



BARBARA WARD AND THE ORIGINS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

David Satterthwaite

acknowledgements

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foreword

When Barbara Ward was invited to head the International Institute for Environmental Affairs in 1973, she agreed on condition that it changed its name to the International Institute for Environment and Development. This shift in name encapsulates her approach to environmental issues, and her legacy has been an organization for whom discussion of environment without parallel reflection on questions of prosperity and equity would be unthinkable. In the years since 1973, IIED has grown from 6 to more than 60 people working on some of the great challenges of our time – climate change, human settlements, sustainable agriculture, forestry and drylands, making markets work for the poor, and designing the law and governance systems to help turn ambitious policy prescriptions into daily practice.

Of equal importance to what we work on, is how we work at IIED. For all of its life the organization has sought to work in partnership with people, groups, governments from low-income countries and poor communities. We work with many different actors, from smallholder farmers and big city slum-dwellers, to global citizen alliances, international agencies and corporate actors. We recognise the highly unequal power relations which distort the structures and decisions which order (or disorder) our world, and try to get a different set of voices heard in the debates about trade, environment, poverty, aid, climate change and so on. Our hallmarks have been collaboration, linking thinking and doing, interrogating conventional wisdom, and brokering dialogue between diverse interests. Much of our work seeks to make discrete improvements at local level, while keeping an eye on the bigger vision, and seizing openings for major change at national and global levels.

Looking back over a third of a century, we could scarcely have imagined how far-sighted and pertinent would be Barbara Ward's vision. Her formidable intellect and moral purpose are only too relevant today. The book she wrote with René Dubos, *Only One Earth*, is sub-titled *The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet*, a down-to-earth reminder of our need to 'widen our understanding and solidarity to planetary level'. She notes the 'inescapable inter-connectedness of the planet which the human race must share if it is to survive'. Over the past 18 months we have seen ample evidence of the multiple and diverse forms of such inter-connectedness, whether the human, economic and political costs of floods in Bangladesh and Hurricane Katrina, prolonged drought in northern Kenya, failure to reach agreement at the WTO, or our snail's pace progress at the climate change negotiations. But while many problems of poverty and of environmental degradation are only too evident, we have also fashioned a range of effective tools to care for and maintain this small planet.

Climate change is becoming the greatest threat to our continued life on this one and only earth. The urgent need to cut emissions of greenhouse gases forces us to accept our close inter-connectedness, and must be allied with a belief in the possibility of collective action, however daunting the constraints. As the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change has made abundantly clear, the scale of investment required to address climate change is feasible at 1% of GDP. It obviously makes sense when compared with how much we spend on arms, or with the rising costs of doing nothing. Business as usual will condemn us to march backwards rapidly into a world of disorder, disaster and desperation. Rich nations continue to be remarkably mean-minded about the challenges to be faced, yet we must recognise that collective agreements about future actions need to build on past legacies. We cannot lecture China, India and other rapidly growing developing countries about the impossibility of their growth in incomes and prosperity, when the problems faced today are the consequence of our thoughtless energy practices over the past 150 years. Recognition of this historic responsibility will be key to framing a fair balance of obligations between diverse groups of rich and poor. We can see that global agreements on the planet's atmosphere are possible - look at the success of the Montreal protocol on eliminating CFCs and other ozone depleting substances. Barbara Ward urged us to act, in her book *Progress for a Small Planet* in 1979 "Let us at least be bold enough to hope and, where we can, begin to act..." Over the 27 years since that book was published, we have often failed to heed her advice. But at 'this hinge of history', we have a final chance to be bold enough to seize the opportunity we face. Time is not on our side, but if not now, when?

For some years, IIED has been wanting to commemorate Barbara Ward as the guiding force and vision behind the Institute. In the past we have felt constrained by mundane issues of limited resources - both financial and temporal. But remembering that fortune favours the brave, we decided to prepare this biography, led by Barbara Ward's erstwhile research assistant - David Satterthwaite - and now Senior Fellow at IIED. We also have gone ahead with what we hope will be an annual lecture series based around the big issues of the day. These will combine that passionate advocacy for justice, with a recognition of the concrete example, the tangible case study, as a means for people to comprehend how fine vision can accommodate the realities of daily life. It is wonderfully fitting that the first lecture in the Barbara Ward lecture series be given by the current Chair of IIED's Board, Mary Robinson, whose championing of human rights at global and local levels has been a powerful and uncomfortable reminder to our political leaders of the gap which often remains to be filled between what is said and what is done.

Camilla Toulmin Director IIED December 2006.

introduction

Barbara Ward is remembered by many as one of the great intellectuals and internationalists of the 20th century. Time magazine called her one of the 20th century's most influential visionaries.¹ She advised two US presidents, John F Kennedy and Lyndon B Johnson; Johnson was also one among many presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers to state publicly how much her work influenced him. She knew many of the first generation of African presidents and several UN Secretary-Generals and World Bank presidents. The British government made her a Dame and then a Baroness, among the highest civil honours it can confer.

Her work crossed so many disciplines and interest groups that different people remember her for different things. Environmentalists know her for the book she wrote with René Dubos called *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet* (published in 1972); also for her seminal contributions to the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (also in 1972) and to the concept of sustainable development and how it might be applied. For those concerned about international development (and the need to address poverty and issues of social justice), Barbara Ward was perhaps their best-known author and most articulate champion from the early 1940s to her death in 1981. Catholics know her for making explicit the moral and ethical basis for international development – including her work on the Justice and Peace Commission; also for her role in getting Mother Teresa the Nobel Peace prize in 1979. A more general audience knows her journalism – for instance in *The Economist* (of which she became Foreign Editor at the age of 28), plus her many newspaper articles – and her public lectures (for which she was greatly in demand), and, in the 1940s, her contributions to the popular radio programme, *The Brains Trust*.

She reached a very large audience through her many books. Almost all were published both in the United States and in the UK; most were published in low-cost paperback editions as well as in hard covers. She also had a large readership outside the English-speaking world, as many of her books were published in several other languages (*Only One Earth* was published in 13 languages). When her literary agent wrote to her, asking what action should be taken against a publisher in India who had produced an unauthorized edition of one of her books, her suggestion was to send this publisher a congratulatory telegram.

But as Jean Gartlan notes, “although she was very public as an author and lecturer, much of her influence was on a personal level, confidential and unpublicised” – through suggestions sent to key politicians, briefs and memoranda, resolutions or speeches drafted for others for which she never took credit. “This was, however, a paradox of her own making, since she was always more concerned with advancing the ideas and causes she believed in than with advancing herself.”² Certainly, an important part of her influence is changes she catalysed and supported within rich-world governments, within the United Nations and within the Catholic Church, for which there is no documentation.

¹ Time, April/May 2000, page 54.

² Gartlan, Jean (forthcoming), *Barbara Ward: Her Life and Letters* (Preface).

She was always an internationalist. She saw much earlier than most the potentials and dangers of an increasingly interdependent world: it was her life's work to articulate how to make such a world work with some semblance of social and economic justice.³ One constant theme in her writings was bringing together the immediate questions – of poverty and injustice – with the ultimate questions that include our responsibilities to our planet and to future generations. She was among the first to spell out for governments the implications of working within this increasingly interlinked and interdependent world. She also focused on the immense benefits – for peace and for prosperity that is ecologically sustainable – and the relatively low costs involved, if actions were taken early enough. She had faith in human capacities for change. She knew that the dangerous trends of rising poverty and ecological damage were not destiny. Yet she also knew, perhaps better than anyone, the political difficulties of getting nation-states to accept responsibilities for planetary housekeeping and for social justice beyond their borders. Indeed, the difficulties of getting nation-states to act with generosity and foresight on such issues formed a central theme of all her books, dating back to the 1930s.

Over fifty years ago, Barbara Ward recognized that a world economic system in which all nations are embedded needed global institutions to moderate the international dimensions of inequality and exploitation. As she pointed out, competing colonial powers created a single world economic system and the interdependencies cannot be wished away. She also pointed out that it is the failure to extend to the planet those redistributive mechanisms that greatly lessen poverty and exploitation within high-income nations that lies at the root of the world's political and economic instability. She also saw, at first hand, the changes that were possible, as the UK's Labour government of 1945–51 developed the welfare state. Not surprisingly, she championed and supported this. She also saw first-hand the possibilities of this happening internationally, as she rallied support in both Europe and the United States for the Marshall Plan. As early as 1943, she was stressing how the world had the industrial and economic capacity to satisfy everyone's needs.

Allied to this were two 'shaping ideas'. The first was that understanding the contemporary world needs an understanding of history. Only through this can we hope to understand the forces and processes that are shaping (and changing) present society. Those who do not learn from history are destined to repeat its mistakes. The second theme was people's capacity to change history, to reshape conditions and trends: "we are not sleepwalkers or sheep". These two themes run through all her writings – the recognition that dramatic change for social justice is possible within an understanding of the difficulties in changing powerful historical processes and overcoming the opposition of powerful vested interests.

³ Sandbrook, Richard (2003), "Change that works, sometimes", in Cross, Nigel (editor), *Evidence of Hope: The Search for Sustainable Development*, Earthscan Publications, London, pages 60–74.

⁴Ward, Barbara (1966), *Spaceship Earth*, Columbia University Press, New York, page 15.

⁵Ibid., page 16.

⁶See chapters on this issue in her last two books: *The Home of Man and Progress for a Small Planet*.

⁷To give some idea of her range, between April 1974 to May 1975, she spoke at the Exploding Cities Conference in Oxford, at a special session of the United Nations and at the Royal Institute of British Architects: she also gave the Morrison Lecture to the American Society of Planning Officials and spoke at the Summer School of the Town and Country Planning Association, at the University of Texas (keynote address on energy), at the Society for International Journalists (Arizona), to the New York Foundations (reporting on the World Food Conference) and twice to BBC TV (an address from the University of Sussex and on the Time Running Out series). She also gave evidence to the Special Committee of the US Congress and contributed to the Delos Symposium, the Nobel Symposium and chaired the Cocoyoc Symposium – and gave numerous press, radio and television interviews related to the World Food Conference in Rome.

More than forty years ago, Barbara Ward wrote in detail about how governments and international agencies should address the problems arising from rapid growth in cities. She already understood the need for coordinated action in rural and urban areas and how the linkages between rural and urban poverty could be turned into linkages between rural and urban prosperity. (There are still many people today who have yet to grasp this.) From the 1960s, she wrote of the devastating effects on human health and on the environment of the misuse of pesticides and unchecked industrial pollution and of the ecological effects of unchecked deforestation. In her book entitled *Spaceship Earth*, published in 1966, she noted, “Our planet is not much more than the capsule within which we have to live as human beings.... We depend upon a little envelope of soil and a rather larger envelope of atmosphere for life itself. And both can be contaminated and destroyed.”⁴ She added, “Our physical unity has gone far ahead of our moral unity. Our inability to do anything but live together physically is not matched by any of the institutions that would enable us to live together decently.”⁵ Thirty years before the Millennium Development Goals were established, she demanded from governments and international agencies a higher priority on meeting basic needs for water, sanitation, health and education in both rural and urban areas, and even set out the costs of doing so – what she termed ‘the cost of justice’.⁶

She was unforgettable for those who heard her speak – in person, on radio or on television or film. She was a consummate public speaker: serious, witty, erudite, a generalizer and a storyteller. And always with a wonderful range of quotes to illustrate her points. She had the instincts of any good actor, as she knew how to hold her audiences, how often to chide them but always to inspire them. Throughout her life, she spoke to packed audiences. This included speeches to the official government sessions at United Nations global conferences that were not really allowed because she was not an official government representative. She was in constant demand as a speaker – for both general and specialist audiences.⁷ She was much interviewed on radio and TV, especially at UN global conferences where she could encapsulate the key issues more succinctly and eloquently than anyone else.

Barbara also had tremendous powers to convene and to ‘network’ – before this term was being used, and long before the facilitating effect of the internet. She convened or chaired so many critical meetings that brought together the world’s best specialists from the North and the South and that issued agreed statements that were to influence international discussions, agendas and institutions. Examples of these include the World Food Conference in 1974, the UN Conference on Human Settlements in 1976 and Cocoyoc in 1974 (a little-remembered meeting whose declaration, as described below, was influential at that time and a key underpinning for the emerging concept of sustainable development). Given the strong and divergent opinions of

these experts – and often corporate executives sat with their radical opponents, and ‘eco-doomsters’ with technology-driven optimists – reaching such clear and focused consensus was remarkable. Barbara Ward always managed to get these diverse expert groups to focus on the key issues on which they agreed – or to badger them with such charm to accept a point for the good of the consensus the group needed.

Barbara Ward also had access unmatched by any other environmentalist to the world’s leaders during the 1960s and 1970s. She advised British prime ministers (Harold Wilson and James Callaghan), US presidents (John F Kennedy and Lyndon B Johnson) and Canadian prime ministers (Lester B Pearson and Pierre Trudeau). She advised many African presidents and UN leaders and supported Willy Brandt, the Nobel Peace Laureate and German chancellor of 1969–74, as he chaired the Independent Commission for International Developmental Issues (also known as the Brandt Commission). She wrote speeches for many of these, if they wanted to articulate and support her main concerns. No one knows how many key speeches she wrote or helped to craft, as, like all good speech-writers, she kept quiet about who she wrote for. But her ideas and style can be seen in speeches by Lyndon Johnson, Lester Pearson and Adlai Stevenson, and also in speeches given by her old friend Robert McNamara as he struggled to move the World Bank towards a more explicit and direct engagement with poverty reduction. She also had close friendships with British politicians strongly committed to international development, perhaps especially Shirley Williams and Roy Jenkins. A committed socialist, she also commanded the affection and respect of internationalists from the other side – including the Conservative prime minister (and member of the Brandt Commission), Edward Heath.

This book begins with a description of Barbara Ward’s life and work from 1971 to her death in 1981, since it was in this decade that she pioneered the concept of sustainable development, and ‘institutionalized’ her concerns by setting up the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). The text then returns to her earlier life, works and writings because many of her concerns during her last decade are evident much earlier. The earlier decades also include memorable works and achievements. In the 1940s, her encouragement of US support for the Allies’ fight against Nazi Germany and her championing of the Marshall Plan that did much to help rebuild Europe and reduce poverty. In the 1950s, her books articulated what was possible in an increasingly independent world in achieving social justice, and pushed rich nations to accept their responsibilities in a post-colonial world. In the 1960s, she was at the core of discussions within the United States government in regard to foreign policy and development assistance. Through all four decades, she pushed, inspired and cajoled an often-reluctant Catholic Church to recognize its roles and responsibilities within international development.

Although the term sustainable development has been given many different meanings and definitions, most recognize that, at its core, it combines a commitment to meeting people's needs with a recognition of the Earth's finite ecological capacity. From the 1940s to the 1960s, Barbara Ward was chiefly known for her work on the first of these concerns – especially the need to address poverty in low- and middle-income nations, and the international development agenda that was needed to support this. But she also recognized much earlier than most that this concern for development had to be combined with a concern for the environment. This is evident in her work of the 1960s – for instance in *Spaceship Earth* published in 1966. It is also evident in the discussions and report of a conference she convened in 1970, as the Albert Schweitzer Professor of International Economic Development at Columbia University, *The Widening Gap: Development in the 1970s*⁸ and in a conference on Environment and Development organized in 1971. David Runnalls, who later built IIED, worked with her on organizing both of these conferences. However, her concern for linking development and environment is most clearly seen in *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet*, co-authored with Nobel Laureate, René Dubos.

Only One Earth was written at the request of Maurice Strong, the UN Secretary General of perhaps the most significant global conference on the environment – the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. *Only One Earth* can be seen as the first book on sustainable development. It recognizes the need to combine a commitment to meeting human needs with acknowledgement of the finite limits of the planet in regard to resources and pollution. As Barbara Ward wrote in the book's introduction, the "charge of the U.N. to the [Stockholm] Conference was clearly to define what should be done to maintain the earth as a place suitable for human life not only now, but also for future generations".⁹ This was the basis for the Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development, 15 years later, meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.¹⁰ *Only One Earth* also notes how the careful husbandry of the Earth is essential both for "the survival of the human species, and for the creation of decent ways of life for all the people of the world." Here, and in many of her other publications, Barbara Ward refers to the need to address the "inner limits" of human needs and rights and the "outer limits" of what the Earth can sustain.

As in so much of Barbara Ward's work, *Only One Earth* identifies key connections between different agendas and makes explicit their implications for governments and international agencies. It acknowledges the importance and relevance of the rapidly growing environmental movement whose concerns initially focused on pollution and other aspects of environmental damage evident in North America and Europe – and also on the very serious environmental problems in the former

⁸More details of this conference are given below.

⁹Ward, Barbara and René Dubos (1972), *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet*, W W Norton, New York, Andre Deutsch, London, page 25.

¹⁰World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), *Our Common Future*, Oxford University Press, 383 pages.

Soviet Union and other parts of the world. But it links these concerns with the growing disenchantment with the achievements of international development, as all the investments and efforts of dozens of international agencies and two development decades had produced surprisingly little success in reducing poverty.

These two powerful currents of thought – each with their own rapidly expanding literature, backed by detailed research and their own popular advocates – had developed independently. There were also conflicts emerging as those concerned with development feared that environmental controls might impede the possibilities for low-income nations to expand their economies. Some political leaders from Asia, Africa and Latin America took up this theme. There was also the ever-present debate over the role of population growth in environmental destruction and this also had its North–South divide. In 1970, many environmentalists saw population growth as the main issue threatening planetary survival. The dramatic reduction in population growth rates in many low- and middle-income nations was not yet evident or recognized – while the empirical studies that found little evidence of links between expanding populations in low-income nations and ecological damage were in the future. The conflicts between environmentalists and the development agendas of low-income nations had the potential to derail the Stockholm Conference – the first critical global discussion among governments of the need for all of them to agree on and support global environmental action.

When it became obvious that most nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America had little interest in a conference on ‘the human environment’, the UN Secretary General, U Thant realized that he needed someone to head the Conference Secretariat who was known to these nations as a friend. He chose Maurice Strong, then the head of the Canadian International Development Agency, and he asked Barbara Ward to intervene with the Canadian Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, to persuade him to release Maurice Strong from his Canadian responsibilities.

Maurice Strong’s invitation to Barbara Ward and René Dubos to co-author *Only One Earth* was intended to head off this conflict. He knew Barbara Ward would never write a global book that did not have poverty reduction and social justice at its core. He also knew of her concern for ‘our fragile planet’ and for the insights, rooted in natural science, that René Dubos would bring. The two authors worked well together, enjoying each other’s company, although René Dubos did not have the time to contribute much to the text – but he saw himself as Barbara’s science tutor and commented on her drafts. So the writing fell almost entirely to Barbara Ward.

the origins of iied, 1970-73

The 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment was the first at which the world's governments agreed that environmental issues were a key part of the international agenda; it was from this conference that agreement was reached on setting up the United Nations Environment Programme – also headed by Maurice Strong. The origins of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) are within the preparations for this Conference. In 1971, Robert O Anderson, Chief Executive of the oil company, Atlantic Richfield, set up the International Institute for Environmental Affairs (IIEA) as he recognized the need to understand how his industry affected the planet. His company was involved in the extraction of oil from Alaska's Prudhoe Bay, from where pipeline construction had been much delayed and made more costly by the controversy surrounding environmental impacts on Arctic terrain and wildlife.¹¹ 'Bob' Anderson had also supported the development of the Aspen Institute to provide a forum for environmentalists, policy-makers and business leaders, and IIEA began as an affiliate of the Aspen Institute, set up to focus on international environmental issues.

IIEA worked closely with Maurice Strong in helping to prepare the Stockholm Conference. A series of international workshops at Aspen drew up recommendations for the international management of environmental problems, many of which were to become central to the work of the United Nations Environment Programme. IIEA staff worked closely with Barbara Ward as she wrote *Only One Earth*. They also helped to manage a vast committee of natural and social scientists who had been assigned to help the book's authors – and to review draft chapters. But it was David Runnalls, a political scientist who worked for the Albert Schweitzer Chair, who was Barbara's main support in preparing the book. He had been one of Barbara's graduate students at Columbia University and was to have the central role in building IIED.

Barbara's professorship at Columbia University in New York meant that she was close to the UN Secretariat set up to organize the Stockholm Conference. Barbara and Maurice Strong convened a small group of advisers that included some of the best-known development specialists – Gamani Corea (later to be Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development), Mahhub ul Haq (who developed the UN Human Development Reports), Enrique Iglesias (later to become head of the Inter-American Development Bank) and Rodrigo Botero (Minister of Housing in Colombia). Members of this group met at Founex in 1971, producing a report drafted by Mahhub ul Haq and Gamani Corea; Barbara was unable to attend but David Runnalls did so. This report stressed how environment and development are inextricably linked.

¹¹Strong, Maurice (2003), 'Stockholm: the founding of IIED', in Cross, Nigel (editor), *Evidence of Hope: the Search for Sustainable Development*, Earthscan Publications, London, pages 19–27.

It emphasized that high-income nations bore the principal responsibility for damage done and the risks that had arisen for the planet's life-support systems. This demanded that high-income nations provide 'new and additional' resources to low- and middle-income countries to help them develop economically while avoiding environmental damage locally and globally.

Few people today have heard of the [Founex Report on Environment and Development](#). Yet it helped to change the agenda for the Stockholm Conference so that it addressed the concerns of low- and middle-income nations and recognized the key relationship between environment and development. As Maurice Strong has noted, "Although for the most part the more developed countries did not initially buy into the substantive basis for this change, they accepted the broadened agenda as the political price of satisfying developing-country demands and ensuring their engagement in the process."¹² [Only One Earth](#), by covering the key development concerns as well as the environmental issues also helped to avoid a refusal by low- and middle-income nations to take part. [Only One Earth](#) made sure that environmental-health issues associated with poverty got as much attention as the environmental concerns of high-income nations.

The conference in Stockholm also set an important precedent that was to influence subsequent UN global conferences: provision for non-government and 'unofficial' events and discussions open to everyone, alongside the formal, protocol-directed, restricted-access United Nations conference of official government delegations. This included provision for an alternative conference on an abandoned airfield outside Stockholm, known as the 'hogfarm'. This helped to generate a much greater interest by the media in the conference and also encouraged official delegations to take more positive positions on the issues being discussed; in fact, there were more journalists here than at the Olympic Games, held later that year.

Barbara Ward was a senior adviser to the conference yet, because she was not an official delegate, United Nations rules did not allow her to speak at the official conference's plenary sessions. However, the organizers ingeniously suspended the official proceedings so she could speak – and her speech "encapsulated brilliantly and cogently the case for bringing developing countries into a new and equitable environment and development partnership to build a more secure and sustainable future."¹³ Maurice Strong noted that her speech helped greatly in elevating prospects for success in the difficult negotiations that followed. The message of [Only One Earth](#) was also reinforced by the Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, as she asserted that poverty is the greatest polluter and noted how "the environment cannot be improved in conditions of

¹² Strong, *op. cit.*, page 23

¹³ *Ibid.*, page 25.

poverty – how can we speak to those who live in villages and slums about keeping the oceans, the rivers and the air clean when their own lives are contaminated at the source.”¹⁴

After the Stockholm Conference, Maurice Strong suggested to Bob Anderson that Barbara Ward be invited to head IIEA. He subsequently invited her to do so and she agreed on the condition that the international development issues such as poverty and social justice were added to its concerns – so its name was changed from the International Institute for Environmental Affairs to the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Barbara Ward also specified that the Institute's headquarters should move from the United States to the UK. At that time, in contrast to the US, Europe had few NGOs interested in international environmental issues.

¹⁴ "Hunger, Poverty, Population and Environment" by Maurice F Strong (<http://www.mssf.org/April7-Millenniumlecture.html>).



Transcending divisions: work for the Stockholm Conference *Maurice Strong*

Even before I met her, Lady Jackson, more widely known as Barbara Ward, was an important influence on my life. She was the most articulate and persuasive champion of the poor, making in her books and lectures a compelling case for the rich to be more responsive to the needs of the poor. It was therefore with great excitement and anticipation that I first met her in Ottawa, at the home of her friend, Tom Kent, Policy Advisor to Lester Pearson, whom she had come to Ottawa to visit. At that time, I had just accepted the invitation of the UN Secretary-General U Thant to organize the UN Conference on the Human Environment, to be held in Stockholm in 1972. I was preparing to leave my position as President of the Canadian International Development Agency and was eager to seek Barbara Ward's counsel on how to respond to the concerns of developing countries that the newly emerging preoccupation of more developed countries with the environmental issue would divert attention and resources from their overwhelming priority to raise their people out of poverty through development.

This was clearly the most important challenge I would face in my new responsibilities for the conference, and some key developing countries had already threatened to boycott it. I had taken on the challenge because of my own conviction that concern for the environment and the need to enlist the cooperation of developing countries in meeting this concern could give new impetus to support for their development needs. I wanted to test my view with Barbara that environment and development needed to be, and could be, mutually reinforcing.

When I met Barbara Ward in Tom Kent's living room, I found her to be deeply interested and responsive to this prospect. While she had not previously been active in the environmental movement, she had a keen intellectual understanding and appreciation of its relevance to developing countries. Her brilliance and enthusiasm ignited my hopes for the conference and excited my spirits. This emboldened me to ask her for help. Her immediate acceptance gave me the most effective and influential ally that I could possibly have had. For me, the prospect of working closely with Barbara Ward was a dream come true.

The dream unfolded rapidly. Barbara designated her brilliant and resourceful assistant, David Runnalls, to be the link between us. One of my first acts when I took over my new responsibilities at UN Headquarters in New York was to seek her help in convening a group of influential leaders of the development movement to consider how best to create a more positive synthesis between development and environment. All were her disciples or admirers. With her convening power, we met in New York in what was a first step in the long process of confronting the policy and political differences that separated advocates of development from those of the environment, which was the central theme of the Stockholm Conference and beyond.

The team that Barbara assembled to meet with me in New York included Gamani Corea from Sri Lanka, Enrique Iglesias from Uruguay, Mahbub Ul Haq from Pakistan, and Jim Wolfensohn, then an Australian investment banker and later to become President of the World Bank. With Barbara's help, we reached out to others to participate in our continuing dialogue, notably to the Brazilian economist, Miguel Osorio de Almeida, the Polish/French development guru with broad experience in Brazil and India, Ignacy Sachs, and Kuwait's leading expert, Abdalatif Al-Hamad. As Barbara was then living in New York, we met regularly with the continuing support of David Runnalls. Most of all, I enjoyed and valued our one-to-one dinner meetings, always over a bottle of her favourite indulgence, Dom Perignon champagne.

In parallel with the network Barbara helped us to develop, I enlisted the advice and support of a visionary scientist, Carroll Wilson, then a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who had already convened a pioneering study of climate change. He arranged a meeting for me with his "Brain Trust" at MIT, which then guided my approach to the conference preparations. I was delighted at the synergy between Barbara and Carroll Wilson. With their networks and leadership, we prepared the intellectual and policy underpinnings for the formal programme of the conference and translated them into the documents I submitted to the preparatory committee of government representatives overseeing the preparatory process.

By according developing-country experts a primary role in our preparations, developing-country representatives at the political level were reassured that their interests would be addressed – and the movement to boycott the Stockholm Conference receded. The fact that Barbara was now so clearly and visibly involved in the process was also extremely helpful to me in recruiting the other star of the conference, India's prime minister Indira Gandhi. She was a great fan of Barbara Ward, and when she agreed to attend the conference and to allow me to make this known, it gave the participation of developing countries new and much needed impetus. My main colleague in orchestrating the increasingly extensive and complex network we were developing with Barbara's guidance was an extraordinarily talented and well-organized Swiss development specialist, Marc Nerfin. He took the lead in organizing a meeting of key participants in this network in June 1971 in the village of Founex near Geneva as the culmination of our consultations. This spirited and often divisive dialogue produced a document articulating in compelling terms the essential nature of the environment–development relationship as two sides of the same coin. It made the point that the environment is both the basic resource for development and a product of development, and that these two dimensions of the process must be brought into a positive synthesis. The Founex Report proved to be a milestone in preparations for Stockholm and the evolution of the movement we now call sustainable development.

The other milestone event in which Barbara's role was central was the book I commissioned for the conference, *Only One Earth*, co-authored by Barbara and René Dubos, the distinguished French scientist then also a resident in New York. It seemed an unlikely combination of personalities, with her extraordinary intellect manifested in a vibrant personality contrasting with his quietly authoritative manner. When I first brought them together, they knew of each other, but had never met, and I was apprehensive. However, their shared interests and mutual respect created an immediate bond between them, which grew into a full partnership and an enduring friendship. The manuscript was reviewed by a stellar group representing a variety of leading world experts. It became not only the principal resource for the Stockholm Conference, but a best-seller in more than 12 languages, disseminating the main themes and messages of Stockholm throughout the world.

At the conference itself in June 1972, Barbara was the guiding star of the many non-governmental organizations that for the first time were given a significant role in a United Nations conference. She shared the starring role with Indira Gandhi. As Barbara was not an official delegate to the conference, we had to suspend the formal proceedings to enable her to address it. Again, her

magic and persuasive challenge to the delegates contributed to the positive mood, which transcended the deep divisions among conference participants, and enabled them to produce results beyond the expectation of most. The agreements on a set of principles, a plan of action and the negotiation of several important conventions owe much to Barbara's influence.

Of course, Stockholm was just the beginning of what continues to be a long and controversial process. But it put environmental issues firmly on the global agenda, and provided the intellectual and policy basis for the interactive relationships between the environment and the economic and social dimensions of the development process, which has now evolved into the sustainable development movement.

Barbara remained at the summit of the movement's leadership. In response to the invitation of Robert O Anderson, the first leader of the energy industry to recognize the importance of the environment movement, she became President of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), which became one of the most effective and influential organizations in the field. She also continued to give me advice and support in the role I undertook as the first executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), established as a result of the Stockholm Conference. Our friendship and partnership continued until her last days. I continue to miss her greatly and to be inspired and guided by what I learned from her.

Maurice Strong was Secretary-General of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment and of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit).

institutionalizing her concerns, 1973-80

In 1973, Barbara moved back to England. Her health was already affected by cancer. David Runnalls also moved from New York to London, and IIED was built with Barbara based mostly in her home in the Sussex countryside, providing the intellectual leadership, and David Runnalls building the Institute, taking on new staff and tasks and managing the complex process of transferring premises and programmes from IIEA. IIED also opened a small office in Washington DC. For Barbara, IIED institutionalized her key concerns. Its new programmes – on energy, the law of the sea and human settlements – helped provide material for the books and the many articles that she wrote after 1973. Barbara also oversaw IIED's innovation in developing the media information unit, Earthscan to support a much wider coverage of environment and development issues in the press. But it was David Runnalls who made possible the ambitious international forays. They shared a capacity to see "the whole picture" and to understand its constituent parts and their multiple interconnections. Like Barbara, David Runnalls could speak authoritatively on all the issues in which IIED was engaged. They also complemented each other: Barbara Ward the great writer and generally the optimist; David Runnalls the organizer, the builder of networks and coalitions, the political scientist, well versed in the roadblocks to progress and perhaps less convinced that progress was possible.¹⁵

IIED's small staff - just six people in 1974 - faced a great range of issues. The environmental issues in the rich world – pollution control, debates about nuclear power and the world's finite resource base, environmental impact analysis – were of little concern to Africa and most of Asia and Latin America where the preoccupation was human deprivation, poverty, disease and hunger. Environment was linked to development in name only. Gradually IIED's key message emerged - the earth's resources, if properly managed and fairly distributed, can sustain the entire planet's population with sufficient food, uncontaminated water, education, employment and shelter. Also that development without proper regard to environmental constraints is both unsustainable and wasteful. To today's audience, these ideas might seem self-evident; they were certainly not so thirty years ago.

IIED's main work programmes during the 1970s were based first on building a collegiate structure of expertise and commitment, and second on injecting this line of argument within the major UN conferences of the 1970s. These global conferences were the principal means by which governments were made aware of the inter-connections between key domestic and global

¹⁵ David Runnalls later headed IIED's North American Office and is currently President of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD).

concerns. At the very least, they raised awareness of key issues and placed them in a broader development context. At best, they created a new global consensus on action and provided the institutions and finance to implement common decisions. Perhaps more than any of them, the Stockholm Conference catalysed institutional change in almost all governments - as departments and ministries of the environment were set up for the first time.

IIED, guided by Barbara Ward, developed three powerful instruments for influencing these global UN conferences: the expert group meeting just before the conference to highlight the key issues that the conference had to address; books for a general audience about the issues these conferences were addressing; and press briefings, to get the issues (and conferences) widely covered by journalists.

1974 and the world food conference

The first conference at which this combination of instruments was tried was the 1974 World Food Conference, convened in Rome – the headquarters of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. At that time, the world was facing its worst food crisis since World War II. IIED was invited by Sartaj Aziz to host an independent group of experts to identify the key issues that the conference should address. Barbara Ward convened a remarkable group of 26 specialists, included personnel from NGOs, governments, UN agencies and corporations. They agreed on a declaration calling for immediate emergency relief for those countries most affected by the shortfall in food supplies, and the creation of a global agricultural development fund that would invest in ecologically sound farming. The declaration noted that the primary question was how many of the world's peoples may not survive until their next harvest. "In the immediate future the success of the Conference and of its follow up depend upon the readiness of those with resources to see to it that the immediate threat of famine is turned aside... we do not believe that either the 'old rich' of the industrialized world or the 'new rich' within OPEC could live in peace and self respect in a planet moving toward recurrent famine."¹⁶

¹⁶ Aziz, Sartaj (editor) (1975), *Hunger, Politics, and Markets: the Real Issues in the Food Crisis*, New York University Press, New York. 130 pages.



Leadership and vision: Barbara Ward and the World Food Conference

Sartaj Aziz

Barbara Ward had a rare combination of human qualities: an incisive intellect, a very compassionate heart, and a deep commitment to the improvement of the human condition. The radiant warmth of all her writings and the incessant fire in her speeches fully reflect this combination.

In August 1974, I met her in London to invite her to convene a group of eminent persons on the eve of the World Food Conference in Rome in November that year. Despite her frail health, her eyes sparkled when she heard about the food issue and the importance of the conference in tackling it. Ignoring her medical attendants' advice to curtail her activities, she accepted my invitation. Within two hours we had the list of invitees to the Rome Forum on the World Food Problem.

The Rome Forum held on 2 and 3 November 1974 was a remarkable event, culminating in the unanimous adoption of the Rome Declaration. I will never forget the compassion, the warmth and the enthusiasm she displayed when she presented the Rome Declaration at a press conference attended by about 500 media and NGO representatives. This curtain raiser, on the eve of the World Food Conference, had a decisive influence on the final outcome of the conference.

The proceedings of the Rome Forum were published by New York University Press in 1975, with an incisive foreword by Barbara Ward. After pointing out the limitations of a pure market system, she made this prophetic prediction about the shape of things to come:

"These defects in the functioning of markets can help us to understand the deepening crisis of the Seventies and the likely tragedy of the Eighties. Since the new censuses were taken in the late 1950s, we are beginning to see that unless drastic changes are made in our global system, we are going to move into an epoch in which world markets will, even more decisively than in the colonial period, impoverish the already poor and even transfer income from the poor to the rich."

The leadership and the vision provided by Barbara Ward in humanity's battle against hunger and poverty will continue to inspire the coming generations.

Sartaj Aziz is Vice-Chancellor, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. He was Deputy Secretary-General to the World Food Conference in 1974 and later Assistant President of the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development.

How Barbara achieved consensus from such a group is difficult to conceive. Norman Borlaug, Lester Brown and René Dumont were all experts on food and agriculture but their views on solutions were certainly very different. The group included Salvador Allende's former Agriculture Minister and HJ Heinz III. Yet this group presented its agreed declaration to a press conference that attracted more than 400 journalists and got front-page coverage in both [The Times](#) and the [New York Times](#). Members of this group gave many interviews and contributed to television programmes on the BBC, ABC, CBS and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. At this conference, Henry Kissinger made the memorable commitment that, within ten years, no child would go to bed hungry – a commitment that the US government never followed up and for which Barbara Ward later chided it on many occasions. One IIED strategy at this time was to push governments to make explicit commitments and then encourage, support or cajole them to meet these.

Guided by Barbara Ward, IIED followed this same pattern of an expert symposium and press conference at other global conferences organized by the UN – on Human Settlements in Vancouver in 1976, on Water at Mar del Plata in 1977 and Science and Technology (held in Jamaica, prior to a UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development in Vienna). For two of these, Barbara Ward also wrote books for a general audience: [The Home of Man](#) for the 1976 Human Settlements Conference and [Progress for a Small Planet](#) for the 1979 Science and Technology Conference.

Writing and speaking

Most of Barbara's time from 1973 to 1981 was spent in her home in Lodsworth, a village in Sussex but within easy reach of London. It was from these quiet surrounds that she did most of her writing – and where she took such pleasure in the company of her son, Robert Jackson (and then his fiancé and later his wife, Carlie). She attended regular meetings at IIED's London office and travelled abroad when needed and when her health permitted. But most of her work and writings were done from her bed at home. Only her closest friends and colleagues knew just how ill she was, most of the time. She began each day with a careful review of [The Times](#) and the [Financial Times](#). Before beginning to write any book, she read Jane Austen 'to clean her language' (she had an encyclopaedic knowledge and ability to quote – mainly from Austen and Shakespeare but also from many more obscure authors and sages). From her home, she was supported by her son and by three other people. For much of this time, her research assistant,

David Satterthwaite, had an office in her attic. Her personal secretary, Irene Hunter, would visit most weeks and help manage her voluminous correspondence. For sustenance and domestic (rather than planetary) housekeeping, she relied on a redoubtable Scottish housekeeper, Mrs Margaret Rose.¹⁷

During these years, she travelled abroad sparingly, again because of poor health. But she still had the capacity to captivate large international audiences, as in, for instance, her many memorable speeches in Canada during the preparations for the UN Conference on Human Settlements in 1976 and, as in Stockholm, to the official conference's plenary. But it was at her country house that so many of the great champions of environment and development would come to visit her – for example: Margaret Mead, John Kenneth Galbraith, Maurice Strong, Sartaj Aziz, Jim MacNeill (head of the Canadian government secretariat for the 1976 UN Conference on Human Settlements and later to head the secretariat for the World Commission on Environment and Development – also known as the Brundtland Commission), and the two key Friends of the Earth energy specialists at that time, Walt Patterson and Amory Lovins (later to found the Rocky Mountain Institute). She also hosted many meetings of IIED staff at her home, including visits from the Argentine urbanist, Jorge E Hardoy who developed IIED's human settlements programme, and later IIED-America Latina in Buenos Aires, Richard Sandbrook who was later to head IIED, Gerry Leach who developed IIED's energy programme, Jon Tinker who developed Earthscan and Anil Agarwal who did so much to develop Earthscan's 'southern focus' before returning to India to found the Centre for Science and Environment. Barbara Ward also received many visits from Bishops and Cardinals who shared her commitment to social justice or sought her advice.

Barbara was also active in the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, as a member of its governing body – and through her close friendship with its director, Richard Jolly (later to become deputy director of UNICEF and to receive a knighthood). Sir Richard Jolly recalls that Barbara's membership was important because "she always brought her wonderful mixture of positive optimistic vision and broad thinking so she wouldn't allow us to get trapped in the pettiness of salaries or minor issues".¹⁸ Barbara was also active in the Society for International Development and was invited by Sartaj Aziz, the Society's President, to chair its North–South roundtable. This was created to give more scope to the views on development of people from Asia, Africa and Latin America. The roundtable brought together around 100 development thinkers, 40–50 of

¹⁷ This book does not dwell on Barbara Ward's personal life: she was always clear about the separation of her private and public life and never accepted interviews about her private life. But the tremendous support she received from David Runnalls, Irene Hunter and Mrs Margaret Rose does need special acknowledgement: there were also some very dear personal friends on whom she relied such as the Kenyons and the Dicks, with whom she often stayed, during her many visits to the USA.

¹⁸ Quoted in Gartlan, *op. cit.*

whom would meet every few months to examine different issues. Mahbub UI Haq, also one of the best-known advocates of development throughout the 1970s and one of the parents of the Human Development Index, succeeded Barbara as chair. He devoted the last chapter of his book *Reflections on Human Development* to Barbara. He quoted from her 1966 book *Spaceship Earth* in which she wrote, "Our physical unity has gone far ahead of our moral unity". "This is one of those seminal statements characteristic of Barbara, who could summarize the dilemmas of an entire age in one simple pithy sentence. It is also a theme that dominated her world of ideas and that was at the heart of her constant search for social equity, for human justice, for reduced gaps between the rich and poor, for a planetary bargain for our planetary survival."¹⁹

The urban agenda

Barbara Ward launched IIED's work on urban issues in 1973 when she was asked to chair an expert meeting in 1973 to prepare for the 1976 UN Conference on Human Settlements (also known as the Habitat Conference), and wrote a booklet for the conference: *Human Settlements: Crisis and Opportunity*.²⁰ She was asked by the Canadian government and the conference secretariat to prepare a book similar to *Only One Earth* on the issues that this conference was to address. This book, entitled *The Home of Man* (and published in 1976), has much in it that is still so relevant. This includes the recognition that the planet was soon to become half urban. The book also describes the growth of the 'unintended city' and 'unintended metropolis' and of the social and political struggles within them, seeking good local governance. Barbara's description of 'the conserving society' maintains that the highest quality of life is possible without ruinous levels of resource use and waste. She wrote of the divides and the interconnections between the formal and the informal city in Africa, Asia and Latin America, of the 'instruments of community', noting how "the chief argument for elective government at national and local level is that it enables citizens to observe and check power whose tendency is to corrupt and enables the tempted officials to be removed."²¹

Barbara wrote of the vitality and ingenuity with which low-income families develop their own homes and neighbourhoods, when they can get the land on which to do so. She also wrote of the shift among many governments from bulldozing to upgrading 'slums' and squatter settlements. But she also noted how government programmes to address 'problems' in squatter settlements failed to

¹⁹ Gartlan, op. cit., quoting from UI Haq, Mahbub (1993), *Reflections on Human Development*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

²⁰ Ward, Barbara (1974), *Human Settlements: Crisis and Opportunity*, Ministry of Urban Affairs, Information Canada, Ottawa, 1974, 60 pages.

²¹ Ward, Barbara (1976), *The Home of Man*, W W Norton, New York and Penguin, Harmondsworth page 248.



listen to and work with the inhabitants and their own organizations. She described a government programme in Guatemala to install drains that was far less efficient and more costly than the one already started by the neighbours themselves – many of whom were construction workers. “The local community had included a varied number of skilled building workers. They also had their own information and social network, enabling them to obtain materials, tools, transport and technical aid at minimal cost. The government’s intervention disrupted the neighbourhood and destroyed the highly effective informal self-help organization.”²²

The Home of Man was dedicated to Constantinos Doxiadis, acknowledging how much his work had stimulated Barbara’s and other people’s interest in human settlements. He had founded Doxiadis Associates in 1951 and this became one of the world’s most successful international planning and engineering consultancy firms; he also founded the Athens Center of Ekistics devoted to the study of human settlements. Constantinos Doxiadis organized the Delos Symposia each year which brought together a small group of well-known architects, politicians, academics and business leaders to discuss environmental problems aboard a chartered Aegean cruise. Barbara Ward went to several of these symposia. In one of her letters, she mentioned how “we were all put on a yacht and taken around the Aegean, talking in the morning and swimming in the afternoon.”²³ Arnold Toynbee, Margaret Mead, Buckminster Fuller and Robert McNamara were among the other participants. The symposia ended with a declaration incorporating the deliberations, and this was always written by Barbara, sometimes assisted by Margaret Mead. It had been on the 1972 Delos Symposium that Robert Anderson had asked Barbara to assume the Presidency of IIED.

Barbara also worked closely with the secretariat of the 1976 UN Habitat Conference and the host government (Canada). She received a warm and enthusiastic response from Enrique Penalosa, the conference’s Secretary-General (and later to join IIED’s Board) and Jim MacNeill (head of the Canadian government secretariat for preparing the conference). She did a lecture tour across Canada in early 1976, speaking to packed audiences in nine cities about the importance of the conference and the issues it was addressing. She also had key roles within both the official conference and the NGO conference, including lending her research assistant, David Satterthwaite, to the Canadian government to help organize Habitat Forum, the non-government conference. She could move so easily between government and civil society, speaking to

²² Ibid., page 257.

²³ Walsh, Michael (2006) *Barbara Ward: a Memoir*. Paper prepared for IIED.

presidents, prime ministers and heads of government delegations while also getting an ovation from an audience of thousands at the NGO conference. As at the Stockholm Conference, she was invited to make a speech to the official government conference in Vancouver; many recall this as among the most memorable moments in the two-week conference.

At the 1976 UN Conference, IIED followed the now-established pattern of a symposium just beforehand – to issue a declaration emphasizing the key issues the conference had to address – and a press briefing. The Habitat symposium included among its participants Margaret Mead, Buckminster Fuller, Maurice Strong and Jorge E Hardoy, the renowned urban specialist from Argentina. Barbara had not met Jorge Hardoy before this conference, but they had corresponded, as Jorge Hardoy had sent her material and advised her when she was writing *The Home of Man*. Jorge had also commented on parts of the text of *Only One Earth*, some years earlier.

The 1976 conference was the first at which IIED's newly formed press and media information unit, Earthscan, was present. Earthscan arranged over 200 interviews at the conference between symposium participants and journalists. Here, as at subsequent conferences, Earthscan prepared press briefing documents and organized seminars and other media services. These were designed to help journalists to penetrate the political and bureaucratic fog around these meetings and to focus on the key environment and development issues underlying the rhetoric.

Barbara Ward also met Mother Teresa at the Habitat Conference – and took her to the NGO conference where Mother Teresa spoke to an audience of several thousand people. Barbara also reminded the audience that giving to support poverty reduction is not enough; for the fortunate, it is necessary to give until it hurts. A spontaneous collection for Mother Teresa after her speech – initiated by Barbara – raised £2000. Barbara was also one of the campaigners seeking to get Mother Teresa the Nobel Peace Prize, along with some powerful friends – Lester Pearson (who first submitted her nomination in 1972), Robert McNamara and Edward Kennedy – and she enlisted her formidable network of politicians to help achieve this, including Indira Gandhi, India's Prime Minister. Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. After the Habitat Conference, Barbara Ward and Mother Teresa remained in correspondence.

During her two weeks at the Habitat Conference, Barbara Ward had a notable brush with Mrs Marcos, the wife of the President of the Philippines and the appointed mayor of Manila. Mrs Marcos came to the Habitat Conference to promote various official government programmes that were

meant to improve conditions for squatters. The impact was somewhat diminished, as squatter leaders from the Philippines were also at the conference, smuggled out of Manila by the World Council of Churches and who pointed to the evictions and demolitions that poorer groups were suffering at that time. Mrs Marcos invited Barbara to meet her at her hotel – and when Barbara arrived, Mrs Marcos said how much she was influenced by Barbara's work and would Barbara reconvene the experts from the Vancouver Symposium in Manila to advise the Philippine government? Barbara said that she would be delighted to do so – but on one small condition, that this symposium would have ready access to the press. Mrs Marcos's response was to storm out of the room.

Here, as with other key global conferences and the changes they set in train, it is difficult to gauge the particular influence of Barbara Ward and her colleagues at IIED. Certainly, Barbara's focus in *The Home of Man* and in her speeches before and during the conference on the billions of people who lacked adequate water and sanitation and the consequent immense health costs contributed to this issue getting a higher priority from governments and international agencies. IIED also helped to focus discussions on this through the 'march for water' organized in the middle of the official conference, and led by Margaret Trudeau, the wife of the Canadian prime minister. This certainly helped to ensure a strong commitment by the 132 government delegations in the officially endorsed Conference Recommendations to give a high priority to safe water supply and hygienic waste disposal. It also encouraged the United Nations to make the 1980s the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

But it is difficult to unpick the particular influence of Barbara and her IIED colleagues from the efforts of so many others – perhaps especially those she worked with who drafted the Conference Recommendations and who worked with the UN Secretariat for the Conference or the UN Centre for Housing, Building and Planning (which after the conference became the UN Centre for Human Settlements) or in the Canadian government's secretariat. One of the nicest aspects of this work was how well all these people worked together. And Barbara Ward never sought credit for what she had done. But here, and elsewhere, Barbara's influence can be seen in four aspects: changing the ways in which issues are perceived, especially through her writings and speeches; defining agendas for action; formulating issues in ways that lead states and other groups to redefine their interests (perhaps most evident in her championing of particular, time-bound targets for meeting development goals); and influencing the institutions that create pressure for change and change itself.²⁴

²⁴ This scheme of four ways in which ideas influence change was suggested by Sir Richard Jolly when he reviewed an earlier version of this text – and draws on the UN Intellectual History project on which he is co-director and co-author of several volumes.

IIED's Human Settlements Programme was born at this 1976 conference – out of a concern that the strong commitments that governments and international agencies had made at the conference should be followed up. The Canadian government provided generous support for this work, at Barbara's request of Canadian prime minister, Pierre Trudeau. IIED was also fortunate in having Jorge E Hardoy to lead the programme.

Jorge Hardoy had set up the Centre for Urban and Regional Research in Argentina and had no intention of working anywhere else. But he, his family and many of his colleagues were forced to leave Argentina in 1976. At this time, the country was in the midst of one of its most tragic political turmoils as the military government detained and murdered thousands of its citizens without charges and without trial. Jorge Hardoy had already had difficulty accepting Barbara Ward's invitation to join the Vancouver Symposium, as he was detained without charges when he sought to renew his passport. Only after a flood of protests to the Argentine government from academics around the world was he released. And it was at the Habitat Conference that Jorge Hardoy was warned that his life would be in danger if he returned to Argentina. He and his family moved to England, settling in Lewes, when he accepted the invitation of Richard Jolly to join the staff of the Institute of Development Studies. He also accepted Barbara's invitation to work with David Runnalls in setting up IIED's Human Settlements programme. Jorge agreed, on two conditions: that most of the work would be done by partner institutions in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and that he would return to Argentina when political circumstances permitted. IIED agreed and Barbara hosted a meeting of the heads of each of the new partner institutions at her home in Lodsworth – from Argentina, the Sudan, India and Nigeria. Jorge Hardoy and his family were also frequent visitors to Lodsworth.

Law of the sea

The Law of the Sea was one of the hot international topics of the 1970s and IIED's view was that the international governmental discussions did not pay proper attention to the complex problems associated with protecting the marine environment. In 1976, Richard Sandbrook, a marine biologist (and one of the founders of the UK's Friends of the Earth) joined IIED (and was later to become its director). There was also much discussion at this time about deep-sea mining rights, in response to the fear that the world was running out of mineral resources. IIED

followed its now accepted methodology of commissioning expert papers and bringing together expert groups to produce reports (such as [Towards an Environmentally Sound Law of the Sea](#)²⁵) to highlight its concerns and suggest avenues for addressing them. Barbara Ward's introduction to this report spelt out the dilemma posed by the burgeoning use and negligent abuse of the oceans, especially in the fertile coastal areas. It also spelt out what needed to be done to resolve conflicting and potentially dangerous trends. This introduction was subsequently published both in [The Economist](#) and in the magazine of the National Wildlife Federation.

Energy

IIED's energy programme was developed by Gerald Leach from 1974 at a time when there was much talk of an 'energy crisis' or 'energy gap' caused by rising demand and dwindling oil reserves.²⁶ Decades of cheap energy and economic growth had created an almost universal belief that growth in energy demand was central to economic success. Now, there was a growing worry that rapid growth in energy demand could not be met by finite reserves of fossil fuel, and that the 'energy gap' thus created would require massive investments in nuclear power. Hardly anyone considered trends in energy demand, with its diversity of users, uses and consumption technologies, let alone the enormous latent potential for more efficient energy use. And the OPEC oil price rises of 1973/74 had made energy issues a top political priority – which included a concern for reducing dependence on OPEC (with nuclear power seen as one way to help achieve this). In addition, the influential [The Limits to Growth](#) had been first published in 1972, highlighting the inevitable conflict between exponential growth in the use of any finite resource and this resource's availability.²⁷

IIED's energy programme was characterized by the kind of sharp questions that Barbara Ward brought to her work. Gerry Leach, like Barbara, was a journalist with long experience in presenting science for a popular audience. The new programme he developed at IIED pioneered the careful study of energy use, which in turn identified where energy savings were possible. It began by looking at energy and food production, highlighting just how energy-intensive the UK's whole food production and distribution system was – in effect, labour had been displaced by massive energy inputs in food production, processing and distribution. Then the programme pioneered the detailed study of energy demand as it broke down energy use in the UK into over 400

²⁵ Hallman, Robert Marshall (1974) *Towards an Environmentally Sound Law of the Sea*, IIED, London, 83 pages.

²⁶ This section draws on Leach, Gerald (2003), 'The energy programme', in Cross, Nigel (editor), *Evidence of Hope: the Search for Sustainable Development*, Earthscan Publications, London, pages 96-107.

²⁷ Meadows, Donella H., Dennis L Meadows, Jorgen Randers and William W Behrens III (1972), *The Limits to Growth*, Universe Books, New York, 205 pages.

separate categories and examined how future demand would or could be influenced by improvements in energy efficiency and by other changes – for instance the declining importance of heavy industry, the slower growth in the number of households and the slowdown in growth in energy demand as most houses had central heating. This produced *A Low Energy Strategy for the United Kingdom 1975–2025*, which was to influence thinking worldwide about energy, environment and development.²⁸

The large possibilities provided by energy conservation and the increased potential for drawing on renewable energy resources as energy efficiency increased became a central theme of Barbara Ward's final book, *Progress for a Small Planet*, ably supported by Gerald Leach and his colleagues. Indeed, this provided evidence of one of the core areas where progress was possible with large benefits for both the environment and for development – although not everyone saw this as positive. The *Financial Times* saw *A Low Energy Strategy* as showing bleak prospects for UK energy: the chair of the Electricity Council even accused it of showing 'lack of respect for civil liberties' because it invoked government intervention to promote energy savings. But this energy strategy defused the conflict between those who opposed nuclear power and those who saw it as essential both to energy security and to economic prosperity by showing how the 'energy gap' that nuclear power was to fill could be avoided.²⁹ Perhaps the loss of business for the companies that had hoped to build the nuclear power stations helps explain some of the negative comments.

The Energy Programme subsequently went on to address key development concerns too – again, by careful analysis of what the problems actually were, that often proved so different from the top-down views dominated by northern specialists. This included questioning whether the use of fuelwood as the primary household fuel in many low-income nations was causing serious deforestation³⁰ and the value of new woodstoves promoted by rich-world NGOs as a means to lessen deforestation (through a report with the memorable title, *How much wood would a woodstove save if a woodstove could save wood*). As Gerry Leach remarked, "received wisdom about a problem will continue so long as the flow of aid funds depends on the continuation of that problem, whatever facts are revealed that show it to be a myth".³¹

The Energy Programme's work also contributed strong evidence to a point that Barbara Ward continuously stressed – that trend is not destiny, and that changes in policy and practice can alter trends that have damaging or risky consequences. IIED was later to apply this same

²⁸ Leach, Gerald, Christopher Lewis, Frederic Romig, Ariane van Buren and Gerald Foley (1979), *A Low Energy Strategy for the United Kingdom*, Science Reviews Ltd, London, 259 pages.

²⁹ This is a debate that has been resurrected, as many high-income nations struggle to reduce carbon emissions in response to the growing scientific consensus on the need for drastic reductions among high-income nations to avoid highly damaging human-induced climate change. However, the low-energy strategy still has relevance, as its emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation, and the gradual introduction of renewable resources, can reduce carbon emissions without increased reliance on nuclear power.

³⁰ Later given more substance in Leach, Gerald and Robin Mearns (1989), *Beyond the Woodfuel Crisis – People, Land and Trees in Africa*, Earthscan Publications, London, 309 pages.

³¹ Leach (2003), op. cit., page 101.

approach of examining critically the assumptions that underpinned projections for urban growth to suggest that projections up to 2000 for the populations of many cities were overstated.³² As did the *Low Energy Strategy*, this suggestion encountered disbelief but was later borne out, when new census data became available.

The work of IIED's Energy Programme also illustrated one of the core themes of Barbara Ward's writings during the 1970s: the limitations of visions based only on 'technical fixes' which in effect assume that technology will solve our problems. What she termed 'technofixers' would say that there is no need to worry about increasing private automobile use because alternative fuels or forms of power (for instance fuel cells) will de-link automobile use from carbon emissions. But Barbara Ward's writings, supported by the work of the Energy Programme, stressed the huge limitations of such an approach – and also the huge dangers, if the hoped-for technical fixes do not appear. They also highlighted concerns about a renewable energy programme based on biomass. Biomass's great advantage over solar and wind that it produces fuel that can be stored and used when needed; it can also produce fuel for direct use (for instance for motor vehicles) or electricity. But biomass is cheap in low-income countries because the workers are paid very low wages. And without great improvements in energy efficiency, this raised the issue of whether the demand for biomass fuel from the rich world would displace food production for local populations. This is a concern Barbara Ward raised nearly three decades ago, and which is still pertinent today.

Earthscan

From its inception, IIED saw the need to alert a wide citizen audience to the issues of environment and sustainable development. This is hardly surprising, given Barbara Ward's success as a journalist and her ability to reach both general and specialist audiences with her work. In 1974, IIED was asked by the newly formed United Nations Environment Programme (headed by Maurice Strong) to consider how an environmental information unit could help journalists to make sense of the vast amount of information about environmental issues. Also to inform them about the unprecedented flurry of activity within the international system – new agencies, new briefs, new conferences, new international negotiations. IIED recommended that such a unit be set up to prepare briefing documents for journalists, articles for placement in key journals, newspapers and broadcasting organizations (especially materials useful for media in the South), and to convene experts, press conferences and briefings to keep the media informed of key international environmental issues.

³² See chapter 8 of Hardoy, Jorge E and David Satterthwaite (1989), *Squatter Citizen: Life in the Urban Third World*, Earthscan Publications, London, UK, 388 pages.

Earthscan was set up within IIED as an editorially independent news and information service on environment and development issues, and headed by Jon Tinker. Maurice Strong knew that the UN Environment Programme had to have a much larger role in public information and education than the other UN agencies at that time. But he also knew that the political and bureaucratic constraints imposed on any UN agency would inhibit UNEP doing this itself – hence the support for Earthscan.

Barbara Ward oversaw Earthscan as it developed and expanded. By 1980, it was running a very successful newspaper feature-syndication service in three languages, going to over 100 newspapers in 50 nations. It was also organizing briefing seminars and field trips for journalists, background press-briefing documents on key issues, a bulletin serving 800 NGOs in 100 nations, a briefing service for radio and TV producers, fellowships in London for journalists from low-income nations, press photosheets and a series of books. It published material first in English, French and Spanish and later in German and Arabic. Earthscan was later to become a very successful publisher, specializing in books on environment and development.

Banking on the biosphere

Barbara saw the need for IIED to audit governments and international agencies – to see if what they did matched what they said. This was central to the work of the Human Settlements Programme. IIED also undertook a study of how far the main development-assistance agencies took environmental considerations into account when they plan and execute projects. Today, it is taken for granted that large bilateral agencies and multilateral development banks should espouse 'environment' and 'sustainable development' strongly (if more in policy than in practice). But in 1977, few had considered the environmental implications of their work.

With Barbara's support and contacts, including the enthusiastic support of the World Bank's President, Robert McNamara, it was possible for IIED's team of Brian Johnson (from the UK) and Robert Stein (who headed IIED's North American office) to get the access they needed to evaluate the environmental performance of eight multilateral agencies. The book resulting from this work, *Banking on the Biosphere*³³ concluded that only one among the eight agencies had made any systematic attempt to include environmental issues in its lending programme – and even in the case of this exception, the World Bank, there were many loopholes and gaps. In this, as in much of its later work, the IIED team sought to involve each agency's staff in the work and in developing the conclusions. This book, published in 1978, also includes a discussion of the

³³ Stein, Robert E and Brian Johnson (1979), *Banking on the Biosphere?*, Lexington Books, D C Heath and Company, Lexington and Toronto, 203 pages.

concept of 'sustainable development', two years before the [World Conservation Strategy](#) and nearly a decade before the Brundtland Commission's [Our Common Future](#). The IIED report encouraged all the banks to sign a public declaration pledging better performance and later to create the Committee for International Development Institutions and the Environment (CIDIE).³⁴

Barbara Ward noted the double effect of this work: "It encouraged officials to attend in a quite new way to the 'cost-benefit' element of environmental impacts. At the same time, it allows these aspects to be inserted into the formulation of projects at an early enough stage for the benefits to be fully realized in the final scheme."³⁵

Progress for a small planet

This was Barbara's last book, published in 1979. Originally, it was intended that the title should end with a question mark – [Progress for a Small Planet?](#) – but her publisher urged her to drop this, so it would appear less pessimistic. [Progress for a Small Planet](#)³⁶ is about sustainable development, and about the new directions for the industrial order – de-linking quality of life from high levels of resource consumption and waste generation. It is about priorities for development in low- and middle-income nations in rural and urban areas, about the linkages between them and the political and institutional means to advance them. Barbara Ward often illustrated these ideas by quoting the advice given by a Taoist sage to a ruler, 2500 years ago: 'these are my three gifts: guard them well. My first is compassion, my second is frugality, my third is desire *not* to be foremost in all things under heaven.' But she wondered whether the rich and fortunate would be imaginative enough and the underprivileged poor patient enough to begin to establish a true foundation for better sharing, fuller cooperation and joint planetary work.

Perhaps the best summary of this book comes from her old friend and fellow economist, John Kenneth Galbraith. In his review of her book for the [Washington Post](#), he noted: "she has for a long time been in exceptionally poor health. Instead of surrendering to tedious pain and reading Trollope, she accumulated and read every recent governmental and United Nations document and every recent book or research publication in accessible language on energy, nuclear power, recycling of wastes, the environment, food, agriculture, post-Keynesian economics, the modern city and its problems, housing, the bitter task and prospects of the poor countries and a half dozen other equally urgent subjects... Also she writes on deeply technical matters in clear English without jargon."³⁷ He concludes that, although not as optimistic as Barbara Ward, "I would be ashamed, after reading her book, to think that I am more cynical. I hope that thousands of others will read it and be similarly improved."

³⁴ Sandbrook (2003), op. cit.

³⁵ Barbara Ward's introduction to IIED's 1978/79 Annual Report, page 2.

³⁶ Ward, Barbara (1979), [Progress for a Small Planet](#), W W Norton, New York, Temple Smith, London and Penguin, Harmondsworth, 289 pages. It was republished by Earthscan in 1989.

³⁷ Quoted in Gartlan, op. cit.



barbara ward's early life

Barbara Ward was born on 23 May 1914, into a prosperous and loving family – as her remarkable and regular letters to her parents throughout their lives and throughout her travels attest.³⁸ Catholicism certainly influenced her life-long commitment to social justice; her mother, Teresa Burge, was a devout Roman Catholic. Her father, Walter Ward, was a Quaker and obviously a powerful influence on her thinking. “My father was a man of very liberal opinions and brought me up as a Social Democrat from the beginning. During my years at college, I was deeply affected by the massive unemployment of the 1930s. I can recall looking after the Jarrow hunger workers as they came through Oxford.”³⁹ Her first school was a local Catholic convent but her father was determined that she should receive as broad an education as had her older brother, John. So, at the age of 15, she went to Paris to attend the Lycée Molière, living with a French family. She later studied at the Sorbonne and also visited Germany several times, staying with a couple for whom she had great affection. In a letter written much later to her future husband, Sir Robert Jackson, she said that it was during her stay in Germany that she first acquired a passion for the beauty of nature. During one of her stays in Germany she took singing lessons; she had an exceptional voice.

She had planned to read modern languages at University – for she spoke fluent French and German. But she changed her mind and became one of only three women reading the recently created degree of Politics, Philosophy and Economics, when she went to Oxford on a scholarship in 1932. Her letters to her parents during this time reveal how much fun she had – parties, dancing, acting (including a small part in an opera) and fencing. She met the Catholic chaplain at Oxford, Ronald Knox, who was also an important Catholic theologian – and she reported to her parents that she liked him but took him to task for having only men in the Chaplaincy. In 1935, she was awarded a first-class honours degree.

She was uncertain what to do next. She had enjoyed acting while at Oxford and even wondered about this for a possible career. She also considered becoming an opera singer but commented later in life that the competition for success in this was much fiercer than for economists. Eventually she decided to do a doctorate on Austrian politics and secured a scholarship at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. She was also appointed a University Extension Lecturer and gave lectures at Cambridge, Oxford and the Workers’ Educational Association. Her themes were generally political, often with a Catholic slant. She was a great success. She worked hard to deliver lectures well – and was hardly disadvantaged by being extremely attractive and vivacious. From this time onwards, she received many invitations to lecture.

³⁸ See Gartlan, *op. cit.*

³⁹ Interview with Mary Evelyn Jegen, Rome, 17 September 1973, reported in Gartlan, *op. cit.*

She was an active Catholic but her Catholicism was never uncritical. A fear that she expressed to her parents was that Catholics were so ready to see communism as the greatest menace that they badly underestimated the threat of fascism. She wrote in 1937 that if she had been a trained nurse, she would have gone to Madrid [to help those injured in the Spanish Civil War] to show that all papists are not in league with Franco, Mussolini and Goering. At this time, her hostility to fascism was unusual among Catholics. But she was encouraged by Fr Jerome O'Hea, the Jesuit principal of the Catholic Workers' College in Oxford, who told her that he was in despair over the pro-fascist attitude of the Catholic press. She was also encouraged to "go into politics and be a socialist" by another Jesuit, who added that they (presumably meaning socialists) are nearer to the truth than the stock exchange.

Barbara Ward's first book, *The International Share-Out*, was published in 1938 when she was 24 years old. The book discussed the conflicts that had arisen among the great powers – England, France and Belgium – and those such as Germany, Italy and Japan that sought to regain lost colonies or expand into new territories. It was well received, one reviewer observing: "There is no textbook available which so clearly states the whole colonial question in the short compass of 173 pages as does Miss Ward's book... it is delightfully written, easy to read."⁴⁰ This book also explored the deep cleavage in international life between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. It contributed to her growing popularity as a lecturer and produced requests for articles from, among others, *The Economist* and the *Dublin Review* (an influential Catholic periodical).

The director of studies at the Royal Institute of International Affairs was the well-known historian Arnold Toynbee – at that time engaged in his mammoth 12-volume work, *A Study of History*. He took a liking to Barbara and invited her to stay at his family home in Yorkshire. She taught his youngest son, Lawrence, to dance and argued with his second son, Philip, who at that time was a communist. She was also influenced by Professor Toynbee's wife, Rosalind, a prominent Catholic and writer – and she worked with Rosalind on the Catholic Committee for Refugees from Germany and Austria which was assisting Catholics forced by the Nazi regime to leave their homes. Some fled because of their Jewish heritage, others because of their political activities, or membership of Christian trade unions or Catholic youth organizations.

⁴⁰ Quoted in Gartlan, op. cit.

*"Of the many remarkable women employed today and over the years here at The Economist, none has quite so strikingly projected her impact on world affairs beyond our columns as Barbara Ward. Barbara Ward, Baroness Jackson of Lodsworth, has been a conscience and provider of fresh ideas, a spur and enthuser; a phrasemaker, provoker and counsellor to one pope and handfuls of cardinals and archbishops, to two American presidents and handfuls of their senior advisors, to British and countless other prime ministers and ministries of rich and poor governments alike, to successive presidents of the World Bank and dozens of the world's corporate fry, large and small."*⁴¹

began as Crowther's editorial assistant and when Crowther left to serve the wartime government's Ministry of Supply, Donald Tyerman, the acting editor made Barbara foreign editor. Barbara and Tyerman largely maintained the paper during the war years when the other members of staff were away; "by the time peace and reconstruction faced the world, she had already become in her early 30s a national institution."⁴³

In her history of *The Economist*, Ruth Dudley Edwards noted that Barbara "brought clarity and distinction to the reporting of the war itself and idealism to the debate about the post-war world". She was "an inspirational and radical influence on the paper, particularly in her role as Geoffrey Crowther's social conscience."⁴⁴ Ruth Dudley Edwards added that although Barbara could not remotely match Crowther as an academic economist, she was by far his superior in imagination.

Tyerman recalled editorial meetings with Barbara: "we did it over, say, coffee at eleven in the Bretternham House café, after 8 Bouverie street (The Economist's offices) was destroyed in May 1941. It was a sort of brainstorming. We talked in dozens, with Barbara setting the pitch; then we went back with leaders to write.... We thought and felt and argued our way to what to say, Catholic, Marxist or Liberal or what not. So Barbara was to me the harbinger of a freer Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson sort of world, before Bowles and Stevenson had ever been heard of."⁴⁵

In 1939, Barbara was offered a two-week trial at *The Economist* by Geoffrey Crowther, the editor. She worked there until 1950 and for the rest of her life contributed articles and special supplements. Barbara's studies for her doctorate had taken her to Italy in 1939 and she also visited her brother in Turkey, where he was working as an engineer. It was her articles, reporting from these nations, that were the first that she had printed by *The Economist*. Geoffrey Crowther wanted to get her on his staff but lacked the funds so he offered her a small retaining fee to write more. When the Second World War broke out, Arnold Toynbee promptly recruited her into his monitoring unit for the Ministry of Information – at first assigned to press surveys, then transferred to the Italian section. But he was told he had to cut his staff so Barbara lost her job; Toynbee recommended her to Crowther.⁴² She

Barbara was also active in a movement called The Sword of the Spirit, founded in 1940 by Christopher Dawson, a Catholic historian she knew and greatly admired. This sought to bring a spiritual dimension to the considerations of contemporary issues, particularly in combating totalitarianism and in uniting all people in securing a Christian peace. It had been inspired by a speech on the BBC by Cardinal Hinsley, head of the Catholic Church in the UK, who was very clear about his opposition to the fascist powers in Italy and Germany (at a time when many Catholics were not). In a speech in 1939, he said, "the sword of the spirit will alone convert unjust assailants and recreate peace and good will".⁴⁶ The cardinal became president of The Sword of the Spirit, with Christopher Dawson its vice-president and Barbara its secretary. Its founders saw it as a Christian movement in which non-Catholics should also be involved but pressure from the Catholic bishops prevented this. Barbara wrote and spoke on behalf of this movement and was its secretary for a number of years – although she did not find it easy to work here, especially because of the refusal of many Catholics to work with other Christians.

In 1942, Barbara was asked by the British government's Ministry of Information to visit the United States to encourage US support for the Allies in the Second World War.⁴⁷ She was based at the British embassy in Washington DC and met many key politicians, including lunching at the White House with Mrs Roosevelt and dining with Vice President Henry Wallace. She also met the Kenyons (Mildred was contributing to *The Economist's* American survey at that time) who became beloved family friends and provided Barbara's US home from home. Barbara stayed five months on this visit, even as Tyerman complained that the original agreement was for two months. This was the first of many trips to the USA, most of them to give lectures, promote her books and push the US government on issues of aid and development; she came to know most of the key US politicians concerned with international development issues and became close friends with many of them. When she returned to London, she was sent to Sweden for three weeks – and saw first hand the fear in Sweden of Russian dominance.

In 1943, Barbara and Geoffrey Crowther were regulars on a popular BBC radio programme, *The Brains Trust* where panellists were asked to give their opinions on questions posed by listeners. As chair, Crowther exuded brilliance, authority and wit; as panellist, Barbara exuded charm, goodness and zest.

In 1945, she was asked to become a Labour Party candidate for election to parliament; she refused but campaigned for Labour, especially for Ernest Bevin, a trade union leader who had been Minister of Labour in the war-time coalition government and was to become foreign secretary in the post-war Labour government. Bevin is reported to have been reduced to tears as he

⁴¹ A tribute to Barbara Ward in *The Economist* by Ronald Bird, published a week after her death (6 June 1981).

⁴² Barbara later laughingly said that Toynbee had recommended her to Crowther because her Italian was so poor.

⁴³ Bird, *op. cit.*, page 21.

⁴⁴ Edwards, Ruth Dudley (1993), *The Pursuit of Reason: The Economist 1843–1993*. Hamish Hamilton, London.

⁴⁵ Bird, *op. cit.*, page 22.

⁴⁶ This and other details of the *Sword and the Spirit* are drawn from Walsh, Michael (1980), *From Sword to Ploughshare*, Catholic Institute for International Relations, London, 1980

⁴⁷ It should be recalled that there was strong opposition in the US to the US involvement in World War II, although by 1942 (and after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour), the US had declared war on Japan, Germany and Italy.

⁴⁸ Walsh (1980), *op. cit.*

heard her put the case for full employment at a political meeting that he was also to address.⁴⁸ During this campaign, she chaperoned a young navy Lieutenant, John F Kennedy, who wanted to learn about the British political process (at the request of his sister, Kathleen, whom Barbara knew). Barbara took him to a Herbert Morrison rally as he was running for re-election.⁴⁹ Kennedy was fascinated by the political process. Barbara later commented how he seemed so young but with an extraordinary and well-informed interest in the political situation he was seeing.

In 1946, she was one of a group of journalists allowed to visit occupied Germany – and she attended the Nuremberg trials. She also met John Kenneth Galbraith for the first time, who became a lifelong friend – he was there assessing the extent of the bombing damage to the German economy. Galbraith's memoirs recall that "one day I travelled to the British Zone to collect Barbara Ward later Baroness Jackson then on the staff of *The Economist*, a diverse and talented writer a woman of rare and slender beauty with a gift for effective and often devastating expression".⁵⁰

One indication of how well known she had become was the invitation she received in 1946 to become a governor of the BBC and of the Old Vic theatre. With typical modesty and wit, Barbara maintained that this was a mistake because the BBC must have intended to invite Irene Ward, a Labour politician, to be a governor. But she was an active governor "where her passion for independence of thought and the wide provision of music and the arts did so much to establish the standards of post-war broadcasting".⁵¹

In 1947, she was back in the United States and met Dean Acheson, then Undersecretary of State, and Felix Frankfurter, a Supreme Court Justice nominated by President Franklin D Roosevelt. She later recalled that it was at Frankfurter's home that she heard Acheson outline what would become the Marshall Plan through which the US government contributed greatly to supporting the rebuilding of Europe. This was later made public by George Marshall at a speech at Harvard. Barbara recognized the seriousness and the enormous potential of the proposal and urged Ernest Bevin, now the British foreign secretary, to act quickly and accept it (which he promptly did and also encouraged the support of the French government). Throughout her life, Barbara wrote and spoke about the generosity of the Marshall Plan, since the funding transferred was a far higher proportion of the US national income than any nation has ever committed for international aid. She also saw it as a demonstration of the potential benefits of aid for, in the end, the US economy also benefited greatly from the economic revival that the Marshall Plan supported. Her articles in support of the Marshall Plan helped ensure its acceptance by European politicians (worried about excessive US influence) and by American politicians. She wrote in 1948:

⁴⁹ Herbert Morrison was an important and controversial Labour politician well known for his work when he was leader of the London County Council and oversaw a major programme for housing, education, health and transport; he also had key roles in the war-time government and in the Labour government that followed.

⁵⁰ Galbraith, John Kenneth (1981), *A Life in Our Times*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston.

⁵¹ Bird, op. cit., page 21.

⁵² Quoted by Bird, op. cit., 1981.

"This week it is fitting that the peoples of Western Europe should attempt to renew their capacity for wonder, so that they can return to the United States a gratitude in some way commensurate with the aid they are about to receive."⁵²

In 1948, she wrote her third book, *The West at Bay*. Here she noted how many European nations were at the verge of bankruptcy – with Britain also economically beleaguered. She made a strong case for a European economic association. She also saw how international action could address poverty – as the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) had helped divert wheat to India to address a famine there. "For the first time the world's conscience has been a little stirred by the fate of Asia's millions and has taken a timid step towards the idea that possibly in times of history they should not be allowed to starve." She also noted the challenge that communism posed to the West, because of its apocalyptic appeal, its vision of a classless society, its cry of brotherhood and its claim to offer a society based not on exploitation but on justice.

Here, as in her later work, she recognized the powerful attraction of Marx's writings for the anti-colonial movements within most nations in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean and then for their first independent governments; Marxism-Leninism provided a clear ideology that seemed to explain how history worked. It also attacked the traditional leaders of the old order and the often-unpopular entrepreneurial class, and it promised orderly economic and industrial development. For those enslaved or otherwise oppressed by the colonial and capitalist world, this was very appealing. "Uncommitted peoples need to be fairly sophisticated to wonder whether the old landlord and the new bureaucrat may not share some of the same vices of absolute power."⁵³ She wondered if free market economies would have the imagination to be able to become liberators or renewers and so make communism retreat at its own game.

Barbara had met her future husband, Robert Jackson, in 1943, when he was director of the supply centre charged with feeding the British-controlled Middle East. After the War, he became senior deputy director of UNRRA and in charge of projects in Europe, parts of Africa and the Far East,⁵⁴ and later special adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General in the negotiations for a ceasefire in Palestine. He was then asked to return to his native Australia to help set up a Ministry of National Development. Barbara's letters to her parents report wonderful times in the few chances they had to be together. They finally married in 1950.

⁵³ Ward, Barbara (1962), *The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations*, W W Norton, New York, Hamish Hamilton, London, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto, 1962, 159 pages.

⁵⁴ UNRRA's first director-general was Herbert Lehman, former governor of New York – and Barbara became a close family friend of the Lehmans.

During the 1950s, Barbara lived for long periods in Ghana, as her husband was an adviser to the government there, but she travelled frequently to Australia, England and the United States. She also visited many different nations in Africa and Asia, discussing development issues with the first generation of prime ministers and presidents in the newly independent nations. This was an era when many aid programmes were being developed – with a mixture of idealism and optimism but so often overshadowed and distorted by Cold War pressures. It was also a time when politicians in newly or soon-to-be independent nations were clear about a need for a break with the colonial past, but also pressured by both sides in the Cold War. Barbara was one of the first commentators on development assistance to bring to the discussion the views and perspectives of these politicians.

In 1952, she visited India with her husband Robert, where they were to assess India's first five-year plan. They met Nehru, India's first prime minister (who she found charming but disinclined to discuss the five-year plan!) and his daughter Indira (later to be prime minister). She reported in an article in [The Economist](#) on the debates there – the Indian government ministers and civil servants who supported the plan and those who thought it overly ambitious or demanding too much taxation (the minister of commerce noted that it would lead to higher taxes and alienate the emerging Indian middle-class from which communism drew its recruits). She also met the US ambassador, Chester Bowles, later to become President Kennedy's Secretary of State; Barbara commented that he had "the finest type of New Deal enthusiasm" and was pumping funding into community projects.⁵⁵

In 1953, she moved with her husband to Ghana (then still called by its colonial name, the Gold Coast), which was to be her main home for several years. Robert was an adviser on the Volta River Project, which included an ambitious and expensive plan for a hydroelectric dam to provide electricity for Ghana and neighbouring countries, and also to support industrial development. Ghana was to be the first British colony in Africa to achieve self-government – under a constitution adopted in 1951, although independence was not granted until 1957. Kwame Nkrumah, the nationalist leader who was to become Ghana's first prime minister was a frequent visitor to Robert and Barbara's home. He had been released from gaol only 12 months earlier and was negotiating the nation's independence. He often met with Barbara, and sought her advice. She wrote in a letter of how he was "a most appealing person – very intuitive, very sensitive, with many sound and wise instincts, under tremendous pressure from the extreme wing of his own party". She also added how she was struck by "the amount of responsibility he has to carry with so little advice he can rely on from his own inexperienced Africans and often such contradictory advice from Europeans".

At this time, Barbara Ward was also writing *Policy for the West*. It makes a strong case for aid to Asia: "the western powers have not yet faced the realities of Asia with anything like the courage and open-mindedness that has made the European recovery programme an outstanding act of international cooperation". She notes how Asian leaders in India, Pakistan and the Philippines faced local economic discontent and pressure from communists; if they could count on annual support, their plans would be bolder and their assurance more steady. She also noted the immense political benefits of a fifty-year development programme for the free nations of Asia.

In 1954, she wrote *Faith and Freedom: a Study of Western Society*. It was not quite finished when she went to New York. This was the era of Joseph McCarthy and his 'Un-American Activities Committee' and a paranoia in US public life about 'communists'. She went to hear Adlai Stevenson speak and was introduced to him by J K Galbraith; it was the beginning of a long and deep friendship. They had so many interests in common. Adlai Stevenson had long been a champion of the emerging United Nations and ran twice as the Democrats' candidate for US president, losing both times to Eisenhower. He was later appointed by John F Kennedy as the US Ambassador to the United Nations.

In 1955, when back in Ghana, Barbara wrote to her parents of a visit by Adlai Stevenson – that he was the simplest and most charming of house-guests and that it was hard to remember that he spent most of his life in the limelight and may well be the most listened-to man in the world's affairs. In a long letter to Stevenson, after he left Ghana, in response to uncertainties he had discussed with her, she wrote "Please never stop feeling that you haven't all the answers. It is the condition of wisdom. It has also made you the least pompous and the most loveable of living politicians."⁵⁶ She often helped prepare his speeches – including the one making his bid for the Democratic nomination for president. On her frequent trips to the USA, she would often visit Adlai Stevenson at his home and she grew very fond of his children and grandchildren. His daughter-in-law, Nancy remembered how "our children adored her and called her Lady J, as she asked them to" (she was Lady Jackson by virtue of her husband being knighted although she was later to be made a dame and then a life peer). She would recite poems by Edward Lear, and play word games with them at a level at which they could participate and, as they grew older, read for example Tolkein books.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Walsh (2006), op. cit.

⁵⁶ Gartlan, op. cit.

⁵⁷ Gartlan, op. cit.

She began a lecture in 1955 with the following words:

In 1955, Barbara found that she was pregnant. Before the birth of her child, Kwame Nkrumah had given them a mother-of-pearl rosary in a carved ivory case; Barbara wondered how many white babies were fortunate enough to have rosaries from the first African prime minister. She returned to London for the birth and on February 25th, 1956, their son Robert was born. Soon afterwards, the family rented a house in Jersey, which became their home for many years.

*"Maybe we think we understand our own ideas – and possibly we do – but we have also to fathom what other countries and other civilizations think about when they look at us. And here, a much greater effort of understanding is needed. Yet this lack of understanding of other peoples' views of the West is a particularly important point to remember because, in the last four or five hundred years, the Western world has been the aggressive, outgoing and indeed disturbing force for all other civilizations and ways of life."*⁵⁸

Barbara had been invited to lecture in Harvard in 1955 but with her pregnancy and Robert's birth, this was put off until 1957. She was appointed to Harvard's Department of Economics under JK Galbraith, and with a four-year grant from the Carnegie Corporation, to study development assistance. The grant supported an annual three-month stint at Harvard and study visits to Africa and Asia. She received many honorary degrees – including one from Harvard and another from the Jesuit College in Buffalo, along with Dag Hammerskold. She wrote later of the president of the college – a male head of a female college and on record as disapproving of female education – that his commencement address made her wonder whether it was worth educating males.⁵⁹ Her commencement speech at Harvard was a public acknowledgement of Europe's debt to America for the Marshall Plan – made on the same podium on which George Marshall had announced the plan ten years previously.⁶⁰ But at that time, even at Harvard, there were separate celebratory lunches after the honorary degrees were awarded for the men who received the degrees and for their wives. Barbara was the first woman to take part in the celebration of an honorary degree but was allowed to join the men for lunch.⁶¹

In 1957, Barbara was diagnosed with breast cancer; she recovered well after a mastectomy and cobalt treatment. She returned to Ghana with her son and her husband (now director of the Development Commission of Ghana and knighted by Queen Elizabeth). Ghana had now

achieved independence – and Nkrumah suggested that she mark this by a series of lectures on the background to world affairs at the university college. She wrote five lectures – on nationalism, industrialism, colonialism, communism and internationalism – and these were later published in 1959 in a book entitled *Five Ideas that Changed the World*, with a foreword by Nkrumah.⁶² She worried about Ghana's dependence on one crop, cocoa – and wrote in 1959 that what Africa needed was a 50-year, Western-backed programme to increase education and development. In 1959, Barbara Ward testified to the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee – and talked with Lyndon Johnson (“awfully good at tactics but not at strategy”) and John F Kennedy (“running like mad for President, probably 10 years too soon”). She is also reported to have performed an impromptu African dance with Hubert Humphrey at a party that all but stopped the band.⁶³ Hubert Humphrey lost the democratic nomination for president against John Kennedy but later became vice president under Lyndon Johnson.

Barbara commented how Kennedy was particularly interested in India and in supporting some kind of Marshall Plan to modernize its economy. Kennedy had already asked her for advice, when selected as the Democratic candidate for the presidency. He responded to one of her memoranda saying, “don't be surprised if I run away with some of its ideas”. In a letter to Adlai Stevenson, she wrote about Africa being awash with Russian, Chinese and Cuban delegations and how the West, without a large aid programme, was losing influence by default. Her husband Robert was having great difficulty at that time convincing Western aid agencies to support the Volta Dam Project. In 1960, when she heard of Kennedy's election, she commented, “he is an able young man. I hope he is wise as well. Fancy having to cope with de Gaulle and Adenauer, let alone Khrushchev!”⁶⁴

In 1961, her book, *India and the West* was published with the following conclusion: “Behind the Indian figures and statistics lie the realities of children without bread, men without work, women without hope. If these do not move us to action, the outer form of our society may survive – but its inner spirit will have withered away.”⁶⁵

When next in the US, she and Galbraith lunched with President Kennedy. Barbara had to take over some of Galbraith's lectures at Harvard, because Kennedy had appointed him US Ambassador to India. Barbara wrote to her parents of one of her very agreeable lunches with Kennedy. “One has a great impression – as ever – of competence and vitality. I just hope he hasn't got too hot a potato with Cuba [Bay of Pigs]. I don't know that America's Central Intelligence Agency is as competent as it might be.”

⁵⁸ Ward, Barbara (1957), *The Interplay of East and West*, W W Norton, New York and Allen and Unwin, London, page 12. This book contained the text of three lectures delivered at McGill University in Montreal.

⁵⁹ Walsh (2006), op. cit.

⁶⁰ Bird, op. cit.

⁶¹ Jean Gartlan, op. cit., reports that Helen Keller had been the first woman to receive an honorary degree the previous year but she did not take part in the celebrations.

⁶² Ward, Barbara (1967), *Five Ideas that Change the World*, W W Norton, New York, 192 pages.

⁶³ Letter dated 4 March 1959 in Walsh (2006), op. cit.

⁶⁴ Walsh (2006), op. cit.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Gartlan, op. cit., page 113.

Barbara was also summoned to Washington to brief Kennedy on Nkrumah who was about to visit the US. She emphasized that Nkrumah was not a communist (any indication of independent thinking by foreign politicians was so often interpreted as such in the US). She emphasized the danger of so many Americans taking the Cold War into Africa, seeing everything in terms of keeping the Russians out, and also the importance of US aid for Ghana. Kennedy did see Nkrumah and the visit was a success; immediately after their meeting, Nkrumah hand-wrote a note to Kennedy expressing his pleasure in the meeting and his hope for future friendship. Kennedy later wrote to say that the US government planned to support the Volta project – and Barbara wrote on several occasions to Kennedy to encourage this support. She also wrote to Kennedy on the importance of a really ambitious plan for long-term North–South aid. She ended her letter with, “I pray that with all your vast powers of influence and persuasion you will rally the 21st century to rout the Neanderthals. I am certain you can do it. I am certain our whole future depends on your success.”⁶⁶

The generous Carnegie grant that supported Barbara's writing and travels from 1958 to 1962 was subsequently renewed. The first grant supported her development of a series of lectures for the Canadian Broadcasting Company that were later published as *The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations*.⁶⁷ The book was a plea not just for development aid but also that the rich countries should try harder to understand the process through which the poor were living. It emphasized the diversity among ‘the poorer nations’, each with their backgrounds and different levels of development. It also noted how Western colonialism had shaken all societies and that “perhaps one realizes how deep the wounds are only when one has lived in ex-colonial lands”. It criticized both the meanness of aid and the haphazard way it is planned – voted on each year – with trade policies so often pulling in the other direction.

“If we continue with what is surely the greatest Western temptation, and think that in some way history owes us a solution, that we can, by pursuing our own most parochial self-interest, achieve in some miraculous way a consummation of world order, then we are heading not simply towards great disappointments but towards disaster and tragedy as well.”⁶⁸

She argued for 1 per cent of national income as the target for aid budgets in high-income nations. *The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations* received excellent reviews in the *New York Times* and the *Herald Tribune* and was selected by the Book of the Month club (which sent out 300,000 copies) plus another 5000 to the Catholic book of the Month. The review in the *New York Times* noted, “We would be a good deal more certain [of the future] if Americans would stop feeling overwhelmed by the world long enough to read this wise and inspiring book.”⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Gartlan, op. cit.

⁶⁷ Published by WW Norton, New York and Hamish Hamilton, London, 1962

⁶⁸ Ibid, pages 136–137.

⁶⁹ Review by Eric F Goldman, quoted in Gartlan, op. cit.

In 1962, Barbara Ward returned to India with her husband, both of them invited by the Indian government, and she stayed some days with JK Galbraith who was then US Ambassador to India. She was back in the US in 1963, pressing the state department on Africa and on the need for foreign aid. She flew to Boston in President Kennedy's plane "with a cosy chat with the President thrown in since he was going to give the convocation speech and I was to receive an honorary degree". Shortly afterwards, she began a long tour of Africa, first to Ethiopia, then to Kenya where she met Jomo Kenyatta who had been prominent in the movement within Kenya demanding independence (and imprisoned by the colonial government from 1953 to 1961) and had become Kenya's first prime minister. She noted how, in Kenya, freedom had become too much connected with a free-for-all, with land grabs and general breakdown of responsibility. She commented that this was why Kenyatta had substituted *harambee* which for him had a double meaning: uniting all races and tribes in a common effort and pulling together. She then flew to Tanzania where she met President Nyerere whom she greatly admired (and who had also been a key person in Tanzania's independence movement) and toured the country, then travelled to Zimbabwe and Malawi and finally to Zambia where she met Kenneth Kaunda, soon to be prime minister. She was in Zambia when she heard of Kennedy's assassination.

In 1964, she visited the White House, summoned by President Johnson who had read [The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations](#) and wanted to discuss foreign aid. She noted in a letter to her family how foreign aid was in desperate trouble in Congress "and a great deal of appealing to popular support will be needed if congressmen are to change their attitudes".⁷⁰ Jean Gartlan notes that "there obviously had been an immediate rapport between them. Johnson was attracted by her ideas and charmed by her personality and she saw in him an openness to those ideas and to her advocacy for the poor combined with a remarkable ability to make things happen".⁷¹ She was in constant touch with Johnson; at one point, she had flown from Paris to Washington at Johnson's request in a US military plane to spend a week at the White House. Lady Bird Johnson recalls one dinner she had with just the President, herself, Barbara and Willis Hunt. Lady Bird recalls that Barbara talked "and Lyndon listened, something he doesn't always do, especially to women.... the nice thing about Lady Jackson is that she seems to believe that anything is possible".⁷²

Barbara contributed to Johnson's campaign speeches as he sought to gain the Democratic nomination (he had initially become president only because of Kennedy's assassination), and also to the speeches of his vice-presidential running mate, Hubert Humphrey. She had an important influence on Johnson's Great Society Speech at Ann Arbour in 1964.⁷³ In 1965, she spoke at a White House conference about the need to set up graduate schools of environmental

⁷⁰ Gartlan, op. cit.

⁷¹ Gartlan, op. cit. page 138

⁷² Gartlan, op. cit. page 141
Rostow Oral History
interview

⁷³ Bird, op. cit.

studies – and of the need for people of different professional expertise to meet to learn the organic and the ecological sense of their work. At the time of this conference, she stayed at the White House and drafted speeches for President Johnson. She also renewed her acquaintance with Robert McNamara, at that time Secretary of Defence and later to become President of the World Bank - whom she had first met at the informal seminars run by Robert Kennedy. President Johnson wrote to Barbara, just before he left the White House, "whatever mark we have made in these last five years clearly bears your stamp too. You have given me so much more than your priceless friendship. You have brought wisdom and inspiration, for which I will always be grateful."



Influencing presidents and prime ministers *David Runnalls*

Barbara was a constant correspondent in the Victorian sense. And many of her letters were handwritten in that illegible scrawl common in English public schools. She was the only journalist and author I have ever known who never approached a typewriter, let alone a computer. Geoffrey Crowther, the wartime editor of *The Economist*, did not allow his journalists to type, on the grounds that the mere act of converting prose by mechanical means somehow degraded it.

Much of her extraordinary influence came from this compendious correspondence – with the Pope and Mother Teresa, with Adlai Stevenson, and Presidents Kennedy and Johnson; with Ernest Bevin, Harold Wilson, Edward Heath and Jim Callaghan; with Pierre Trudeau and Lester Pearson.; and with Bob McNamara, Maurice Strong and many others.

She understood the relationship between influence and anonymity. She would contribute ideas, sometimes even text, to influential people and would never brag about it, never take credit. Perhaps the most telling example of this is cited in Harold Wilson's memoirs. The former prime minister describes one of his bizarre meetings with LBJ at his Texas ranch. After being driven around the ranch at high speed by a somewhat tipsy president, they were ushered into a room to discuss matters of policy. Following a spirited discussion of the high-stakes issues, they came to the question of foreign aid. Wilson began reading from a handwritten note. After a minute or so, President Johnson leaned across and stopped him: "That's Barbara Ward's handwriting isn't it?" Rather puzzled, Wilson acknowledged that it was indeed from Barbara. Johnson then removed an almost identical note from his own jacket. And they came to an amicable agreement on foreign aid.

David Runnalls, now President of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), worked with Barbara Ward to found the International Institute for Environment and Development, and directed its London and Washington offices.



Barbara Ward's campaign for more generous and less-tied aid was also directed at the Catholic Church. Jean Gartlan notes that Barbara's life experience – having a Catholic mother and a Quaker father, an early interest in the injustices of colonialism, and first-hand knowledge of the newly independent countries of Ghana and India – brought a special perspective. This was also a time for change within the Catholic Church, after the unexpected election of Pope John XXIII who called for a Second Vatican Council (known as Vatican II) to update the Church's theology and structures. John Heenen, the Archbishop of Westminster (and head of the Catholic Church in the UK) who was attending the Council was an old friend. He reported to Barbara of the difficulties in getting the Council to make a strong stand on the Church's duty to address world poverty.

In 1964, Barbara was asked to prepare a memorandum on poverty for Cardinal Suenens. She wrote *An Ecumenical Concern for World Poverty*, beginning with the statement that, since the Second World War, an entirely new fact confronted the Christian conscience in the West: Western economies now had 70 per cent of the world's wealth but only 16 per cent of its population, and with much of this wealth arising from exploiting the resources of the South. She argued for an ecumenical approach, uniting all Christian Churches in addressing poverty and noting that having this common purpose could avoid the entanglement of doctrinal and historic differences. She suggested that the Vatican Council set up a permanent secretariat to coordinate action on addressing world poverty. She also noted the faltering of faith and effort in development assistance, a rebirth of selfish, inward-looking nationalism, cynicism about international effort and a general tendency to grow weary of well doing. "If Christians do not provide the needed stiffening of hope, faith, fortitude and love, who will?"

She went to Rome to meet with clerics there – much helped by Arthur McCormack and Bishop Gerald Mahon – and by Archbishop (later Cardinal) Heenan. She was to have addressed the assembled bishops, until the Council's secretary-general discovered with horror that B Ward was a woman. But her friend Jim Norris (deputy director of the Catholic Relief Services and invited to be auditor at the Council) spoke instead (in Latin), drawing heavily on Barbara's earlier memorandum. He was followed by Cardinal Frings, who appealed for a concerted effort by the Church to support projects to reduce poverty. Norris then worked tirelessly to get a poverty secretariat set up, supported by Barbara, Monsignor Gremillion and Cardinal Heenan – and also with the support of Barbara's husband (now working in the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP) and Paul Hoffman (UNDP's administrator). The Pope was planning to come to New York to address the United Nations and Barbara wrote to her contacts at the Vatican, encouraging a greater

interest in development issues. Pope Paul VI's address to the UN was the first by a Pope: he referred to economic inequalities and injustices and the need to protect human rights although the emphasis was on peace and disarmament.

The fourth and final session of Vatican II included a recommendation for the 'poverty secretariat' and Jim Norris stayed in Rome to make sure it was acted on. Both he and Barbara were part of a working group to advise on how it might work – but it proved difficult to get their recommendations to the Pope and they had to enlist the help of the UN Secretary-General, U Thant in promoting this. In January 1967, Pope Paul VI established a Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, with Monsignor Gremillion its secretary and Barbara Ward and James Norris among its 24 members. It was supported by a small secretariat (which included Fr McCormack). This commission's mandate was "to arouse the whole People of God to fulfil its calling for promoting world development, justice and peace".⁷⁴ The Commission was also tasked with working with the World Council of Churches and with supporting justice and peace initiatives within nations.

Barbara was an active member of this commission, until her death. She helped to draft the initial plan for the secretariat and strongly promoted the commission's links with the World Council of Churches. Arthur McCormack recalls how, after a difficult day between the top people in the Commission and the World Council of Churches, they went to a trattoria where there was a band and a girl singing arias. "Barbara joined in, much to the girl's surprise, and sang 'your tiny hand is frozen' in Italian in an excellent voice to the applause of the diners."⁷⁵ The influence of her writings can be seen in the encyclical letter by the Pope, *Populorum Progressio* ("on the progress of peoples") on the moral issues surrounding the relations between rich and poor nations and the question of development aid. She wrote various publications for the commission – for instance a pamphlet entitled, *The Angry Seventies; the Second Development Decade: A Call to the Church* which was widely distributed. In 1972, Monsignor Gremillion wrote to her that it was still going great with 600 copies ordered by Justice and Peace in Korea – and with a French edition shortly to be published.

While she had not been allowed to speak to the Synod of Bishops at the Vatican Council, in 1971 Barbara Ward was invited to speak to the Synod and the *New York Times* reported on how she was the first woman to address a high-level meeting of Catholic bishops. She spoke of how the problems of ecology and international justice were inseparable and urged the Church to foster "a modesty of living more in keeping with the demands of local and international justice".⁷⁶ She also reminded the Bishops that at least 75 per cent of the world's resources are controlled

⁷⁴ See Ward, Barbara (1973), *A new Creation: Reflections on the Environment Issue*, Commission on Justice and Peace, Rome, Page 71.

⁷⁵ Gartlan, op. cit.

⁷⁶ Gartlan, op. cit.

and consumed by a third of humanity and that this high consumption and high waste among a small part of the world's population was already overloading the biosphere and putting it at risk; "May we plead that the Church itself, this foreshadowing of a universal and planetary order, conducts its own affairs in the strict spirit of justice and poverty."

Barbara's ideas are evident in the Synod's document on "Justice in the World". Barbara also wrote a series of weekly columns that were distributed by the National Catholic News Service to newspapers throughout the United States. In 1972, she addressed an influential group of clerics, asking Church leaders to identify concern for the environment as a Christian concern; this was subsequently published by the Commission on Justice and Peace as *A New Creation: Reflections on the Environment Issue*. She also worked hard to defuse the Church's opposition to development assistance on issues of contraception – stressing that, "the conditions of social improvement, of growing participation in society, of dignity and opportunity required to make the masses accessible to Catholic teaching on responsible parenthood are precisely the preconditions both of just and effective modernization and of a necessary stabilization of family size."⁷⁷

The last meeting of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace that Barbara Ward attended was in 1977. After it, she wrote to the commission's chair, urging the Church to point out publicly how a proposed cut in aid by the US Congress was in direct opposition to the teaching of the Church and to rally the Church to support President Carter in his proposals. She also raised the issue of the US government's reduced aid budget in 1979, this time through a letter to the Church's representative in London, which urged Pope John Paul II to speak about sharing with the poorer nations during his visit to the United Nations and the United States. The Pope made this a major theme of his speech in New York. She later urged the Pope to receive Willy Brandt during a visit to Germany to talk about the Brandt Commission's report which at that time was building the case for a more coherent and generous aid programme.⁷⁸ Barbara had also helped to set up the Brandt Commission. One gets some appreciation of her role in a letter from Archbishop Giovanni Benelli, the Vatican's Secretary of State, in response to Barbara's letter to him, congratulating him on becoming a Cardinal: "Let me tell you once more how highly I have valued during the past ten years the many exchanges, the stimulating conversations, and above all your unflinching enthusiasm for the common cause of peace and justice."⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Gartlan, op. cit. Page 204.

⁷⁸ Gartlan, op. cit.

⁷⁹ Walsh (2006), op. cit.

the frog pond at Columbia, 1967-70

In 1967, Barbara Ward was appointed Albert Schweitzer Professor of International Economic Development at Columbia University. Her friend Nelson Rockefeller had established this professorship when he was governor of New York. But her appointment was not welcomed by economists at Columbia, who thought that she was not a proper economist. The controversy became public when it was reported in the [New York Times](#). It inspired a Charles Adams cartoon in which a frog kisses a princess, with the princess turning into a frog; Charles Adams gave her the original which she kept in her office in Columbia. She also gathered around her a small group of students whom she called the "frog pond". At this time her husband was working on a report on the reform of the structures of the United Nations – known informally as the Jackson Report.

Perhaps the most significant event during her time in Columbia was the organization of a conference to discuss [Partners in Development](#), the report prepared by a commission under the leadership of Lester Pearson, the former prime minister of Canada and Nobel Peace Laureate. Robert McNamara, who had become the World Bank's president, had requested this, and the commission was asked to review 20 years of development assistance. The idea of such a commission had come from McNamara's predecessor, George Woods, and Barbara had been part of a small group that had recommended the establishment of such a commission in 1967, along with William Clark (one of the Bank's vice-presidents and later to take over from Barbara as IIED's president). The commissioners organized consultations with governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America. [Partners in Development](#) justified a larger and more predictable international aid programme from both a moral basis and from "enlightened self-interest"; it endorsed the aid target for high-income nations of 1 per cent of their GNP, with 0.7 per cent to be achieved by 1975. It also discussed the necessary reforms for trade.

The conference discussion on [Partners in Development](#) had its first three days at Williamsburg, Virginia, mainly for academics, and then a final session in New York where representatives of governments and international agencies joined in. The theme of the conference, and the title of its published proceedings was [The Widening Gap: Development in the 1970s](#). The title was taken from the opening statement in the commission report – "the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries has become a central issue of our time". When planning the conference, Barbara visited the Institute of Development Studies and asked its director Dudley Seers for help in getting some younger people in the development field to attend. During the conference, some of the younger participants drafted the Columbia Declaration, with Richard Jolly elected to present it. As Richard Jolly recalls, much to his surprise, virtually everyone signed.



Reaching out to the next generation *Richard Jolly*

All of us at some point in our early lives were “the next generation”. In my case, it lasted until the late 1960s. Although I had heard Barbara speak in 1963 in Uganda, I didn’t get to know her until she came to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in late 1969 to ask help from Dudley Seers, then the IDS director. Barbara explained that she was organizing a global conference to discuss the Pearson Report, *Partners in Development*. She said to Dudley “I want the next generation, the young radicals, not the well established. Please help me identify some of them.” Dudley helped her to draw up a list – and I was on it, along with another 30 to 40, mostly not known in the international world, nor to each other.

We met first in Williamsburg, then in New York. Memorable from Williamsburg was Mahbub ul Haq’s presentation, “Mr Polanski’s dilemma”, and IG Patel’s strong denunciation of the humiliation involved in the aid negotiating process for those from developing countries. In great nervousness I gave my own paper – showing that in spite of identifying the gap between developing and developed countries as “the central problem of our time”, the proposals of the Pearson Report, even if fully implemented, would allow the gap to widen further.

After the paper, Barbara came up to me and asked if I would gather together a few of the younger participants in New York and draft a statement, summarizing the message of the conference and listing conclusions for action. So a few days later, Mahbub ul Haq, Reg Green, Gerry Helleiner, Michael Bruno, Branko Horvat, Enrique Iglesias and HMA (Prof) Onitiri met in an upstairs room, talked over our view of the conference discussions and drafted what became “The Columbia Declaration”. We emphasised the widening gap and the need for true partnership and international action that would go far beyond an increase in aid if the gap was to be narrowed. We included what to us seemed at the time a strong critique of the comfortable language and limited perspectives of the Pearson Report. I was elected to present the declaration next morning to the conference and all of us wondered at the reception it would get.

To our surprise, the response was overwhelmingly positive, both in comments from the floor and in willingness to sign. Indeed, only a handful of the participants declined to add their signatures, mostly on the grounds that this would be inconsistent with the official positions they held. Later, Barbara made the *Widening Gap* the title of the book of the conference and put on its cover the graph I had nervously constructed from the projections in the report.

Naturally I immediately became one of Barbara’s devoted followers. Here was someone wanting to reach out to the next generation, to hear their views and to give them voice. Those of us who had met in the upstairs room became firm friends and allies in the cause of development.

Barbara had constructed a network which lasted. Though we soon lost our standing as representatives of the next generation, we adjusted to the realization that vision and fresh thinking remains a challenge for life – to which all can contribute.

The lessons of Williamsburg inspired later initiatives of the 1970s, by Mahbub ul Haq in the World Bank, by Sartaj Aziz at the World Food Conference and in the re-energizing of the Society for International Development (SID). As part of SID's reform, the North South Roundtable was created which borrowed many ideas from Williamsburg. Barbara was elected the first chair and, though frail, continued to inspire.

Barbara's last keynote speech was at the North South Roundtable in IDS in 1980 winding up the conference on the Brandt Report. We were meeting in the White Hart Hotel in Lewes where just over 200 years earlier Tom Paine had often debated with the Headstrong Society. On the oak panelled walls was a facsimile copy of the American Declaration of Independence. Barbara pointed to this as she reached her peroration. "Little Lewes, mighty America! Nearly everything which works began with a vision and a small group of people committed to its realization. Things which would have been inconceivable in the early days of history began with as unlikely a group as a small bunch of Quakers dedicating themselves to the abolition of slavery. At the time, everyone assumed that slavery was part of nature. Or take the great events that started with the American revolution. Or who would have conceived in the 1880s that the empires would be dissolved in less than a hundred years." Barbara ended, "Our visionary perspective is the true realism and that is what we must pursue."

These words of Barbara continue to inspire many of us to action. We still quote them and use the vision she set out in our own talks and presentations - and especially when, recalling the events which moved our own lives, we are sharing our experiences with today's next generation.

Sir Richard Jolly is Honorary Professor and Research Associate of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex. Before returning to England in 2000, he was an Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations holding senior positions in UNICEF and UNDP. In 2001, he was knighted for his contributions to international development.

David Runnalls was one of Barbara's assistants at Columbia and one of *The Widening Gap's* editors. This was also the first book manuscript typed by Irene Hunter, who became Barbara's personal secretary. The conference was opened by Sir Arthur Lewis, a Nobel Laureate for Economics, and one of the commission members. His address contained many sentiments closely aligned to Barbara's work and priorities; he noted that the case for foreign aid was basically moral – and the supreme task was persuading the peoples and governments of high-income nations to continue the worldwide crusade against poverty.

This is a theme that Robert McNamara also dwelt on in a 1973 speech to the World Bank's board of directors when he outlined a new direction for the Bank, focusing on the absolute poor and with an increased focus on rural areas. He noted that there are "many grounds for development assistance: among others, the expansion of trade, the strengthening of international stability, and the reduction of social tensions. But in my view, the fundamental case for development assistance is a moral one. The whole of human history has recognized the principle – at least in the abstract – that the rich and powerful have a moral obligation to assist the poor and the weak."⁸⁰ When questioned about her influence on this speech, Barbara would say, "Bob and I talk often and think along the same lines". But McNamara certainly showed her drafts of speeches and she sent him comments.

In 1970, Barbara Ward moved back to the UK to Pound House in the small Sussex village of Lodsworth. This was to be her permanent home until her death. It was also her retreat: the cancer that had been in remission since 1957 reappeared in 1968. It was from here that she built IIED, as described earlier.

In 1979, Barbara Ward recognized that her health no longer permitted her to carry on as IIED's president. She invited her old friend, William Clark, at that time Vice President for External Affairs at the World Bank, to take over. She died at her home in Lodsworth on 31 May 1981. John Kenneth Galbraith summed up what all of us who knew her felt: "I do not weep for Barbara. I weep for myself and all who similarly rejoiced in this lovely, beloved, brilliant and diverse companion."⁸¹ Maurice Strong, who himself has contributed so much to sustainable development over forty years, noted that "Barbara Ward will probably go down in any objective history of our times as the person who, more than any other living human being, was the one to pull all our environmental problems together for the first time."⁸²

Sir Sridath Ramphal, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, noted that Barbara Ward "saw the world whole, and she belonged to the whole world, much more than to any of its parts.... the memorial she would most have wished is that we should act to make the world a more peaceful, just and habitable planet she worked so tirelessly to secure".⁸³ Edward Heath, former UK prime minister and also a great internationalist (and member of the Brandt Commission), said that, "she was among the first to see the problems in global terms and to recognize that they required global solutions. This was no superficial approach, urging simplified solutions through glorified government operations. If ever a mind had a detailed grasp of the variety and suitability of all the measures possible in overseas development, backed by practical experience, it was hers."

But it is appropriate to end on the final words from Barbara Ward's last book: "No problem is insoluble in the creation of a balanced and conserving planet save humanity itself. Can it reach in time the vision of joint survival? Can its inescapable physical interdependence – the chief new insight of our century – induce that vision? We do not know. We have the duty to hope."⁸⁴

⁸⁰ McNamara, Robert (1981), *The McNamara Years at the World Bank*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore.

⁸¹ Bird, op. cit.

⁸² Quoted in Gartlan, op. cit.

⁸³ Quoted in Gartlan, op. cit.

⁸⁴ *Progress for a Small Planet*, page 265.

The Duty to Hope: A Tribute to Barbara Ward by Brian Johnson

The quiet musical voice was speaking of Carlos Romulo. "He saw," she said, "that what makes our time unique in modern history is that the immediate questions and ultimate questions are again bound up together."

She was walking in her garden at Lodsworth on a dappled summer's day. Although I was there often, and in all seasons, I suppose that it was the gentleness of her wit, her archness in irony and the recurrent bubbling of her laughter that makes me remember this renowned thinker and moralist in a summer frock and in her garden. "When I am old and retired" she would say gaily (she was never either, despite the awful depredations of her long illness), "I shall play the Edwardian lady in my shawl and bonnet, snip-snipping away dead-heading my roses, pruning my vines." Barbara Ward knew about gardening and loved her flowers. It was typical of her to qualify the insight of Romulo, to put it into historical context. Barbara had read *Modern Greats* at Oxford, but she had emerged with a depth of historical perspective that enabled her to see the changes and chances of our kaleidoscopic times in a context. She looked beyond the more extravagant claims and wilder alarms of many environmental writers.

The immediate questions and the ultimate questions. Their juxtaposition absorbed most of her waking hours. And it was the synthesis of their increasing convergence which made up her life's work.

Barbara Ward is celebrated here as a champion of the environment. Her contribution to environmental care and conservation was the more effective because she came to the environment, as it were, from economics. Indeed, she was generally described as Barbara Ward, the economist, and, as in the *Times* obituary, "an outstanding contributor to economic thought".

Her contribution to economics evolved in the tough school of journalism. Working with Geoffrey Crowther on *The Economist*, this young political and economic commentator soon found herself writing the weekly leader of the paper, as its foreign editor. Her speed as an assimilator who could write rapidly and almost without correction from the briefest of notes never left her, even in her long battle with pain and illness when she continued to focus ideas for the international community with *The Home of Man* (written for the United Nations Habitat Conference of 1976) and her final testament, *Progress for a Small Planet*, published in 1979.

Supreme skills with the written and the spoken word are rarely mastered by a single brain. But starting with an evangelical message of Fabian socialism – she first impressed the economist,

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tributes

Hans Singer, when he heard this ethereal girl speaking from a Catholic pulpit in Manchester in 1939 – Barbara’s verbal powers were soon to be enlisted by the Ministry of Information to carry the message of British resolution on hazardous journeys across the North Sea and German-occupied Norway, and across the Atlantic to America.

These were the first of many speaking engagements in the United States. She talked then of England at war and of the British people “with a pulse like a cannon”. Already she was amassing that following of American admirers who stayed with her for the rest of her life, and who stirred her always in her unrelenting struggle with illness. In recent years, with the British economy almost prostrate, beset with troubles, this time of its own making, she recalled those phrases and searched for a returning glimmer of this island’s solidarity and spirit.

Barbara blossomed early. By the end of World War II she was a nationally known figure, a favourite member of the BBC’s [Brains’ Trust](#), on which she could match the wide knowledge and wit of the redoubtable Professor Joad. By her early thirties, she was already a Governor of the Sadler’s Wells Ballet, of the Old Vic and of the BBC.

In the hungry, coal-short winter of 1947, that dark time when America had withdrawn again across the seas and renewed world war or Communist take-over were daily fears, she wrote [The West at Bay](#). Barbara’s theme of that time remained the theme of her life: cooperation across seas, across frontiers and across cultures - cooperation for human renewal and development. Her writing and speaking inspired that small missionary group, led by Paul Hoffman and Oliver Franks, who administered, in Churchill’s phrase, “the most unsordid act in human history”. The Marshall Plan offered a 13 billion dollar carrot in return for a restoration of multi-lateralism in European trade and payments. The carrot was skilfully used: in less than four years, prosperity was returning, thanks to the economic cooperation which had replaced bankrupt Europe’s resort to siege economics and barter.

As Europe returned to prosperity again, Barbara Ward’s voice was among the first proclaiming the responsibilities of the reconstructed West towards the emerging post-colonial world. William Clark, Barbara Ward’s successor as President of the International Institute for Environment and Development, remembers talking to her in 1950, when he was about to set out to cover the first Commonwealth Finance Ministers’ meeting to be held in Asia, at Colombo: “We must always remember”, she said, “that we in Europe and the old Commonwealth are the fortunate minority. We dare not forget the really poor, who are the great majority because prosperity, like peace, is indivisible”.

For the rest of her life, Barbara Ward wanted to repeat the Marshall Plan, the working example of how rich and poor could cooperate for the betterment of both. Only last October, she called again for a second Marshall Plan to help the poorest developing nations.

This belief that the success of the Marshall Plan - the impact of massive funds producing relatively rapid results - could be repeated in poor countries was perhaps Barbara's most widely criticized tenet. Indeed, in many circles of development thinking, it is seen as discredited today. Propositions can, of course, become discredited without ever being tried. But for Barbara, the Marshall aid parallel was never meant to be close. It was not a three-to-five or even ten-year push that she had in mind. It was a sustained massive financial, social and intellectual drive to remove the abject poverty which, she said, "we know we can banish from the world if we have a mind to do so".

Throughout her life of thinking, writing and speaking, Barbara never lost the sense of outrage of people moaning amid their affluence; of Western nations shrinking from the challenge of healing other lives in the course of widening international prosperity. This moral passion which suffused her life has been seen by some to have blinded her to the myriad pitfalls and sidetracks which face the campaign against poverty: the law's delay, the insolence and corruption of office, the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely being only a few. We hear as much today of the problems inherent in the transfer of culture and technology - apparently inseparable from one another. Could a massive transfer of resources also be a sophisticated transfer? Could it avoid the pitfalls of only benefiting elites or lining official pockets or encouraging short-cuts which waste and deplete vital resources? More fundamentally, there is the political problem of dependency: Could independent, sustaining development occur under the thrust of a Marshall aid scale of Western involvement?

Book by book, Barbara Ward addressed all these problems. She had gained first-hand experience of developing countries with her Australian husband, Robert Jackson. Together they worked for six years in Ghana, where he advised Nkrumah on the Volta River project, in India and in Pakistan. When from 1957, she began to teach at Harvard, she produced a succession of books which refined her thinking and her prescriptions. India and the West in 1961 had marked Barbara Ward as a leading promoter of the concept of the 1960s as a "decade of development". *Nationalism and Ideology* and *Rich Nations and Poor Nations* - probably her most influential book - explained the problems of underdevelopment and charted the pitfalls and possibilities of economic assistance programmes. In each case she set her analysis into an historical context and drew on her great range and depth of knowledge for contrast and comparison. Barbara's influence at this time, as later, was felt in many quarters and at many levels. It was particularly strong in America where she was teaching and lecturing. As a regular

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participant at Robert Kennedy's Hickory Hill seminars, she met and made a disciple of Robert McNamara who, as President of the World Bank, turned frequently to her for encouragement, inspiration and a deepening friendship.

The evolution of Barbara's ideas in these years was inseparable too from her deeply held religious beliefs. As a Catholic, she was often accused of soft pedalling on the issue of population control. Indeed, the director of one major American foundation told me once that she was irresponsible in her neglect of this crucial question. But population was another example of how Barbara worked at many levels and always insisted on the wider context. She loathed the prejudice against the poor and despised racial fears which, she believed, motivated many of those that pressed for population control as the unique priority. Her message on population was simple and tirelessly expressed: better living standards and hope in life are the only possible replacement for the welfare state of the large family. Short of compulsion, population control would only be acceptable alongside a rise in family standards of nutrition and health and a consequent fall in infant mortality. "This is the vital prerequisite to persuade them to use the contraceptive", she said. "We must help them to lengthen each baby's life". Thus Barbara made her counsel clear as a mainstay of the Vatican Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace while encouraging Robert McNamara to commit the World Bank further to programmes of contraception as a part of mother and child welfare. Barbara was painfully aware of the strain that a world population now double what it was 35 years ago was placing on the world's natural systems. She spoke and wrote of the ecological pressure to come with six, seven and eight billion people – as she put it, "another world on this". It seems, indeed, that it was partly at least her comprehension of the time that demographic transition must take, even with comprehensive family planning programmes installed, which moved Barbara to concentrate more and more in the late 1960s on the problems of conserving resources and the ecosystems that support all life. By 1971, a decade after the publication of *India and the West*, she was at work on her grandest theme: development cooperation that would involve changes in lifestyle and expectation for all people and all nations – the vital changes necessary for "the care and maintenance of a small planet".

The theme and the message of *Only One Earth* were very much Barbara Ward's own, a logical projection of earlier work. The presentation of the work as "the book of the Stockholm Environment Conference" and its coauthorship with the eminent biologist, René Dubos, combining the insights and prestige of luminaries in the social and the natural sciences, was the idea of a new friend, Maurice Strong, the Canadian Secretary General of 'The First World Conference on Everything'.

The Stockholm Human Environment Conference provided the intellectual framework and the stage which launched Barbara Ward into the final phase of her career. The idea of a popular book which could set forth in vivid language the intricacies of Stockholm's all-embracing theme was a new one to the United Nations' system. It was one of Strong's most effective devices for raising the level of participation and popular interest above what could be induced by the documentary word-mills that traditionally supplied United Nations conferences with their facts.

Ward and Dubos embarked upon *Only One Earth* with Barbara recovering from a major operation for her already familiar enemy, cancer. Then Dubos himself fell ill and Barbara faced the whole burden of producing the manuscript by an ineluctable deadline with translators in three countries poised for their breakneck dash for multiple language editions by the time of the Conference. The strain was extreme, even for someone of Barbara's fortitude. It was here that her training as a journalist proved invaluable.

At the Stockholm Conference itself, Barbara added her extraordinary gift as a speaker to a series of lectures by "distinguished persons" and at several of the other less formal and, at times, impromptu events which made up that intellectual carnival in a Swedish midsummer.

Barbara's writing of *Only One Earth* had been supported by a small secretariat who formed the staff of a newly founded and American-based institute, the International Institute for Environmental Affairs. They together with her tiny group at Columbia, which she nicknamed "the frog pond" saw the manuscript through to its completion. This was no mean task. Maurice Strong had arranged that this "unofficial report" to the Conference should be read and vetted by a 152-member "committee of correspondents" (the phrase was Barbara's, mindful of Diderot) who wrote from 58 countries with 400 pages of criticisms and suggestions. Then, when the Conference was over, Robert O. Anderson, the President of Atlantic Richfield and the Founder of IIEA, asked Barbara Ward if she would take on the Institute's Presidency. She demurred. Would she have adequate financial backing over a reasonable time so that she could launch her own purpose-built vehicle, as it were, to convey her ideas at the level at which she could operate? Anderson told her she would. Could she change the style and title of the Institute? She could not head an institute that did not include development in its purpose. For environment alone would have little meaning to two-thirds of humanity if they could not acquire the means to improve their lives and so be able to look beyond today in managing their surroundings. She could. Her final condition, after two decades of sojourn in other lands, was that she could bring the re-founded institute home to Europe, though spanning the Atlantic with a base both in Washington D.C. and London.

So the International Institute for Environment and Development was born in 1973. It became, in the words of her former colleague, Roland Bird, "perhaps her first secular interest". In the seven years from 1973 to her retirement from the Institute's Presidency in 1980, Barbara built upon the Stockholm formula. Surrounded by a small and increasingly international staff, she was able to convene leaders of widely different- and, indeed, opposed, - interests and ideas. As their rapporteur, she steered and presented their conclusions, several steps, as usual, ahead of what governments would countenance at the World Food Conference in Rome (1974) and at the Habitat Conference in Vancouver in 1976.

In the meantime, she launched her staff, chairing groups, gathering facts and statistics, drawing up statements, spurring, enthusing, phrase-making, provoking and counselling at other world conferences and on other topics: the Law of the Sea, the First World Water Conference, the World Conference on Desertification and one on the hazards and potentials of science and technology. The formula was simple: to follow and to build upon the international conference agenda, writing and speaking always with down-to-earth humour and simplicity.

At the same time, Barbara worked to shape the Institute so that it might survive her to continue her work as a technically solid centre for policy analysis and influence. In all of this, she retained the support of Anderson and gathered that of others, not least the institutional child of Stockholm: the UN Environment Programme that sponsored her books and other aspects of the Institute's work as well.

This support enabled her to use the trans-Atlantic reach of the Institute to link and cross-fertilize not only ideas - this was happening anyway through the media and travel - but also the confidence and friendships that precipitate action. To mention even a few such linkages would turn this celebration into a catalogue. A long one too, for pretty soon the links were becoming a network - Barbara was adept at institutional crochet - that spread to many parts of the world.

In all these activities of the 1970s there was constant expansion and growth, and at a time when Keynesian assumptions were under challenge and the liberal credo that Barbara had espoused was under attack in the centres from which she and her Bloomsbury and Fabian foundations had drawn their support. What then of her own political development in a time of conservative challenge and reappraisal? Politics inevitably tend to pigeon-hole people; even people like Barbara who avoid direct party involvement and in whom analysis and idealism form heady compounds. All her urgings inevitably held clear political implications and any celebration of her contribution cannot avoid some account of her political progress, especially in today's devious climate.

In 1945, Barbara was asked to stand in Britain for Labour. She would not do so. But in those days she spoke for Labour. Her espousal of bold government intervention, as with the Marshall Plan, and her link not only with British Fabian socialism, but with American liberalism – what Donald Tyerman called “a freer, Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson sort of world” – was never diverted but steadily modified by experience. It was modified a long way from the hopes and claims of the Atlee era. In 1972 she ended a speech in London to the Conservation Society with a quotation from William James:

“I am done with great things and big things, great institutions and big success and I am for those tiny invisible molecular moral forces that work from individual to individual, creeping through the crannies of the world like so many rootlets, or like the capillary oozing with water, yet which, if you give them time, will rend the hardest monuments of men's pride.”

In her last book, *Progress for a Small Planet*, she wrote of “private socialism”, of the use made by both the Japanese and French governments of indicative planning and of the Yugoslav experiment. She talked of “the dispersion of wealth through the community and the involving of all in their factories and offices – an involvement which, more than anything else, can dissolve, perhaps, the worst aspects of traditional industrialism, the alienation of the mass of workers from their community of work”.

Politically and intellectually, Barbara offered a brilliant counterpart to the propositions of E.F. Schumacher, to most of which she lent her warm support. She complemented his new analysis of the problem of production, bringing the worldly shrewdness or mainstream politics to the “alternative” and the insights of the alternative to the mainstream. Never afraid to be counted in the political fray, in the last months of her life she threw her support to the nascent Social Democrats in Britain, but her prescription would never necessarily follow the format of a party platform. In the end, Barbara returned to her message of only one earth. The beloved planet was the only political unit she could happily espouse. “In short” as she wrote in concluding her last book, “no problem is insoluble in the creation of a balanced and conserving planet save humanity itself. Can it reach in time the vision of joint survival? Can its inescapable physical interdependence -the chief new insight of our century - induce that vision? We do not know. We have the duty to hope”.

Brian Johnson 3 Petyt Place London, SW3, UK 1981

The Economist Barbara Ward

This article has been compiled by Roland Bird, for many years business editor and deputy editor of the paper. Barbara Ward was born on May 23, 1914, and died last Sunday, May 31st.

Of the many remarkable women employed today and over the years here at [The Economist](#), none has quite so strikingly projected her impact on world affairs beyond our columns as Barbara Ward.

Barbara Ward, Baroness Jackson of Lodsworth, has been a conscience and provider of fresh ideas, a spur and enthuser, a phrasemaker, provoker and counsellor to one pope and handfuls of cardinals and archbishops, to two American presidents and handfuls of their senior advisers, to British and countless other prime ministers and ministers of rich and poor governments alike, to successive presidents of the World Bank and dozens of the world's corporate fry, small and large. Deeply Roman Catholic, her role since the war as a policy catalyst to great men of every kind, and as a teacher at Harvard, Columbia and many other colleges, has been catholic in a wider sense.

During all this time, in recent years brushing aside severe illness by the sheer optimism of her will, Barbara Ward has kept an active link with [The Economist](#), by her articles over the years, by letters, by visits and lunches when she has constantly tried (not always with full success) to raise our sights above the mundane - on to that plane of her own where analysis and idealism have mixed, headily.

Barbara Ward's continuing message was, against all the odds, one of hope. "We still have a choice, we are the fortunate minority, we dare not forget the really poor." Barbara Ward stretched her lease on life, continuing to teach and write as a public voice. But hers has also been a private voice, passionately concerned with making the world a better place; and it was a voice charged with such spiritual force that she was able, single-handed, to move the great towards decisions that they might scarcely have embarked on without her inspiration and urging.

The style was the woman. She had trained to be an opera singer. She had a voice of music and a charm and beauty that left a trail of frustrated suitors until she married Robert Jackson in 1950. Her mind was as full of fun as it was of the world's concerns. She could be scathing to top people when she had a mind, but was never wounding to lesser mortals. She never talked down.

[The Economist](#) had the enormous good fortune to recruit Barbara Ward late in 1939. She had sent two freelance pieces from Italy and Turkey before war broke out. Geoffrey Crowther was determined to get her on the staff. When Arnold Toynbee's "monitoring unit" of the wartime ministry of information at Balliol was told to shed 10%, Donald Tyerman remembered, "he offered Geoffrey Crowther two young ladies: Sheila Grant-Duff and Barbara Ward". So Barbara came on a fortnight's trial - though it lasted until 1950 and indeed long after.

Barbara Ward and Donald Tyerman, who was to succeed Crowther as editor in 1956, largely maintained the paper during the war when others were away. By the time peace and reconstruction faced the world, she had already become in her early 30s a national institution.

One important reason for this was her instant success as a broadcaster, notably on the [Brains Trust](#). In this she vied with Crowther himself, making millions wonder how a modest weekly newspaper could possibly house two stars in the generation of liberal ideas. Soon she was a governor of the BBC (one of a remarkable quartet of women governors after the war) where her passion for independence of thought and the wide provision of music and the arts did so much to establish the standards of postwar broadcasting and television. It was an idea of hers that inspired Sir William Haley to start the Reith lectures. At [The Economist](#), where the staff worked in these years in cold and squalor, her presence lightened everybody's life.

Elizabeth Monroe recalls how they shared a flat in the early 1950s and would set the alarm at 6am on Wednesdays to write their pieces in bed. "My fatal facility", as Barbara Ward joked about her skill in writing, meant that she always finished her leader first and usually had time to go to Mass. "If only people knew where it had been written", they used to say, "they would perhaps wave it less lustily as proof of some bidding in the house of commons." These crack-of-dawn pieces, lightly and daringly written, sometimes puzzled the patient printer when her fluency got the better of her handwriting. One piece she wrote on the train declared that Spanish peasants wanted "oil, pulses and chick peas"; fortunately the despairing typesetter's rendering "oil, braces and clutch grease" was spotted before publication.

Her contributions and questionings at editorial conferences were a joy (if only there had been a tape recorder!); she and Geoffrey Crowther sparked each other off and stimulated all the rest of us. Her writing and her talk were as fluent as his, though perhaps less firm and analytical, and her output was prodigious. She could write anywhere on anything – even on cross rates, if it came to it – and always with immense persuasiveness. Some of her jealous contemporaries found her facility close to glibness. She was not, indeed, the most profound academic thinker. She was above all a publicist, with a way. The story is told of Lester Markel defending himself against disgruntled [New York Times](#) writers complaining that he made them rewrite their stories again and again, paying them very little: "I made Barbara Ward rewrite a story 10 times." Said a voice from the back of the room: "And printed it every time."

Perhaps her greatest editorial achievement here at [The Economist](#), among so many, was the series of articles that she wrote on the Marshall Plan in 1947 and 1948. They produced some

of her best phrases. Of Mr Marshall's challenge she wrote: It must be done quickly, but it cannot be done quickly. It must be big enough to take the breath away, but there is no time to construct even the simplest structure.

Soon she was patiently explaining to European statesmen how imaginative idealism about a new Europe might be the most practicable way of getting the dollars and urging them to drop any misconceptions about the power of presidents to manage congress. And when the whole laborious process of fact-finding and congressional inspection had become stalled in Washington, she helped to drive the American political process on to decision by taunts that worked:

While the examination continues, the wheat goes irretrievably into the hogs... It is no slur on American generosity in the past, or the possibility of American generosity in the future, to say that in the next few months the combination of political intervention and economic inaction is likely to turn the European nations from grateful partners into sour clients and to intensify at every turn the irrational anti-Americanism already disastrously widespread. And who profits from this save the Communist party?

And then in April, 1948, when all was safe, she wrote one of her finest pieces "Unsordid Act": This week it is fitting that the peoples of Western Europe should attempt to renew their capacity for wonder so that they can return to the United States a gratitude in some way commensurate with the aid they are about to receive.

Barbara Ward was a superb communicator of ideas – not always original ideas, for she had a rare skill of fashioning ideas that were just coming into their own into campaigns that would never have flourished without her. "A great simplifier," said Donald Tyerman, "her great gift intellectually and morally – and perhaps her great weakness, because her argument, laid out and repeated over and over again elegantly, simply and persuasively allowed little debate about its relation to disorderly reality. To say this is to chip not a bit from the tour de force."

Kennedy and Johnson

She was a most persuasive and non-didactic teacher, and not above using her charm and wiles to get her own way. Her shop window was full of bright merchandise, compounded of modern technology, liberal economics and radical political thought, which seemed eminently buyable. Indeed most of it was, though some sceptics questioned whether she was quite the mistress of all the disciplines that she purported to practise, and to some degree they were right. What she could not establish by pure thought she brought off by grace, fun and cajolery. "It was the intensity of Barbara's personality," says Edward Heath, "even more than the power and lucidity of her

arguments or the persuasiveness of her writing, which her friends and all those who worked with her or were influenced by her will remember longest." She blended intellectual honesty with moral purpose and if sometimes the reaction of some of her more rigorous readers had to be "Yes, but..." they never doubted the earnestness of a single word that she wrote or the sincerity of her aims of improving the human lot.

Barbara Ward's mid-career, in the 1950s and 1960s, was spent in America. In June 1957, she publicly acknowledged Europe's debt to America for the Marshall Plan from the same Harvard podium at which George Marshall had announced his plan exactly 10 years earlier. It was regarded by many as the finest commencement speech ever heard there. Her years at Harvard as a visiting scholar between 1957 and 1967 were among her happiest, working with Galbraith (one of her close friends for 35 years) and Mason on pioneer courses on development. She spent some of this time in the field with her husband putting together the plans for the Volta River scheme in Ghana and then having guardedly to persuade President Kennedy that, despite Dr Nkrumah's aberrations, the scheme deserved American guarantees. "We have," he said in a note to her, "put quite a few chips on a very dark horse indeed but I believe the gamble is worthwhile."

The influence of outsiders, no matter how distinguished, on the politically great can perhaps be over-called. Barbara Ward had written a survey on India in [The Economist](#) of January 22, 1955. Without question she gave the then Senator Jack Kennedy every encouragement to work for sustained economic assistance to India, which in the end resulted in the World Bank consortia. Her meetings with him after he became president stimulated both of them but in retrospect she found him a "cool" personality - which she relished, for she enjoyed both his wit and his objectivity and she respected the slight distance between them, finding amid all his qualities little empathy on his part for the trained intelligent woman.

With President Johnson there was no such coolness. She was almost one of the family. In Lady Bird Johnson's diary of April 16, 1964, the president is "fascinated by her, and so am I. The nice thing about Lady Jackson is that she seems to believe anything is possible." She had an important influence in Johnson's Great Society speech at Ann Arbor in 1964. It is quite likely that the actual phrase was put in the speech by Dick Goodwin without reference to Barbara Ward. When LBJ was characteristically putting Goodwin in his place during an interview that year, however, he said: "I can tell you the Ann Arbor speech came as a result of a book I read and some work I did with Barbara Ward." However selective LBJ's memory, Barbara Ward tendered advice and encouragement to him on an astonishing range of concerns until 1972. In Walt Rostow's words:

She understood with compassion the unrelenting forces that bore in on a responsible politician. She also knew that Kennedy and Johnson wanted for the human race just about what she wanted. And so she urged them on to reach out and do their best with concrete proposals, not always usable, but always suggestive, always in terms which respected the reality of the harsh world within which good things had to be done. Johnson's last note to her as president was dated 18 January, 1969, two days before Mr Nixon was sworn in.

Dear Barbara,

Your gracious and generous note brought a wonderful brightness to this final week of my presidency. Whatever mark we have made in these last five years clearly bears your stamp, too. You have given me much more than your priceless friendship. You have brought wisdom and inspiration, for which I will always be grateful. Lady Bird joins me in wishing you the very best.

And then he added in his own hand:

You must come to the LBJ School of Public Affairs to lecture and spend a few days with us...

Which she did. And they continued to correspond until 1972, sending each other their books and cheering each other in the times of illness they experienced.

When in 1968 Barbara Ward was appointed Albert Schweitzer Professor in International Development at Columbia University, she took on a role that was closest to her heart, although reservations by some academics about it clouded the start of her work. It was a chair of prestige, created and funded by the state of New York, through the influence of Andrew Cordier (a former assistant secretary general of the United Nations and at the time president of Columbia) and Nelson Rockefeller, then governor of the state. Her books continued to flow, until in 1973 she resigned, to take on her last big role, as president of the International Institute for Environment and Development.

The argument of goodness

It was a period to which she devoted great effort, though not perhaps so happy and fruitful as the years at Harvard, which her students all over the world still recall with gratitude and affection. Yet outside Columbia she continued to be an important influence on many important minds. She had, in particular, a succession of admirers and devoted listeners at the World Bank. With George Woods in the middle 1960s, when the development decade was clearly not going very well, she started a new drive on aid. Woods put it into a speech at Stockholm out of which the Pearson Commission emerged.

Barbara Ward's skill in drawing ideas out of people was perhaps her greatest gift. Not that George Woods, or Eugene Black and least of all Robert McNamara were resistant to her advocacy. It was her idea, after founding the Pearson Commission, to get Willy Brandt to run a successor. Months elapsed and then (William Clark records) "Suddenly Bob sent for me and said 'We're going to have a Brandt Commission' and we started it". And her spirit nobly kept her alive to endorse the Brandt report in a characteristically eloquent article in *Foreign Affairs* this past winter.

She was a great influence on McNamara at the World Bank. He would consult her on his speeches, submit his early drafts ("as shy as a 17-year-old about them", William Clark says) and somehow they matched, he the detailed quantifier and she the great generaliser. To him, as to so many other people, she gave the extra nudge, the touch of rhetoric, that he needed. And all this time she had been nudging other people towards the Stockholm conference on the environment for which (with René Dubos) she produced one of her best books "[Only One Earth](#)".

Houston Kenyon and his late and dear wife Mildred were friends of Barbara Ward (and of [The Economist](#)) for a lifetime. She inscribed her books to them, from "[The West at Bay](#)" in 1948 to "[Progress for a Small Planet](#)" in 1979. They took care of her in Manhattan (perhaps not her favourite place) and she (and we) owed them much. And by the time she took on the Institute (not just of development but also of the environment, which showed yet another expansion of her understanding and interests) she needed the support of friends. For the last decade of Barbara Ward's life, the IIED was perhaps her first secular interest. She worked for it unremittingly with an energetic staff. Her last great international effort was the Habitat conference in Vancouver in June, 1976. She had driven herself through two exhausting years of cancer operations, pleurisy and dysentery. Her house at Lodsworth was a scramble of activity, with five chapters to write in three weeks.

The deadline was made, but, not for the first time, she had something to cut - just a matter of 20,000 words. So, as she wrote to Nora Beloff, "the fiendish factory was at work again... You will see that this kind of experience does not endear one to the written word." Yet she found time amid all this to set the scene for the conference in some pages in [The Economist](#) of May 22, 1976 (the year when she was created a life peeress). "The disproportion between the means of life and the weapons of death", she wrote, "has become so vast that here too perhaps we may hope for a moment of truth." For her, alas, the cumulative price was six months out of commission. But not before "[The Home of Man](#)", another classic in its field, had been safely published, and she had driven herself to deliver eight lectures in Canada. By this time even her stupendous strength was failing. She called William

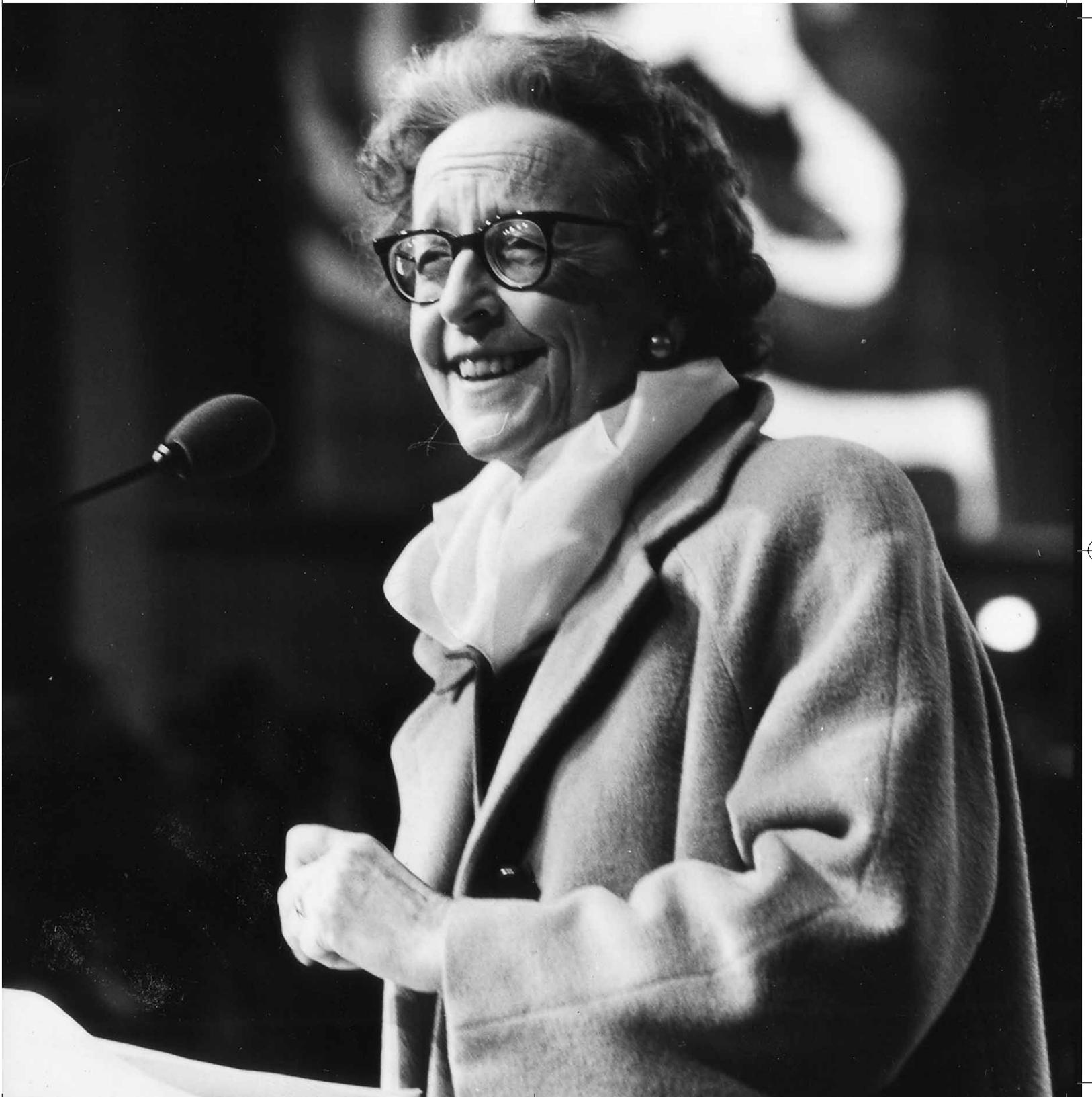
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Clark to see her in hospital and asked him to consider giving up his post at the World Bank and taking on the presidency of the Institute.

I was extremely happy at the World Bank and I had no desire to leave but Barbara didn't have to ask twice. Mr McNamara was not in the least anxious that I should leave but I told him that Barbara had called and he said: "Oh well, of course, that's another matter...."

So her monuments remain: the Institute; her books; the echoes of her musical eloquence; a world where the worst of poverty is perhaps just in slight retreat; her love for "this precious home for all of us earthlings". To adapt words of her own, she was a member of that intensely creative minority that has changed the direction of human thought. There have been few men or women who have done more to inspire great movements for the benefit of mankind. Her spirit triumphed over her ills. There was nothing of the passive stoic in her; her mission was the positive and glorious one of showing men how to widen their moral and economic horizons, of giving her very special push to the restless ideals of progress. She brought, says Edward Heath again, people "to face up to the world as it really is outside their own confines. And having been forced to recognise it – for she never gave up, however obdurate the object of her attentions – to accept that matters could not be left there; effective action had to be instituted."

This did not spring solely from intellectual conviction. Barbara Ward's moral sense and religious faith were at least equally important elements in her teaching. It was said that she lost her Catholic faith at Oxford, but, when she regained it, it was with all the strength of a convert: "lively, bright, warm-hearted and always bubbling with joy," writes Archbishop Angelo Fernandes from New Delhi. "The impression that came through to me was that this emanated from a deep faith in the Lord." She was an important presence on the ecumenical scene from the early 1960s and became one of the original members of the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace. She must have seemed to some of the assembled cardinals distinctly dangerous – a threatening radical and beautiful to boot – as she bullied, wheedled and taunted them into recommendations that might almost have seemed to shake the Vatican itself. She knew better than they, the awfulness of the pressure of population on the meagre resources of the very poor. Her faith was constant and the Mass was her spiritual engine, but she stopped some way short of embracing the pure doctrine of papal infallibility. There were popes that she adored and if her faith and power of persuasion were not able to move the institutions of the Church as she would have wished, they as well as the world's leaders and its peoples have reason to thank God for Barbara Ward and her work.



// *So my chief first memory is of a very young man, still hardly with the eggshell off his back - he seemed so young - but with an extraordinarily, I would say, well-informed interest in the political situation he was seeing.* //

Barbara Ward on taking John F. Kennedy to watch Herbert Morrison campaigning in the British general election of 1945.

// *The utter, utter contempt one felt for anything faintly resembling integrity in the character of Mr Nixon. I mean, one just felt it wasn't there. And if there's one quality you need in a president of the United States it's the ability to recognise truth, to seek the facts, and to have a certain profound element of disinterest in it.* //

Barbara Ward in 1964 on Richard Nixon.

// *In 1945 she was asked to stand for Labour. She wouldn't but she did speak for Labour, and especially for Ernest Bevin, who was seeking to get into parliament at Wandsworth. One very hot summer evening the candidate turned up sweating from every pore and sat on the steps outside a meeting which Barbara was keeping in play until he came. As his perspiration cooled and dried, his face became wet with tears. Barbara was talking about the need for, and the way to, full employment, coolly, logically, intensely, in her high, compelling voice, and the hard-bitten trade unionist could not bear it.* //

Donald Tyerman

// *She was the pluperfect editor of young colts' copy, gently altering only the sentences where one knew one had been too pompous, and with the rare knack of making a request for a partial rewrite actually pleasant (nestling up to you, "in just this third paragraph I feel Homer's nodded, dear"). She was almost the inventor of bold quantification in popular economics, at a time when quantities weren't often published.* //

Norman Macrae

// *We did it over, say, coffee at eleven in the Brettenham House café, after 8 Bouverie Street was destroyed in May, 1941. It was a sort of brainstorming. We talked in dozens, with Barbara setting the pitch; then we went back with leaders to write ... we thought and felt and argued our way to what to say, Catholic, Marxist or Liberal or what not. So Barbara was to me the harbinger of a freer, Chester Bowles, Adlai Stevenson sort of world, before Bowles and Stevenson had ever been heard of. Afterwards she became quite different... The friendliest economists, including The Economist itself, had to edge away from, and qualify, her inevitably simplified statements. A generation of reformers may still be regarding them as gospel.* //

Donald Tyerman

// *She was among the first to see problems in global terms and to recognise that they required global solutions. This was no superficial approach, urging simplified solutions through glorified government operations. If ever a mind had a detailed grasp of the variety and suitability of all the measures possible in overseas development, backed by practical experience, it was hers.* //

Edward Heath

// *She possessed a rare gift for telling a story ... while the rest of us plodded among the minutiae of some reportage, Barbara would illuminate our efforts by some great sweep of perspective. It was an aesthetic pleasure to listen to her.* //

Ronnie Grierson

// *She was almost the only opponent with whom it was a joy to discuss these questions of the sixties, chiefly because she always met everybody at his or her own level, with a knack of never talking contemptuously down or obsequiously up to whatever idiot or Einstein she was addressing. This made both the idiots and the Einsteins in countries like India adore her.* //

Norman Macrae

quotations

// *I first met her in mid-war years as a member of a small circle which met at Stafford Cripps's flat. Cripps was exploring new ideas; showing, for instance, a strong interest in the idea of a European federal union. Barbara was easily the equal of the men in this group of assertiveness. But she looked more like the daughter of a country vicarage than a high-powered woman writer. Her manner was charming, style direct and good-natured, and her expression had just a touch of the angelic. Already she showed an amazing intellectual self-reliance. When she told Cripps he was missing the point or accused Crowther of being spiritually lazy, she was giving a strongly-held view, not point-scoring. Yet she never seemed to lose her balance or humour, never became clumsy or superior, even though her convictions were strong ones. Her appreciation of people's differences and her strong dislike of extremists may have come from her parental influences, which were both Quaker and Catholic.* //

David Astor

// *The wedding was at Felixstowe and I think must have been on a Friday as I went down very late, having helped to put the paper to bed. It was early and was a full nuptial mass in Latin. We all lost our places in the printed text. Then, suddenly, the priest turned round and gave the address in English. It was marvellous and the priest was Cardinal Heenan.* //

Elizabeth Monroe

// *With the rain hammering down on the tin roof of the RC church at Felixstowe, the congregation was crowded with the brightest and best of the diplomatic and foreign services, all frustrated suitors – it was like Zuleika Dobson, only more intellectual.* //

Donald Tyerman

// *Of those outside government I believe only Jean Monnet ranked in the same class as Barbara among those whose advice Kennedy was pleased to receive.* //

Walt Rostow

// *“Barbara, how was it that you and Geoffrey worked so much shorter hours than we on The Economist do today?” “During the war, love, it was easy: there were no real sources of information, so we made it all up”.* //

Andrew Knight

“ I had asked that she might be included at a lunch in New York to which several members of the American “Establishment” had been invited whose views on international affairs and American policy would not be conspicuously in harmony with hers. As soon as the slight radiant figure appeared in the doorway the tension relaxed; and the meal passed in a gale of laughter and high spirits which detracted not a whit from her outspoken and indignant criticism of what she judged to be the selfish folly of the world’s rich nations. ”

Lord Trend

“ It was in 1942 that Barbara made her first visit to the United States, for the ministry of information. She enjoyed it immensely and sent back the most enthusiastic letters. I think she was a bit surprised at how completely she carried all before her. By the time I next saw much of her, when I too was living in the United States from 1958, she had of course got used to that, though perhaps she still had to pinch herself from time to time, and had become an American institution. ”

Sir Geoffrey Wilson

“ Instead of [American government] being a sort of a grey area, a mush area, as it was previously, it’s now pinpointed, and the problems have emerged. And the moment a problem emerges, the chances are people will do something about it. So I think this probably historically will be one of the great changes [Kennedy] brought about. ”

Barbara Ward six months after John F. Kennedy’s death

“ She did not allow her compelling personality to make lesser mortals feel inferior. She was respectful of social or professional inferiors and gloriously irreverent to those on top. She was totally devoid of feminine vanity, hated wasting time buying clothes, never dolled herself up, but with her lovely voice and impish smile was very attractive and unintentionally sexy. ”

Nora Beloff

“ If the Brandt report has become the catalyst of world opinion, it is Barbara Ward and her influence that have helped to secure this. ”

Donald Tyerman

quotations

// *I remember Sir Ernest Pooley making up a limerick when he dined with us one night:
Two ladies well able to cope , Compounded of grit and soft soap,
Pretty as peaches , Determined as leeches , And highly esteemed by the Pope!
“Grit and soft soap” is an apt description. She had a steel-like determination and a healthy personal ambition but she was exceptionally gentle in her human relationships. She hated rows and controversy. She was capable of animosity but it was directed against people’s ideas and values rather than against them personally.* //

Lady Albermarle

// *I have heard her in public at the Gregorian University (the first lady to address that august assembly since its inception), at the English and Irish Colleges in Rome, at a conference in Chicago and at the World Synod of Bishops in 1971. As always, her diction and forceful communication fulfilled, and well, the old trilogy of teaching, pleasing and moving the audience to action on the matter in hand. There are few to compare with her.* //

The Rev. Angelo Fernandes, Archbishop of Delhi

// *As were so many others, I was greatly instructed by Barbara, but that was not the basis of our friendship. Far more it was based on her talent for wide-ranging conversation. And a shared delight in absurdity.* //

John Kenneth Galbraith

// *We all went [after a difficult day between the top people in the World Council of Churches and the Justice and Peace Commission preparing for the Joint Conference on Development: which was to take place in 1968 in Beirut] to a rather touristy trattoria where there was a band and a girl singing arias. Barbara joined in, much to the girl’s surprise, and sang “Your tiny hand is frozen” in Italian, in an excellent voice, to the applause of the diners.* //

Father Arthur McCormack

// *Brains Trust question: should women propose?
Barbara (at once): Yes, if they’ll take the same risk as men - of being turned down.* //

Elizabeth Monroe

// With her mother an irresistible Catholic and her father an immovable Quaker, she had the qualities of both. When she “lost” her faith at Oxford and recovered it, she added the zeal of the convert to the steadiness of the Catholic born. //

Donald Tyerman

// Cardinal Suenens had made a speech recommending that women should be invited to take part in the Vatican Council. He had said that half the population of the world were women and presumably therefore half the population of the Roman Catholic Church were women and that consequently they should take part in the discussions affecting the Church. She immediately replied “Yes, half the population are women and of course don’t forget we are also responsible for the other half as well”. //

Bishop Gerald Mahon

// Her immense sense of humour prevailed throughout her long illness. Soon after a major operation, Barbara was informed of the death of a close colleague of international standing. After the initial shock she said, “Well, that gives me a few more years. Our Lord simply could not digest us both at the same time”. When someone told her how Mother Teresa, having addressed a large and appreciative audience at Jericho Beach, “speaks nearly as well as you do”, Barbara’s retort was: “Better. But Our Lord leans over her shoulder and tells her what to say as she speaks. Alas, I have to work my speeches out myself.” //

Irene Hunter

// Barbara said to me: “We must all persist. We must never discount the capacity of people to be moved by the argument of goodness.” //

Shridath Rhamphal

// I do not weep for Barbara. I weep for myself and all who similarly rejoiced in this lovely, beloved, brilliant and diverse companion. //

John Kenneth Galbraith

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N.B. These are her main books. The list does not include booklets, pamphlets or chapters contributed to edited books.