

out her.

She herself gave us the answer. From Psalm 39, with her afterthought: "...for I am a stranger with thee, a sojourner, as all my fathers were... *Mothers, too, I feel compelled to add.*" And finally, from her "My Final Hour" statement to a Trent audience:

*The death of the individual is the end which we will all one day meet, but in the knowledge that our children and their children will... go on, that the great works of humankind will endure in art, in recorded history, in medicine, in the sciences and philosophies and technologies that our species has devel-*

*oped with devotion and a sense of vocation throughout the ages. The individual is the leaf on the tree. The leaves fall but the tree endures... I would not claim to pass on any secret of life, for there is none, or any wisdom except the passionate plea of caring.*

# Margaret Laurence, Peace Worker

*by George Ignatieff*

I met Margaret Laurence through reading her books and serving with her on the Board of that determined and dedicated organization, Energy Probe.

Samuel Johnson once said: "I cannot see that lectures can do so much good as reading books from which lectures are taken." Margaret's books breathed a reverence for life and individual responsibility. It was natural that this reverence should be converted into a recognition that the human race must not suffer extinction through uncontrolled competitive technology.

The idea that profit and loss should dictate what was done in the utilization of nuclear machines, rather than giving priority to reverence for life and the safeguards they required, made of Margaret a dedicated as well as well-informed advocate for control of the atom in its various

manifestations.

The proposal that tritium, one of the essential components of hydrogen bombs as well as of the more common-place nuclear bombs, should become material for trade between Canada and the U.S.A., in order to reduce the tremendous overhead cost of the new nuclear reactors being built by Ontario Hydro on the basis of paper assurances about their "peaceful" uses, made Margaret as concerned as I am. Her last and most forceful appeal on behalf of Energy Probe on this issue represents an example of her insistence that reverence for life requires a fresh mental attitude to replace the unquestioning certitude of some of our decision-makers that threatens to permit civilization to drift towards nuclear disaster on the basis of assurances that everything is "under control," when it isn't.

Margaret Laurence's dedicated mind will be numbered among Canada's immortals as long as there are those who share her reverence for life, and her respect for language.

In her final message to "What Peace Means To Me" [a collection of essays by recipients of the Order of Canada, published by External Affairs in connection with the 1986 celebration of the International Year of Peace], Margaret wrote: "Peace: a word reverberating with meanings, achievable meanings." But she warned that "politicians often use words not to clarify but to conceal what they mean to do. Militarists often use jargon in perhaps the meanest way of all, to obscure the appalling meaning of their statements." Timely wisdom from Margaret Laurence.

## HEATHER CADSBY

Evelyn Hart was dancing, I was crying,  
and my mother was unpacking her  
china.

She moved like a leaf loose in wind  
a shooting star. Some chance,  
to be sitting in the audience watching  
just after

I'd been sitting with my mother  
as movers carried her life to a truck  
and the old house was gone to us.

Something like smoke blew in from the  
wings  
covered a grave, and she danced like  
nothing I've seen.

My mother had said, It's chilly with the  
door open.

My sister was waiting at the new place,  
I was checking empty rooms and  
Evelyn was rehearsing or sewing  
ribbons  
on her slippers. The lambswool is still

in place  
in my old toe shoes. My mother's  
circular stitching  
still intact.

I was fifteen and dancing with big  
dreams  
and my mother saying this and that  
which made me cry for truth.  
*Giselle*, for instance, as it was today  
after my mother moved.