

**Tributes to IPPNW Founding
Co-President Dr. Bernard Lown
from members of the IPPNW Global Family**



IPPNW mourns co-founder Dr. Bernard Lown (1921-2021), calls on people worldwide to continue his legacy



FEBRUARY 17, 2021

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), 1985 Nobel Peace laureate organization, mourns the loss yesterday of our co-founder Dr. Bernard Lown, just months short of his 100th birthday. Dr. Lown was a tireless visionary and pragmatic activist whose example continues to inspire countless physicians, students, and citizens worldwide. Those who knew Dr. Lown know that he would insist that the most meaningful way to honor his memory will be to carry on his work.

IPPNW was founded in 1980, when a renewed nuclear arms race between the superpowers clearly threatened all of human civilization. Dr. Lown, who in 1961 had co-founded Physicians for Social Responsibility in the US to combat the dangers of nuclear war, believed that a revitalized and greatly expanded international “physicians movement” was required. Building from his friendship with leading Soviet cardiologist Dr. Evgueni Chazov that had grown out of their cardiovascular research collaborations, Dr. Lown, Dr. Eric Chivian, and Dr. Jim Muller met in Geneva with Dr. Chazov and two of the most senior Soviet physicians, Dr. Mikhail Kuzin and Dr. Leonid Ilyin. Setting aside all other issues, they committed to working together on behalf of human survival, and to launching and building an organization they named International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

The histories of **PSR** and **IPPNW** are available in detail elsewhere. Dr. Lown’s book **Prescription for Survival: A Doctor’s Journey to End Nuclear Madness**, was published in 2008. As Dr. Lown said in his 1985 Nobel Address:

Only those who see the invisible can do the impossible. But in order to do the impossible, in the words of Jonathan Schell, we ask “not for our personal survival: we ask only that we be survived. We ask for assurance that when we die as individuals, as we know we must, mankind will live on...”

Dr. Lown stepped down as IPPNW’s co-president in 1993, passing the torch to new generations of physicians and medical students throughout the world, which went on to launch in 2007 the **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons** that was awarded the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

To honor Dr. Lown, we invite people inspired by his legacy to share your memories and express your thoughts to us.

We look forward to celebrating Dr. Lown’s 100th birthday on June 7, 2021, and joining with others throughout the world on that day to rededicate ourselves to fulfilling his and IPPNW’s founding vision.

[Saving one life while working to save all our lives](#)

FEBRUARY 18, 2021

by IPPNW

Monday, December 9, 1985: As members of IPPNW's executive committee met with the international press before the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony in Oslo, a journalist suddenly slumped over in his chair and began convulsing—the victim of cardiac arrest. An international team of IPPNW physicians rushed to his aid as the press conference dissolved into a battle for the life of the stricken camera operator. The story became a parable for IPPNW's work. When the press conference resumed Dr. Bernard Lown, **who died this week at the age of 99**, had this to say:

We have just witnessed what doctoring is about. When faced with a dire emergency of sudden cardiac arrest, doctors do not inquire whether the patient was a good person or a criminal. We do not delay treatment to learn the politics or character of the victim. We respond not as ideologues, nor as Russians nor Americans, but as doctors. The only thing that matters is saving a human life. We work with colleagues, whatever their political persuasion, whether capitalist or Communist. This very culture permeates IPPNW. The world is threatened with sudden nuclear death. We work with doctors whatever their political convictions to save our endangered home. You have just witnessed IPPNW in action.



Dr. Eugeni Chazov administers CPR to a Soviet journalist in Oslo as Dr. Bernard Lown looks on at upper left. Drs. Lown and Chazov respond emotionally after the event.



REMEMBRANCES FROM THE IPPNW GLOBAL FAMILY

On behalf of ourselves and the IPPNW Board we mourn the death of our dear colleague and the co-founding-father of IPPNW, Dr. Bernard Lown. For the last few years, he was not present with the organization on a daily basis, but he followed our work, he was always with us, and he shall always be with us. In these times of grief our thoughts are with his family and his nearest. And we shall “Never whisper in the presence of wrong!”

Bjørn Hilt (IPPNW Norway) and Sally Ndung'u (IPPNW Kenya)
IPPNW Board Chairs

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I am deeply saddened by the news of Bernard's death. Towards him I first and foremost feel gratitude. Not only did he speak out loudly about the threat of nuclear war, but he had the courage and the stature to do something about it. No one knows if we would still be here without his efforts.

I last visited him at his home in Boston in 2018. Even at his advanced age, he was extremely present, quick-witted and full of optimistic energy. His sharp mind and immense experience will be missed.

It was 30 years ago that he introduced us to the "IPPNW Triangle" in Stockholm. With it he illustrated the fundamental link between poverty, environmental degradation and war. Bernard Lown understood war as a disease and nuclear war as its most extreme form. He explained that we need to understand the causes in order to prevent wars.

In his speech at the 2010 IPPNW World Congress in Basel, he described the North-South divide as crucial to 'nuclearism'. He was convinced that overcoming the nuclear threat can only succeed if the inequality on our planet decreases instead of growing and growing. The again increasing danger of a devastating nuclear war was his concern and commitment until the end. Only in January, he published an urgent appeal to us doctors in the New England Journal of Medicine, calling on us to actively support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2033335>

It is now up to us to respond to this call and at the same time to implement the comprehensive understanding of medical responsibility that Bernard has always conveyed to us.

With regards,

**Helmut Lohrer, MD**  
**IPPNW Germany**



AIMPGN, Associazione Italiana Medicina per la Prevenzione della Guerra Nucleare, the Italian Affiliate of IPPNW, cries the death of our Founder.

IPPNW Italy was born in October 1982 organizing the visit in Rome by professor Bernard Lown and his colleague and friend Eugene Chazov, at the so called I International Scientific Meeting for the Prevention of Nuclear War "Medicine for Peace", promoted by all the medical members of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, all the medical members of the Italian scientific Academy of Lincei, by all members of the central committee of the National Federation of Medical Associations and by the Italian Scientific Committee "Medicine for Peace".

The great, historical, unforgettable opera of our Founder, that offered his life to the medical science, to the medicine, to his family and to safe mankind and planet, at the center of Cold War between USA and Ussr, from nuclear war and what at his presence was called in Rome "Nuclear Madness", must give to all of us, even with his last recent message to the global medicine for nuclear abolition, the force and courage to continue his and our efforts for life, peace, disarmament, international cooperation, and nuclear military abolition.

May he rest in peace,

**AIMPGN (IPPNW Italy)**

[www.ippnw-italy.org](http://www.ippnw-italy.org)

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It was a profound shock to hear the tragic news. It was fortunate that I, together with Dr. Usui, then-president of JPPNW, visited Dr. Lown's home in Boston in September 2011. We were honored to receive from him directly his autographed book 'Prescription for Survival' and to be allowed to translate it into Japanese and distribute it to JPPNW members and other activists in Japan who gathered at Hiroshima Congress in 2012.

On behalf of all members of JPPNW, we send our sympathies and condolences to his family and friends.

Makoto Matsumura

President, IPPNW Japan

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We have all lost a father and a fountain of wisdom. His kind exemplary leadership and passion towards making the world a peaceful place, will keep giving long after his departure.

My deepest sympathy goes to his family, May his soul Rest In Peace

Stay safe

**Daniel Bassey**

**IPPNW Nigeria**

Filled with sadness, I share with you the mourning about Bernard Lown's death. Helmut reminded us that Bernard Lown gave us the "triangle" understanding the huge crisis of the world: How the immense nuclear threat that derives from the military industrial complex being so powerful in all the nuclear weapons states is inextricably linked to destroying our mother earth and to poverty - the deep social divide.

In the beginning of the 1980s in Germany it was Ulli Gottstein together with his wife Monika who brought us the many people in the peace movement in this wonderful and fruitful connection with Bernard Lown. I feel very grateful to be part of this worldwide movement founded by Lown and Chazov. Lown's legacy gives me the energy to link the old and new existing movements on climate change, peace and for a sustainable world going to zero nukes.

My condolences also go to Bernard Lown's family.

**Angelika Claussen**  
**IPPNW Germany**

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Lown was the founding father of IPPNW together with Yevgeni Chazov. We in PSR Finland remember Lown well since the fourth world congress of IPPNW in Helsinki 1984, where he helped us to organize the congress with endless energy and vast visions. Since then and through many congresses and meetings (again several of them in Helsinki) we have worked with him and will remember him as an inspiring and tireless advocate of a nuclear free world.

Our condolences to his family, we will carry on his work.

Kati Juva
PSR Finland

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I offer my condolences to all his family and loved ones in these difficult times.

His work and his life have been an inspiration to many of us who never had the privilege of knowing him personally, but who have, indeed, been closely acquainted with him through his work.

His vision will live on in our work and his teachings will continue to inspire us and many others who will follow. Thank you, friends, for sharing your memories. He lives on, his soul lives on in this invisible thing, this purpose that unites us, that has made us find each other and form this ever-growing family of humanitarian defenders and medical peacebuilders. Our joint work, as we continue to carry out his mission, our mission, will forever attest to this singular man's wisdom.

**Carlos Umaña**  
**IPPNW Costa Rica**

The passing of Bernard Lown is an immeasurable loss for medicine and for the world. He was a brilliant cardiologist who demanded that doctors restore the art of healing in their work. He invented the cardiac defibrillator but warned against making medicine so technical the patient would be lost in the relationship. His practice drew patients from around the world, including King Hussein of Jordan.

In the 1960's, he ignored the emerging Cold War and pursued collaborative research on sudden cardiac death in men under forty with his Soviet colleague, Eugene Chazov. In the late 1970's he told Chazov that the greatest threat to public health in the world was not sudden cardiac death, but the threat of nuclear war. Chazov agreed and in 1980, the two founded the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. At the peak of the Cold War, when there were 70,000 nuclear weapons, the idea of doctors working together across the Iron Curtain was shocking and controversial. Lown was a brilliant speaker and writer who inspired hundreds of thousands of doctors to join in the movement for nuclear disarmament. Meetings of Lown and Chazov with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev led the Soviet leader to press for nuclear disarmament with US President Ronald Reagan.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Lown, Chazov and IPPNW in 1985, at a time when public opinion regarded recognition of Soviet/American cooperation with deep skepticism. Bernard Lown's commitment to serving humanity continued through his life and is expressed in his books. "The Lost Art of Healing" should be a gift to every medical graduate today.

I was privileged to serve on the IPPNW Council and work with Dr. Lown from 1985 and watch his tireless energy and creative drive inspire IPPNW to take on major international projects. He was a demanding leader who expected the highest level of scientific integrity and dedication from all who worked with him. Even at times that he was impatient that we weren't doing enough, he was always gracious and respectful. My life was enriched by knowing him, and history was changed because he expanded his commitment to healing until it included the whole world.

**Mary-Wynne Ashford MD PhD, IPPNW Canada**  
**Co-President of IPPNW 1998-2002**

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We pay tribute to the memory of the father of our organization who made history that will enlighten and inspire humankind. He led, achieved, and saw the united international physicians and health professionals from all parts of the world as an excellent organization, collaborating with other professionals from all key sectors, scientists, experts, leaders, and community groups to prevent nuclear war and eliminate nuclear weapons.

As socially responsible health professionals we will continue working for the abolition of nuclear weapons with all weapons of mass destruction, dealing with the root causes of conflict, social exploitation, violence, and armament to achieve peace and social justice, equality, and freedom.

We respectfully extend our condolences to his family and all colleagues in IPPNW.

Derman Boztok
IPPNW-Turkey President and International Councilor

Dear friends, on my behalf and on the behalf of all of my Argentinian colleagues, I send you a fraternal hug in the face of such news. All of my past at IPPNW was made present by remembering so many moments lived with dr. Bernard Lown, with whom I shared dreams about nuclear disarmament. I was very young when I met him, he was my teacher and my inspiration.

I think the best way to honor his memory is to continue his path, as we are doing. Despite the sadness that the news brought me, I'm grateful for having met him and all who collaborate in this honorable movement .

All my best,

Norma Perel
IPPNW Argentina



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So many of our IPPNW family have already spoken so eloquently about the unpayable debt we owe to Dr. Lown. As Helmut suggested in his email, it is not at all clear that we would be here today were it not for the work of IPPNW in the 1980's. While many people contributed to that effort, Dr. Lown and Dr. Chazov were the key figures. I join all of you in mourning Dr. Lown's passing and in saluting his extraordinary courage, determination and vision.

We have lost a giant. The best tribute we can offer is to carry on with our work and finally rid the world of nuclear weapons. IPPNW helped save the world in the 1980's. Let's do it again.

**Ira Helfand**  
**IPPNW Co-President, United States**



I was shocked to have heard that Professor Bernard Lown has gone to the heaven.



As a premedical student, I studied leukemia among atomic bomb survivors. Ai drew pictures of Acute and chronic myeloid leukemia, lymphoid leukemia, and monocyte leukemia, and explained the ordinary citizens. In 1985, Prof. Bernard Lown, Dr. Chadov, DR. Vappu Taipale visited Hiroshima, and I met them again in the IPPNW World Congress held in Hiroshima Peace Park, followed by Nagasaki Peace Park. Actually, the 1989 IPPNW Congress has been the largest ever since.

I pray for Dr. Lown, and I feel he would also pray for world peace with the God in heaven.

The attached picture is white rose, grown in Rose garden in Hiroshima Peace Park.

**Katsuko Kataoka**  
**Advisor, Hiroshima Prefectural Association of Medical Doctors**  
**IPPNW Japan**

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The Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD/IPPNW India) condoles the sad demise of Dr Bernard Lown-founder Co President of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). He was a real leader, devoted to the profession who developed the first effective defibrillator. It was his concern for preservation of life and promotion of good health that he joined hands with Dr Yevgeny Chazov of USSR to organise doctors to speak up against nuclear weapons and thus founded the IPPNW. It was his hard work that won the organization Nobel Peace prize in the year 1985. He warned the global community about Humanitarian consequences of nuclear war and raised the voice for complete elimination of nuclear weapons. With his loss the world has lost a visionary and powerful devoted crusader for peace and nuclear disarmament.

Dr S S Sodan
President IDPD

Dr Arun Mitra
Senior Vice President IDPD

Dr Shakeel Ur Rahman
General Secretary IDPD

The news of the loss of Bernard Lown has been devastating.

An editorial in the British Medical Journal decades ago when IPPNW received the Nobel Peace Prize changed my whole life. I turned from obstetrics to the abolition of nuclear weapons by forming the Malaysian affiliate of IPPNW. It seemed that antenatal and postnatal healthcare was totally inadequate as long as nuclear weapons existed and threatened the total destruction of humanity in a nuclear war.

It was an enormous privilege to have been involved in the work of IPPNW and to have been inspired by its leaders, Bernard Lown and Evgueni Chazov.

I would like to send my condolences to the Lown family and would be grateful for their addresses.

Thank you. Michael, for all that you have also done for nuclear disarmament.

Sincerely,

Ron McCoy
IPPNW Malaysia

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Dear Anne and all family members.

You cannot imagine the sorrow with which I received the sad news of the passing of your beloved father, the infatigable co founder of IPPNW, the unforgettable teacher in our professional life and the exemplary model in our role as responsible citizens of this troubled world of marvels, joys, regrets and sorrows.

I remember the years of wonderful bedside clinical teachings at the PBBH, the unending afternoons of reckoning about the unresolved doubts at the Harvard Laboratories, the many evenings at Newton, preparing a paper for publication, always with the caring and understanding support of your mother Louise, and the kindness with which I was received at your grandparents home at Sebago lake where we did some canoeing.

It was your father, who rightly and confidently signaled to us the potentials and possibilities of this world if we were to live guided by the premise "never whisper in the presence of wrong", with the implicit understanding the road ahead would be difficult and will require tireless labor to build a more just society.

It was because of his contagious enthusiasm that I funded the Guatemalan affiliate of IPPNW whose membership was presented and accepted during the International Congress of IPPNW in Moscow in 1987, and was to be the beginning of multiple participations and presentations about the invisible and denied societal damage of the nuclear arms race, the mistaken concept of deterrence and the risk of nuclear war, at national meetings and regional and international congresses during the ensuing ten years.

I am not exaggerating if I confide to you, that almost daily, the remembrance of your father's example and teachings pervade our daily common endeavours as a guiding beacon pointing to the ethical way, be it in the caring for illness that should be done with love and respect, the practice of academic and public medicine, or the assumption of a citizen's responsibilities with the required critical thinking necessary for the construction of a just and inclusive society.

Just a week ago I came across the enclosed picture that could have been taken around 25 yrs ago, during a visit to your parents home in Newton and that I was going to send it to him !

Dear Anne, please convey to Fredy and Naomi that I still remember them, and to all the children and grandchildren, our words of love, comfort and forever thankfulness for all we received from your family.

**Carlos and Constance**  
**IPPNW Guatemala**



Sad, very sad news. When I go back to the 1980s, a memory comes to my mind: Bernard Lown and Louise Lown visiting Toledo (Spain), the city of conciliation of the three cultures (Christians, Muslims and Jews). He was indeed a man of peace and tolerance. We will miss him much. Health and peace.

**Aurora Bilbao**  
**Bilbao - Basque Country – IPPNW Spain**

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Dear friends of our IPPNW family world wide,

We have lost the initiator and co-founder of our IPPNW who had „missioned“ all pioneers of our movement in the early eighties. I was invited to take part at a preparatory meeting in Ascot /UK in October 1981 with Bernard Lown und Evgeny Chazov and representatives from US, Russia, UK, France, Hungary, Sweden and me from West Germanv. A large IPPNW congress was planned to be held in Cambridge in 1982. I had been afraid of mixing in politics but Lown convinced me that doctors must not care for their single patients only if an annihilating epidemic, a nuclear war, is threatening.

I started to help build up the German IPPNW affiliate from that day on. At the second IPPNW world congress in Cambridge our West German affiliate participated with 8 members.. This example under the guidance of Lown in close cooperation with Chazov became a great success. It was the proof that close cooperation between countries with different political opinions and belonging to different blocs is possible, if the safety of humanity is the common goal.

From now on Lown was travelling to Moscow and many other countries several times per year and very often made a stop in Frankfurt in our house. He and Louise became our closest friends and almost part of our family. We stayed in their house in Newton and at their summer house at the Lake Sebago in Maine several times.

I cannot write here about Lowns great merits as life saving doctor (e.g. founder of the defibrillator) and about the inspiring speeches at the world and European congresses and at the UNESCO and Nobel Peace Prize events, all this is part of my own life. In all the forty years we kept in contact. In his last handwritten letter to us on November2020 he wrote :“ I believe the physician Peace movement has had a permanent effect on the struggle for a livable world. It educated inactive Peace movements of the power they possess. Once they have a feel of this power it can not be readily taken away. It becomes a powerful legacy“

And in January 2021 Bernard Lown wrote „The support of physicians for the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the“Five demands of Back from the Brink“ would alert the Nation to the threat of nuclear weapoons and would highlight the role of physicians in reducing this threat through public activism“.(New En.J.Mred.2021)

We will and must never forget this great humanist and friend !

Ulrich Gottsetin
IPPNW Germany

Dear IPPNW family,

It's so meaningful to read reflections and memories of Bernard Lown today. I remember well the day I met him at his clinic in Boston in 2009. I was a second year resident, and was the deputy chair of the IPPNW board at the time. He was so enthusiastically encouraging, and asked me all about my career plans and aspirations. He tried (unsuccessfully) to talk me out of a life in neurosurgery, pointing out the benefits of cardiology practice. Standing next to the defibrillator he invented he explained the importance of the use of direct current in cardioversion. The example of this towering giant of the medical peace movement, whose work to save human lives from both nuclear disaster and sudden cardiac death has certainly saved millions and probably saved us all, has stayed with me ever since.

Through my tears I return to what Ira said: the best way to honour Bernard Lown is to get rid of nuclear weapons. Together, let's finish the job.

Ruth Mitchell
MAPW – IPPNW Australia

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Deeply sad for the loss of such a great man. Few individuals are able to give so much to humanity as Dr Lown. But also in the middle of the sorrow it brings joy to see a such a long life, full of blessings and convictions of what is right, that we must celebrate always for his teachings and legacy.

**Jans Fromow**  
**IPPNW Mexico**

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What a sad news!

I looked forward to the day I will meet Bernard Lown in person and now the reality that this dream has eluded young activist like me is really a sad development. I will take solace in his great work in our world ; his write-ups & his books ; and his life.

May the soul of the founding father of IPPNW rest in peace.

My condolences to his family and loved ones

David O. Onazi
International Councilor IPPNW Nigeria
Board member IPPNW 2012 -2014

Thank you for passing on this very sad news. We've lost a real giant, one of those people who has left an indelible historic mark on the world.

One of my most treasured books is the collection of excerpts from Dr Lown's speeches on the prevention of nuclear war, "Never whisper in the presence of wrong". The title is from his address to the 1988 IPPNW Congress in Montreal, in which he said "*If we are to prevail, we must never delegate in the presence of challenge, and never whisper in the presence of wrong*". Good guiding words for our movement.

Condolences from MAPW Australia to all of Dr Lown's family and other loved ones.

Sue Wareham
MAPW – IPPNW Australia

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It is also a great sadness for French Affiliates. Bernard Lown was many times in Paris and he was the genesis for our affiliate: AMFPGN.

IN MEMORIAM, good by our founder  
We send our deepest condolences to his family.

**Dr. ABRAHAM BEHAR MCU PH HON.**  
**Président de l'AMFPGN**  
**former co président of IPPNW**

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It is really great loss for all of us, who knew Bernard Lown, who assisted him in IPPNW activity. And I was really lucky to be Co-President of IPPNW with him, and had the rare chance to live in his hospitable house a whole week with my wife Ljuba,

He was a real leader, devoted to profession , who wrote a lot of wonderful books for physicians (translated to Russian).

We lost the father of our movement. May he rest in peace.

Sergey Kolesnikov
Co-president of Russian affiliate

Dear IPPNW community,

Bernard Lown was a phenomenon. He was a never tired critic of the medical community, a clinical innovator and a man of peace. His persistence created our movement during the Cold War. His attitude was that nothing is impossible to achieve, if people were committed enough. His death is a great loss for us all.

We visited him always when in the USA. He was a dear friend, and at the same time formidable when demanding us to do more, to act more. He always had new ideas, new stories from his past and present. He knew personally many of the real decision makers of the world. Without fear or hesitation he confronted them in issues of war and peace. He demanded us , us all in all peace movements, to do the same.

We send our deepest condolences to his family. We are his family in the ever needed peace activism.

With love,

Ilkka and Vappu Taipale
IPPNW/PSR Finland

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Bernard Lown was one of the truly great.

His created the first effective cardiac defibrillator which has saved millions of lives. He made many great contributions to cardiology.

He saw that the threat of a nuclear war to the health and survival of mankind was of even greater importance than that of cardiac death. The prevention of the nuclear omnicide was also a medical obligation. He saw that cooperation of doctors in the Soviet Union and in USA and the world was needed and possible.

The influence of Lown and Yegeniy Chazov, the Soviet co-founder of IPPNW, on public opinion in Russia was deep. We in the Swedish affiliate of IPPNW made visits at least annually to Moscow and Leningrad. "Dr Chazov and Dr Lown have told us that no one can be protected in a nuclear war, We will all die" said people we met. The Soviet TV audiences saw American doctors who just like them wanted to cooperate to save the world from the nuclear Armageddon.

Michael Gorbachev learnt, from Lown and Chazov, that a nuclear war could mean the end of all human civilization. He and Ronald Reagan agreed to abolish all nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the friends of the nukes won.

Through the 1990s we had the possibility to end the nuclear era. We failed. We still do not understand the reason. Now we try to do what we see as possible. We are not able to do what you, Bernard Lown, did, unite the doctors of the world against the final pandemic, the nuclear war.

Now we try to do what we see as possible to unite the doctors of the world against the final pandemic, the nuclear war.

Thank you for what you did for us, for the world.

**Gunnar Westberg**  
**SLMK, Swedish affiliate of IPPNW**

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Dear friends,

There is so much to say about Dr. Lown.

He „implanted“ in me the conviction that change is possible, that it is our personal responsibility to make ground for change, justice and peace. And despite all the resistance we get it is still in our hands to achieve a world in peace without nuclear weapons if we only work hard enough.

His reflections on our roles as physicians laid out in the book „The lost art of Healing“ has been guidance for my approach as an internist for many years.

Interestingly he left the IPPNW leadership at a relatively young age in the 90ies. But he continued to be available for participation in selected IPPNW events.

It is a pity for all the people to come that they will not have the opportunity to meet and „get infected“ for a lifelong IPPNW engagement by this man who was a nothing less than a light figure in our struggle for a world without nuclear weapons.

It will be on us to re-unite and to move forward with our cause. We owe this to Bernard Lown.

We will miss him.

Dr. med. Lars Pohlmeier
Former Chair of the International Board of Directors
Member of the German IPPNW board of directors

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A great sadness to know this, we really admire the tremendous work and commitment of Dr. Lown, this is a terrible loss for our world and anti nuclear activism. He was a real activist and inspiration for me.

Rest in Peace Dr Lown.

**Dra. Emperatriz Crespín**  
**El Salvador**

So sad news!

He was speaker in the birth ceremony of the Greek affiliate of IPPNW in Athens 1993 and he spoke me about it during Mexico Congress 1995.

He is an inspiration for all of us and we promise to continue his example . He was lucky to see on January 22 the first step of the fulfillment of his efforts.

My condolences to his family and all our friends in USA for this great loss

<https://ippnwgr.blogspot.com/2021/02/bernard-lown-ippnw.html>

**Maria Arvaniti Sotiripoulou**  
**Μαρία Αρβανίτη -Σωτηροπούλου**  
**IPPNW Greece**

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Yes, we have lost our father of our movement who along with Eugene Chazov will be remembered, both in the peace movement and in cardiology with the humanitarian basis for both. As doctors, we look after our patients but we must also prevent the worst disease, that of nuclear weapons that would destroy civilization as we know it. My deepest condolences go out to Ariel and his three children. He will be remembered. I enjoyed reading his autobiography years ago.
In Peace,

Richard Denton, MD Emeritus in Canada
IPPNW Canada

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This is a sad news for me and our Affiliates. Professor Bernard Lown was a distinguished physician and an Apostle of Global peace. His achievements speak for themselves.

We are beneficial of his generous and selfless humanity that brought knowledge to medicine and peace to the world.

Please kindly extend our condolences to his family.

May his gentle soul rest in peace

**Ime A .John**  
**Co- President, 2006-2010**  
**IPPNW Nigeria**

This is indeed very sad news. Please extend our heartfelt condolences from NVMP Physicians for Peace/IPPNW Netherlands.

He will continue to inspire all of us to intensify our efforts for his and our ultimate goal: a nuclear weapon free world!!

With sad but warm regards,

**Peter Bujis**  
**IPPNW Netherlands**

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### **In Memory of Dr. Bernard Lown, Physician to Us All**

Published on February 19, 2021

**By Andrew Kanter**  
**Asst. Prof. in Clinical Biomedical Informatics & Clinical Epidemiology at Columbia Univ. / Chief Medical Officer at IMO**

In my **last article** I talked about how my work with **Intelligent Medical Objects (IMO)**, sustainable development and abolition of nuclear weapons (**IPPNW/PSR/ICAN**) comes together. It was about bringing people together to solve tough problems that impact all of us using technology to communicate different perspectives. I am continuing this theme because this week we lost a great human being. Dr. Bernard Lown (Bernie) was one of my most important role models. **He died this week at the age of 99** after living an incredible life of sacrifice and noble effort (literally) to save Humanity (on both small and large scale) and IPPNW remembered him [here](#).

I met Dr. Lown through my work in Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) and especially IPPNW, where he was co-founder and co-president for many years. In my earlier post, I described the importance of the physicians' movement for prevention of nuclear war and climate change and how it had affected me. In the early 80's, during a time of severe Cold War feelings and talk about winnable nuclear war, it was PSR and IPPNW's work around the medical consequences of nuclear war that changed the discussion making it clear there could be no winners in a nuclear war.



Prior to receiving the 1985 Nobel Prize for Peace, IPPNW received the **1984 Beyond War Award** from an organization that I also worked with). Presented in a precedent-breaking live satellite "spacebridge" between San Francisco and Moscow, Dr. Lown in SF and Dr. Yevgeny Chazov in Moscow simultaneously received the award in front of American and Soviet audiences--highlighting that the US and USSR could work together. Vladimir Posner MC'd from Moscow and Richard Rathbun from SF. Dr. Lown's speech was tremendously moving and helped me shift my local efforts in PSR to PSR's international Federation, IPPNW. The use of



satellites by Beyond War for the award presentation foreshadowed Dr. Lown's interest in them several years later.

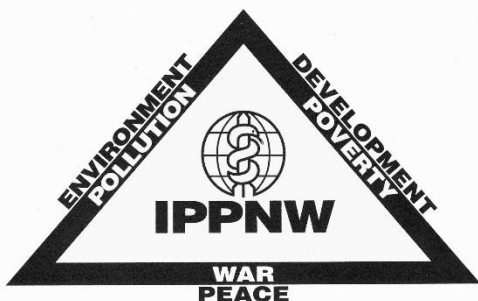
As the first full-time medical student liaison to IPPNW, I spent a lot of time in the IPPNW Boston offices. They were situated in the old lying-in hospital across the street from Harvard Medical School (HMS). I had deferred my admission to HMS specifically to help IPPNW. Working closely with Dr. Lown, I could see his commitment and his unwavering passion for helping people. Many know Dr. Lown, an eminent cardiologist from his work saving cardiac patients, the **Lown-Ganong-Levine Syndrome**, his development of the **direct current defibrillator**, or his teaching at Harvard Medical School (a colleague described his teaching voice as "rabbinical"). However, I had the pleasure of witnessing his role modeling as a physician at the global level.



Initially it was his, and a few other physicians', relationships with Soviet doctors like Dr. Chazov that formed the basis of IPPNW. It created trust and collaboration that helped reduce fear in both societies and bring down the East-West divide. I tried to emulate that when I worked with Soviet medical students, Vladimir Popov and Vladimir Garkavenko to foster exchanges with Western students in 1985 and 1986 and later in 1990.

In 1987, Dr. Lown formed SatelLife to improve communications between health care providers in the developing world. At a time before internet and cell phones SatelLife created HealthNet which used low Earth orbit satellites to provide a form of email communication at low cost launching two satellites in 1991 and 1993. Being addicted to communicating while traveling in Africa, I had the opportunity to take advantage of HealthNet's store and forward technology to send messages to my friends and colleagues in those early days.

In 1990, while at the Harvard School of Public Health, I worked again with my Soviet colleagues to bring together health students from the East (2nd Moscow Medical School and the Baltics) the West (Harvard School of Public Health) and South (University of Nairobi) to try to work together on a public health project in Kenya. Called Public Health and Diplomacy (PHD), this project highlighted some of the challenges we would face in bringing together a global effort for peace and development. It confirmed to me that the divide between East and West was actually much smaller than between the geopolitical North and South.



It was at the IPPNW World Congress in Mexico City in 1993, the first IPPNW Congress held in a Developing country, that the organization and Dr. Lown formally combined environment, peace and development, introducing the IPPNW triangle. The triangle had at its base the preservation of peace, but its sides showed the importance of protecting the environment and eliminating poverty. This immediately

resonated with me and my experiences working to bridge both the East-West and the North-South divide.

Dr. Lown was always a strong supporter of the interaction between peace, health and development, but never took his eye off the most immediate threat to our common survival: nuclear weapons. He even co-authored a commentary in the prestigious [New England Journal of Medicine](#) on the renewed threat of Nuclear Holocaust only weeks before his death.

For much of the first decade of IPPNW, Drs. Lown and Chazov would take the opportunity during the World Congresses of IPPNW to meet with world leaders and other dignitaries furthering the educational



message of IPPNW. Traditionally, Dr. Lown's aid-de-camp during these meetings would be Dr. Lachlan Forrow. Dr. Forrow was one of the first medical students that took part in IPPNW in its earliest days and his role continued to be quite influential over the years. During these Congresses, Dr. Forrow would assist Dr. Lown by managing his hectic schedule, helping to arrange the meetings with leaders, and otherwise be supportive. One year, after the birth of his child, Dr. Forrow was unable to join Dr. Lown for the World Congress in Hiroshima, and I had the honor to take his place. It was remarkable to sit in on these meetings with Dr. Lown and witness his passion in action.

He never stopped working, and his exhortations to the rest of us to never give up, I took to heart (the recent entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which I discussed in my prior article was one vindication of never giving up).

Although IPPNW continues to focus primarily on nuclear weapons and armed violence, I understood Dr. Lown's vision to be a wholistic one, based on the understanding that true health can only be achieved through a lasting peace, protection of our environment, and reduced disparities between peoples. In his book [Prescription for Survival: A doctor's journey to end nuclear madness](#), he calls on all of us, not governments, to stand up for our common survival. Physicians might have a particular responsibility to speak out for the health of their patients and communities, but *all of us need to act on each other's behalf*. We cannot wait for governments to lead us, we must demand a sustainable, healthy and safe planet not just for us, but for the unborn generations to come.

Dr. Lown's [acceptance speech](#) for the 1984 Beyond War award concluded with a fundamentally optimistic view:

*We are but transient passengers on this planet Earth. It does not belong to us. We are not free to doom generations yet unborn. We are not at liberty to erase humanity's past or dim its future. Social systems do not endure for an eternity. Only life can lay claim to uninterrupted continuity. This continuity is sacred. We physicians who shepherd human life from birth to death are aware of the resiliency, the*

*creativity, and the courage that human beings possess. We have an abiding faith in what humanity creates, humanity can control. This perception provides optimistic purpose in reversing the direction of humankind's potential tragic destiny.*

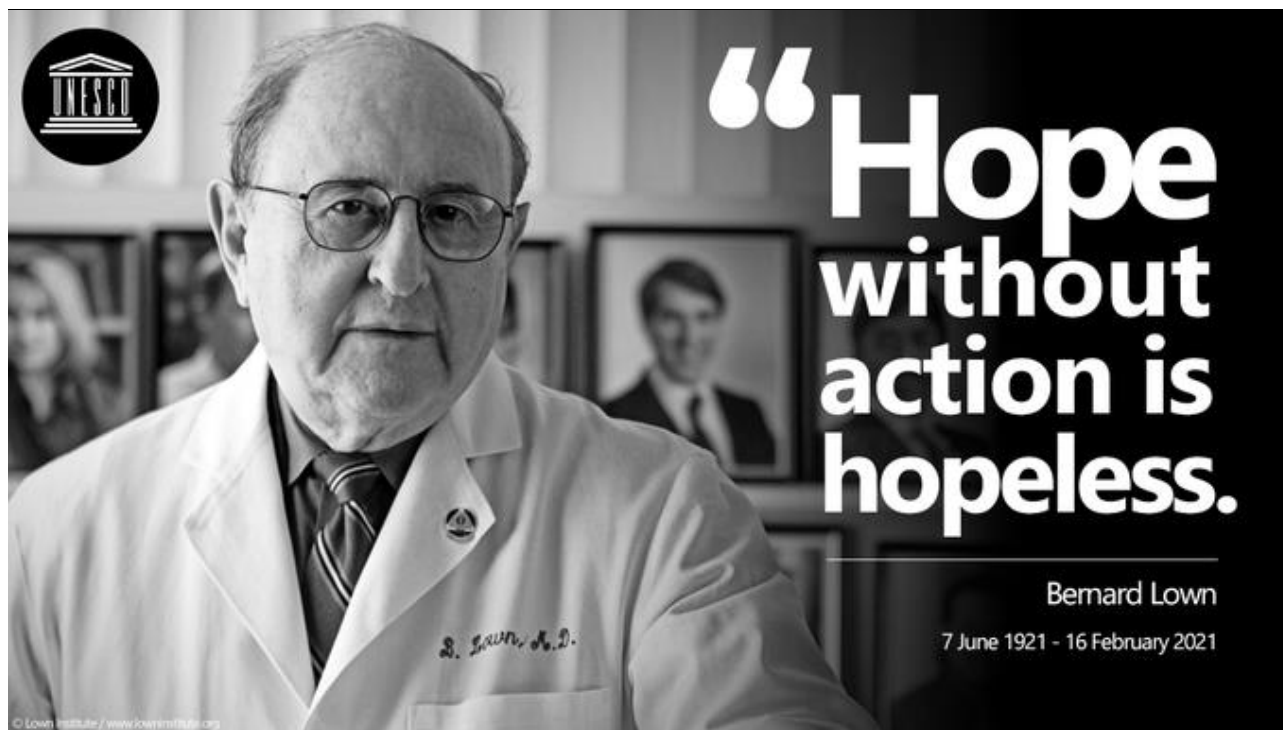
I am so grateful for the opportunity to have had role models like Dr. Bernard Lown and the many other physicians he was associated with. I am deeply sorry that the world has lost one so dedicated to the preservation and flourishing of our collective lives, but I am confident that his legacy lives on in the hearts of many today. Mine included.



Many took to Twitter to remember Dr. Lown. Here are a few examples:

#### [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#)

We mourn the passing of Dr. Bernard Lown. A renowned cardiologist & antiwar activist, he was the co-founder of [@IPPNW](#) & received on its behalf the UNESCO Prize for [#Peace](#) Education & the Nobel Peace Prize. Let us be inspired by his ideals of peace and a nuclear threat-free world.



### [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#)

Our deepest condolences to the family and friends of Dr. Bernard Lown, a renowned doctor, anti-nuclear weapons activist and co-founder of [@IPPNW](#) who will be dearly missed.



### [PSR-USA](#)

Remembering Dr. Bernard Lown, PSR co-founder - Physicians for Social Responsibility

For the second time in recent months, we at PSR are mourning the passing of one of our founders with the loss of Dr. Bernard Lown. We extend our sincere condolences to Dr. Lown's family and loving...[psr.org](http://psr.org)

### [Arms Control Association](#)

Bernard Lown, inventive heart doctor, co-founder of [@IPPNW](#) & PSR, co-recipient of 1985 Nobel Peace Prize, dies at 99 <https://nytimes.com/2021/02/16/health/bernard-lown-dead.html?smid=tw-share...> "Eliminating the nuclear menace" he wrote "is a historic challenge questioning whether we humans have a future on planet earth" [#nuclearban](#)



## [MAPW Australia](#)

"If we are to prevail, we must never delegate in the presence of challenge, and never whisper in the presence of wrong." Vale Dr Bernard Lown [@IPPNW](#) co-founder. Condolences from [@MAPW\\_Australia](#) members to Dr Lown's family, friends and colleagues.

## [IPPNW Germany](#)

He would not only have deserved the Nobel Peace Prize, but also the Nobel Prize for Medicine: The IPPNW mourns the loss of its initiator, the cardiologist and anti-nuclear weapons activist Bernard Lown, who died yesterday at the age of 99. More about him here: <https://ippnw.de/der-verein/geschichte-der-ippnw/persoenlichkeiten/artikel/de/bernard-lown.html...>

A portrait of Prof. Bernard Lown, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie, looking slightly to the right. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor event with red umbrellas.

**„Worte sind das mächtigste Hilfsmittel, das ein Arzt besitzt.“**

„Words are the most powerful tool a doctor possesses.“

**Die IPPNW trauert um Prof. Bernard Lown.**

The IPPNW logo, which consists of a globe with a dollar sign inside, and the text "IPPNW" below it.