

GARRY DAVIS DAUGHTER.

When I was 6 years old, in first grade, the teacher asked all the children to state their father's profession (of course for this teacher who happened to be a nun – this was 1970, mothers were supposed to be at home). When my turn came, I said, to the nun's horror: "My Daddy travels and goes to prison". But for me this was quite OK and even great, since he went to prison for a good cause! Thus, I learned quite early that one can be put in prison for political reasons...

I knew about the passports hidden in the house where the police could not find them (they came regularly and ended up having coffee and a chat with my mother). My mother told me one day Troy (5 years old), was whispering "no, you're cold ... getting warmer ... now pretty warm ..." as one policeman was approaching the place the boxes of blank passports were. She quickly took him out of the area so he wouldn't give away the location!

I knew that my Dad wrote to presidents and kings (especially the queen of England for some reason), that he wasn't afraid of anything, anyone, any situation. I guess it is part of the reason I was never impressed by any hierarchy.

There was always a solution. I thought that my father could get out of any situation and show up suddenly for a birthday, Christmas, my graduation from University (that time he was stuck in Japan, got out without any ID and made it all the way to Toronto ...). A knock on the door, and Voilà! Papa est là! He would simply appear as if by magic.

In reality he wasn't there much, too taken by his cause, by the world peace he had to shape. It was really our mother Esther who raised us. But he taught me a most important lesson one day, as I was feeling sorry for my lonesome self: "Do not ever feel lonely on this planet, there are millions of people around you, laughing, crying, talking, eating, sleeping. You are surrounded by humanity. Think of all the lights in all the windows around you! You are not alone" I never forgot that.

He wrote continuously and he also received thousands of letters. I remember one simply said: Garry Davis, Europe. It got to him. That was in the Forties, but when I talked to him 4 weeks ago (June 25, 2013) he told me he received 300 emails per day!

Our house was opened to the world. Wherever Dad lived, it became World Territory. Thousands of people came to visit throughout the years. I remember people from the Eastern Bloc, a Sikh who gave me a turban (I had long hair), a Vietnamese family and US Vietnam war veterans, Israelis and Palestinians, sometimes together on the terrace at Chaggarah (the name of our house), eating together, sharing life histories. All human beings from planet Earth, Dad would say. All world citizens.

Occasionally in my life I met by pure chance people who told me of "this incredible man, Garry Davis, who dedicated his life to world peace!". It happened once as I was walking the Camino de Santiago, and got to a tiny village in the South of France (Saint Cirq-Lapopie). It was close to the City of Cahors, a city that "mundialized" itself in 1949 (ref: Cahors Mundi). This was in 2005. When the person went on and on about Garry Davis, I eventually smiled and gently told the person: "Yes, I know him, actually he's my father". Just so I could see his jaw drop! That time it got me a free lunch in the little restaurant the fellow held with his wife in the village.

When you're small, you think all this is great, when you grow up, sometimes you feel a little embarrassed to have a father who is so different from others (adolescence has to be lived!). And when you really grow up you look back and reflect on how this has shaped you too, has made you who you are. Troy, Kim and I all grew up knowing that what our father did was incredible and good. Who could say their father worked his entire life to promote world peace? And even when we would get into heated discussion about the feasibility of his project, talking ideas, concepts, problems, solutions ... I realized it was special. No discussion about the weather at our house! Between my mother who was one of the founders of the environmental movement in Europe and my father, we debated politics (and sometimes philosophical and religious concepts), plunged into any subjects anyone of us would bring up, fought our way and shaped our thinking.

Troy, Kim and I could not become nationalists, in the sense of being "us", excluding the "others". We grew up knowing the world was our heritage. We were all humans. Dad would joke about the absurdity of frontiers. When we crossed a border: "oh look kids, this is German grass! US sky! Canadian cows! French trees!". This is not to say we should forget about our culture, our history. As my Dad explained to me when I questioned the possibility of a huge World Government, which could become a "Big Brother" Government, he explained to me that we have numerous levels of governments already! Municipal, local, State, Federal ... The World Government would not be taking care of street repairs or social security (I heard, if he did not say it, the Duhh! in my head). We needed a World Government to take care of peace, the environment (a river does not stop at a border ...), and human rights. That made perfect sense to me. I retain my French culture, I am a part Mainiac (as he would say of himself, being born in Maine), and I am also convinced the Province of Quebec should be able to form a government of its own if the people do not want to remain in the Canadian Federation. And I am a world citizen. And I think a world government is urgently needed, because it already exists, in the form of global finance and multinational companies. If anything, the global economic crisis of 2008 should have convinced us that our local politicians, even Barack Obama, cannot deal with the issues that have the potential to destroy the world. A world regulatory body is needed to stop greed from destroying thousands if not millions of lives.