The American Bertrand Russell Society

a progress report

After the decision in 1972 to found an American Bertrand Russell Society, letters were sent to American subscribers to Russell inviting discussion on the general aim of examining, disseminating, and actively promoting Russell's ideas. Similar letters were written to those on a list of Russell's American friends compiled by Lady Russell and Christopher Farley.

Replies were received from 48 of the 66 to whom letters were sent. 45 expressed very strong to strong interest. Almost all commented at some length. A capsule digest of the letters follows.

#Start on campus and expand. Glad to help on small tasks only, not in organizing.
#Interested - particularly in BR's pacifism, make it comprehensive. Work with McMaster. No reason for rival journal to Russell.
#Young "Russellophile". Dedicated. Entrance corridor to apartment has "The Bertrand Russell Memorial Alcove".
#Applauds. Suggests some programs.
#Delighted.
#Busy but interested. Already trying to carry out Russell's kind of work.
#If anything I can do, call on me.
#A privilege to cooperate. Capitalize on Einstein peace experiences.
#Don't believe in cultist Preservation Societies.
#Those who thought of organizing are best qualified to proceed.
#Start as broadly as possible. Attract as many as possible of BR admirers.
#Main interest is BR's parents, not BR.
#Very interested and very willing to help. Combine education and action.
#Further Russell's social and political goals. Further the ideas behind the War Crimes Tribunal.
Red Hackle finale:

As most of you know, we were not able to bring to the McMaster Centenary Celebrations the Red Hackle Scotch - Lord Russell's favourite drink. After months of negotiation, and with only a week remaining, a final appeal was made to Prime Minister Trudeau, but he was out campaigning. His office opined that "those assembled to do honour to Lord Russell will accept their deprivation philosophically" (though we had pointed out that seven days had been sufficient for creation).

We have heard from Alan Marshall, director of Hepburn and Ross Ltd. It appears that though we lost the battle, we won the war. The makers of Red Hackle are negotiating for entry to the lists of the liquor control boards of British Columbia and Ontario.

Plans will be made between now and the next issue of Russell for the getting together of charter members. Letters will be sent to keep them informed as to developments and to solicit further suggestions as to organization. We need all the help we can get.

If we have overlooked anyone, please write:

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Peter G. Cranford
Michael C. Moore

It is time to have an organizational meeting for a Bertrand Russell Society. The first meeting should be of a provisional nature (and those taking part should be those with the most dedicated interest).

A comprehensive organization is envisaged that will include a balanced attention to the examination and promotion of specific Russell ideas. The organization itself should be invested with Russell's principles - most important of these being love of humanity.

The utmost encouragement should be given to the BR "buffs", particularly in the task of reaching alienated youth and also alienated adults. This should be approached through the problem of happiness and can be met through the distribution and promotion of The Conquest of Happiness.

The advice and counsel of the Bertrand Russell family should be given the deepest consideration, as should the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, the Bertrand Russell Archives at McMaster University, and the Japanese Bertrand Russell Society.

The possibility of an international organization needs to be explored.