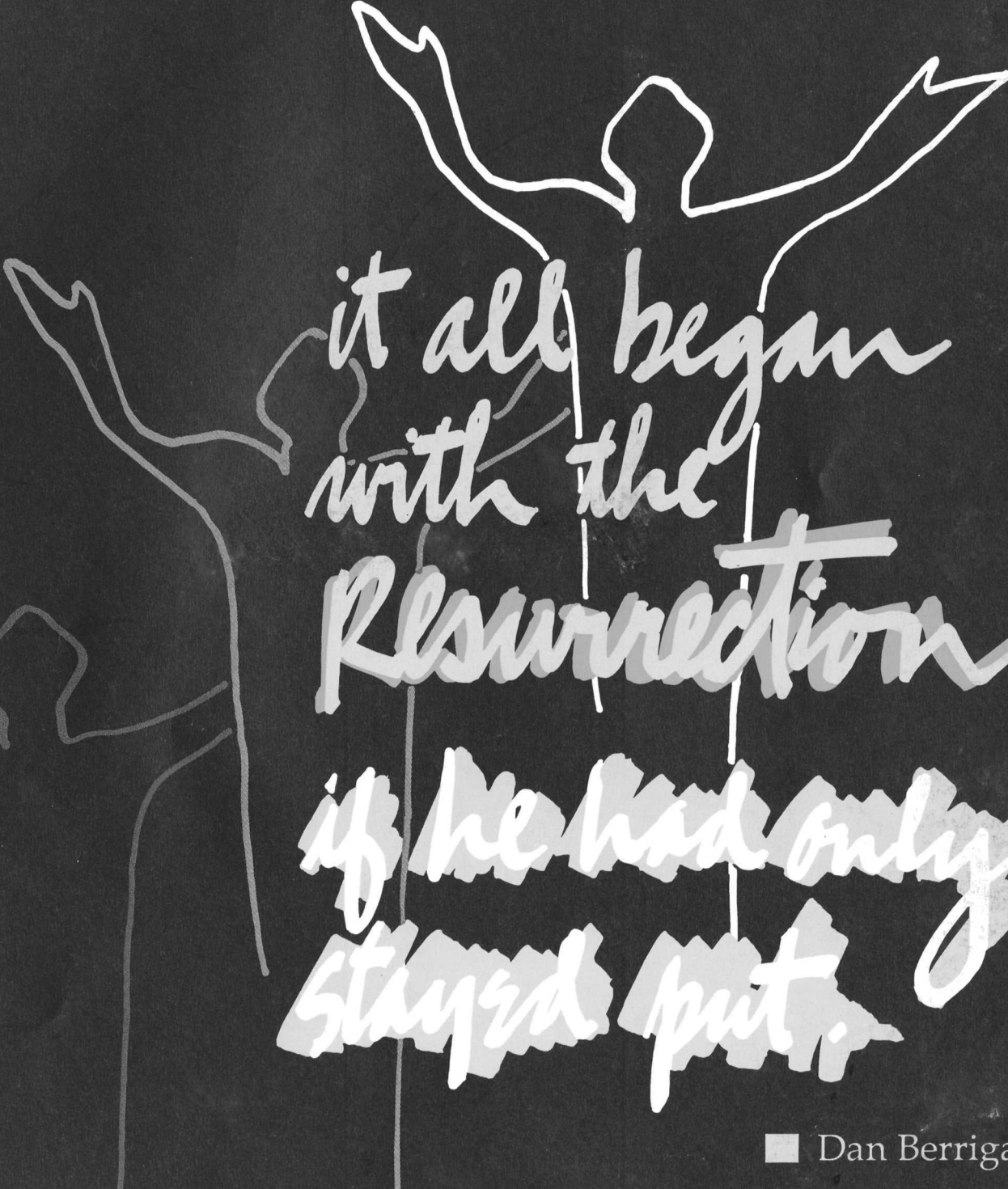


VOLUME • 73 NUMBER • 4 APRIL 1990

THE WITNESS



*it all began
with the
Resurrection...
if he had only
stayed put.*

■ Dan Berrigan, S. J.

Letters

Saw hope in Haiti

I too have been to Haiti (like Joan Chittister — January WITNESS). I too have walked along the shadowed streets of peeling, pastel Port-au-Prince. I too have stepped in silent horror through Cité Soleil. I was first there beneath the softest salmon twilight heavens, and I wept to see how God's creatures on earth are forced to live in such pain. It was still called Cité Simone, then, after the president's wife. She was the one who installed refrigerated rooms for her furs, while mothers on nearby streets cradled dying babies, praying for medicine and mercy.

And I too have taken the very bumpy ride out of Port-au-Prince, up the big mountain to Hinche. Hinche is the reason that I first travelled to Haiti during the summer of 1985. An Episcopal church and school in my home diocese of El Camino Real had established a link project with an Episcopal school just outside of Hinche. I was sent to see what needed to be done. Hinche is also the reason that I was compelled to return to Haiti the following summer. By then, president-for-life Jean Claude Duvalier had fled, leaving behind him a nation mourning what had been and celebrating what might be.

In her article, "The anguish of Haiti," Chittister wrote powerfully of the suffering of Haiti and its people. I share her outrage that this situation exists, and that great efforts are not being made, by all of us, to end this oppression. But, I experience something else in Haiti, something I did not find in Chittister's article. It was hope. It saddens me if the lasting image of Haiti is one of despair. Perhaps the hope in Haiti is not something readily witnessed in a matter of days. But it is there.

It is there in Pere Durecin and St. Andre's School. Pere Durecin, the Episcopal priest in Hinche, is headmaster of

St. Andre's Primary School. This school did not exist when I first visited Haiti. Pere Durecin spoke with passion and humility that a school was needed to strengthen the Episcopal Church and its community in Hinche. Money was soon raised at St. Dunstan's Church, Carmel Valley, Cal. and sent to Hinche. Work on the school began. When I returned to Haiti the following summer, I was greeted with songs of welcome by students in bright green uniforms.

It is there in Sister Leslie Anne and Holy Trinity Episcopal School, just blocks from the National Palace in Port-au-Prince. There is a summer music camp at this school. The children of Cité Soleil learn to play violins and trumpets and flutes, and music comes forth with an eloquence which would move a maestro.

It is there in the Sisters of Charity and Mother Teresa's Orphanage, also in Port-au-Prince. Children are brought to the orphanage each day. They are met with soft touches and gentle voices. The children are nurtured with love and laughter until they are able to return to their families, or are adopted, or die.

There is much in Haiti that is tragic. What I saw amid this pain, however, was a people of unshakable grace and dignity and faith. The lesson the Haitians taught me — and teach all of us — is that it is not anguish which is the starting ground, but hope.

Christina S. Griffith
Cambridge, Mass.

No more rich havens

In the two years I have been reading THE WITNESS, I found the January issue to be the most informative. The article on Haiti's "La Tortue: Haven for the super-rich?" points out what is and always will be the difference between the rich and the lower and middle

classes. The very rich will always be the very rich. The lower and middle classes will always walk in their shadow. We must be on guard to prevent more of these "havens."

Margaret Carlson
Roxborough, Pa.

Strikes balance

Your article about Sallie Bingham (February WITNESS) was probably written prior to Sallie's quite regular attendance at our 9:15 a.m. Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral which uses the supplemental texts. For several years this liturgy has afforded a contemporary balance to our more traditional Rite II service at 11:15.

The Very Rev. GERALYN WOLF
Louisville, Ky.

Boyd saved day

I am an Anglican feminist and long-time WITNESS subscriber who can find almost nothing redeemable in the traditional roles for women in the church. Nevertheless, privileged Sallie Bingham's censure of Mother Teresa's "saintliness" was depressing to read. In the same issue, however, Malcolm Boyd's beautiful, truly realized words on life as prayer redeemed me. Certainly Mother Teresa's saintliness is a mere outcropping of a life lived as prayer.

Leonora Holder
Long Beach, Cal.

Despairs over 'Rescue'

I am writing this letter two days after having taken part in a pro-choice counter effort aimed at stopping an "Operation Rescue" at a women's health clinic. As an evangelical Christian, I am feeling totally disgusted and spiritually grieved that most of the anti-choicers label themselves as "Christians."

I have seen professed believers in Je-

sus bang on the car windows of women patients, screaming at them, calling them "sluts" for wanting abortions. I heard one professed Christian holler out to a woman leaving the clinic, "Is your baby dead yet?" causing her to burst into tears. I am in total shock and filled with despair.

I have finally come to know how the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. must have felt when he realized that the Bible he found love, mercy, compassion and justice in was the same Bible being used by segregationists and the KKK to justify racial hatred and bigotry. My heart feels as his must have felt.

I am so glad I discovered the Christian feminist movement and the liberal wing of evangelical Christianity. If I hadn't, I think I would have given up all hope by now. And I want to thank your magazine for being there, too. A friend gave me a copy of your June pro-choice issue and it has been providing much inspiration and hope for me. I take great comfort in your magazine, but especially in *John 16:33*. Thank you for caring!

Annette L. Ravinsky
Philadelphia, Pa.

Offended subscriber

Please cancel my subscription. From the advertisement I did not realize that your magazine had religious/church overtones. I find this offensive.

Suzanne Arnopolin
Ypsilanti, Mich.

About enclaves?

I was genuinely impressed with Carter Heyward's "Seminary-in-wilderness" article in February. Ultimately, however, it was self-centered and self-serving. Perhaps it will turn into a book. One of the chapters I would label "Metaphors abounding, reality wanting." You see, Ms. Heyward, we are all pilgrims, even

those of us who shovel money from Egypt into the traveling potsherds. Enclaves are enclaves, wherever they take root.

The Rev. Thomas L. Culbertson
Baltimore, Md.

Need people of vision

I admire Carter Heyward for the courageous way she applies the Gospel to seminary life. I can readily believe, however, that her opinions will be minority ones since too many folks are only interested in what they can get out of the seminary rather than the intrinsic value of it. A person with great vision of the possibilities was George Peck, president of Andover Newton Theological School, who recently died. Our seminaries need more people like Carter and George.

Dorothy A. McMillan
Geneseo, N.Y.

Instrument of Satan?

I believe you are a very rotten magazine, malicious, misoriented, demonic and an instrument of Satan. No, I do not need your magazine.

The Rev. William Muniz-Rocha
El Paso, Texas

Dying to read it

Please rush a copy of your publication. It has been suggested as one of the more liberal Episcopal publications. Thus, we are dying to read it.

Hans von Siegel
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Editorial pabulum

Your February editorial suggests that WITNESS readers who found George Bush's invasion of Panama to be unconscionable would be consoled by the statements of the church leaders whom you quoted.

Consoled! Rather, readers should be

outraged by the moral flabbiness of the statements. As one example, I suggest below an edited version of Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning's statement so that it might be termed an appropriate reaction:

I am outraged that George Bush has decided to invade Panama to gain in presidential popularity polls by ordering U.S. killing forces, without any true provocation, to intentionally slaughter civilians, women, men, children and infants with bombs, flame and gunships in order to assassinate one person, Noriega.

His real motive: to enhance his *macho* image and minimize his *wimp* image, with no national interest, to quote essayist Lewis Lapham, "other than Mr. Bush's vanity and spite." I mourn the deaths of both U.S. soldiers and Panamanian citizens, and equally I mourn the slow death of the Constitutional restraints protecting the free people of the United States from the oppression of a democratically elected U.S. dictator president.

For Browning to describe the killing fields of Panama, carefully choreographed by Bush, as "intervention" is to call the dropping of A-bombs at Truman's order a surgical strike because only one was dropped on each city. Soon our delicate leaders will refer to rape as "a sexual impropriety."

The reason for the inability of Browning to express genuine outrage against this democratically elected, Episcopalian assassination chief might be found in the article by Jack Gessell in the same issue:

It may well be that the Episcopal leadership of the church is to a large extent captivated by its medieval theology of the *episcopate* which includes the relatively uncritical alliance with the political and economic principalities. There are those who are critical and who can distinguish the dominant secular values which engulf us, but the general ethos tends to be acceptance without critical

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THE WITNESS

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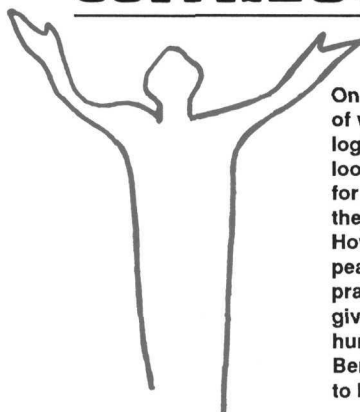
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THE WITNESS (ISSN0197-8896) is published monthly except July/August by The Episcopal Church Publishing Company. Editorial Office: P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002. Telephone (215) 643-7067. THE WITNESS is indexed in *Religious and Theological Abstracts* and the American Theological Library Association's *Religion Index One Periodicals*. University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, reproduces this publication in microform: microfiche and 16 mm or 35 mm film. Printed in U.S.A. Copyright 1989. SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$20 per year, \$2.50 per copy. Foreign subscriptions add \$5 per year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please advise of changes at least 6 weeks in advance. Include your label from the magazine and send to: Subscription Dept., THE WITNESS, P.O. Box 359, Ambler PA 19002.

THE WITNESS



About our Easter cover

On this month's cover, Sister Helen David sketched her concept of words spoken by Jesuit peace activist Dan Berrigan at a theological seminar at Maryknoll, N.Y. Berrigan said that Jesus was looked upon as a rebel in his day and it would have been easier for the Pharisees and Sadducees "if he had only stayed put" after they crucified him. The Resurrection was, to them, an illegal act. How dare Jesus rise from the dead? Analogously, justice and peace activists like Berrigan who challenge the ruling powers by practicing non-violent civil disobedience will continue to be given jail sentences to make them "stay put." But the house of humanity is burning and we have to break down doors to save it, Berrigan said. May all WITNESS readers be granted the courage to be Easter people in a Good Friday world.

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U.S. needs program to end war addiction

The U.S. government has a terrible addiction — the need to control the destinies of Central American and Caribbean countries. Like most addictions, it is extremely costly and destructive, both to the addict and those affected by the addict's abusive behavior.

For many years, the U.S. State Department, military and the CIA have been hooked on a particular method of control — low-intensity warfare. Basically it consists of wearing down a population through a combination of guerilla warfare, economic and social sabotage, and propaganda — or, in the case of Panama, outright invasion — until the people are whipped and more willing to follow orders.

Nicaraguans recently demonstrated how effective low-intensity warfare can be. A population that danced in the streets last July celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Sandinista revolution, voted it into history on Feb. 25. People voted with their empty bellies and aching hearts — 10 years of U.S.-sponsored war and crushing economic deprivation had worn away their enthusiasm for the self-determination championed by the Sandinistas. Like many abuse victims, they desperately sought to win the approval of the abuser and hopefully end their pain. In fact, many Nicaraguans said openly that they would welcome a U.S. invasion.

And the violence the United States exports and encourages is an outgrowth of the chaotic brutality of its homelife. Homelessness, drug abuse, hunger, lack

of health care, decent education and employment have been brushed off by the Bush Administration, which prefers to blame the victims of its injustice and neglect for their own problems. Not permitting its own poor a chance at self-determination, the U.S. government, like most bullies, fears any movement in this hemisphere that empowers those at the bottom. Witness the 30-year economic sanctions, Bay of Pigs invasion, and vicious propaganda attacks on Cuba.

The U.S. government clearly needs to participate in the 12-step program — pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous and used by most self-help groups — to overcome its addiction.

The United States first must admit it is powerless over its addiction — that its life has become unmanageable, with an out-of-control military budget causing a monstrous federal deficit and a rapidly deteriorating quality of life.

The next few steps require that architects of U.S. policy believe that God or a Power greater than themselves can restore them to sanity. They must let go of the need to oppress and start supporting self-determination.

And all the doublespeak must end. State Department spokespersons will have to stop calling invasions “interventions.” The military will have to refrain from calling its deadly missiles “peacekeepers.”

The United States will have to make “a searching and fearless moral inventory”— as Step Four says — and confess to God, itself, and the people of

Central America and the Caribbean, the exact nature of its wrongs, and own up to its support of contras in Nicaragua and death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala, and tell the truth about its complicity in the death, wounding and homelessness suffered by thousands of Panamanians.

But in order for its rehabilitation to be successful, the U.S. government must humbly ask God's help to remove its defects, make a list of the people both at home and abroad that its policies have harmed, and be willing to make just retribution, including forgiveness of international debts.

The United States needs to take personal inventory and admit promptly that Bush's so-called “victories for democracy” in Central America and the Caribbean have been victories for a capitalist economy more interested in exploiting the poor than improving their lives.

To complete the last two steps of the program, the U.S. government has to spend time “in prayer and meditation” to understand the will of God or a Higher Power. Once the U.S. government has had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, it must carry the message to others addicted to violence, and practice the principles of peace, justice and redemption in its dealings with other countries.

And as U.S. citizens, we must solemnly determine not to be co-dependents in encouraging our government's rapacious habit. TW

In search of the labor movement

by Kim Fellner

“What do you do?” the businessman sitting next to me on the plane invariably asks.

“I’m a union organizer,” I reply. On good days, I gleefully anticipate his surprised response; on bad days, I brace myself for the latest malediction against unions; on terrible days, I say I’m executive director of a writers’ organization, so I can spend the rest of the flight in peace.

At 41, I’m one of labor’s “new left-overs,” one of the generation of activists who, after participating in the civil rights or anti-war movements, migrated into union work. Most of us didn’t know each other in the beginning. Yet we came with a shared need to somehow hang on to the passions, however inchoate, that the ’60s had kindled — for social change, for racial and gender equality, for the lifestyle and camaraderie of activism itself. We were the first substantial influx of college-educated young people to enter the labor movement since the 1930s.

What we found, and how we have fared over the past 20 years says much about the current status and potential fate of American labor.

I’ve been a union staffer now for 15 years, first at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), then at the Screen Actors Guild, and for the last four years, at the National Writers Union. My vocation has, in fact, always been troublesome, not so much because

of corporate management, which I always expected to be recalcitrant, if not downright immoral, but because of union management, which often seems determined to grind its organizers and activists into conformity and complacency.

Which means I’ve been in trouble from the start. Much worse, I have persisted not only in having opinions, but also in voicing them — from questioning election procedures at the Labor Press Association in my earliest days, to joining my ex-boss Edward Asner in challenging AFL-CIO policies toward Latin America. And those are less forgivable sins.

Along with its near-fanatic anti-communism, the AFL-CIO has embraced a classical, pre-glasnost Soviet approach to loyalty. “I’m willing to talk with you, but don’t use my name,” close friends tell me when I ask about their lives in labor. “It’s like China,” an AFL-CIO insider half laughs, rolling her eyes.

I learned early that working in unions requires a high tolerance for contradiction on many fronts. Among my disorderly files is an article I wrote more than a decade ago in praise of union work. “However,” I cautioned, “it is work for believers who can survive in organizations that often mimic in style, and occasionally in substance, the corporate and management structures they were created to oppose. Those same organiza-

tions that preach dignity for workers often exploit their own. They preach equality and discriminate against women; they advocate progress and desperately fear change.” All still true.

Twice a year, I vow to open a cafe devoted to Viennese pastry and string quartets. But so far I haven’t, because I’m in love. Not with unions as they are, but with the labor movement as it still occasionally blooms: a dynamic community of organizers and working activists who, through collective action, struggle to achieve a redistribution of power and wealth; dignity for workers as a class and as individuals; and an enrichment and celebration of the human spirit.

And sometimes it happens — in the crusade of the United Farm Workers, in decent locals throughout the labor landscape, in an organizing campaign where all the components miraculously come together.

The knowledge that it’s still possible keeps us going, but the realities of working in unions are a powerful challenge to that faith.

The contradictions between labor’s principles and practices are seldom so apparent as at the ceremonial gatherings of the labor establishment, like at the biennial AFL-CIO convention. “Just thinking about it makes my heart sink,” says one union staffer. “All those white males over 50. And we could fund an organizing campaign on the money it takes to host just one of those receptions.”

The conventions, and the meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Council in Florida, are frequently the butt of mean-spirited, sarcastic commentary by the media. But sometimes it’s hard to blame them.

“Two young showgirls, appropriately

Kim Fellner is executive director of the National Writers’ Union based in New York, and a long-time organizer. This article was made possible through a Samuel Gompers Leadership Award from the City University of New York.

“The labor movement is like the lover you cannot leave, the parent to whom you cannot be reconciled. Part prayer, part promise. A vision in the synapses of bureaucratic days. And those of us who hold it cannot sleep.”

nicknamed 'Postage Stamp Girls' by some, have provoked a fierce debate among convention-goers," the *New York Times* reported from the Council meeting in Bal Harbour. The article went on:

At issue is whether young women in skimpy black bikinis with sequins are beneficial to labor's drive to improve its relations with women, who account for an increasingly large chunk of the workforce.

The National Letter Carriers hired them to pass out small gift bags at its lavish cocktail party the other night. Men lined up to pose for photos with the women . . . "I think it enhanced the image of labor," said Vincent R. Sombrotto, president of the union.

The article noted that AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, "who recently started an advertising campaign to bring more women and minorities into the federation, brushed off the criticism, saying 'Don't you take some things too seriously?'"

Then there's Labor Day. In New York City last year, 40,000 unionists marched in the Labor Day Parade — including contingents from four major strikes. Machinists, pilots and flight attendants from Eastern Airlines. United Mine Workers from the Pittston coal fields. Local telephone and hospital workers.

But the streets were nearly devoid of spectators, the marchers impelled by duty more than pride.

As one organizer put it, "Here we are again, marching down the streets of New York with no one watching. Why not march on some of the big financial institutions behind Eastern Airlines or the Pittston Coal Company? Why not go to the airport, or to the Virginia coal fields where these numbers would make a difference?"

If labor's commitment to solidarity is more often pro forma than proactive, the same thing can be said for organizing.



Union organizers with Ralph Fasinella, left, noted labor painter, during Pittston strike

No one, either in the AFL-CIO or in the national Bureau of Labor Statistics, seems to know how many labor organizers there are in the country today, although "not enough" is a common response, attested by the drop in union membership from a post-war high of 35% to a current low of less than 17% of America's workforce.

A study by two California organizers, Marshall Ganz and Scott Washburn, revealed that in 1985, out of 7,000 full-time union staff people in the state, there were just 182 organizers — less than 3% of the total.

The definition of organizing is almost as elusive as the practice.

"The clearest definition of organizing I have been able to develop is that it is about identifying and developing leadership, building a community around that leadership, and building power out of that community so it can meet its own interest," suggests Marshall Ganz. The son of a rabbi, he came out of the civil rights movement, served as organizing director for the United Farm Workers for more than 10 years, and now heads the independent Organizing Institute in northern California.

"It also requires a credible strategy and financial independence. Reduced to its most basic elements there would be just two: people and power."

That definition owes much to the work of master organizer Saul Alinsky, a friend and biographer of John L. Lewis.

Alinsky first achieved recognition for his feisty community organizing in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago. He based his approach on the belief that organizing should not "do for" people but, rather, enable a group of people to "do for themselves." From the late 1930s until his death in 1972, Alinsky practiced and preached the gospel of building "people's organizations." Many of the community and labor organizers of my generation were trained at his Industrial Areas Foundation, or were mentored (occasionally hectorred) by those who were. His book, "Reveille for Radicals," inspired us to regard organizing as an heroic vocation to which we should aspire.

To Alinsky, every good radical was an organizer, every good organizer a radical. The organizing rubric went beyond the conventional understanding of union campaigns to win more members (or po-

litical campaigns to win more voters), to defining an approach toward shaking up the status quo. It distinguished the educators, editors, negotiators, even the occasional attorney, who were activists and empowerers from those who were functionaries and bureaucrats.

Alinsky's systemic approach gained emotional resonance when cross-fertilized and combined with the more intuitive, but powerful, movement-building culture of the civil rights movement. Organizers a shade older than I often cite SNCC — the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee — as their first romance with organizing. However, while the Southern tradition and style differed from Alinsky's, the underlying goal of empowerment was the same.

"This is our real job," Alinsky asserted, "the breaking down of the feeling on the part of our people that they are social automatons with no stake in the future, rather than human beings in possession of all the responsibility, strength, and human dignity which constitute the heritage of free citizens of a democracy. This can be done only through the democratic organization of our people . . . It is the job of building People's Organizations."

If the concept of democratic empowerment that brought us to the labor movement was inspired by the civil rights movement and grounded in the work of Saul Alinsky, it also had roots in the labor legacy of Eugene Debs.

Ask 1960s activists whom they aspire to emulate, and it's never Samuel Gompers, cigar maker, organizer turned bureaucrat, who became the first president of the American Federation of Labor. Rather, you'll hear the names of the renegades: Mother Jones, who was still organizing in the coal fields and steel towns when she was 80; the Wobblies, who fought for "One Big Union" in the first two decades of the century; and especially Debs, leader of the Pullman Strike of 1894, pioneer of industrial un-

ionism, socialist candidate for president of the United States. In his heyday, the press carried columns of his aphorisms and thousands flocked to hear him speak.

Samuel Gompers told us to ask for "more." Eugene Debs told us "while there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element, I am of it, while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."

It is that overarching vision, passionate and generous, that seems to have disappeared from the AFL-CIO philosophy. "Initially there were two separate streams to the labor movement," says Gus Tyler, 78, education director emeritus of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. "On the one hand were the pure and simple trade unionists who did not believe labor had any kind of ultimate goal and were opposed to political action, even to social legislation at the federal level. Their ideologue was Samuel Gompers.

"Then you had the radicals, deeply influenced by selfless thinking, and they were perhaps a third of the trade union movement. During the 1940s, in the Roosevelt era, there was a confluence. The pure and simple trade unionists became more moderate. They no longer said, 'socialism today,' but 'socialism somewhere in the back of our minds as an ultimate goal.'"

That socialist legacy was eviscerated even further in the 1950s, when most AFL-CIO unions purged left-wing activists and intellectuals during the McCarthy era. Eleven unions representing almost 1 million members were expelled from the CIO on charges of communist domination. That weeding out process cost the labor establishment many of its most eloquent and effective proselytizers. Those who remained were often less progressive, or more circumspect, in their views.

By the time I started working for a Pennsylvania social workers local of the

SEIU in 1974, most AFL-CIO unions had been closed communities for more than 15 years. I knew no one active in the labor movement and few who thought well of it. The support of George Meany and the AFL-CIO for the Vietnam War, combined with labor's very white, male, public face, had not endeared it to civil rights and anti-war activists. Or the other way around. After all, "hippies vs. hard-hats" had been one of the media images of the decade.

"No unions were hiring in the '60s when they were strongest," says Marshall Ganz. "I first heard about unions at the Highlander Center in 1965 at a session organized by SNCC and SDS. The Meatcutters and the United Electrical Workers (UE) were the only unions who came, and they were leftist, outside the mainstream. While the Peace Corps and the poverty programs were recruiting us, the unions were too afraid of communists to talk to us. The unions were scared of young people, and an organization fearful of the young is a dying organization."

Not surprisingly then, the first real opening for '60s activists came, not from the labor establishment, but from the fringes.

It took Cesar Chavez, in search of a large cadre of organizers to build the United Farm Workers of America, to open up the labor movement to a new generation of idealists.

Among the ranks of ex-civil rights and peace movement activists he found people, including Ganz, with the fervor to work 100 hours a week for \$5 plus communal room and board. Between 1965 and 1980, mentored by one of Alinsky's co-organizers, the Farm Workers trained several thousand activists, using as many as 500 organizers on any one campaign.

Other '60s activists began to work at other labor causes at the peripheries of the labor establishment: in the J.P. Ste-

Continued on page 26

Short Takes

How to save \$100 billion

We cannot base our military strategy and force structure for the 1990s only on conditions which prevailed in the past. Hitler is dead, the Cold War is over, the Warsaw Pact and NATO will soon be irrelevant. We can pretend to ignore the changes which are occurring at the risk of becoming irrelevant ourselves.

After World War II we promptly reduced our forces from 12 million to 1.5 million. After Vietnam we cut our forces from 3 million to 2 million and there is every reason now to move toward a force of about 1.2 million total active persons (from 2.1 million), which could be operated for \$100 billion less per year than the current \$300 billion military budget.

Admiral Gene R. LaRocque

How do I work? I grope.
— Albert Einstein

Poverty exciting, says millionaire

To me, one of the most exciting things in the world is being poor. You see these people in line in supermarkets with all these food stamps. You'll find potato chips, frozen foods, ice cream and all that stuff — give me a break — that's poverty?

A family of four today could have an adequate, balanced diet on an annual food budget of \$150-\$300. First thing, go to the Farm Bureau and buy a 100-pound bag of powdered milk, like they feed calves. Buy yourself a bushel of wheat, a bushel of oats, a bushel of corn and mash that stuff up. Grow some vegetables to supplement your diet. I think that's exciting.

Thomas Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza, quoted in *National Catholic Reporter* 3/2/90

Plus for forgetfulness

Do you know what is nice about aging and getting forgetful?

You can hide your own Easter eggs!

**Network News, 2/90
Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging**



Do not believe in miracles.
Rely on them. *Anon.*

Holocaust Memorials scheduled

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council will lead the nation in remembrance of victims of the Holocaust in two important ways, the first to take place this month. April 22 through April 29 have been scheduled as Days of Remembrance, during which persons are asked to draw from the Holocaust critical human lessons: to respect and protect the rights of each individual, to strengthen our commitment to human moral and philosophical values, and to deepen our appreciation and tolerance of ethnic and religious diversity.

The second memorial, a permanent, national Holocaust Museum, is now under construction in Washington, D.C. It will tell the complex story not only of six million Jews murdered by the Nazis, but also the often little known story of the Gypsies, Poles, Soviet POWs, homosexuals, handicapped and other individuals persecuted and killed by the Nazis and their collaborators.

Ministers hang in there

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, a U.S. Labor Department study found that people stay in the ministry longer than most other careers. The study found that most ministers have been in their jobs for 15.8 years. Only barbers, who stay in their careers an average of 24.8 years, farmers and railroad conductors stay longer. The normal career tenure is 6.6 years.

NCC's *Ecu+link*, 1/90

Women take on bishops

The Sisters of Loretto recently released an open letter to the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States, calling their teaching against the use of condoms "outrageous" and "irresponsible."

"We are not thinking here of homosexual relationships or extra-marital intercourse," but "that increasing number of women who, attempting to be faithful to the teaching of their bishops, have marital sexual relationships without the protection of a condom with husbands who carry a sexually transmitted disease, whether it be syphilis or gonorrhea or AIDS."

"You must know that the fastest-growing population infected with AIDS is Hispanic women, traditionally women of Catholic background, who contract the disease from their drug-using husbands and pass that disease on to their infant children. We find it outrageous that this irresponsible teaching of the bishops is proving fatal to women and children," they said.

Mistaken identity

The ancient mountaineer found a mirror, an object new to him. Looking into it, he said, "By cracky, it's a picture of my old pappy," and put it under the bed for safe-keeping. His wife saw him, thought he was hiding something, and fished it out. "So that's the old hag he's been chasing," she said.

And the truth shall set you free:

The rise and fall of Robert Williams

by Kim Byham

“**W**hat we’re doing here today will make our Anglican Communion more honest.”

I heard the Rt. Rev. John S. Spong, Bishop of Newark, say those words on Dec. 16, 1989 at All Saints Parish in Hoboken. The occasion was the ordination to the priesthood of an openly gay, non-celibate man, Robert Williams. What Bishop Spong meant was that the church in general and our part of it in particular had long been dishonest. We have ordained gays and, more recently lesbians, but asked them either to lie about their orientation during the interview process or to keep very quiet about it, and to remain silent about it after they had been ordained.

But was the Episcopal Church really being honest that day? I had serious doubts. There were only about 175 people in the congregation. There were perhaps 50 people from the news media, including camera crews for several television stations. I had never been to an ordination which had so small a congregation, and many there didn’t even know Williams. The woman sitting next to me, for example, had come in from the suburbs because she had read about the ordination in the press and wanted to be present at “an historic event.”

Why did the media descend en-masse on Hoboken that afternoon? My theory is that the media pounced on the ordina-

tion because the preceding Sunday, Dec. 10, ACT UP, the AIDS activist group, had staged a demonstration both outside and inside St. Patrick’s Cathedral. It was a slow news day and the coincidence of this colorful and controversial demonstration and an article in the New Jersey section of *The New York Times* containing an interview with Robert Williams resulted in his upcoming ordination becoming national network news that evening. While neither *The New York Times* nor the networks claimed the ordination was unique, the level of coverage led others in the press to assume there would be something monumental happening the next Saturday.

Press release issued

The following day, the Diocese of Newark issued a press release. The release described the ordination as “unusual and probably unique,” and it made reference to the ordination of Ellen Barrett, an openly lesbian priest, in January 1977. The communique stopped short of stating that Robert Williams was the first openly gay male ever or the first openly gay person to be ordained since 1977, but that was implied. More explicitly, in comments to at least two news services, United Press International and Reuters, the press spokesperson for the Diocese of Newark, the Ven. Leslie Smith, stated that, indeed, “Robert Williams will be the second openly homosexual person to be ordained in the Episcopal Church.”

During that week I became aware that the news media was beginning to tout this unusual idea. An Integrity member

called to say, “How can this be? We all know that lots of openly gay non-celibate males have been ordained since 1977.” I knew that, too; I’d been to several such ordinations myself. At least two had been reported in nationwide gay newspapers: The Rev. Blair Hatt, who was ordained in the Diocese of New York in 1982 and the Rev. Rodney Reinhart, who was ordained in the Diocese of Michigan in 1985. Neither of them, however, claimed to be the “first” openly gay male ordinand.

On Friday I made a list of persons I knew who had been open about their sexuality during the ordination process, which caused me to prepare a press release which was distributed to the media at the ordination the following day. The Integrity release stated that there had been approximately 60 such ordinations prior to Robert’s and that while he was the first openly gay man to be ordained in the Diocese of Newark, his ordination was far from “unique” for the Episcopal Church as a whole.

The news media, many of whom had no doubt gone to considerable trouble to get to Hoboken that day, were not interested in hearing that the story they were covering was less significant than they had imagined. Indeed, one of the television reporters to whom I handed the press release and whom I saw reading it, reported on the news that evening that this was the first such ordination in the Episcopal Church. Two months later, Phil Donahue began his interview with Williams with the same misinformation.

Edgar K. Byham, an attorney, is National President of Integrity and lives with his life partner, Scott Helsel, in Guttenberg, N.J.

This was not the first time I had questioned Robert's and the diocese's honesty with the press. In June 1989, at Robert's initiative, the Diocese of Newark had created The Oasis, a ministry with the lesbian and gay community, at All Saints in Hoboken. Robert told *The Advocate*, the national lesbian/gay news-magazine, that it was the "country's second Episcopal gay outreach program but is the first that had an official sanction when it opened." The other program is The Parsonage in San Francisco, which Williams said, began unofficially but is now recognized by its diocese.

Two programs ignored

I'm not sure that's an accurate description of the status of San Francisco's Parsonage, but it completely ignored two other official outreach programs initiated by the Episcopal Church years before: The Parsonage in Los Angeles, and P&ALS (Proud & Affirmative Lives) in Erie, Pa. The latter, a project of the Diocese of Northwest Pennsylvania, was a Jubilee Ministry. These projects are listed in the *Integrity Directory*, which is sent annually to all members. I wrote to *The Advocate* about the error, but the letter was ignored; the press doesn't like to admit when it gets snookered.

By a day or two after the ordination, the news of Robert's priesthood had reached around the world and it seemed as though he had begun to believe the press stories that, indeed, he was the first openly gay man to be ordained an Anglican priest. Integrity re-issued its press release. During interviews with the gay press, Williams pressed his claim that his was the "second openly gay ordination, regardless of gender (sic), since 1977" and was quite angry about claims that it was not. He told reporters that I was expressing some kind of personal animus toward him. That struck me as odd; wouldn't the president of Integrity welcome such an ordination if it were truly unique?

The event was unique, but not for rea-

sons noted by the press. The intensity of the media presence was the most notable aspect of the event. There were only three protestors outside but five camera crews were filming them. I did not see one openly gay male priest at the ordination, although even Williams acknowledges that there are some in the Diocese of Newark and many more in nearby New York. Only two openly lesbian priests were present. There were no members of the board of Integrity/New York, the 300-member chapter which Williams had recently joined.

Integrity was represented by Louie Crew, our founder, who carried the national banner in the procession. However, no other lesbian/gay groups were represented. Where were the "radical, out-of-the-closet, self-affirming lesbians and gay men" that Williams was later to claim rallied to his defense, the people he described as his "community of accountability"?

Most of the people present appeared to be parishioners of All Saints. As I looked over the small congregation, it occurred to me that had this actually been the first ordination of an openly gay male, or the first of any gay or lesbian person since 1977, a church the size of New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine would scarcely have held the crowd.

The lesbian/gay media, to its credit, largely took the position that Robert's ordination was misrepresented by the straight media. The general media frenzy, however, in reporting the event and reactions to it continued unabated.

The theme of Robert's ordination was "Things which were cast down are being raised up" and Robert clearly saw himself as the one being raised up. He began to style himself as the leading prophet of the lesbian/gay movement in the Episcopal Church.

As a result of his notoriety, invitations began to pour in. Integrity chapters played a considerable role in embellish-



The Rev. J. Robert Williams on his ordination day Dec. 16 in Newark, being applauded by the Rt. Rev. John Spong.

ing his instant celebrity. The Dallas chapter planned a special service with Robert preaching at a non-Episcopal church. The Richmond chapter, a joint chapter with Dignity, invited Williams to speak at its annual dinner — the largest event in the lesbian/gay community in Richmond. And, in celebration of the Feast of St. Aelred, Integrity's patron saint, Integrity/Detroit, the Task Force

on Gay and Lesbian Concerns of the Diocese of Michigan, and the Church of St. Matthew and St. Joseph, invited Williams to speak at a symposium on the church blessing lesbian and gay relationships.

Began plunge from forum

That forum, on Jan. 13, was the platform from which Robert Williams began his plunge. He was aware that the press was present. Asked about celibacy, he said that he could not say anything good about it and that he believed "sex is inherently good for all people." When questioned further about whether that could possibly include Mother Teresa, Robert replied, "If she got laid? Yes. I believe the quality of anyone's life is significantly enhanced by sex." He also stated that "Monogamy is as unnatural as celibacy. If people want to try, OK. But the fact is, people are not monogamous. It is crazy to hold this ideal and pretend it's what we're doing and we're not."

The symposium itself — on a controversial subject and with the newly-installed Bishop of Michigan, R. Stewart Wood, in attendance — would have attracted widespread attention completely apart from Robert's remarks. Indeed, while *Detroit News* religion writer Kate DeSmet wrote a lengthy piece on the forum the next day, she did not even mention Robert's name. It wasn't until the following Saturday that she revealed all in an article which began, "Sometimes the gift of celebrity should be packaged with operating instructions."

The article was picked up by the wire services but the initial coverage was limited to the Midwest. A few days later, when Bishop Spong was called for comment, things really started happening. The press had made Robert Williams; the press was now determined to destroy him.

Williams' comments about Mother Teresa really were nothing new. While in seminary he had said much the same thing about St. Julian of Norwich. That

comment caused considerable controversy even at the Episcopal Divinity School and was certainly known by "the dean and the faculty of the seminary that recommended him . . . with enthusiasm."

Williams had been making statements of this sort for many years; indeed outrageous comments were his stock in trade. He often used them to get people's attention when giving a presentation.

It would be virtually impossible for anyone to have a sustained conversation with Williams without hearing comments of the general nature he uttered in Detroit. Williams says he doesn't recall ever being asked by anyone on the Commission on Ministry or the Standing Committee for his views on celibacy or monogamy.

Asked to apologize

After learning of Williams' comments, Bishop Spong asked him to retract them and apologize. When Williams refused, the bishop conveyed his concern to The Oasis board. The board scheduled a meeting as soon as it could — Jan. 26, the first day of Newark's diocesan convention. Sometime during the day-long meeting of the board, Williams allegedly put in a long-distance telephone call to a priest who advised him not to give in to Bishop Spong, and to maintain his position above all else.

When Williams retold this conversation to Louie Crew, who is also a member of The Oasis board, Crew said to him: "What this priest has done is to catapult you into the ranks of the non-stipendiary clergy. While I greatly value the gifts that the non-stipendiary clergy have made to our church, that isn't what I thought you saw yourself called to in founding a pastoral ministry like Oasis."

Further, some in the diocese felt that Williams simply was not fulfilling his pastoral ministry at Oasis and was failing to respond to parishes that were calling upon him to present information about the lesbian/gay community. Instead, he spent his time being a media

prophet. When the board of The Oasis held its emergency, agonizing 14-hour meeting, all who were present agreed to ask for Robert's resignation. His initial reaction reportedly, was, "I will not resign — I want to hurt Jack Spong the way he's hurting me." However, after a lengthy conversation that night with the Rev. Carter Heyward, an EDS professor, Williams relented and on Saturday morning submitted his resignation to The Oasis board. It was hoped that this would essentially end the media furor.

More verbal tirades

That was not to be. When the next reporter called him he said, "Now that I'm resigning I'm telling them to go to hell," Since that time there has been a veritable tirade of comments from him about Bishop Spong. Williams' basic argument is that he was attacked by Spong because the bishop was trying to take pressure off himself in potential action being brought against him by fellow members of the House of Bishops. Williams has used other endearing phrases, such as "the Diocese of Newark functions as a large, dysfunctional family. Everybody knows daddy's crazy and flies into occasional rages." "Jack Spong . . . wants to be Paul Moore when he grows up. The tragedy for the Episcopal Church is that Paul Moore [has] retired and Jack Spong never has grown up." And he called Bishop Spong a "racist, sexist, homophobic" on national television.

Williams said in one of numerous letters he has widely distributed since Jan. 27: "Those of you who know me well know nothing angers me more than the suggestion I lied. The reason all this happened is simply because I *don't* lie."

Williams has threatened to leave the Episcopal Church, saying, "Before I got ordained, I was thinking of starting my own church, and that may be something I'll have to do after all, in order to tell the truth." It may be Robert Williams' perception of the truth that will set him free from the Episcopal Church. **TW**

The forgotten side of evangelism

by Barbara G. Schmitz

Many of us have had the experience of going to a hospital, nursing home, or someone's house for a pastoral visit. Perhaps a death has just occurred, or bad news has been received, or we go simply to visit one who is lonely, to pray, to comfort, to give of ourselves, to bring Christ. But how many times have you heard one who has gone to minister to others say, "I went to them, but it was they who ministered to me."

Like pastoral ministry, evangelism, which starts out as "my going out to convert and evangelize the world" ends up with my coming home and admitting, "I went to evangelize, but it was they who evangelized me." I go out with all good intentions, to "do something" along with the poor; to work in a soup kitchen, or help rehabilitate a house, but I find myself coming back having been converted and called to repentance. In hearing the stories of the poor and being with them, I am challenged by and converted to the Gospel call to justice and peace. Much more than my needing to evangelize do I need to be evangelized.

To think that it is I who need to go out, that it is I who have the truth which others need, borders on arrogance and idolatry. I do not need to tell my story as much as I need to hear their stories.

I need to hear the stories of people in Central America, people in poverty, people like Desmond Tutu and Nelson and Winnie Mandela who suffer under apartheid in South Africa. I need to hear the stories of people who are persecuted in countries like China and El Salvador.

The Rev. Barbara G. Schmitz is a priest in the diocese of Michigan, currently serving at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Detroit.

I need to hear the stories of gay men and lesbians, of Third World factory workers, of coal miners in Virginia, of women who are physically and emotionally abused. I need to hear the stories of drug addicts, of the homeless, of the dying and those who grieve. I need to hear all these stories of Christ present in today's world.

Jesus came to preach good news to the poor and to proclaim release, recovery, and liberty for the captives, the blind, and the oppressed. He told stories and evangelized those around him. But Jesus was also evangelized by the outcasts, the marginal people in society. The woman who washed his feet evangelized Jesus. The woman at the well evangelized Jesus. The blind Bartimaeus evangelized Jesus. The lepers evangelized Jesus. They all told Jesus their stories of what it was like to be outcasts, less than whole — marginal people. They converted him. They touched him. They evangelized Jesus.

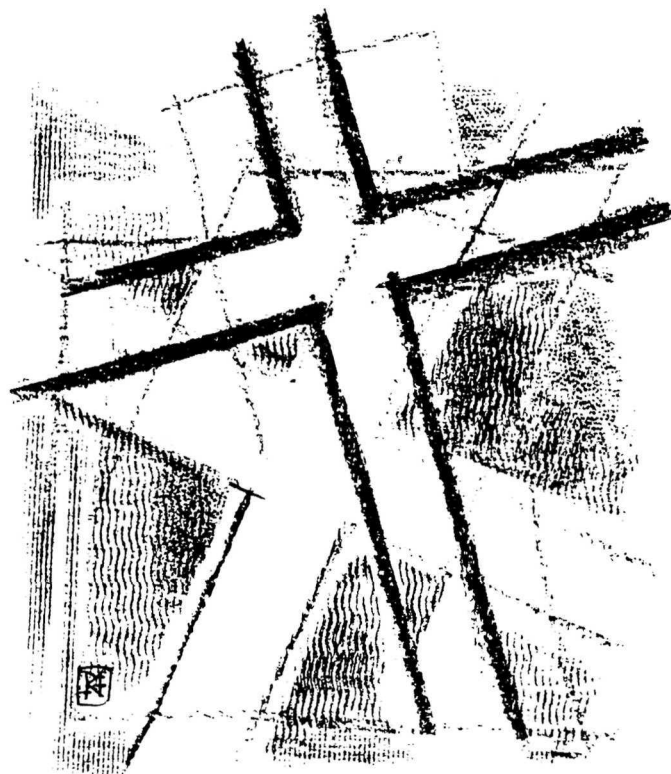
Oscar Romero was evangelized by the poor in El Salvador. Initially sent to maintain the status quo, Romero heard the stories and he was converted.

There are two sides to evangelism. One is telling our story and the Gospel story, the good news, to those

who need and want to hear it. But there is another, often neglected side. We need to hear the stories of others. We need to be evangelized by the poor, homeless, hungry, hurting. We need to be converted to peace, and proclaim economic justice. We need to be ministered to and evangelized precisely by the people we think need to be evangelized by us.

We need to hear the stories of marginal and outcast people if we together are to have any hope of finding the salvation we are too eager to preach to them. The Episcopal Church has declared the '90s to be the Decade of Evangelism. May we prepare for it by being willing to be evangelized ourselves.

IW



An observer's view of the Nicaraguan elections: **War-weary people give up the vote**

by Susan Pierce

From Feb. 15 to March 1, a 16-member Episcopal delegation, brought together by Mary Miller of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, traveled to Nicaragua as official observers of the Feb. 25 elections. The group was one of seven denominational delegations, totaling 123 people, coordinated by Witness for Peace, which has been working to change U.S. policy in Central America since 1983. The following is what I saw and heard as a WITNESS editor and a member of the delegation in this suffering country for which we as U.S. citizens bear so much responsibility.

The streets of the provincial capital of Matagalpa were nearly empty, and eerily quiet. It was Feb. 26, the day after the Nicaraguan elections, and despite the stunning defeat of the ruling Sandinista party, members of the opposition UNO coalition were not celebrating their landslide victory. In fact, the people seemed to be collectively holding their breath in disbelief, frozen in the numbness resulting from 10 agonizing years of civil war and economic disaster. The only signs of life were groups of defiant Sandinista supporters headed towards a rally in one of the town's plazas.

Sandinista banners bearing the campaign slogan "*Todo será mejor*" (Everything will be better) hung over shuttered shops and restaurants. At a *hospedaje* (inn) in the center of town, foreigners and Nicaraguans clustered around a TV to watch President Daniel Ortega's concession speech. Many wept silently as Ortega, appearing tired and fighting tears himself, accepted the results while vowing to hold the new government to the advances made by the Sandinista revolution. He said, "This Feb. 25, we Sandinistas have demonstrated our commitment to keep our word . . . In this unjust world, divided between the powerful and the powerless, we are proud to

have contributed a little dignity, democracy, and social justice."

Some pro-Sandinista international residents appeared more visibly upset about the defeat than their Nicaraguan counterparts. Stoically dry-eyed, one Nicaraguan explained, "We have suffered so much, we have no tears left."

The 1990 Nicaraguan elections were the most thoroughly observed in the world — more than 2,000 people had come from all over at the invitation of the Nicaraguan government to act as observers. Ninety percent of the registered voters had gone to the polls — many for the first time in their lives — to select a president, vice-president, members of the National Assembly and the Municipal Councils.

Witness for Peace, a faith-based group that has been non-violently opposing U.S. policy in Nicaragua since 1983, had organized seven delegations of different faiths, one of which was an Episcopal delegation.

Leader of the Episcopal delegation was Gail Phares, a Roman Catholic and former Maryknoll sister who was one of the founders of Witness for Peace. During an orientation session in Miami, Phares explained why she and others felt called to witness in Nicaragua. As a

young woman teaching in Guatemala in the early 1960s, she said, "I saw what happens when a revolution is destroyed." She also taught in Nicaragua for three years, along with Maura Clarke, the Maryknoll sister murdered with three other women in El Salvador 10 years ago.

Phares and others opposed to U.S. intervention traveled to Jalapa in northern Nicaragua in 1983 and tried to "literally form a human chain" to stop the contras coming in from Honduras. Since its inception, Witness for Peace has brought over 4,000 people to Nicaragua in short-term delegations to see the effects of the U.S.-backed contra war.

The onslaught of observers and 2,300 journalists was intended to be "a pacific invasion, rather than the more nasty kind," according to Roman Catholic delegation member Arthur Schmidt, a Latin American Studies professor at Temple University. Especially in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Panama, the Nicaraguan government wanted to safeguard against the United States using charges of election fraud as a pretext for military action.

Dr. Alan Neely of Princeton Theological Seminary, a member of the Interfaith delegation, noted after the elections that the Nicaraguan experience had much to

teach the United States. "If the presence of international observers can result in the defeat of an incumbent administration, let us work to have them in the United States," he said.

What was at stake in the elections became very clear in the Nicaraguan countryside. If one spent time in Managua and the larger towns, it was easy to think that the Sandinistas would be victorious, or at least there would be some fair representation of the 10 parties on the ballot. However, in the war zones of rural Nicaragua, there were only two sides — the FSLN and the UNO. And in the tense atmosphere of a country at war, voting seemed less a political exercise than a matter of life and death. The opponents waged serious graffiti battles. A common anti-UNO slogan was GN=1, implying a vote for the UNO was a vote for the *Guardia Nacional*, the National Guard of the former dictator Somoza, many of whom became contras. UNO supporters countered by transforming the FSLN slogan from *todo será mejor* to *todo será peor* (things will be worse).

There was no conversation with a Nicaraguan that did not eventually come around to the war. Over 30,000 people out of a population of 3,754,000 have died in the decade-long contra war, proportionally far more than the number of U.S. soldiers killed in Vietnam. Twenty-eight thousand people have been wounded; 10,450 kidnapped or captured by the contras; 16,500 children have been left orphans.

And it has not been the kind of war that swells national pride, that bands a people together against an outside aggressor. Instead, it has been a vicious U.S.-funded war of terror and intimidation, a cancer eating at the heart of the country, an eroding of the bedrock of Nicaraguan society by creating bitter divisions in families, villages, and, ultimately, the entire nation.

The ideological battle in the countryside is waged at the expense of the *cam-*

pesinos, struggling to make a living from their isolated small farms in the mountains and valleys. "The mountains are so beautiful," an observer said to a *campesino*. The *campesino* answered somberly, "These mountains will not be beautiful until the war is over."

The provinces of Matagalpa and Zelaya, where the Episcopal delegation spread out to various polling places, are in a "contra corridor," one of the routes by which the contras travel to and from their bases in Honduras. The *comarcas*, or townships, where most *campesinos* live, are considered to be contra controlled. Many young *campesinos* are kidnapped by the contras or lured into their ranks by promises of new U.S.-made uniforms and boots — things most of them would never have otherwise.

In Rio Blanco, a frontier town of 9,000, a Roman Catholic priest explained that the contras encouraged many *campesinos* to support the UNO, and that the *campesinos* often cooperated with the contra "not because they support their struggle, but simply because they want to stay alive and work

their land."

Also mentioned continually as a major source of discontent was the government's compulsory draft, necessitated by the war, which deprived many households of all their male wage earners. It was one of the primary reasons that the townspeople of Rio Blanco supported the UNO over the FSLN. Don Julian Zeladón and his wife Maria Jesús, who own a shop and have a farm outside of town were in favor of an UNO victory because of the state of the economy and in the interest of their three sons. He said, "One of our sons lives in Guatemala now to avoid the draft. He doesn't want to go into the mountains and end up killing someone he knows."

In Wilicón, a tiny *asentamiento* — government resettlement village — in the mountainous eastern part of Matagalpa, the war is a constant companion. All the inhabitants have been forced out of their homes in the mountains by contra attacks. Wilicón itself has been attacked several times. Now there is an army outpost on a nearby hill. The villagers farm cooperatively, and a few



Nicaraguans waiting to cast their ballots at the polling place in Wilicón.

armed residents make up a small militia to protect the fields and livestock.

Life there consists mainly of unrelenting hard work. The houses are small, generally made of wood and thatch, with dirt floors. Cooking is done over open wood fires, and village women make the five or six-mile walk to cut wood twice a day. To fetch water, which must be done three or four times a day, requires a 15-minute walk to reach a treacherously slick red clay path down into a gully. There spring water is scooped from two small holes in the ground.

Though the residents were polite, dignified and generous with what little they had, a sense of desolation permeated the village. People rarely raised their voices, and there was little laughter. When not working, people often sat and stared blankly into space. "They've been so brutalized by the war that they're like the living dead," said Witness for Peace long-term volunteer Marie Clark. Long-termers generally serve stints of six months documenting contra attacks, leading delegations, and sharing the hardships of the Nicaraguan people.

Clark has been in Nicaragua for a year and a half and lives in Rio Blanco with another long-termer, Patricia Westwater. They said that the number of contra attacks in the region had risen sharply in the six months before the elections in an apparent effort to disrupt the process. Most of the dead and wounded were FSLN activists and election officials. Clark, Westwater and Leone Bicchieri, who is based in the town of Waslala, guided the Episcopal delegation through the countryside.

Clark and the others understood the emotional emptiness of Wilicón. Because Clark has had to learn to suppress her feelings to do her job, "I see dead bodies now and I feel nothing," she said. "But it's the only way to survive and do my work."

Doña Carmelita de Lopez, who provided hospitality to election observers in

Wilicón, told her story on the evening before election day. By the flickering light of a tiny oil lamp, her face shadowed in darkness, she related a tale of such devastation and loss that it stood out even among the endless litany of tragedies one hears in Nicaragua. She said, "I'm 75 years old. I can't read or write. I can't remember a time when I didn't work. I suffered under Somoza and I am suffering now from the *Guardia*. The *Frente* (Sandinista party) has saved my life, has given me a place to live and protection. Before, we always had to go from place to place, moving because of threats. Every time we got a little bit ahead, everything was taken away.

"I have lost 18 members of my family



to the war," she said, putting her head in her hands. "I have lost sisters, daughters, sons, cousins. They killed my first son by surrounding his house in the mountains and setting it on fire. My last son, who was in the army, was killed at Christmas time by men trying to rob him — they rode by on horses and dropped a grenade in his backpack."

She paused, rocking back and forth as tears ran down her face. "Sometimes," she whispered, "I don't know if I want to go on living anymore."

People in Wilicón feared an UNO victory. Many said they saw no difference between the UNO and "the *Guardia*," and saw a return to "the time of Somoza," where the poor would lose the land given to them by the Sandinistas.

On election day, officials started set-

ting up in the little schoolhouse in Wilicón at 6 a.m. Each party was permitted by law to have representatives present. Voting actually started two hours late because neither side trusted the other. The FSLN and UNO *fiscales* (officials) wrangled endlessly over procedure. Voting dragged on into the evening — well past the 6 p.m. deadline — because the UNO *fiscales* insisted on checking every name against their list as well as the official registration list.

Nicaraguans stood patiently all day in the hot sun, men in one line, women in another. Many had been waiting to vote since the night before, having come from the mountains on foot or on horseback. Some had traveled for a day or more. Most were wearing their best clothes, carefully protected from dust or mud. Shyly, respectfully, the *campesinos* presented their voter registration cards and received their ballots and voting instructions. Both voters and officials treated the whole process with immense seriousness. Linda Burton of the United Methodist delegation, who was an observer in the southeastern Chontales region, commented later that "people approached voting like it was a sacrament." Many were voting for the first time in their lives, and were so nervous that their hands shook as they placed their ballots in the ballot box.

As evening fell, the voting in Wilicón took on a dreamlike quality. Rain began to fall in torrents on the still-patient voters. The registration table was bathed in light from a lantern hanging overhead. Voters fumbled with flashlights in the voting booths. When darkness set in, the guards at the doors of the schoolhouse became more vigilant, their AK47s ready in their hands, uneasy at any unfamiliar noise or movement. For a long time, the men's line never seemed to grow shorter. Those who had waited until nightfall to vote drifted into the line unseen. "There are those from the mountains who don't want to be noticed," said

a pollwatcher enigmatically.

Finally, around midnight, the count began, and with it the first inkling of the stunning upset. As the pile of UNO ballots rose higher and higher, the faces of UNO *fiscales*, which had been rigid with the aggressive fear of the underdog, became wreathed in smiles. The FSLN *fiscal* slumped motionless in his chair, a look of utter defeat in his eyes.

Back in Managua, speculation began over why the FSLN lost by a 15% margin. One of the major reasons was the disastrous state of the economy. According to Hemisphere Initiatives, a Boston-based fact-finding group, inflation in 1988 topped 30,000%, and was still 1,700% in 1989. Urban real wages in Nicaragua have fallen 90% since 1980. Last year, 50% of the national budget went to the war. From 1982-84, the height of the conflict, it was estimated that as much as 75-80% of the budget went to defense. In November 1989, the cordoba was devalued from 25,000 to the dollar to 42,000, making the legal minimum wage of 500,000 cordobas a month lose half its value.

Many felt it was clearly a victory for the U.S. doctrine of low-intensity warfare — 10 years of war and economic blockade had pushed people to blame the Sandinistas and vote them out of office. Donna Kilich, an editor at *Envio*, a Managua-based journal, felt the Sandinista government had done much for the Nicaraguan people despite formidable U.S. interference, and was shocked at the election upset. But, she said, "The Nicaraguans are taking the long-term view. It's going to be easier physically, but harder politically."

The Rev. Dalton Downs, an Episcopal priest from Washington, D.C., is a cousin of Sturdie Downs, the Bishop of Nicaragua, and, like him, was born and raised on the country's Atlantic Coast. As a native Nicaraguan, he was acutely sensitive to the fears and the hopes that have surrounded the elections. After vis-

iting with his brother and several nieces and nephews in Managua two days after the elections, his face reflected the prevailing mood of anxiety. "Everyone is very worried," he said. "No one knows what will happen now."

Uncertainty is the legacy of the UNO victory. Dr. Henry Wells of the Episcopal delegation, an expert in Latin American elections, said, "I don't know how such a fragile coalition as the UNO can possibly govern with any effectiveness," noting that it is a coalition of parties ranging from right-wing conservative to far-left communist, unified only by their dislike of the Sandinistas.

The Episcopal observers at Nicaraguan elections

The Rev. Peter Casparian, Lexington, Ky.
The Rev. Dalton Downs, College Park, Md.
Joe Louis, Highland Park, N.J.
The Rev. Brian Grieves, New York, N.Y.
Dr. Richard Groepper, Atlanta, Ga.
The Rev. Carter Heyward, Cambridge, Mass.
Ann McElroy, Cupertino, Calif.
The Rev. Roberto Morales, Bronx, N.Y. and Puerto Rico
Gail Phares, Raleigh, N.C.
Susan Pierce, Philadelphia, Pa.
Dr. Robert Proffitt, Maryville, Tenn.
The Rev. Thomas Trimmer, Alma, Mich.
Ann Vest, Norfolk, Va.
Dr. Henry Wells, Philadelphia, Pa.

Despite their loss, the Sandinistas made it clear that they still held a majority of the seats in the National Assembly and remained a force to be reckoned with in the country's political life. At a post-election reception for the observers in Managua, Daniel Ortega declared, "Shall we say that the FSLN getting only 40% of the vote is a defeat of the revolution? Not at all. It will be a test of the free, democratic nature of the Nicaraguan revolution. We are now going to govern from below, in a constructive way."

Serious questions remained about the future of the international community in

Nicaragua. UNO president-elect Violeta Chamorro, who will take over April 25, has declared that many of the foreigners, because of their support for the FSLN, would no longer be welcome. Guatemalan, Salvadoran and Panamanian exiles were facing the loss of their only refuge in Central America. The day after the election, doctors and others from Cuba who had been doing development work were reportedly being recalled by Havana.

The Ben Linder Council, a North American residents' group named after the young U.S. engineer killed by the *contras*, issued a paper with suggestions for actions now that many of the group's goals, such as working to end the embargo, would no longer exist. "We all need to renew our commitment to solidarity with the poor and their organizations . . . continue our close relations with grassroots organizations." The group pointed out the necessity of continuing financial and material aid because, in spite of announced large U.S. aid packages, "From experience, we know that very little bilateral aid ever reaches the poor."

And the paper concluded by noting that the lessons of the Sandinista revolution should not be lost: "We need to reflect on what we have learned from the Nicaraguans and adapt it to work in our own society . . . Nicaragua continues to be 'the threat of a good example.' Our challenge is not just to change U.S. foreign policy but to change the United States."

The message that many Nicaraguans expressed was summed up by a milita man in Wilicón, who stood and talked with great dignity, wearing threadbare fatigues and worn boots caked with mud. The afternoon sun glinted off the barrel of his battered AK47 as he said, "Please tell the people in the United States that the Nicaraguan people have suffered for too long. All we want is enough food to eat and peace."

TW

The myth of equality

by Manning Marable

A myth is haunting black America — the illusion that equality between the races has been achieved, and that the activism characteristic of the previous generation's freedom struggles is no longer relevant to contemporary realities.

In collective chorus, the media, the leadership of both political parties, the corporate establishment, conservative social critics and public policy experts, and even marginal elements of the black middle class, tell the majority of African-Americans that the factors which generated the social protest for equality in the 1950s and 1960s no longer exist. The role of race has supposedly "declined in significance" within the economic and political order. As we survey the current social climate, this argument seems to gain a degree of credibility.

The number of black elected officials exceeds 6,600; many black entrepreneurs have achieved substantial gains within the economic system in the late 1980s; thousands of black managers and administrators appear to be moving forward within the hierarchies of the private and public sector. And the crowning "accomplishment," the November 1989 election of Douglas Wilder as Virginia's first black governor, has been promoted across the nation as the beginning of the transcendence of "racial politics."

The strategy of Jesse Jackson in both 1984 and 1988, which challenged the Democratic Party by mobilizing people of color and many whites around an ad-

vanced, progressive agenda for social justice, is dismissed as anachronistic and even "reverse racism." As in the Wilder model, racial advancement is projected as obtainable only if the Negro learns a new political and cultural style of the white mainstream. Protest is therefore passe.

It is never an easy matter to combat a myth. There have been sufficient gains for African-Americans, particularly with the electoral system and for sectors of the black middle class in the 1980s, that elements of the myth seem true. But from the vantage point of the inner cities and homeless shelters, from the unemployment lines and closed factories, a different reality behind the specter emerges. We find that racism has not declined in significance, if racism is defined correctly as the systemic exploitation of blacks' labor power and the domination and subordination of our cultural, political, educational and social rights as human beings. Racial inequality continues despite the false rhetoric of equality. Those who benefit from institutional racism now use the term "racist" to denounce black critics who call for the enforcement of affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation.

Behind the myth of equality exists two crises, which will present fundamental challenges to African-Americans in the decade of the 1990s. There is an "internal crisis" — that is, a crisis within the African-American family, neighborhood, community, cultural and social institutions, and within interpersonal relations, especially between black males. Part of this crisis was generated, ironically, by what I term the "paradox of desegregation." With the end of Jim Crow segre-

gation, the black middle class was able to escape the confines of the ghetto. Black attorneys who previously had only black clients could now move into more lucrative white law firms. Black educators and administrators were hired at predominantly white colleges; black physicians were hired at white hospitals.

As the black middle class increasingly retreated to the suburbs, they often withdrew their skills, financial resources and professional contacts from the bulk of the African-American community. There were, of course, many exceptions, black women and men who understood the cultural obligations they owed to their community. But as a rule, by the late 1980s, such examples became more infrequent, especially among younger blacks who had no personal memories of experiences in the freedom struggles of two decades past.

The internal crisis is directly related to the external, institutional crisis, a one-sided, race/class warfare which is being waged against the African-American community. The external crisis is represented by the conjuncture of a variety of factors, including: the deterioration of skilled and higher paying jobs within the ghetto and the decline in the economic infrastructure; the decline in the public sector's support for public housing, health care, education and related social services for low-to-moderate income people; and the demise of the enforcement of affirmative action, equal opportunity laws and civil rights legislation.

The myth of equality is required in order to convince African-Americans that the external crisis doesn't really exist, and that racism is dead. That's why it is more important than ever for the black

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movement to be reborn, using the strategies of demonstrations, community mobilizing and resistance to the “new” racism. Institutional racism may be more sophisticated, using the language of equality, but the necessity for struggle still exists.

The American economic and political system promises equality, but has never delivered for the African-American. In fact, the system uses the rhetoric of equality to hide the process of oppression. Both through legal and illegal means, blacks are being destroyed.

Illegal drugs destroy thousands of African-Americans in many direct and indirect ways. We witness the daily, destructive impact with the proliferation of gangs and fratricidal criminality. But there are other indirect effects as well. In January 1990, a comprehensive study released by the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, which reviewed traffic fatalities between 1984 through 1987, observed that nearly one in four drivers age 16 to 45 killed in New York City tested positive for cocaine in autopsies. Researchers suggested that individuals addicted to cocaine experience spatial perception and other physical dysfunctions. How many thousands of African-Americans are crippled and killed in accidents caused by those whose abilities are impaired by crack or other drugs? How many homes are destroyed, and dreams shattered? How many daughters and sons are lost forever from their families and friends?

The cancer of crack creates many more living victims than those who are killed by the drug. Crack is part of the new urban slavery, a method of disrupting lives and “regulating” the masses of our young people who otherwise would be demanding jobs, adequate health care, better schools and control of their own communities. It is hardly accidental that this insidious cancer has been unleashed within the very poorest urban neighborhoods, and that the police con-

centrate on petty street dealers rather than those who actually control and profit from the drug traffic. It is impossible to believe that thousands and thousands of pounds of illegal drugs can be transported throughout the country, in airplanes, trucks and automobiles, to hundreds of central distribution centers with thousands of employees and under the so-called surveillance of thousands of law enforcement officers, unless crack represented at a systemic level a form of “social control.”

Most African-Americans do not realize that the most destructive drug problem within our community is tobacco addiction. The tobacco industry makes it highest profits from African-Americans. For two decades, tobacco companies have followed a strategy of “special marketing,” targeting younger, poorly educated African-Americans as potential consumers. In late December 1989, for example, the R. J. Reynolds Company announced the development of “Uptown” menthol cigarettes, a product specifically designed to “appeal most strongly to blacks.” One NAACP leader has called the strategy “unethical,” and the American Cancer Society declared that the “campaign exploits blacks, especially the ghetto poor.” Under fire, R. J. Reynolds was forced to cancel the scheme for higher profits.

The “Uptown” controversy highlights the fact that African-Americans suffer higher death rates for virtually all types

of cancer, especially cancer of the lungs, prostate, esophagus and cervix, than white Americans. The statistical life expectancy for blacks actually *declined* in the late 1980s, due in part to extremely high mortality rates from cancer.

However, the major means for the social control of the African-American remains the criminal justice system. As of June 1989, the U.S. prison population reached 673,000, of which blacks comprise 46%. Prisons have become the method for keeping hundreds of thousands of potentially rebellious, dissatisfied and alienated black youth off the streets. There is a direct correlation between the absence of job training programs and social programs designed to elevate blacks’ incomes, and the increased utilization of the criminal justice system to regulate unemployed and unemployable blacks. Keep in mind that between 1973 and 1986, the average real earnings for young African-American males under 25 years fell by 50%. In the same years, the percentage of black males aged 18 to 29 in the labor force who were able to secure full-time, year-round employment, fell from only 44% to a meager 35%.

Is it accidental that these young black men, who are crassly denied meaningful employment opportunities, are also pushed into the prison system, and subsequently into permanent positions of economic marginality and social irrelevancy? Within America’s economic system, a job has never been defined as a human right; but for millions of young, poor black men and women, they appear to have a “right” to a prison cell or place at the front of the unemployment line.

The struggle against the myth of equality requires a break from the tactics and ideas of the desegregation period of the 1960s. Our challenge is not to become part of the system, but to transform it, not only for ourselves, but for everyone. We must struggle to make economic and racial equality for all. **TW**



On the night she was betrayed . . .

by Jan Nunley

October 23, 1989

Carol DiMaiti Stuart, a 30-year-old lawyer, seven months pregnant with her first child, was returning with her husband Charles to their home in Reading, Mass., a suburb north of Boston. They'd been at Brigham and Women's Hospital for Lamaze classes. The hospital is located in the Mission Hill neighborhood of Boston, a close-knit, racially diverse area tucked between Roxbury and the Fenway.

Shots were fired.

And when the telephone rang at State Police headquarters, the voice was Charles Stuart's, calling from his cellular car phone, begging for help; he and his pregnant wife had been shot, he said, by a man who jumped into the back seat and robbed them. He didn't know just where he was. Desperate dispatchers kept him talking for 13 minutes, trying to gauge his location from the sound of the approaching police sirens. A camera crew from the TV show *Rescue 911* raced along with police to the location.

Mortally wounded, Carol Stuart was delivered of a son, Christopher, and died in the emergency room in the early morning hours of Oct. 24th. (The baby died 17 days later.) Charles Stuart, shot in the abdomen, was in critical condition. Police told reporters he had described the gunman: a black man with a raspy voice, wearing a black sweatshirt.

Boston Mayor Ray Flynn called a press conference that night, promising to deploy "every available detective" to find the Stuarts' assailant. Republican Party Chairman Ray Shamie urged resto-

ration of the death penalty. Suffolk County District Attorney Newman Flanagan jumped on the law-and-order bandwagon. Flynn, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and Roman Catholic Cardinal Bernard Law attended Carol Stuart's funeral. A farewell letter, written by Charles Stuart to his wife from his hospital bed, was read at the service. "In our souls," the letter said, "we must forgive this sinner, because He would too."

The story made the *CBS Evening News*. The next day the tabloid *Boston Herald* printed a full front-page picture of the wounded Stuart couple, calling the crime an example of "the gratuitous violence that we too often accept as part of urban life." The normally staid *Boston Globe* called the couple's relationship "a shining life," and descriptions of the two as a "Camelot couple" surfaced on radio and television.

On the night Mission Hill was betrayed . . .

In Mission Hill and Roxbury, Mayor Flynn's promise was delivered. African-American men were immediately suspect — professionals, students, workers, unemployed — all were ordered spread-eagled against cars and walls, made to drop their trousers in public places to be frisked for weapons and drugs. Community leaders who protested that it was "open season" on their people were accused of "overreacting." Within six days, police had detained an unemployed African-American man after finding a black sweatshirt in his apartment. (He was released after 23 days in custody.) Within a month, Charles Stuart had identified another African-American, William Bennett, as a suspect.

Bennett was no angel. His criminal record showed some 38 arraignments and 60 arrests. He'd bragged, so witnesses said, about the Stuart shooting. When Charles Stuart picked Bennett out of a lineup in late December, Boston police, the District Attorney's office, and the media seemed to have their man. Case, very nearly, closed.

On the night Boston was betrayed . . .

The city awoke Jan. 4 to the most shocking news it had heard since the Stuart shooting. The body of Charles Stuart had just been fished out of Boston Harbor, an apparent suicide, hours after Stuart's youngest brother implicated him in his wife's murder.

Within days, the possible scenarios had multiplied. Charles Stuart was involved with another woman, a co-worker. Charles Stuart had been treated for cocaine addiction while recovering from his gunshot wound. Charles Stuart had a number of high-ticket insurance policies on his wife. The most plausible story was at once pathetic and chilling: Charles Stuart wanted to kill his wife and unborn son so that nothing would stand in the way of his dream — opening a top-notch restaurant in Boston.

The anger multiplied, too. And the blame. Mayor Flynn had overreacted to the shooting. So had the police. And the DA's office. The media hadn't done its job. African-Americans had been scapegoated. So had Mission Hill.

But who killed Carol Stuart?

After Charles Stuart's suicide, the stories began to emerge from friends. Carol had known about her husband's ambition to be a restaurateur. Wondered, to friends, about the huge insurance poli-

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cies he'd taken out on her. Complained when he insisted on nights out with "the boys" while she was home alone, carrying his baby. She loved him, and he appeared, in public, to love her. But his brother said Charles had once spoken of hiring a hit man to kill his wife; he hadn't taken the conversation seriously.

It was the ultimate wife-beating, the last word in domestic violence, but few were willing to see it that way. State Representative Byron Rushing (D-Boston), who is sponsoring legislation to create a commission to probe the Stuart case, says part of its charge will be to unmask the sexism that led investigators to ignore the possibility that Stuart killed his own wife. Rushing says that denial extended to the media. He cites a television interview with domestic violence counselors in which "one of the women suggested that from what she knew, just reading the papers, she would guess that Carol Stuart had been abused before, that this was not the first violence that she experienced at the hand of her husband." The male interviewer looked astonished, says Rushing, and expressed disbelief that Stuart had abused his wife.

In Massachusetts a woman dies at the hands of a husband or boyfriend every 22 days. Yet the investigators in the case failed to do the one thing that is standard operating procedure in the death of a married woman — check out the husband. Stuart's near-fatal wound may have thrown them off the track, as did the pathos of the story. It certainly had a chilling effect on the media. According to Tony Brooks of public radio station WBUR-FM, "The level of grief in the city was such that if someone had begun questioning the DiMaitis about Charles and Carol Stuart's marriage, they would have been crucified for insensitivity."

Carol Stuart also died of racism. Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts Barbara Harris observes, "Historically, the white community has always felt that black men did this kind of thing to white

women. It's why so many blacks were lynched, because of imagined or perceived threats to white women . . . It has to do with the notion that white women are vulnerable in the presence of black males." Charles Stuart's hoax played on those centuries-old fears.

Carol Stuart died, too, of her husband's ambition, the classism that surrounded them both. His life was checkered with contradictions: the Brown University education he claimed but didn't have, the working-class childhood he repudiated for the "good life" as a successful salesman at one of Boston's tonier Newbury Street fur salons. Carol Stuart, pregnant and alive, was a liability, a hindrance to Chuck Stuart's yuppie aspirations to be a successful entrepreneur. Carol Stuart, dead, was a liquidated asset, a source of thousands of dollars in insurance money to make his dreams a reality. She was expendable.

And who wounded Mission Hill?

Charles Stuart had to play out his plan in a place where the story would be believed, says the Rev. Canon Ed Rodman, canon missionary to the Diocese of Massachusetts. Mission Hill was just such a place — "the ultimate contradiction," says Rodman, with institutions like Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Mission Hill Housing Project side-by-side. "The thing that's been missed in all of this is that Mission Hill is one of the city's most integrated areas." The Rev. Floyd Naters-Gamarra, vicar of St. Stephen's in the South End, near the Mission Hill area, says the Stuart shooting casts another shadow on the neighborhood, a shadow of "violence, hostility and degradation." Mission Hill suffered economically as well as psychologically, says Naters-Gamarra, "People avoid coming here now." A plan to move the headquarters of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to a location just blocks from Brigham and Women's was axed following the shoot-

ing, costing the area a potential \$200 million dollars in development and 900 high-tech jobs.

The controversy over police stop-and-search procedures has stayed at a high pitch. At the time of the shooting, Boston was having a deadly autumn — from Labor Day to late October, the time of the Stuart shooting, more than 100 people had been wounded and five killed by gunfire. Most of the assailants and victims were African-Americans, including one who died the same night as Carol Stuart. But it took an assault on a "perfect" white suburban heterosexual couple to galvanize city government into an attack on urban violence — an attack that targeted its most common victims as much as its perpetrators.

It's not clear, says Byron Rushing, what the response would have been if the Stuarts had been an African-American couple assailed by a white gunman. But certainly "the police would not have gone into Brookline (a predominantly wealthy, white section) and started grabbing every white man they could find and slamming them up against buildings and telling them to spread their legs and search them. That's the difference." Canon Rodman agrees. "Since white people have never been subjected to a stop-and-search policy, they don't understand why black people are upset."

But the idea that race and class motivated the police response is highly unpopular. Eileen McNamara of the *Boston Globe* wrote a column after the shooting, asking why some peoples' lives are seemingly more valuable than others, based on their race and class. The next day angry readers kept McNamara's phone ringing, in one case calling her a "nigger-lover" for comparing the Stuart murder with that of an African-American man killed the same night.

Boston police have also come under scrutiny for their treatment of witnesses who implicated William Bennett in the

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How TV sold the Panama invasion

by Mark Cook and Jeff Cohen



Two weeks after the Panama invasion, CBS News sponsored a public opinion poll in Panama that found the residents in rapture over what had happened. Even 80% of those whose homes had been blown up or their relatives killed by U.S. forces said it was worth it. Their enthusiasm did not stop with the ousting of Gen. Manuel Noriega, however. A less heavily advertised result of the poll was that 82% of the sampled Panamanian patriots did not want Panamanian control of the Canal, preferring either partial or exclusive control by the United States ("Panamanians Strongly Back U.S. Move," *New York Times*, 1/6/90).

A "public opinion poll" in a country under martial law, conducted by an agency obviously sanctioned by the invading forces, can be expected to come up with such results. Most reporters, traveling as they did with the U.S. military, found little to contradict this picture. Less than 40 hours after the invasion, Sam Donaldson and Judd Rose transported us to Panama via ABC's Prime Time Live. "There were people

who applauded us as we went by in a military convoy," said Rose. "The military have been very good to us [in escorting reporters beyond the Canal Zone]," added Donaldson.

While this kind of "Canal Zone journalism" dominated television, a few independent reporters struck out on their own. Peter Eisner of *Newsday's* Latin American Bureau, for example, reported that Panamanians were cursing U.S. soldiers under their breath as troops searched the home of a neighbor — a civilian — for weapons. One Panamanian pointed out a man speaking to U.S. soldiers as a *sapo*, a toad, slang for "dirty informer," and suggested that denouncing people to the U.S. forces was a way of settling old scores. A doctor living on the street said that "liberals will be laying low for a while, and they're probably justified" because of what would happen to those who speak out. All of Eisner's sources feared having their names printed.

Obviously there was a mix of opinion inside Panama, but it was virtually unreported on television, the dominant medium shaping U.S. attitudes about the invasion.

Few TV reporters seemed to notice that the jubilant Panamanians parading before their cameras day after day to endorse the invasion spoke near perfect English and were overwhelmingly light

Jeff Cohen, Executive Director of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting), a national media watch group, co-authored this article with **Mark Cook**. It appeared in the Jan./Feb. 1990 Issue of *Extra!*, a bi-monthly publication of FAIR, 130 W. 25th Street, New York NY 10001. Subscriptions are \$30 a year for individuals, \$50 for institutions.

skinned and well dressed. This in a Spanish speaking country with a largely mestizo and black population where poverty is widespread. ABC's Beth Nissen was one of the few TV reporters to take a close look at the civilian deaths caused by U.S. bombs that pulverized El Chorillo, the poor neighborhood which ambulance drivers now call "Little Hiroshima." The people of El Chorillo don't speak perfect English, and they were less than jubilant about the invasion.

In the first days of the invasion, TV journalists had one overriding obsession: How many U.S. soldiers have died? The question, repeated with drumbeat regularity, tended to drown out the other issues: Panamanian casualties, international law, foreign reaction. On the morning of the invasion, CBS anchor Kathleen Sullivan's voice cracked with emotion for the U.S. soldiers: "Nine killed, more than 50 wounded. How long can this fighting go on?" Unknown and unknowable to CBS viewers, hundreds of Panamanians had already been killed by then, many buried in their homes.

Judging from the calls and requests that poured into the FAIR office, European and Latin American journalists based in the United States were stunned

by the implied racism and national chauvinism in the media display. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* of Canada ran a front page article critiquing the United States and its media for "the peculiar jingoism of U.S. society so evident to foreigners but almost invisible for most Americans."

TV's continuous focus on the well-being of the invaders meant that the screen was dominated by red, white and blue draped coffins and ceremonies, honor rolls of the U.S. dead, drum rolls, remarks by Dan Rather about "our fallen heroes" . . . but no Panamanian funerals. This despite the fact that the invasion claimed perhaps 50 Panamanian lives for every U.S. citizen killed.

On Day One, when Pentagon pool correspondent Fred Francis was asked on ABC's Nightline about the civilian casualties, he said he did not know, because he and other journalists were traveling around with the U.S. Army. Curiosity didn't increase in ensuing days. FAIR called the TV networks daily to demand they address the issue of civilian deaths, but journalists said they had no way of verifying the numbers.

No such qualms existed with regard to Rumania, where over the Christmas weekend, CNN and other U.S. outlets were freely dishing out fantastic reports of 80,000 people killed in days of violence, a figure greater than the immediate Hiroshima death toll — which any editor should have dismissed out of hand. Tom Brokaw's selective interest in

civilians was evident when he devoted the first half of NBC Nightly News to Panama (12/20/89) without mentioning non-combatant casualties, then turned to Rumania and immediately referred to reports of thousands of civilian deaths.

Not until the sixth day of the Panama invasion did the U.S. Army augment its estimated dead (23 American troops, 297 alleged enemy soldiers) to include a figure for civilians: 254. The number was challenged as representing only a fraction of the true death toll by the few reporters who sought out independent sources — Panamanian human rights monitors, hospital workers, ambulance drivers, funeral home directors. These sources spoke of thousands of civilian injuries and 10,000 left homeless.

TV correspondents, so uncurious about civilian casualties, could not be expected to go beyond U.S. military assurances about who was being arrested and why. As the *Boston Globe* noted, U.S. forces were arresting anyone on a blacklist compiled by the newly installed government. Peter Eisner reported, "Hundreds of intellectuals, university students, teachers and professional people say they have been harassed and detained by U.S. forces in the guise of searching for hidden weapons."

Ted Koppel and other TV journalists had a field day mocking the Orwellian-titled "Dignity Battalions," but none were heard ridiculing the invasion's code name, "Operation Just Cause." The day after the invasion, NBC Nightly News offered its own case study in Orwellian Newspeak: While one corre-



spendent referred to the U.S. military occupiers as engaging in “peacekeeping chores,” another on the same show referred to Latin American diplomats at the OAS condemning the United States as a “lynch mob.” After the USSR criticized the invasion as “gunboat diplomacy” (as had many other countries), Dan Rather dismissed it as “old-line, hard-line talk from Moscow.”

Journalism gave way to state propaganda when a CNN correspondent dutifully reported on the day of the invasion, “U.S. troops have taken detainees but we are not calling them prisoners of war because the United States has not declared war.” That kind of obedient reporter probably still refers to the Vietnam “conflict.” Similarly, on Day One, many network correspondents couldn’t bring themselves to call the invasion an invasion until they got the green light from Washington; instead, it was referred to variously as a military action, intervention, operation, expedition, affair, insertion.

Many reporters uncritically promoted White House explanations for its break-up with Noriega. Clifford Kraus reported in the *New York Times* that Noriega “began as a CIA asset but fell afoul of Washington over his involvement in drug and arms trafficking.” ABC’s Peter Jennings told viewers on the day of the invasion, “Let’s remember that the United States was very close to Mr. Noriega before the whole question of drugs came up.” Actually, Noriega’s drug links were asserted by U.S. intelligence as early as 1972. In 1976, after U.S. espionage officials proposed that Noriega be dumped because of drugs and double-dealing, then-CIA director George Bush made sure the relationship continued. U.S. intelligence overlooked the drug issue year after year as long as Noriega was an eager ally in U.S. espionage and covert operations, especially those targeted against Nicaragua.

Peter Jennings’ claim that the U.S.

broke with Noriega after the “question of drugs came up” turns reality upside down. Noriega’s involvement in drug trafficking was purportedly heaviest in the early 1980s when his relationship with the United States was especially close. By 1986, when the Noriega/U.S. relationship began to fray, experts agree that Noriega had already drastically curtailed his drug links. The two drug-related indictments against Noriega in Florida cover activities from 1981 through March 1986.

When as vice president, Bush met with Noriega in Panama in December 1983, besides discussing Nicaragua, Bush allegedly raised questions about drug-money laundering. According to author Kevin Buckley, Noriega told top aide Jose Blandon that he’d picked up the following message from the Bush meeting, “The United States wanted help for the contras so badly that if he even promised it, the U.S. government would turn a blind eye to money laundering and setbacks to democracy in Panama.” In 1985 and ’86, Noriega met several times with Oliver North to discuss the assistance Noriega was providing to the contras, such as training contras at Panamanian Defense Force bases. Noriega didn’t fall from grace until he stopped being a “team player” in the U.S. war against Nicaragua.

The U.S. media showed little curiosity about the Dec. 16 confrontation that led to the death of a U.S. Marine officer and the injury of another when they tried to run a roadblock in front of PDF headquarters.

The Panamanian version of the event was that the U.S. soldiers, upon being discovered, opened fire — injuring three civilians, including a child — and then tried to run the roadblock. This version was largely ignored by U.S. journalists even after the shooting two days later of a Panamanian corporal who “signaled a U.S. serviceman to stop,” according to the administration. “The U.S. service-

man felt threatened,” the administration claimed, after admitting that its earlier story that the Panamanian had pulled his gun was false.

For months, U.S. forces had been trying to provoke confrontations as a pretext for an attack. In response to an Aug. 11 incident, Panamanian Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter asked that a UN peacekeeping force be dispatched to Panama to prevent such encounters. The U.S. press largely ignored his call.

“When during the past few days Noriega declared war on the United States and some of his followers then killed a U.S. Marine, roughed up another American serviceman, also threatening that man’s wife, strong public support for a reprisal was all but guaranteed,” Ted Koppel said on Nightline Dec. 20.

Noriega never “declared war on the United States.” The original Reuters dispatches, published on the inside pages of the *New York Times*, buried the supposed “declaration” in articles dealing with other matters. In the Dec. 17 article headlined, “Opposition Leader in Panama Rejects a Peace Offer from Noriega,” Reuters quoted the general as saying that he would judiciously use new powers granted him by the Panamanian parliament and that “the North American scheme, through constant psychological and military harassment, has created a state of war in Panama.” This statement of fact aroused little excitement at the White House, which called the parliament’s move, “a hollow step.”

The Bush team set out to control television and front page news in the first days knowing that exposés of official deception (such as Noriega’s 110 pounds of “cocaine” that turned out to be tamales) would not appear until weeks later buried on inside pages of newspapers. Rulers do not require the total suppression of news.

As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, “It’s sufficient to delay the news until it no longer matters.”

TW

Betrayed . . . Continued from page 21
 shooting. Three teenagers say they were forced to make false statements; another says he was threatened with a beating and 20 years in prison if he didn't go along with a statement about Bennett's alleged confession to the crime. A woman who saw Bennett the night of the shooting says police offered to release her son from juvenile custody if she cooperated — and to detain her daughter if she didn't. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has announced its intention to investigate those allegations.

Rep. Rushing isn't sure he believes Charles Stuart was the source of the story that the "gunman" was black. "One of the things we have to do [with this commission] is to really start from the moment Charles Stuart called the State Police dispatcher, and reconstruct what happened and when people knew certain things. We have no public information yet that tells us when Charles Stuart said that the perpetrator was black."

Tony Brooks says the media bear some responsibility for "dropping the ball" in the Stuart investigation. "News coverage isn't set up to include minority communities," says Brooks. "The *Boston*

Globe doesn't have a Roxbury bureau. We know those areas only as havens for violence and poverty. So it was easy, when Charles Stuart set up this hoax, to believe and imagine that such a crime belonged in Mission Hill. Had the city's reporters done a better job at covering minorities, things might have been different." Brooks talked to police-beat reporters at both newspapers about their relationship with the "cop shop." "Their sources are police officials, and that's dangerous, because the police have a vested interest: their job is to get someone arrested for the crime. In Willie Bennett, they thought they had their man. Reporters told me their sources inside the investigation were leaking information to build their case." As for suspicions about Stuart: "Everybody had heard the rumors, but there was nothing to back them up, and it was hard to buck the momentum of sticking with the clichés of 'the perfect couple.'"

"As a white journalist," Brooks says, "I would like to figure out ways to be involved in all of the city."

It was Carol Stuart's family who provided a healing touch in late January, when they announced they were setting up a scholarship fund for Mission Hill residents in her name. The fund has grown rapidly since its inception, and it's been hailed as the most caring and sensible gesture to come out of the tragedy.

Canon Rodman thinks the Episcopal Church has a role to play in the aftermath of the Stuart case — working to abolish the death penalty. Rodman says the initial "rush to judgment" in which politicians were calling for its reinstatement was immediately reversed after Stuart's suicide. "What we're trying to do in the church community in particular is to try to focus on that aspect of this issue, until such time as the rest of the facts come out," says Rodman.

There's a feeling that what Boston is dealing with now may be the "bottoming-out" phase of an addiction to racism,

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

judgment — as if the Episcopal Church were an *established* church with duties to legitimize the culture.

In its editorial, THE WITNESS bewails, "But what about the lack of voices condemning the invasion of Panama coming from our own country? Our own Congress?" As to Episcopalians, why ask? In deed, as well as word, the teaching of this sect of ours supports jingoism. It's leaders have always waited until society has made it fashionable to even speak about, let alone condemn or fight against, oppression.

Condemn? To what? Not to hell, as the recent message of the Roman Catholic Bishop Austin Vaughn to Cuomo.

Impeachment? Yes. It is not as efficient as the Rumanian system of condemning the killer of their dreams. But it is the agreed method to condemn the killers of the Constitutional Democracy dream.

If THE WITNESS wishes to console its readers by printing the words of existing others, let it eschew the pabulum and cheap grace suggestions of those wearers of fine ecclesiastical silks, dwellers in kingly homes. Offer writers like Lapham and John B. Oakes: "The president's rationale for this long planned, clumsily executed and cynically named Operation Just Cause was hypocritical and false. Not one of his reasons for pressing the Panama button stands up under scrutiny. Mr. Bush showed his contempt for truth, contempt for domestic and international law, contempt for the norms of diplomatic decency."

McRae Werth
Blue Hill, Maine

sexism and classism. Whether or not the city can admit it has a problem remains to be seen. "It is extremely difficult," says Bishop Harris, "for white people to admit that they are racist, or to admit their complicity in a racist system. They don't really have to do anything to perpetuate it. If they just keep putting one foot in front of the other, enjoying their privileged status, the beat goes on." **TW**

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Labor . . . Continued from page 8
 revens campaign mounted by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union against the notoriously anti-union Southern textile producer; in the efforts of renegade Mine Workers and Teamsters to reclaim and democratize their unions; and in public employee unions winning the legal right to union representation for the first time.

In these out-of-the-mainstream organizing efforts, the new generation of activists felt at home. The work was defined as part of the crusade for a more equitable society, and utilized many of the same techniques and community/church coalitions that had characterized the movements of the 1960s. In addition, they fostered an organizer-centered culture, a community united in struggle, sacrifice and solidarity.

And they were successful. Combining brilliant organizing in the California fields with a national boycott, the Farmworkers won a contract with Gallo wines. A former VISTA volunteer, Ray Rogers, developed a corporate campaign strategy which, by applying pressure to corporate boards and financial interlocks, helped ACTWU win a contract with J.P. Stevens. The Miners for Democracy deposed the corrupt UMW president Tony Boyle. And public employee unions became (and remain) the fastest-growing unions in the country.

These successes could not go unnoticed by other unions or the AFL-CIO. In addition, the influx of the new activists coincided with an intensified attack against unions by the New Right and a proliferation of sophisticated union-busting firms retained by companies to fight union representation. A new economic order was beginning to take form, marked by increased corporate conglomeratization and the shift from an industrial, more frequently unionized base to a mostly ununionized, often female or minority, service workers economy.

As labor confronted these new, per-

plexing problems, a few of the more traditional unions grudgingly opened their doors to some of the labor newcomers.

However, the integration of '60s activists into the labor establishment has frequently been an uneasy and disheartening process. While organizing and the people who do it may be crucial to the

Pittston strike settled

Some 1,500 United Mine Workers from Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky were back on the job at the end of February after voting to accept a new contract from the Pittston Coal Group, ending an almost 11-month-long strike. Though 500 miners were laid off, they were hoping to be reinstated by the end of April. The union is still negotiating to have Judge Donald McGlothlin of Russell County Circuit Court drop \$64 million in fines he levied against the union for illegal strike activities.

The contract permits Pittston to schedule shifts 24 hours a day, including Sundays, and to suspend 13 strikers who are faced with felony charges for strike activities. But the company is required under the contract to pay 100% of workers' health care costs and resume payments into an industry pension fund, a victory for the miners since this is the issue which prompted the strike. Retirees also got their benefits, a hotly contested issue with the company in the strike. Union officials expressed gratitude to religious leaders and congregations throughout the country who supported the strike, many of whom participated in non-violent civil disobedience with the miners.

For Episcopalians supporting coal miners and their families, their involvement has been a true biblical experience including a lonely crucifixion and now a resurrection, according to Mary Lee Simpson of Roanoke, editor of the *Southwestern Episcopalian*.

survival of the labor movement, union organizers generally suffer the double whammy of long hours and strenuous demands, coupled with low pay and a lack of institutional recognition. Furthermore, unions have often embraced a restrictive management style that makes it hard for good organizers to survive.

As Si Kahn, an independent southern organizer who has worked with many unions, notes, "Great organizers are gut non-conformists. They're artistic and creative and fundamentally anti-management. Also headstrong, quirky, and profound outsiders. They don't fit well with suits and ties."

Unquestionably, the organizational structures that inhibit innovation, the lack of institutional support or recognition for organizing, the bias for conformity and the sheer arduousness of the lifestyle, all take their toll on activists employed by unions. But what seems to finally grind down, and eventually defeat, union organizers and activists are the contradictions. Between espoused democracy and internal repression; between espoused equality and institutional racism and sexism; between a commitment to solidarity and organizing in theory, and an internal culture that vitates against them in practice.

For those who can limit their vision to the small daily tasks, survival in the labor movement is possible, even rewarding: You can manage to do good organizing, if you don't concern yourself with issues of foreign policy; you can rise in the union hierarchy, if you don't defend your clerical staff; you can edit the union newspaper, if you don't encourage debate. Some make the compromise.

For others the cost is too high. When the divide between the principles and the practice becomes too wide, people, both inside and outside the institution, lose faith.

Those of us who struggle to keep faith look for ways to make the culture of organizing live in the movement and in ourselves.

"When I started," Industrial Unions Department organizer Joseph Uehlein relates, "my boss said, 'I understand you're a singer of labor songs; that's not why you're on our payroll.'"

"People saw music as ornamental, not political. But I tell them music reflects

politics. Culture is what people do together to make them a group, and it is inseparable from political activism. Look at our efforts to inform people in organizing drives. Those conversions that are solely intellectual are always vulnerable. We need to win people over in their hearts, with the righteousness of what this movement is about."

Good organizers, Si Kahn maintains, "have rage at the core, rage at injustice, but at the same time, are guided by great feelings of love. I think organizers can survive living in motels, the hours, the demands, so long as they have a chance to feel they are changing history. They cannot survive when they feel they no longer make a difference, when they are no longer redressing injustice.

"We need to make sure they're doing that, and then let them know they are heirs of a proud tradition. People who struggle for justice are the prophets of our time. It's that kind of call."

The office next to mine at District 65, UAW, belongs to Julie Kushner, Vice President for the Clerical and Professional Division, my friend and fellow survivor.

Julie hardly has an evening to herself. Ever. The divorced mother of two young children, whose crayoned masterworks adorn her office walls, her life is a constant juggling of out-of-town travel, evening meetings and childcare. I've seen her negotiate all night long and come in the next morning, exhausted but still fighting.

I love Julie because she is still passionate about the labor movement, although that's sometimes a political liability within the organization, as though strong feelings were somehow inappropriate. I've never seen Julie as discouraged by management, as she is by the under-appreciation and non-support occasionally displayed by fellow union officers. More and more often, she wonders whether she has the stamina to ward off emotional fatigue.

A few weeks after Labor Day, Julie helped coordinate a caravan of 40 New York union staffers on a solidarity visit to the striking Pittston miners in Russell County, Virginia. The visit, which started out as a plan to participate in civil disobedience, was transformed when 100 United Mine Workers strikers seized one of the Pittston processing plants, the first plant take-over in the United States in 50 years.

"The plant had already been taken over when I arrived on Monday," Julie told me. "It was night, eerie and foggy. But there were 200 supporters at the plant, and the atmosphere was charged. That plant's a huge, grey, enormous concrete structure, maybe six stories high, with chutes coming out the sides. The guys who had occupied the plant were on a balcony about four stories up. When I was allowed inside, there was water dripping and coal dust everywhere, but it was so important to let them know how much we appreciated their courage, to make that contact.

"On Tuesday, the UMW was ordered into court, and the judge ruled that unless they were out of the plant by Wednesday at 3 p.m., they would attach the union's strike fund and arrest everyone.

"They were planning to send in the National Guard. By then, the crowd of supporters had swelled, contingents of miners arriving from Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana. It was so exciting. And by Wednesday we were all ready to take them on, anxious to defend the workers in the plant, even against the National Guard. There were close to 4,000 of us by then, so many of us we had no fear. It seemed so natural to be there. Here was a union saying 'no' to the laws which have found all sorts of ways to restrict us.

"The union didn't leave the plant in the afternoon. It planned a rally at the plant instead. It was already getting dark when the music started. Joyful. A celebration of our power, like a victory. And

then the strikers inside the plant came out on the balcony in formation, carrying an American flag. And chants rang back and forth between them and us. 'We are. Union.' 'Solidarity. Forever.' And they somehow managed to spell the letters UMW against the wall of the plant with their flashlights, and the chants kept on, deep voices, real loud, echoing. And then the men came out of the plant and evaporated into the crowd.

"Nothing like this had ever happened to me in 12 years in the labor movement," Julie relates.

"This was not a picket, but a real challenge to authority. It was like history repeated, at the same time as we were making it. We so rarely have the opportunity. And even though our contingent was only a small group, they showed us such warmth, welcomed us into the struggle, not just their struggle, but ours.

"When I came back to New York on Friday, I had to go to an arbitration, and I thought, how mundane. But if you think deeply about the experience we had, it spurs you to think more creatively. You internalize it and take it with you to the next struggle. And the alliances you build are deep, people are aware, and it will not be forgotten."

"Deep in the cradle of organized labor," Saul Alinsky wrote, "America's radicals restlessly toss in their sleep — but they sleep. There they continue to dream of labor and the world of the future.

"But in spite of the parallel course of organized business and organized labor, the fault with the American radical is not that he chose to make his bed in the labor movement but that he fell asleep in it."

To me and my fellow '60s refugees, the labor movement is like the lover you can neither marry nor leave, the parent to whom you cannot be reconciled. Part prayer, part promise. A vision in the synapses of bureaucratic days. And those of us who hold it cannot sleep. 

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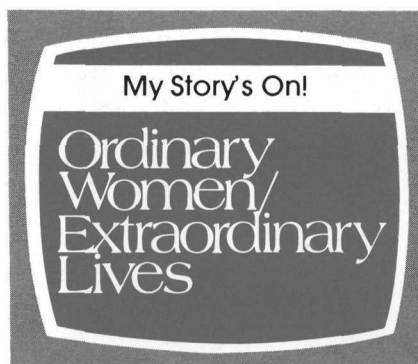
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