



Paul N. Temple

Part 1

By Dickson Buxton and David Zweig

Paul Temple may best be known as the man who co-founded the [Institute for Noetic Sciences](#). Beyond this signal achievement, though, he is a mixture of many marvelous contradictions. He is immaculately polite, but warm and accommodating. He is a combat veteran of World War II who has lent his talents to important efforts for peace and international understanding. He graduated high school during the New Deal and his youngest daughter is in high school. He is a Harvard-trained lawyer who has been exploring the boundaries of consciousness.



He spent much of his career in the oil business and now is operating two companies with tremendous technological promise to cleanse our rivers of poison.

His achievements are too many to emanate from anything but brilliance and hard work, but while reading his oral autobiography, you'll notice his favorite phrase is, "It was my good fortune..."

Indeed, fortune has been good to him. One cannot help but think, however, that this is a reciprocal love affair preordained by the sort of cosmic double-entry accounting system that IONS might study: Paul has put so much Good into the world that the universe smiles upon him as its reluctant favored child.

IONS began before the World Business Academy. Both shared the DNA of Willis Harman. In Part 2 of this interview Paul explains how, after almost 20 years, he has come to join the Academy. He appeared at the 2005 Global MindChange Awards like a wonderful long-lost relative with whom one shares a bond whose warmth defies his two decade-long absence.

This interview is not so much an exposition of Paul's most profound thoughts, as it is a character sketch of a rare person.

"Please be sure to tell the readers," Paul requested, "that this was an interview, and you did assign me to talk about myself."

As ever, Paul dispatched his assignment with distinction.



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I certainly have had what may be referred to as a long and checkered career. It involves a lot of different things over the years. I have no objection at all about talking to you about it if you are interested.

I was born in Cincinnati where I spent the next two or three weeks. My father was a traveling salesman, and my mother was with him when I chose to appear in this world. They happened to be in Cincinnati, so that's where I was born and I've never really been back. I lived most of my life in Denver, although I lived in several other places too as a youngster: in Los Angeles and Long Beach for a year or two. I went to school in Portland and Seattle and lived for several years in Des Moines, Iowa, where my father was state manager for an insurance company there.

Anyhow, when I was in 8th grade we moved back to Denver which had been the family home. We stayed there through my high school years. I graduated from East High School in Denver in 1940. My mother wanted me to stay home and go to Denver University, but for reasons that are no longer quite clear in my memory, I was determined if possible to go to one of the better known schools in the East. I applied to Columbia University, and they awarded me a regional Rocky Mountain scholarship. I was all prepared to go to Columbia when I was approached by the father of one of my high school buddies who was the representative for Princeton in the Rocky Mountain region. He said, "I hear you are going to go to Columbia. Why don't you consider going to Princeton?" So the final result was that I received the Rocky Mountain regional scholarship to Princeton in the class of 1944 and was driven back there by my mother and father in the fall of 1940.

I managed to make ends meet by waiting tables in the Commons and was in charge of the Undergraduate Student Directory. I went around and sold ads to most of the stores up and down Nassau Street. My scholarship covered the tuition, and my waiting on tables covered the food. As a sophomore I managed to get a job as a proctor in one of the freshman dormitories off campus, and that covered the housing. I was there when World War II started.

On December 7, 1941, I remember the great consternation of all the freshmen in this house. They all came around to ask me what did it mean that the Japanese had sunk so many of our ships in Pearl Harbor. I didn't have a clue, but I tried to console them as best I could. As a result, Princeton went onto a wartime basis almost immediately -- classes all year 'round. They also opened a Naval Officers Training group, V12, so I enrolled in that. We were in Navy whites and bell-bottom trousers. As a result, I managed to complete all of the courses necessary for a degree, except for a few, and then when I went directly from Princeton to Columbia Midshipmen's School (they turned out 120-Day Wonders), Princeton gave me credit for a couple of the courses I took at Columbia, such as navigation and damage control. So after the war I never had to go back to Princeton to finish my studies. I received a degree in the mail! I never participated in a graduation ceremony, but I have





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that certificate hanging around in my office today.

I went directly into active service from Columbia as a shavetail ensign USNR in February of 1944. I reported to Norfolk where boarded a [Landing Ship Tank](#) (LST) that joined a convoy heading for the Mediterranean.

I remember that I turned 21 halfway in mid-Atlantic. I felt very lucky because I had been sent to Italy whereas most of my classmates had gone to the South Pacific. I never found out how I was so fortunate.

I had an opportunity to discover what the war was all about one night in the Mediterranean off the coast of Algeria when our convoy was attacked by a group of German torpedo bombers. It was quite exciting. They were dropping flares toward the starboard land side of our convoy, and then coming in and dropping torpedoes on the port side. My ship was in the last row of this convoy. One of these torpedo bombers came in and obviously didn't see our ship. Its wing hit our mast. It knocked the mast over about 30 degrees. The plane spun in the air and then machine guns on the starboard side managed to catch it, and it immediately went into the water. A few seconds later, a Dutch corvette plowed right through the airplane. Meanwhile, the only people injured on our ship were one gunner who got his fingers caught in a machine gun and another man who fell off one of the fairly low turrets and hurt his back. Aside from that, no one was hurt, not even the captain, who was up on the bridge next to the mast that was knocked over. Of course, the plane cut the wires, and we lost all of our communications, identification and radar.

So the ship was floundering around until the sun rose in the east. There, silhouetted in the sun was a British heavy cruiser with all of its guns trained on us. The signalman got on his hand-operated mechanism and managed to identify us before they blew us out of the water. The cruiser came up to us and led us back to the convoy. The convoy then went into Lake Bizerte in Tunisia. From there I managed to transfer to another LCI and made my way to Naples. We came into Naples Harbor as Mt. Vesuvius in a suburb of Naples was still smoking from a recent eruption. I reported to a landing craft group in Possuoli, a suburb east of Naples. For some reason the commander of this group of eight LCIs appointed me communications officer for this little flotilla. Its job was to supply the beachhead at Anzio that already had been established. That was quite something. I made a number of trips to Anzio, but my general quarters station was to go below and put my arms around the safe with the communication codes. If the ship ever got hit by the railroad guns that were sometimes shooting at us during our runs to Anzio from Naples, I had to make sure that the codes all went to the bottom of the sea. I suppose I would have gone with them. That was the only way to get them down there!

While on this kind of duty I caught the mumps and spent a couple of weeks in an army hospital in Naples. I think I caught them because I had inspected the LST on the way across the Atlantic. There were a number of seamen who had been exposed to the mumps before they reported on board. Just walking through that isolated compartment was enough to infect me. That was an interesting experience because, having the mumps, they wouldn't let you walk around in the hospital. The mumps would sometimes migrate to unpleasant places. Practically every night we would first hear bombs dropping, and one

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came so close to the hospital that the glass of water on the little table next to my bed started waltzing around and fell on the floor. The sequence of events was that the bombs would drop, the anti-aircraft guns would start shooting, and then later on the air raid warning siren would go off. They had it exactly backwards.

Somehow we survived that experience and I went back to the little flotilla of LCIs. Before I came to the hospital my knee had become swollen. They took X-rays and found out I had pieces of loose cartilage in the joint. Therefore, to my surprise my term of service in the landing craft proved to be much briefer than I had expected. I found myself on an airplane back to a base hospital in North Africa, in Oran, Algeria, on the edge of the Sahara desert. I spent several months there. They decided that they didn't have anyone capable of operating on my particular problem so eventually they gave me orders to fly back to a naval hospital in St. Albans, Long Island.

My shipmates were envious as could be. I felt bad about it at first. When I got back and told the story to my parents, my father named my knee "Woodrow." President Wilson had run for re-election on the slogan, "He kept us out of war."

I did have my knee operated on, and they never sent me back to Active Duty. Instead they sent me out to Glenwood Springs, Colorado, to the old Hotel Colorado, and I spent the winter of 44/45 there as a patient. My only activity was to get my knee massaged every day. I then took a bath in the hot spring pool. Two or three times a week I taught a class to the seamen on national politics and things of that nature. Finally I was surveyed back to duty. My orders came back to the effect that my services in a limited capacity (which is what they recommended) were not required, and "you are hereby honorably discharged." Again, here I was in mid-1945 totally unexpectedly out of the Navy. I went back to Denver and got a job in the Remington Arms plant making fuses. I was a safety inspector until the war was over.

Meanwhile, I had been inspired with the thought of going to law school by my friend, Jim Bell, from Princeton. I applied to Harvard Law School under the GI Bill, whereby the government would pay my tuition. Somewhat to my surprise, I was accepted. In August 1945, I had married Karen Borgstrom who lived in New Jersey. By the time I got out of the Navy we had a new little daughter. We got into our car in Denver and prayed everything would hold together as we drove to Cambridge, MA. There were three of us starting a new experience on the East Coast in the fall of '45. I was there until February of 1948 on an accelerated basis, passing through law school. I got very interested in the Moot Court competition. The students organized themselves into groups and gave each of them a name after some famous jurist. We had a competition each semester. Again, to my great surprise and delight, my partner and I won the Ames Competition in appellate argument. As a result, Jack Sutro, who was the partner in a large law firm in San Francisco, came to the law school to interview potential candidates to join their firm. He interviewed me and then hired me.

When I graduated from law school in early 1948, we drove to San Francisco. We lived for a while in a little hotel in Mill Valley, and I went to work for Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro. We had driven from Massachusetts to San Francisco by





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way of New Orleans where we attended Mardi Gras and saw what an amazing event that is!

I was assigned to a partner who spent full time working for Standard Oil of California (as Chevron was known in those days). Because of my experience in appellate argument in the law school, I had thought that I might get involved in that kind of activity in a large law firm. But no, the partner I worked for spent most of his time reviewing debentures and other legal documents. He was what they call a "flyspecker." So I also spent most of my time reviewing legal documents for Standard Oil of California. I was not terribly enthralled by that kind of law practice, so when the law firm opened a branch office in Washington, DC, in early 1951 I spoke with a partner who was going back there, and he was apparently glad to take me along. I went with this partner back to Washington, DC. They doubled my salary. I had started at the glorious sum of \$250 a month. They had raised the starting salary from \$200 a month because I told them I just couldn't afford, with a wife and a daughter, to live on \$200 a month. We lived on the lower slopes of Mt. Tam, a downstairs duplex apartment in a house for \$60 a month. I commuted by bus from Mill Valley into San Francisco.

There I was in Washington, DC, helping the resident partner open an office. I took the D.C. bar exam and had become a member of the bar of California. I then became the only one in our office who was a member of the bar in Washington, DC. I had to handle anything that required going to court, as I was the only one qualified. Thus, I got involved in the negligence automobile accident cases that had a lot of human interest.

During my stay in D.C., I met a man named [Abraham Vereide](#) who had been a Norwegian minister who had come to the United States and settled in Seattle, where they were having a lot of trouble at that time with the Communist-dominated union. He had organized a group of men that became a prayer group. They met and tried to work together to try to solve this serious problem in Seattle. He also worked for Goodwill Industries. He had been ordained as a Methodist minister. He had been working for the down and outs, but it occurred to him that the up and outs had problems too. He decided to move to Washington to see what he could do to create a leadership led by God. Eventually it happened.

I had the good fortune one morning to go to a meeting with my friend Jim Bell. He said, "Come with me. We're going to a prayer breakfast." I said, "Prayer breakfast?! You must be kidding!" He said, "No. Come, you'll really enjoy it."

So I went off with him to Fellowship House. I found myself seated at a table with ten men, and I remember [Sen. Gillette from Iowa](#) was there. The man who was a moderator that morning was a three-star general from the Pentagon in charge of military propaganda. I remember listening to him as he was agonizing over the fact that he was a believer in Christ, but his job required him to spin information in a way that was really distorted. He had to put the best foot forward. His faith told him he needed to tell the truth, but his job required him to put a spin on things that didn't always come out exactly truth-



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fully.

In that one breakfast meeting I experienced a relationship among men that was compelling. It was the finest spiritual relationship among men who hardly knew each other that I had ever experienced. I got hooked on this kind of meeting and have continued to attend prayer breakfasts through the years.

I had only been in Washington a year and a half or so when I got an offer, again at twice the salary I was making, to go to work for the [Celanese Corporation](#) in New York City. I became counsel for foreign relations for Celanese and moved to New Jersey. We lived most of the time in Montclair, New Jersey, where several of our children were born.

I made a trip to Venezuela where a Celanese plant was to be built on some land near to the town of Valencia. There was only one problem: a large number of squatters was camping on the land, and there was no legal way to evict them under the law of Venezuela.

I'll never forget that experience. I had to go see the Governor of the State of [Carabobo](#). Fortunately I had learned to speak Spanish starting in high school and then continuing through college. So I sat down and talked to the Governor. He said here, "Have a drink!" We drank scotch and coconut milk, an unforgettable combination. The Governor proposed a solution. He proposed that if Celanese would pay the expenses, they would move all these squatters to the other side of town, and he would give them free land they could rebuild their shacks on. That sounded like a good deal to me. It was rather inexpensive, and the footings for a big rayon and fabrics plant already had been put in the ground before the squatters were moved. That solved that problem, and I became a temporary hero back in New York.

My job involved quite a bit of travel to Europe and Latin America. In 1954, my boss, who was the general counsel for Celanese, had lunch with the general attorney for Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, as Exxon was known in those days. Unexpectedly, I received an invitation from Exxon, at least for an interview. They needed someone with a legal background to work as an international land man. I was then interviewed, hired and went to work for Exxon. A geologist would point a finger at a map. I would get on an airplane and go there to try to negotiate Exxon an opportunity to explore for oil and gas in that area. This work took me into a wide variety of countries and areas.

Perhaps the most memorable event that happened during that period of my life was when another man who was headquartered in Rome went with me to Libya, a former Italian colony, which had recently been given its independence. We found the Minister of National Development in [Cyrene](#), Cyrenaica, in the Eastern part of Libya, enjoying a summer vacation. We found out they were planning to give all of Libya under concession to Shell and BP. The British had acquired a protectorate over the northern two provinces of Libya, and the oil companies had tentatively talked the Libyan government into an arrangement that would be wonderful for the two British companies. We persuaded this Minister of National Economy to prepare a new modern petroleum





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law that would invite companies from all countries and a lot of different specialties in finding oil to come in and have an opportunity to search for oil in Libya. At that time there wasn't any production within a thousand miles of Libya, but our geologists felt it had good potential. The Minister agreed that it would be a good thing to adopt such a law. He soon found a Palestinian lawyer living in Libya and named him the head of a petroleum commission to draft such a law. He sent out an invitation to many different oil companies to send representatives to help prepare such a draft. Naturally I was tapped by Exxon to go back to Libya.

I found myself in 1955 attending daily conferences in the Castello in Tripoli with a group of about a dozen other oil lawyers from other companies. Over a period of about two months, with much debate, we drafted the first petroleum law for Libya. It was then accepted by the government and put into effect. Then I was sent over again because I had become kind of a Libyan expert to represent the Company in filing applications and negotiating conflicts under the new law. That was quite a wonderful opportunity.

I will mention one thing that happened in passing.... About 1960 I was waiting for a decision of the Petroleum Commission, which was then sitting in Bengazi, in Cyrenaica on the eastern coast. One could spend week after week waiting until the Commission decided what it wanted to do. I can't remember what issue was involved at the time, but I was staying at a guesthouse that Esso had set up in Libya, and I had a tall Sudani house servant who took care of me. I was the only one there, so I had to decide what to do with my time. I started going to the British Tennis Club. I was the only American there, but there were a lot of Brits who played tennis. One day a Libyan came down to the club. They arranged a match for me with the Libyan.

He was a better tennis player than I had expected. I was playing quite a bit at that time; I remember beating him 5-3. Then I decided to give him my tennis racquet because he was playing with a racquet that had seen better days, and I had bought a new one at Lillywhite's in London on the way down into Libya. After the match I was given the man's name and almost forgot it.

When Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi led a successful coup d'etat a few years later, I looked at his picture and did a double take. Sure enough, he was the man I had played tennis with back in 1960 when he was a lieutenant. We know that he was the man. When President Reagan sent the U.S. planes into Libya to retaliate for their having attacked some U.S. citizens in a nightclub in Germany, they found Qaddafi's camp in the desert. They dropped bombs on it and ruined his tennis court. There were very few, if any, Libyans playing tennis in those days. I am sure that he was the same man. He had a unique physiognomy.

To be concluded next week.

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Academy Phone 805 640-3713 • Fax 805 640-9914 • Website www.worldbusiness.org
Senior Editor, David Zweig, david@worldbusiness.org • Phone 510 547-3223