

Title: *The Witness*, January to December, 1991

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THE WITNESS

Civil rights,
past
and
present



Left: Jonathan Daniels, killed in Selma, 1965

Right: Dr. Mary Frances Berry
U.S. Civil Rights Commissioner

Letters

Protests usurping of war powers act by Bush

Thank you so much for sending me a copy of your October issue of THE WITNESS which makes a brief reference to my stance on the Persian Gulf crisis. I appreciate your making this information available to me and my staff, and I will continue to raise my voice on this critical issue.

Please know how grateful I am to you. I am taking the liberty of enclosing copies of my resolution (calling for removal of U.S. Armed Forces from the Middle East).

Henry Gonzalez
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

(Ed: — Texas Representative Gonzalez' H.J. Resolution 685 reads as follows:

Whereas the Constitution grants Congress the exclusive power to declare war;

Whereas U.S. Armed Forces were introduced in August 1990 by the President into a situation in the foreign land and waters of the Persian Gulf region where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated, without consultation with Congress or a declaration of war by Congress;

Whereas the Administration has announced its intention to escalate this action by deploying 100,000 more troops to the Persian Gulf region in addition to the 240,000 already deployed in connection with Operation Desert Shield;

Whereas these deployments are a commitment of U.S. Armed Forces into a foreign region for an unknown period;

Whereas there has been no solidly defined and constant mission for U.S. troops in connection with Operation Desert Shield in that

1) the original deployment was purportedly to ensure the safety of Saudi Arabia and to prevent an Iraqi invasion of that country;

2) the basis for the original deployment was altered to one of protection of American interests in the Gulf States' oil

supply and to Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait;

3) the latest announcement by the Administration is that the mission may be further altered to one of taking offensive action against the country of Iraq;

4) the effect of the deployments and the sanctions on the Nation's economy as well as on the international community was not analyzed; and

5) the wisdom of protecting foreign oil supplies as opposed to developing a national energy policy that would end dependence on foreign oil and the whims of foreign government officials has not been analyzed;

Whereas the military force introduced by the President without consideration of the collective judgment of the Congress has escalated the tension and the potential for world war;

Whereas the initial unilateral action by the President was taken without regard for the effects that diplomacy might have had to avert this crisis;

Whereas this deployment to the Middle East is subject to the limitations of the War Powers Resolution: Now therefore be it

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled that

1) the deployment of the U.S. Armed Forces into certain hostilities in the Middle East is subject to the War Powers Resolution;

2) there has been no declaration of war, specific statutory authorization, or national emergency created by attack upon the United States, its territories or possessions or its armed forces justifying the President's action in ordering the deployment of U.S. troops and

3) therefore this deployment shall be ceased immediately and all U.S. Armed Forces deployed to the Middle East in connection with Operation Desert Shield shall be withdrawn immediately.)

'Afterlife' bemuses

As a priest and thanatologist, I read with mild bemusement Charles Meyer's "Afterlife" article in the November WITNESS.

However laudable or absurd his speculations, it is most important to remember that his views are, as he acknowledges, just that: speculation. As such, they are of course ultimately no more valid or certain than those of any person, any theologian, lay or ordained. In my 17 years as a clergyperson, I have encountered all manner of descriptions of "afterlife," each of which was held dear by the person describing.

It seems to me more fruitful to explore that which can be known than to spend

Kudos to THE WITNESS for your splendid December editorial, "No to Phoenix in 1991." Even before the editorial appeared, I had written Presiding Bishop Browning urging him to move the 1991 General Convention. About the same time the PB asked a group of African-American bishops, Executive Council members and the national president of the Union of Black Episcopalians to meet with him in order to discuss the issue. We had two conversations, one a conference call, the other a meeting at the Church Center. On both occasions we were overwhelmingly in favor of moving the convention.

I agree with the PB that the issue facing us is a moral one. It has deep moral and theological implications for the future and is grounded in a sound biblical imperative from our past in the Exodus story. In Egypt, too, the power to change the law was in the hand of the government (Pharaoh) and the oppressed were ignored. But unlike the Episcopal Church, the Israelites were willing to risk the move.

much effort and energy on that which cannot — ever in this life — be known. My personal and professional concern is with life here and now as we know and live it. So the question for me becomes one more important than “Is there life after death?” It is, “Is there life after birth?” Is there life — most authentic life with God, full, free, good, whole, purposeful, abundant — after birth?

It is quite possible to live a life of (using Meyer's terms for metaphorical images of being with God) “peace, joy, rest, happiness and tranquility” *now*. I suggest that we might gain more by directing our attention to this life.

The Rev. John L. Abraham
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Praises from MERIP

Thanks to THE WITNESS for alerting readers to the ominous consequences of the U.S. military buildup in the Persian Gulf. Your September and October editorial statements are excellent.

I do feel that Jim Lewis' piece on Iraq in the December issue should have reflected more the police-state reality of that country. This is a very dangerous regime, and its stronger political image internally and in the region as a result of the confrontation with the United States is one of the most unfortunate aspects of this entire affair. Saddam is not Ho Chi Minh or Daniel Ortega.

If WITNESS readers wish to explore a detailed analysis of the Mideast crisis,

they might be interested in our Middle East Report, “On the edge of war.” Its 52 pages include an eight-page background to the crisis, as well as articles on Iraq, continuity and change in Soviet policy, and U.S. war strategy. Available for \$5.75 from MERIP, Suite 119, 1500 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Joe Stork
Washington, D.C.

Spong 'back swinging'

Bravo to Bishop John Spong for his response to his fellow bishops on confronting homophobia, and to THE WITNESS for printing the excerpts (November). I

Continued on page 9

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Firm 'no' to Phoenix in '91 says Executive Council member

I am in favor of going to Phoenix for the purpose of witnessing with African-Americans who in the words of the Presiding Bishop are “bruised” and in need of our support. Why not put forth a concerted effort to invite a large contingent of churchpeople to accompany the PB when he goes to Arizona on MLK's birthday so we can make a strong witness? A General Convention which is already splintered, where deputies will have comfortable hotel accommodations with evening dinners simply does not seem the appropriate time to make such a witness.

I am also in favor of standing in solidarity with my Native American sisters and brothers. As one among many who can claim Native American blood on both sides of our family tree, I have been and continue to be deeply committed to the need for recognition, reparations and remorse on the part of the American government and church for the grave injustice my ancestors have suffered. Because of my concern, I have spoken with fellow Executive Council member

Kesley Edmo, a Native American who says that “Justice would best be served by moving the convention.” I have also spoken with Bishop Craig Anderson of South Dakota who said, “When one group is diminished all others are also.” He spoke of the great symbolic power in not going to Phoenix and in being able to say that our moral outrage is such that we have decided not to go at considerable monetary loss — even stating the amount of that loss.

If our desire is to be with Native Americans, then why not, as Bishop Arthur Williams has suggested, meet in New Mexico or Utah, states into which Navajoland also extends?

It has been noted that a number of states, if faced with the same referendum, would probably go the same way as Arizona. I do not doubt this. But to my knowledge one state has so far had its governor refuse to allow the Day of Observance, and even after his impeachment, Evan Mecham leads the anti-MLK Day forces. This is an image many of us will carry for a long time, just as we

remember George Wallace in the school house door blocking young African-Americans seeking a better education.

Finally, your citing of Medgar Evers and others lost in the fight for justice during the civil rights movement brought back a flood of memories from my days as a civil rights activist. Medgar Evers was one of my parents' dearest friends — the first person to welcome us to Mississippi when we moved there in the 1950s. His murder was a terrible blow to our family. It is, I imagine, one of the reasons I am not willing to take this decision in my stride.

On another topic, lest we lose sight of other young lives lost by the innocents among us, I was riveted by the stories of homeless teens in the same December issue and profoundly moved by the courage these young people have shown. I pray the church will be outraged enough that we not take their plight in our stride either.

Nell Braxton Gibson
Executive Council Member
New York, N.Y.

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THE WITNESS



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Peace

Save us from weak resignation to violence,
Teach us that restraint
is the highest expression of power
that thoughtfulness and tenderness
are the mark of the strong . . .
Help us to love our enemies,
not by countenancing their sins,
but remembering our own

— Prayer by a Christian

Salaam

Save us, our compassionate Lord,
from our folly, by your wisdom,
from our arrogance, by your forgiving
love
from our greed by your infinite
bounty, and
from our insecurity by your healing
power

— Prayer by a Muslim

Shalom

Grant us the ability
to find joy and strength
not in the strident call to arms,
but in stretching out our arms
to grasp our fellow creatures
in the striving for justice and truth

— Prayer by a Jew

Happy New Year?

As we face an uncertain future, with peace hanging so precariously around a January 15 "deadline," we know our readers join us in greeting the New Year with prayerful vigilance.

The prayers above were composed by a Christian, a Muslim, and a Jew at the request of the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, a group with a prestigious Christian, Jewish and Muslim Board of Directors. The Interreligious Committee is calling for ongoing weekly or monthly community prayer services for peace in the Middle East during the New Year. It has already sponsored a number of such services, with enthusiastic turnouts, and in the process has developed models for liturgies which include Muslim, Jewish and Christian participation. These services might be held in a public place, such as a Veterans Memorial, or rotated to various houses of prayer.

Executive Director Ron Young can offer suggestions for such events: U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, Greene and Westview Sts., 3rd floor, Philadelphia, PA 19119 (215) 438-4142.

Activist says churches must support

Racism is on the rise, and institutions that were once at the forefront of the battle for civil rights have been backing away from the issue. The decline of support for civil rights is a legacy of the Reagan years, carried on by George Bush, as evidenced by his veto of the 1990 Civil Rights Act.

That's the opinion of Dr. Mary Frances Berry, educator, author, attorney, and a member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, who also believes that the Episcopal Church will not serve the cause of justice if it goes to Arizona.

Many rights activists are dismayed that the church is considering ignoring a boycott against the state of Arizona and going ahead with plans to hold its 1991 General Convention in Phoenix. The boycott is in protest of a state referendum which eliminated the holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.

Berry, now a professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania, has seen the civil rights struggle from many sides. She was Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Carter, and a leader in the movement for sanctions against South Africa. The night Nelson Mandela was released from prison, she was there to greet him.

In an interview in her office at the University of Pennsylvania, she said she was recently in Louisville, Ky., where there had been heated debate over the Arizona boycott.

"The University of Louisville football team decided to accept an invitation to play in the Fiesta Bowl (in Tempe, Ariz.)," she said. "The idea was they would go because they would get money, and they were happy they were invited, since they hadn't been invited to a bowl before."

Berry opposed the university's deci-

sion. "My point of view was that principle is more important than money. A university ought to teach people about principles and how to stand up for them.

"But the university is going ahead anyway, with the idea it will use the money to help minority programs. But I think that's wrong."

She felt that the same standards that applied to the university should also apply to the Episcopal Church, and that churches have a unique role to play in these situations.

"I think the church ought to teach moral values — I assume that is what churches do. Whatever principles the church has, it ought to abide by them," she said.

"The leadership in this country is against civil rights, and is trying to define it as something people should not be concerned with. We're in a period of reaction and it's going to get worse," she said.

Berry pointed out that the anti-apartheid struggle shows the importance of sticking to principle. "If all of us who went out to march and protest against the regime in South Africa had not done so, the U.S. Congress would not have passed sanctions."

The boycott is an important gesture of solidarity, she said. "The principle is one of encouraging those in Arizona who want to continue the fight for the holiday, not so much because it's for Martin Luther King, but because it represents a tremendous change for the better that occurred in American society.

"I was in Arizona right before the vote, and all the people who've worked very hard on this holiday would be deeply offended by the erosion of support for them."

She noted that the fact of the boycott



Dr. Mary Frances Berry
U.S. Civil Rights Commissioner.

fight against racism

by Susan E. Pierce

itself is as important as the outcome. "I don't really care whether or not boycotting succeeds. You don't always win when you stand up for principle."

Berry cautioned that it was crucial to every struggle that activists in the church come together on this issue. Those who feel it is only a black issue forget history, she noted. "If there had been no civil rights movement, there wouldn't be any gay and lesbian movement. The gay and lesbian rights movement is an offshoot of the civil rights movement. There wouldn't be any modern-day feminist movement if there hadn't been a civil rights movement."

Supporting the King holiday is part of honoring that history, she said. "Whatever one may think about Martin Luther King as a person, he embodies that movement."

"Advocates for the rights of anybody — women, gays and lesbians, people who believe in civil rights and in the quality of justice and believe that the church should stand for principle — ought to start a movement and demand that the church not meet in Arizona," she said.

"The fragmentation of the civil rights movement," she warned, "says something about how easily people forget, if they ever knew, the origins of the movement and how there should be an unbroken web between all of these movements, which should work and resonate together."

"People who are advocates for rights let themselves be divided because they get focused on whatever it is they're concerned about, rather than seeing the big picture. Also, they get tired and forget things — it's a human condition."

When told of the campaign in the Episcopal Church to honor as a martyr

Jonathan Daniels, a seminarian killed in 1965 while doing civil rights work in the South, Berry commented that it was ironic to think of the church commemorating his efforts, "while at the same time not understanding why it has to get out of Arizona."

She has witnessed the effects of this

"Advocates for the rights of anybody — women, gays and lesbians, people who believe in civil rights and that the church should stand for principle — ought to demand that the church not meet in Arizona."

civil rights amnesia on a national level as a member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission since 1980. The commission, an independent panel founded in 1957 to monitor federal agencies' compliance with civil rights legislation, came under attack during the Reagan administration. Berry successfully defeated attempts to weaken the commission by replacing her and others with conservatives who would carry out the administration's anti-civil rights agenda.

Berry believes the right-wing backlash has endangered the gains of the feminist

movement as well. She is presently working on a book about the politics of motherhood, which, among other things, examines the general belief that women, not men, must be primarily responsible for childcare.

She argues that buying into that belief, which has been heavily promoted by conservatives, has caused many women to give up on feminism. "The majority of women still believe that they are supposed to take care of kids and hold down jobs and do all this by themselves. They have lost hope that feminism can change these things."

"Men assume that if they don't take care of their kids, somebody else will. Women assume that if they don't take care of their kids, *nobody* will. It is impossible to build momentum for good public policy on child care until women understand that it is not necessary for them to be principally responsible for the care of children," she said in *Ms.* recently.

She expanded on the difficulty of consciousness-raising: "Most women have accepted the idea that they're going to be principally responsible for the kids and simply have to bear this double or even triple burden."

This sense of apathy and powerlessness, Berry noted, seems to pervade contemporary society.

"There's a general malaise," she observed. "The economy isn't doing well, complicated by the Middle East situation — people do not want the country to go to war. But there's a certain despair because they feel there's nothing they can do about it."

This pessimism, she felt, was another legacy of the "Reagan Revolution."

"The majority of Americans who voted liked Reagan and believed all of

this garbage about a free lunch and that the bills would never come due, and the money will trickle down, and that the real problem is we have to keep blacks down, and women at home and then everything will be fine.

"I think that part of the general malaise is that many who supported all that realize that they made a big mistake, but they don't quite know what to do now."

She points out that Bush is trying to continue the damaging Reagan policies of reversing civil rights and exploiting racial tension for political ends.

"That's what the Willie Horton campaign ads were about, and vetoing the Civil Rights Act of 1990, calling it a quota bill, when it isn't. Next was picking William Bennett as chairman of the Republican National Committee, and then having Bennett decide right away that his big issue was going to be supporting Jesse Helms' crusade against quotas," she said.

But Berry sees "signs in this depression that stalks the land that maybe not enough people will buy" the Bush administration's solutions for social ills. Concerning the problem of drug abuse, which has particularly damaged the black community, she is deeply skeptical of the administration's vaunted "war on drugs."

"I don't see any signs that the drug war has declined or dissipated," she said. "I don't see anyone seriously coming to grips with these problems. There's a lot of talk. But in communities that are most ravaged by the problem, it still exists."

African-Americans and other people of color are not only more adversely affected by drugs, but also by the failing economy, noted Berry.

"With the loss of manufacturing jobs, the economy is turning into a service economy where people, when they do work, are making lower wages. That affects everybody, but it disproportionately affects those who are at the bottom in our society," she said.

Again, she stated, there is no policy to deal with the country's financial woes. "The budget discussions in Congress didn't seriously tackle the issues. All they did was pretend to do something. But the deficit will continue. We're still borrowing instead of saving, and not doing anything about restructuring the American economy."

In a depressed economy, protecting civil rights and combatting racism is more necessary than ever, said Berry.

"Racial tensions in our society are exacerbated under these circumstances be-

"Churches should try to help people understand the issues and help them see that the code words being thrown around are simply excuses for not getting on with the business of creating a more just society."

cause it's not only black/white racial tensions which exist, but it's also intra-ethnic groups and across ethnic lines — Hispanics and blacks, Jews and blacks, Asians and blacks. You have people who feel that they've been locked out and now immigrants have come in and somehow gotten ahead of them.

"There is simply not enough economic wherewithal in this society. Yet what we've had from national leaders is a lot of rhetoric about 'in America, everyone can make it,' and 'you too may be rich.'"

"But people realize that no one is

dealing with their educational needs, healthcare needs, the need for housing, for community — despite all the rhetoric out there about achievement," Berry noted.

Unrealistic expectations and a bleak reality make fantasy seem the best alternative for young people of color.

"The only hope that many have for achievement is that they will somehow be able to write a hit song, or if they stay in school and play football, there's the slim chance they might play in the pros, or go to college on a scholarship. They have dreams like that, and not 'Yes, I will get a job in manufacturing when I get out of high school,' or, 'When I get out of college I'll be able to make enough money and do at least as well as my parents, or maybe better.'"

This uncertainty breeds more tension, Berry observed. "It makes the race problem worse, and makes the struggle for opportunity harder. You can always say: 'If those people had some intestinal fortitude, or weren't on drugs, or worked harder in school' — but it's still blaming the victim. Opportunity, change, or uplift requires motivation."

Berry cited an example of how the inherent racism of the system defeats dreams of opportunity: "Freedom National Bank, the largest black bank in the country, was just closed by federal regulators. We have money to keep open all these S&Ls in Texas, but we can't do anything about Freedom National Bank."

Even more difficult to deal with is the attitude that if some people can make it, why can't the rest?

Berry, who with her remarkable record of public service, scholarship and activism could serve as an example of achievement, countered, "It's true that extraordinary individuals make it despite these oppressive conditions. But not everybody is extraordinary, and you shouldn't have to be extraordinary to make it if you are willing to work and

become educated."

The struggle of individuals against the sea of social problems and injustices is admirable, said Berry, but it does not let society off the hook.

She referred to a *New York Times* Sunday magazine cover story about Madeleine Cartwright, principal of an elementary school in an impoverished North Philadelphia neighborhood, who is making a heroic single-handed effort to improve morale and motivate students and their families by doing such things as buying the school a washing machine to wash the students' clothes.

Berry commented, "The effort of one human being to try to change a reality is laudable — everyone should try to light one candle — but a whole governmental sector, a whole community sector that should be doing something about the context in which these children live, isn't involved. One lone warrior is out there trying to slay all the lions, when in fact there's nothing there to support the situation. Even if she were able to motivate some of those kids, what do they do when they leave?"

"There's nothing wrong with volunteerism, but think how much more effective that principal's inspirational leadership would be if there were structures to help her help those kids."

In such a climate of increasing racial tension and growing inequities, Berry stressed that those whose mandate is to advocate for justice must support the movement for change and make clear that their stand against racism and oppression is unequivocal.

"Some problems are solved by individual efforts, but other problems have to be solved by a commitment to a just social and governmental policy."

She concluded, "Churches should try to help people understand the issues and help them see that the code words being thrown around are simply excuses for not getting on with the business of creating a more just society." **TW**

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

am gratified that Bishop Spong "came back swinging" on this issue, and I applaud his courage, honesty, and integrity. We need much more!

Valerie A. Abrahamsen
Waltham, Mass.

Cyndi Jones key to ADA

Thank you for Sara Fischer's great article, "No inclusivity without accessibility" (December). It challenges the church to faithfully respond to the recently passed Americans with Disabilities Act.

The issue should also have mentioned the crucial role played by another Episcopalian, Cyndi Jones, publisher/editor of *Mainstream* magazine, a national advocacy publication by and for people with disabilities. She helped mobilize disabled people across the nation, who witnessed to members of Congress and President Bush to pass the ADA. Her eloquent writing and speaking helped unite widely divergent groups, drawing disabled people into the political process until victory was achieved. She made many trips to Washington, and was there when the President signed the bill.

Cyndi, a member of St. Elizabeth's, San Diego, now works to implement the law by insisting that disabled people be included in decisions about access.

The Episcopal Church has an invaluable resource in Cyndi Jones, as she will extend inclusivity through access. It is a must in this Decade of Evangelism.

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, Cal.

Scholarship open

I would like to inform WITNESS readers that application deadline is Feb. 1 for the eighth Coolidge Research Colloquium for individual study of intellectual-religious topics, for communal living and ecumenical dialogue at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass. Paid expenses include room and board — as well as access to EDS, Harvard, and Boston libraries — during the Collo-

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quium, June 6 to July 2.

Resource theologians for 1991 are Rabbi Richard N. Levy, director, Los Angeles Hillel Council; Dana Greene, professor of history, St. Mary's College, Maryland; and the Rev. Dr. James P. Breeden, dean, William Jewett Tucker Foundation. The Colloquium is sponsored by the Association for Religion and Intellectual Life. Those interested can contact me at 401-863-2956.

The Rev. David A. Ames
Brown University
Providence, R.I.

No to WITNESS

I am no longer a priest or a member of the Episcopal Church — I am now an Orthodox Christian. I have no desire to receive THE WITNESS.

The Rev. John B. Pahls, Jr.
Colorado Springs, Col.

WITNESS inspires

I subscribed to THE WITNESS for a year in 1989 and I have *greatly* missed it since the subscription has run out. THE WITNESS makes me proud to be Episcopalian. You tackle issues of unfairness in much the same way Our Lord did. You inspire and bless. Please send my new subscription to my new address.

Durrell Watkins
Arkadelphia, Ark.

Correction

In the story about seminarians in Sing Sing prison (November '90), the section on Imam Mika'il Abdullah Mohammed, a.k.a. Michael DeVeaux, should read: "A child math whiz and prep school veteran, he is now doing 25 to life for murder — incarcerated for the last 10 years of his life for a crime of which the Imam says, 'I'm innocent, man.' "

Jonathan Daniels: Civil rights martyr

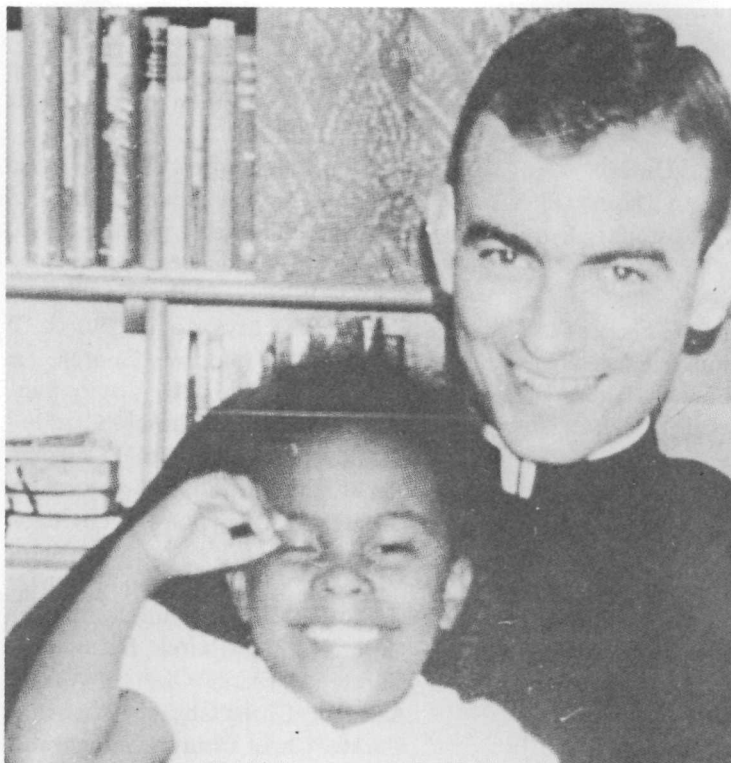
by Bill Rankin

“We left the jail in a group, and we walked up to the corner and it was one of those hot steamy summer days . . . we’d been in jail, underfed, and we were thirsty . . . As we were walking to the store (to get a soda) suddenly there was an ominous sense that filled the air and I became very nervous . . . The street was clean of cars. There was literally no one around. It was as if the town was suddenly shut down. We started walking up the stairs. I was in front, Jon was behind, and Joyce Bailey and Father Morrisroe were walking side by side up the steps. When I got to the last step, Tom Coleman was standing there brandishing a shotgun. He said, ‘Bitch, I’ll blow your brains out.’ And then I felt a tug and I fell back — a shotgun blast, a thud. A few seconds later, another shot. And then I heard Richard (Morrisroe) on the ground crying for water, water, water, water.”

So spoke Ruby Sales to a *Washington Post* reporter 25 years after Jon Daniels pulled her out of the line of fire and was blasted full in the chest with a 12-gauge shotgun. His body was hurled a dozen feet backward, and he was killed instantly.

The events leading to Jon’s death on Aug. 20, 1965 in Hayneville, Ala., are chronicled in *The Jon Daniels Story, With His Letters and Papers*, edited by William Schneider and currently out of print. I have read it several times since Jon was killed at the age of 26. We were seminary classmates. I was 24 at the time, and embarrassingly unconscious of

The Rev. William W. Rankin, rector of St. Stephen’s Church, Belvedere, Calif., is newly-named chair of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company



Jonathan Daniels and an unidentified friend in Selma, Alabama, 1965.

a lot of things before Jon’s murder. Since then, and because of it, I have come to see the world and my place in it, and Christian ministry in general, largely in terms of justice and peace.

Jonathan Myrick Daniels was born March 20, 1939 in Keene, N.H., the only son of Constance and Philip Daniels. Jon’s former high school teachers and friends in Keene remember him as a champion of the underdog and a non-conformist. At Virginia Military Institute he emerged as an uncommonly bright student, winning Woodrow Wilson and Danforth fellowships for graduate study, and admission to a graduate program in English literature at Harvard.

His student years at V.M.I. were marked by an anguished searching after his calling, and by an apparent tendency to be as hard on others as he was on himself. His father’s death following a difficult illness was a significant burden for him, coming during his junior year in college. Some months later, his sister became very ill, and he worked all summer to help pay her medical bills.

His stint at Harvard was filled with anxiety about his vocation. His sister’s continuing illness and a delayed grief reaction to his father’s death caused him to obtain counseling at the Harvard Health Service. On Easter Sunday 1962, while attending a worship service at Boston’s

Church of the Advent, Jonathan experienced some sort of conversion, the details of which he seems not to have disclosed to anyone. The effect of this experience, however, was to resolve the question of his future. He entered the Episcopal Theological School (ETS) in Cambridge, Mass. in the fall of 1963 as a postulant from the Diocese of New Hampshire. (ETS merged later with the Philadelphia Divinity School to become the Episcopal Divinity School.)

I remember Jonathan as an extremely bright student, possessing an earnest desire to understand as best he could the theology being presented to us, but he was at least equally concerned with the issues of the day. He was more intense than most, and he sometimes made me feel his intensity more than I wanted to.

I was not surprised when he responded immediately to the March 10, 1965 call of Martin Luther King, Jr., for all persons of good will to come to Selma, Ala. Jonathan went with Judith Upham and other ETS students. He and Judith stayed in Selma until March 16, then returned to Cambridge, where they obtained faculty permission to work with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Selma while continuing their studies from a distance. Their return was sponsored by the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. (ESCRU continued its struggle for racial justice until it disbanded in 1971.)

From then into the summer, Jonathan's civil rights work in Alabama was centered in the Selma area, with a brief return to ETS for his examinations. The decisive turn was made around July 30, 1965, when Jonathan focused his interest upon voter registration in Lowndes County, an area known to be particularly dangerous for civil rights workers.

Because his red VW was well-known, and because he had been shot at before, Jonathan rented a larger car, which he thought would afford him better protection and greater speed in any moment of

danger. He drove with Roman Catholic priest Richard Morrisroe to Fort Deposit in "Bloody Lowndes" on a Friday in August to advise and photograph local black teenagers. These teenagers intended to demonstrate in front of a few local stores, in the hope of drawing their parents and other black adults into civil rights activity. Schneider's account states that all the young people knew they would be beaten by whites during their arrests. He writes, "When Jon saw the group of teenage marchers, pathetically few in number and frightened by what they knew was about to happen, he decided that he must join them to offer his moral support." At 11:30 a.m. Jon and the demonstrators began their walk into Fort Deposit. An FBI informant had warned them that they would be arrested by the local police.

By about 11:45 all had been arrested. They were placed in a tiny jail, approximately 150 square feet. After being searched, they were ordered into the



Ruby Sales was a teenager when Daniels saved her life by pulling her out of the way of the shotgun blast that killed him.

back of a garbage truck and conveyed to the abysmal Hayneville jail. Bail was set at \$100 each, but the prisoners agreed to stay in jail until all could be released together. Their stay lasted six days, during which the Rev. Henri Stines of ESCRU arrived with bail money for Jon. He refused it. Stines was the last member of the Episcopal Church to see him alive.

On Friday, Aug. 20 the entire group was released without explanation. They decided to wait on the jail lawn for transportation until they were ordered off by the police. As they moved on, Jon, Ruby Sales, Joyce Bailey, and Father Morrisroe headed for the nearby "Cash Store" to buy soda pop. This store had been used by integrated groups before.

Joyce Bailey told Schneider what happened next: "Actually I didn't see the man with the gun until we got to the door and he had a gun on Ruby, and Jon pushed Ruby to the ground. At that time the man shot Jon and Jon caught his stomach and fell. He didn't even say a word. So Father Richard caught me by the hand and jerked me round somebody's car . . . (Then) I started running and he ran with me. At this time this man shot Father Richard and I kept running. As I looked back Father Richard was falling to the ground and Ruby was on her knees crawling . . ." Thomas Coleman, the man with the gun, kept on-lookers at bay until a friend of his arrived by car and drove him away.

About 45 minutes later Jon's body was taken to a mortuary. A number of telephone calls were made by civil rights volunteers to local ambulance services and funeral homes in the area in an effort to locate his body. Three calls were made to White's Chapel Funeral Home in Montgomery, which denied knowing anything about him. No one would disclose the whereabouts of Jon's body. Several hours later, Assistant U.S. Attorney General John Doar established that

Jon's body was, in fact, at White's Chapel Funeral Home. No air service from any nearby airport would contract to fly Jon's body to New Hampshire. John Morris, executive director of ESCRU, eventually arranged for the use of a small plane belonging to an Episcopal layman from Atlanta. Morris accompanied Jon's body to Keene. There, at the funeral service, William Wolf of the ETS faculty read from a paper Jon had written from Selma for a theology class: "I lost fear in the black belt when I began to know in my bones and sinews that I had truly been baptized into the Lord's Death and Resurrection, that in the only sense that really matters I am already dead and my life is hid with Christ in God."

The hasty trial of Thomas Coleman in Hayneville on charges of manslaughter resulted in a verdict of not guilty. A *Washington Post* editorial of Oct. 1, 1965 commented on the bizarre miscarriage of justice: "(Alabama) Attorney General Richmond Flowers had taken the prosecution out of the hands of the local authorities in order to avoid a 'travesty of justice.' His contention was that Coleman should be tried for murder rather than manslaughter, that the trial should be postponed until Father Morrisroe could testify, and that the atmosphere of Lowndes County was not conducive to a fair trial from the point of view of the prosecution. But the Attorney General was booted out of the trial by Judge T. Werth Thagard for not playing the game according to the accepted formula."

The *Atlanta Constitution* of Oct. 2 blasted the Hayneville court while praising Alabama's "courageous attorney general" for attempting to have Coleman charged with murder rather than manslaughter. Coleman's defense had been based on the contention that Jonathan and Morrisroe were armed. Local authorities apparently decided that none of the young people who were with Jon that

day could testify — neither could Morrisroe, who was still in the hospital during the trial. Nor did the U.S. Attorney General send an observer from the Justice Department to watch the trial.

I have never seen a written account of something that happened not longer after this immensely sad event: Late in 1965 the ETS community was visited by the bishop coadjutor of Alabama. He ac-

"I lost fear when I began to know in my bones and sinews that I had truly been baptized into the Lord's Death and Resurrection, that in the only sense that really matters I am already dead and my life is hid with Christ in God."

— Jonathan Daniels

ceded to our request to meet with us and help us understand what happened during Jon's death, and at Coleman's trial. I remember the bishop somewhat ostentatiously swallowing antacid tablets and trying to answer our questions. We were greatly frustrated by what we took to be equivocation, evasion, and not a little unconscious racism.

At the end of the visit two students made brief statements to the bishop, which I have never forgotten. Ed

Rodman, who had more than served his time in bloody civil rights work, asked with enormous exasperation, "Bishop, when will the black man be a man in Alabama?" The room became silent. The bishop replied that he hoped that day would come soon. And Peter Selby said, "The trouble, bishop, is that even after your visit here, you seem not to really understand how serious this is to us, and how there is, well, blood between us." There was no reply.

Ever since August 1965 I have tried to do right by the issues of justice and peace, and I feel a lump in my throat as I write this. I want my children to read it. I think of the idea George Eliot had when she wrote of Dr. Lydgate in *Middlemarch*, that just as we have to care for the body as it gets older, so we have to care for the soul, which too easily gets flaccid. And I think of James Baldwin, who wrote of racist poison in the soul, "It is a terrible, and inexorable, law that one cannot deny the humanity of another without diminishing one's own: in the face of one's victim, one sees oneself."

In reading through the various documents about Jon I come across the names of those who were, and are, so great in their witness to goodness and rectitude in these matters — Episcopal Church people like John Morris, Earl Neal, Morris Samuel, Henry Stines, Judith Upham, Mary Eunice Oliver, Francis Walter, and on and on: I think of these as the heart of the Episcopal Church, with Jon. They remind the rest of us what we have departed from, to our great shame.

The point of Jon's life is that he happened to live out the fullest implications of what it means to be Christian, as we all are supposed to do. And we can honor his memory, and his commitments, by supporting the Jonathan Daniels scholarship fund, administered through the Episcopal Divinity School, to assist seminarians in undertaking peace and justice projects. We can also

Daniels icon dedicated at EDS

Jonathan Myrick Daniels was a member of the Episcopal Divinity School's class of 1966. In his life and death he has become one of the school's most influential alumni, influencing the ethos of EDS in a number of ways.

The Rev. Judith Upham, a graduate from the class of 1967 who journeyed to Alabama with Daniels to work for civil rights, commented that Daniels "is really key for the school. His death made a big difference. I was re-reading John Coburn's sermon from Jon's memorial service [Coburn, later Bishop of Massachusetts, was dean of EDS at the time of Daniel's death], and he talked about the importance of theological education, about how theological education isn't just in books, but in how we live it out. That's really set the tone and the direction for the school ever since. EDS cares about what you know and how you live it out."

The school established the Jonathan Daniels Memorial Fellowships shortly after Daniels' death. These fellowships, awarded annually, provide financial assistance to seminarians seeking to work directly in some area of social concern, such as civil rights, fair housing, community organizing, gay and lesbian rights, environmental issues, or fair labor practices.

On Nov. 7, 1990, the EDS community and its extended family gathered for a special service to commemorate Daniels in the 25th anniversary year of his death and 50th anniversary year of his birth. The Jonathan Daniels Memorial Fellowship Committee commissioned the production of an icon in his memory, and the completed work was dedicated at that service. It celebrates not only Daniels but many of the saints and martyrs for justice throughout the church's history, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Absalom Jones, Oscar Romero, Stephen Biko,

and Julian of Norwich.

Present and participating in the service were the Hon. Pamela Chinnis, vice-president of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies; the Rev. Judith Upham; the Rev. Richard Morrisroe, the priest who was seriously injured in the shooting incident that killed Daniels; and Ruby Sales, the young African-American woman whom Daniels shielded from the shotgun blast.

The Rev. Blayne Colmore, a classmate of Daniels, preached a moving sermon, recalling that Daniels "willingly and cheerfully did what he'd made up his mind to do," knowing that by going back to Alabama he could be in danger. He faced hatred from the white residents of Lowndes County, and was called a "white nigger" by some. But Daniels had "fallen hopelessly, shamelessly in love with people he had never known before: the poor, oppressed people, people who had become a blessing to him; and in love with God's outrageous calling to be there in that tortured town with people who had been for generations oppressed, and with other people who were terrified that the oppression might turn right upside down.

"The shotgun blast which brought Jon's body to the ground was a terrible blast of reality, a stark underscoring of what Jesus must have meant when he said that when horrible frightening things began to take place, we should pay close attention because the kingdom was breaking through."

The Jonathan Daniels icon hangs in St. John's Chapel at EDS, a constant reminder of a young man who lived so bravely the faith and love he professed.

— Susan Erdey
Communications
Episcopal Divinity School

contribute to the EDS-based Daniels lectureship, to advocate the church's greater commitment to the things for which he lived and died. And we can support efforts to have Jon made a martyr of the church.

I believe Jon's commitments to freedom and racial justice and love must be ours now more than ever. What must animate us all is a vision like Walt Whitman's, which reminds me of a 26-year-old man who tried to keep faith with God, himself, and his sisters and brothers. He died that a frightened teenager might live. He lives with Christ in a land of light and joy, where none is excluded, black or white. This is Whitman, this is Jon — Listen:

Sound over all waters, Reach out
from all lands

The chorus of voices, The clasp-
ing of hands

Sing hymns that were sung by the
stars of the morn

Sing songs of the angels when Je-
sus was born.

With glad jubilation, bring hope
to the nations;

The dark night is ending and
dawn has begun

Rise hope of the ages, arise like
the sun. TV

Resources

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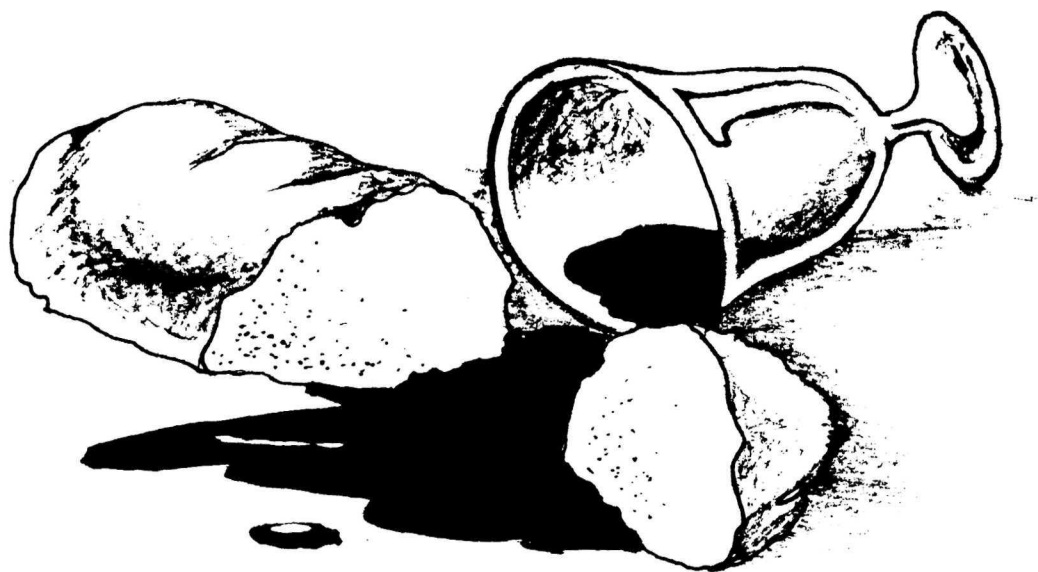
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Fasts divine: Communion in conflict

by Grant Gallup



Louie Crew, founder of Integrity and English professor at Rutgers University, announced recently that “in response to my baptismal vow to respect the dignity of every human being, I will no longer receive communion until the Episcopal Church makes all sacraments available to lesbian and gay persons.”

Crew’s action in “fasting from the eucharist” is, in effect, a unilateral excommunicating of the rest of the church from himself. There is a profound truth, nevertheless, in this highly idiosyncratic

interdicting of the central act of worship in the Episcopal Church.

I have always found the words in Article XXVI in the Book of Common Prayer to be the “comfortable words” — that in the visible church “sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet for as much as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ’s . . . we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God and in the receiving of the sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ’s ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God’s gifts diminished . . .”

What means, then, do we have for rebuking unworthy, unjust “sacraments,” and unworthy, unjust ministers, if we do not deny their validity? Ministers are

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nowadays rarely deposed for anything but sexual misdemeanors, and certainly never for acts of injustice, or allying themselves with the rich against the poor and marginalized. They are more likely to be disciplined for their advocacy of the poor and oppressed, or for denouncing their rich and powerful oppressors. What means does the Christian pilgrim or prophet have for calling a denomination to repentance? The particular demon of Louie Crew's attention "cometh not out but by prayer and fasting."

His act demonstrates, as would a Gospel sign, the difference between one world and another, between one faith and another. For although we have one denomination, the Episcopal or Anglican church, yet we have many religions within this one church. "Religion" signifies the organization of theology and piety of a particular group of persons. It is quite reasonable to admit that Archbishop Desmond Tutu does not have the same religion as Maurice Benitez, the Bishop of Houston, who says that the church is "excessively focused on social and political concerns."

It seems to me that we are in the same church, but in different pews, praying totally different prayers to totally different gods. When I say in church, "I believe in one God," it is not the god that George Bush says he believes in when he says the Creed in an Episcopal Church. I do not believe in the Rambo, racist god that blesses capitalism, that abuses women and gay people, that loves war and acts to destroy the hopes of the poor in Central America, that blesses the big lie that is the Pax Americana, is furious about people enjoying sex, or says "kill, kill" to defend private property, but won't let a woman have an abortion under any circumstances. "My God is the other God," as Juan Arias instructs in *The God I Don't Believe In*.

I believe in the God of Jesus, who in fact gave the church no sacraments at all, but gave us signs, which signs are to

signify the reality of our community's love and justice, the reality of our life together. When that reality is a fraud, a Hollywood false front, a quick fix TV spot, then the sign becomes only a rite, awry, like the kiss of Judas.

Juan Luis Segundo in *The Sacraments Today* declares that "Jesus wants signs, not rites." The New Testament used no religious words for its signs — they were simply *bathing* and *giving thanks*. Which is why it is so hard for ritualists to find "sacraments" in those documents. Rafael Avila writes in *Worship and Politics* that "If the Jewish passover celebrated the liberation of the Jewish people, the Christian passover celebrates the liberation of all peoples," and he cites the lengthy passage from a pastoral letter of Ruben Isaza, Archbishop of Cartagena, which I have practically memorized for 20 years:

It is not in passivity or in conforming that the Christian realizes communion with God. Rather it is in the attempt without respite to achieve one's own liberation, and by the continual movement forward from a life less human to conditions more human. It is clear that in this matter we Christians do not want to recognize our own culpability. But we will be culpable if we refuse to understand that, just as in the first passover of the Israelites, the eucharist ought to be received by those who are ready to begin the march toward their liberation.

This craftsmanship of peace, this promotion of the love of Christ, is required as a condition for a sincere eucharistic celebration as long as conditions persist that drive many to extreme reactions out of desperation. The eucharistic celebration should therefore launch the poor and the marginalized toward a progressive awareness of their dignity as human beings and of the demands that arise from this fact. From eucharist to eucharist they should grow in their own self-esteem and in their acceptance of their own responsibility as human beings, so

that their continual eucharistic participation will motivate them to raise their heads in order to move toward the pursuit and the conquest of a liberty that is not an option but a responsibility and a right, and of which only they can be the legitimate authors.

The refusal to celebrate can itself be "an articulate liturgy." For the eucharist is not just the bread and wine — it should be the workshop for Christian action, the place where politics is made, where the Word of God is brought to bear on the world we carried in with the bread and wine. If that is not happening, what is there to "celebrate"? What is there to "receive" apart from the outward signs? The signs of the kingdom have been made into consumer items which are available both to oppressors and to the oppressed, and they want to call this "reconciliation." Frequently, the oppressors have in their grasp the loaf and the cup.

Such a eucharist arises from a *conciliationist ecclesiology*, at the service of the class system. A true eucharist will embarrass the *traidores* into leaving, as Judas left the first eucharist. Jesus urged him to his own agenda, away from the common dish of love.

Thus the real reason some people are staying away in droves from the Episcopal church is indeed the reason Bishop Benitez gives: *that the church is interested in social and political concerns*. This has been very offensive to the ruling class. It's the real reason Ronald Reagan never went to church, and why George Bush is very careful when and where he goes. Benitez says "a church speaking mostly in political terms is going to decline." He means liberationist political concerns, and a decline in ruling class constituency. His own political views are pretty clearly announced, and everyone knows what they are. If I were in his diocese, I would find his sacraments hard to swallow.

He is quite right that "St. Paul and the

other apostles did not barnstorm the Mediterranean world preaching social justice, the abolition of slavery, and calling on the Roman empire to provide housing for the homeless and a more equitable economic system." They preached instead that the empire and the world as it was organized were doomed, and they set up an alternative system of government, caring for widows and orphans, and rescuing exposed infants. They abolished the class system, and shared their houses and their livelihoods, calling each other brother and sister, and respecting their leaders and officers as if they were Roman senators, and publicly referring to Jesus as their only *kyrios*, king, or leader. They were in fact, a revolutionary political movement. If they had stayed a religion, they'd have been safe.

In *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon gives five causes for the growth of Christianity: the intolerant zeal of Christians for the unity of God against the empire of demons; the assertion of immanent judgment and reversal of fortunes in a future life; miraculous achievements of the apostles; pure and austere justice and morality among Christians; and "*the union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire.*"

If the right-wingers think that the early Christians sat about at cocktail hour denouncing political activists, they need to look at them again. R.H. Tawney, in the concluding chapter of his *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* declares: "The criticism which dismisses the concern of churches with economic relations and social organization as a modern innovation finds little support in past history. What requires explanation is not the view that these matters are part of the province of religion, but the view that they are not."

Until the Reformation, and even down

through the Puritan writers like Richard Baxter, economics was considered by all a branch of ethics, and ethics a branch of theology. The secularization of political thought and activity, "the separation of religion and politics," is a thoroughly contemporary notion, agreeable to the totalitarian nation states, which demand all human loyalty and energy. The churches are permitted to serve as mausoleums for dead gods or hospices for dying ones.

It was because they were "atheists," because they denounced the gods of the culture on every possible occasion, that the first Christians were socially unacceptable. But it was because they took care of the sick and the poor and showed mercy and embraced the outcast and the eunuch and the castaway that they won followers. The New Testament speaks almost exclusively in political terms. "King," "Messiah," "Kingdom," "the nations," "governors and kings for my sake" and "taxes to Caesar or no," are not the words of a religious vocabulary. Nor are "arrest," "false witnesses," "officer of the court," "tetrarch," "women of the upper classes," "magistrates" or "inner prison." But they are the talk of the canonical gospels. Indeed, the words "apostle" and "elder" originally had no religious content whatsoever. Yet they are the vocabulary of the Book of the Acts. Such words as "bishop" and "priest" came later, with "sacraments" and "altars" and other such "church furniture." These are words for a "religious gospel" which is good news to the ruling class — that the status quo is blessed by God.

Conversely, those who are committed to liberation are staying away from churches where liberation is not the agenda, and where "religion" has supplanted the good news. We find such places banal and bourgeois and far more boring than bowling alleys. Who can say "Amen" to their prayers, or stay to set pins for them? The Episcopal Church is

in both places at once, alas: between the reactionary and the revolutionary — like the Church of Laodicea, neither hot nor cold. Most denominations are, yet they are the scene of struggle. If they go to the right, as has the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Nicaragua, they will lose "the people's church." If they go to the left, they lose their bank accounts and save their souls.

Louie Crew's "fasting from communion" is in fact a fasting from the act of hypocrisy inherent in a eucharist open to the oppressors; not only open to them, but operated by them and for their benefit. It is not he who is excluding himself from the Sign of the Kingdom that true *thanksgiving* celebrates, but he is declaring indeed that such eucharists are no eucharists at all, but the tables of demons, of the false gods of a racist, homophobic, sexist, classist, and militarist culture opposed to Christ.

Because nice people and naive people also take part in these eucharists does not change their nature, but it may put these people in jeopardy, according to St. Paul, *for not discerning the Lord's body*. The Lord's body is sitting there in the pew next to them, in Louie's body, a Sign of the Kingdom.

They want instead a tasteless cookie, popped out of a mold, with a magic symbol on it, which they will call holy, and a sacrament. They want him to conform, and swallow it, too. But every Christian has a right to an authentic eucharist. Louie should find people to make eucharist with, to *give thanks* with, in the context of God's people who are in the struggle for the new humanity, who are ready to eat the bread of haste, and to eat it standing or on the run, and leave Egypt this very night.

Integrity began as base Christian community; it has to keep those roots, even as it reaches out to rebuke and redeem the oppressor — in this case the denomination itself — by prophetic speech and sign. TW

Short Takes

Storm of justice

The civil rights movement was a storm that shook the country's foundation in ways that left us all forever changed. One of the casualties of the storm has been the loss of unity forged by common oppression among blacks. Clearly-defined goals such as integration and legislation no longer exist to unify African-Americans into a movement. Our victories have scattered us.

The disturbing realities of our present position in American society do not negate the successes of the civil rights movement. They verify for us that the movement for racial justice is not merely our history, it must also be our future.

Brenda Dyer Quant

Blueprint for Social Justice 11/90

War of hunger in southern Africa

Hunger itself is a form of violence. In Mozambique hunger is also a product of violence. Since 1980 South Africa has conducted a military and economic war against Mozambique — as it has against every other country in southern Africa. The costs of war offer the people of Mozambique a stark reminder of the human losses sustained through violence and militarism:

- 900,000 people have died in the country from direct military action or through indirect results of the war;
- 500,000 children under five have died as a result of the war;
- 1,000,000 people have become refugees;
- 8.7 million people — half the total population — have become so affected by the war as to be totally or nearly dependent on external food assistance.

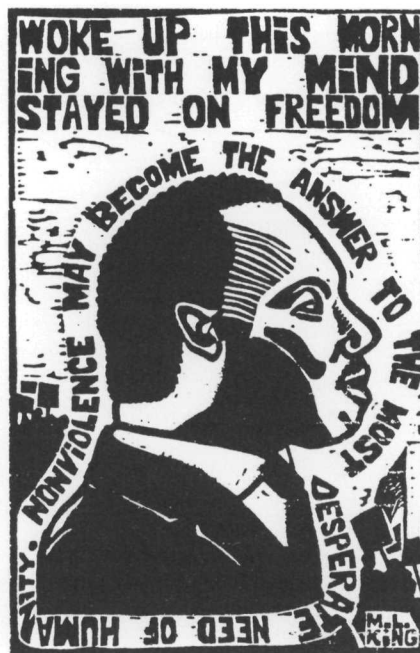
**Bread for the World Institute
on Hunger & Development**

First World values inhuman

You [in the industrialized world] have organized your lives around values that are inhuman because they cannot be universalized. It is crucial to define a system of values and a norm of living that takes into account every human being.

Ignacio Ellacuria

The Inter-Faith Witness 7-8/90



Quote of note

The ultimate measure of greatness is not where we stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where we stand at times of challenge and controversy.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

How to convert liberals

A recent fundraising letter from the Quixote Center in Hyattsville, Md., from which many progressive church programs emanate, suggests the following self-improvement courses (tongue-in-cheek of course) to convert liberals:

Art Appreciation with Sen. Jesse Helms;

Basic Banking Made Easy with Neil Bush;

Advanced Feminist Spirituality with Pope John Paul II;

Democratic Theory and Practice taught by the King of Saudi Arabia and the Emir of Kuwait.

And if these don't work, how about sending them books like *What I Learned from the Panama Invasion* by Saddam Hussein or *Poverty of Spirit* by Leona Helmsley and Donald Trump?

Muslims and St. Francis

We have been brought up in a culture that dismisses Muslims as a primitive people prone to violence and terrorism — as if the "Christian countries" had been centers of a nonviolent way of life!

It is the rare Christian who has gone into the Muslim world as a student. One of the exceptions was Francis of Assisi. While other Christians were killing Muslims and when contact with Muslims was prohibited by church law, Francis went unarmed to visit the Muslim Sultan in Egypt. He was received with traditional Arab hospitality. The Sultan spent several days with his remarkable guest. It was said that they parted as brothers.

Francis was deeply moved by the way Muslims interrupt the normal activities of life in order to turn towards Mecca and pray five times a day. When he returned to Europe, he sought to establish a similar custom among Christians and achieved some success. Even today, there are places where, when church bells ring out, Catholics cross themselves and pray no matter where they are or what they have been doing. In doing so, they are linked to the devotional customs of Islam that inspired Francis of Assisi.

Jim Forest

Reconciliation International Vol. 3, #1

By the time we've made it, we've had it.

— **Malcolm Forbes**

Prepping for war

One hundred thousand body bags, 10,000 pints of blood plasma that will be unusable in 60 days and a specialized military unit trained to work with prisoners of war have reportedly been shipped recently to the Persian Gulf from Westover Air Force base in Chicopee, Mass., and other U.S. military airfields.

In addition, there are indications that nuclear weapons were recently loaded onto mammoth C-5A cargo planes at Westover and sent to the Gulf.

Don Ogden

The Guardian 12/5/90

Ecumenical encounters of a

Women doing theology in Latin America are diverse as their North American counterparts. What we have in common is a commitment to begin with the concrete economic and political needs of people, then deal with questions of meaning and value as part of the process to meet those needs. Latin American women feel great resonance with the African-American womanist approach and are now using the word “*mujerista*” as well as “*feminista*” to describe their perspectives.

For nearly a decade, the Washington, D.C.-based Women’s Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) has been partnered with the women’s project of the *Centro de Estudios Cristianos*, an ecumenically-funded study center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, directed by Mabel Filippini.

While the development of feminist theology in Latin America is a Latin American task, it is heartening to see how the model of “women crossing worlds” — WATER’s approach — can play a small but consistent part in it. Our annual work in the Southern Cone is part of “the promise of a permanent presence” that characterizes our long-term commitment to friends in the region. Return visits by Latin American colleagues to WATER are equally enriching.

WATER taught introductory courses in feminist theology, ethics and ritual for groups in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile in preparation for the Fifth Encuentro of Latin American and Caribbean Feminists held this past November in Argentina. Tough ethical issues like domestic vio-

lence, language about the divine, and various ways to celebrate everything from the Eucharist to an exorcism of patriarchal values suggested new ways for women to be religious. While the issues and priorities vary across cultures, both sides find perspective and challenge in the other’s approach.

Course participants took the fruits of their learning to the international meeting where the influences, mostly negative, of patriarchal churches on women’s lives were discussed as part of strategies for social change. They wove feminist theo-political concerns into the wider political agenda using workshops and rituals. Violence against women, women working as priests without ordination, and overcoming racism against indigenous people were major concerns. It is exciting that women from several Latin American countries worked together to bring their various perspectives to bear. WATER staff were their students at the Encuentro.

Our Latin American colleagues are engaged in a range of social-change activities for which feminist religious thought — in a predominantly Christian/Roman Catholic culture — is a useful tool of analysis and strategy. The Anglican community, though small, is an integral part of the ecumenical scene. Former Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie visited Argentina in May 1990, where he discussed the Malvinas/Falklands War as “a sad occasion over which it is necessary to build new relations” between England and Argentina. What is new is the participation of women in this process.

The woman-church movement — *mujer-iglesia* — is key as Latin American women express their spirituality in ways that are consistent with their poli-

tics, something traditional Catholicism does not permit. Argentine anthropologist Sara Newbery, WATER’s staff person, nurtures this movement of women as religious agents. For example, at the Encuentro, she led a ritual on power, conveyed through women’s lifecycle, using symbols of indigenous women — corn, earth, shells and rice. It takes great imagination and even greater organization to develop spirituality that is consistent with liberation politics.

The Casa Sofia in Santiago, Chile is a barrio-based women’s center initiated by religious feminists. Self-help groups abound; counseling and literacy training from a feminist perspective provide poor women with survival resources. The Casa is a safe place for women who have experienced violence and poverty. It is a modest house, attentively but simply appointed with women’s art so that women know that they are important and taken seriously. Like so many Latin American women’s projects, simple beauty is integral to the ambiance. This is activist feminist spirituality at its best, a show of respect for women that is not a luxury but a necessity.

Women of the *Centro Ecumenico de Accion Social* (CEAS) in Buenos Aires provide support services for single pregnant women who otherwise would be in the streets before and after the birth of their children. CEAS has grown from a stopgap measure to an agency that provides job skills, medical attention, and even cooperative housing, because the staff members, from volunteers to staff doctors, take women seriously. CEAS gives women the tools to struggle for survival with dignity. When these women sing a popular Argentine folk song, “*Dame la mano y vamos ya*” (Give me your hand and let’s go), they mean it.

Mary E. Hunt, a widely-published Roman Catholic feminist theologian, is co-director of WATER (Women’s Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual) in Washington, D.C.

feminist kind

by Mary E. Hunt

The struggle for legal and economical birth control and abortion, spearheaded by *Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir*, the Latin American office of Catholics for a Free Choice, needs a firm feminist theological foundation for its work. The director, Dr. Cristina Grela of Montevideo, Uruguay, uses Beverly Wildung Harrison's theo-ethical analysis from the book *Our Right to Choose* in discussions with church officials and women who have been brought up to think of themselves as sinful if they choose to plan their families. This group has already felt pressure from the hierarchical church but moves on courageously with a regular publication, *Conciencia*, and a new volume on abortion in Latin America.

It is always amazing to encounter lesbian and gay groups in Latin America, given the extent of cultural resistance to same-sex love. While there is no equivalent to denominational groups like Integrity, Dignity and the Conference for Catholic Lesbians, there are many lesbian and gay people who seek to make sense of their faith and their sexuality.

One predominantly gay male group, the Community of the Beloved Disciple in Buenos Aires, is flourishing, as is the Metropolitan Community Church there. AIDS is only slowly becoming a church and human rights concern.

The first church-based support groups for gay and lesbian people, like their North American counterparts, mirror the male-dominance of Christianity. Lesbian women seeking religion are forced to find other avenues for exploration and articulation of their spiritual lives, a task made easier by the "feministization" of faith by women who cross worlds.

Feminist liberation theology in Latin America has to deal with two competing dynamics that slow its flowering. The first is the fact that patriarchal Christianity arrived as part of a colonizing package that has kept women submissive in an economic environment of dependence on advanced industrial countries. Latin American liberation theology is the male-led effort to break that pattern, the theological impetus to change centuries-old patterns of economic exploitation. However, the particular needs and con-

tributions of women have not been at the top of liberation theologians' agendas. Feminist efforts are often critiqued as distracting from the process at hand, an analytic mistake that leaves aside the fact that empowered women are part of any historical project of liberation. That is why our colleagues see womanist, feminist *and* liberation theologies as central to ecumenical activism.

The second dynamic is the signal contribution of what are patronizingly and erroneously referred to as popular religions. Far from being extraneous, exotic cults, the so-called popular religions tend to have women in leadership, female images of the divine, and statues of the Virgin Mary or her counterpart at the heart of community life.

Feminist scholars of religion are only beginning to understand these groups on *their own terms*. One example is Sara Newbery's research on *La Difunta Correa* (the Widow Correa). This popular saint in Argentina is alleged to have followed her soldier husband into the desert with a child nursing at her breast, only to die of thirst and have the baby miraculously live. Roadside shrines to her abound. She was outlawed during the military dictatorship while the Virgin Mary was held up as the patron saint of the armed forces.

The feministization of religion is a "dangerous" thing both in Latin America and the United States. It marks the emergence of women as religious and moral agents who bring values of inclusivity and community to the struggle for survival. The danger is increased as women and progressive men form new models of church and develop new theologies out of the encounters with one another and the divine. May the danger only deepen.

TW



Lessons from street prophets

by Renee Yann

Last winter snapped across the face of the Northeast corridor like the slap of an Arctic monster. Bitter, bone-chilling cold and early snows crashed down toward the Atlantic long before we really expected them.

I live on the impoverished edge of a big Eastern city. My neighbors are primarily black, Jamaican, Cambodian and Vietnamese. I am a Scots-Irish Catholic nun. I live here because I choose to: It is a ripe field for the exercise of mission. I think most of my neighbors live here because they must. They don't have the material resources to move to a less dangerous place.

Although I am not comfortable with it, I have gotten used to the face of poverty on the abused, the mentally ill and the homeless. Through all seasons of the year, I try to reach out toward that face and comfort it because I believe it is the face of Christ. But in the winter, it is the homeless who most call out to me.

There are many agencies and individuals ministering to the homeless in my city. But there will never be enough. The problem of homelessness continues to grow like a virus fed on the ingrained inequities of our economic system. Humanitarian efforts to cure that virus will always be inadequate. As long as our society allows the problem to remain at the fringes of its awareness, there will never be enough resources to address it.

For example, the soup kitchens in my area are closed on weekends. There just aren't enough people or supplies to feed the hungry seven days a week. Most of

the homeless know about other shelters in the city center where they can eat on Saturday and Sunday. Some, who can't or don't choose to travel, beg a little food at the fast food chains that ring the nearby university. Some just don't eat. They say that's just the way it is on weekends.

A group of us got together and packed lunches to distribute on winter weekends. Handing out lunches is how I came to meet Joe and Maybelle, my prophets of nearness.

I met Maybelle outside the suburban transit station. It's a fairly warm place, with several caverns where the unwanted people can sequester themselves from the "gleaning efforts" of the management. If one is trying to rent commercial space, one doesn't want a lot of homeless people hanging around discouraging prospective merchants.

Maybelle innately understood this. She tried very hard to look like a patron of the transit system waiting for a bus. She pulled it off pretty well. What gave her away early one Saturday was the shopping bag, already full at 10 a.m., before the stores had opened. I guessed that the bag was not full of purchases, but instead contained all the worldly goods this lady had accumulated.

It's almost impossible to comprehend a life's worth of memories and necessities accommodated in a single shopping bag. In the presence of someone who lives in such diminishment, I feel a sense of utter reverence. It was in this manner that I first approached Maybelle.

She leaned on a cool radiator at the end of a sparsely populated corridor. The cold snap hadn't hit yet. It was still unseasonably warm. The strong rays of the

sun streamed through a southeastern window. Maybelle dozed on and off with her head nodding toward the wall. She wore a wool skirt of a deep purple and lavender plaid. I remember thinking how pretty it was as I walked toward her.

I looked for the clues that identify homeless people. Over a blouse, she wore a green and yellow checkered flannel shirt. It didn't match: clue #1. Her feet were stuffed into tube socks and semi-slippers. Her ankles were swollen and her legs looked scaly from exposure: clue #2. She had a black wool stocking cap pulled tightly down toward her brows. And then there was the all-revealing bag: clue #3.

You may find it strange that identification of a homeless person can be so difficult. Perhaps it isn't for some people. But I have been known to offer a bagged lunch to business persons and travelers waiting for their trains. It may be that I am not terribly discerning. It may also be there is often not that much apparent difference between us.

Nevertheless, I was pretty certain I was right about this lady. As I got closer to her, she had the dazed look of one who continually snatches sleep only in minute-measured intervals. The homeless must be vigilant on many fronts. They cannot afford the luxury of long sleep.

I stopped a little distance from her. She didn't look at me. I wasn't sure just what to say. Finally, I said, "Miss?" It was a stupid thing to say. She was at least 65 or 70 years old.

I leaned a little toward her. "Ma'am?" I tried. She barely turned her head toward me and opened her eyes. Her face was expressionless. I knew that she had

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heard me but her response contained not the slightest element of engagement. I continued, "If you're interested, I have some packed lunches to give away. You'd have to come out front to the trunk of my car."

We could not overtly distribute lunches in the confines of the station. This would identify the homeless and jeopardize their ability to remain inside this somewhat inhospitable shelter.

She gave me the slightest millimeter of a nod. I went out to wait hopefully beside my opened trunk. My companions were about similar endeavors in the other corridors of the station. Soon a steady dribble of homeless people came to the car. My lady friend did not appear. I was afraid she hadn't understood me, or was too far gone to care.

Finally, after my companions had left to look for other homeless in the nearby alleys, I saw my lady hobbling around a pillar and heading slowly to the car. I handed her a couple of lunches to carry her through the weekend. She still had

not spoken a word, nor really fully looked at me. But before leaving she said, looking down toward the ground, "Do you have any warm clothes?"

I hadn't thought of clothes! It wasn't all that cold yet, though a drastic change was predicted for this evening. I felt angry that I didn't have the simple goods to fulfill this modest request. I almost let her walk away before my wits came to me. I wore a *coat* — a pretty purple one my mother had given me two years before. Oddly, it was a perfect match for the lady's skirt of purple tones. I slipped it off and handed it to her.

"But this is yours."

"I don't really need it. It's an extra one,"

"I don't have anything to give you for it."

"Would you tell me your name? That would be enough."

"My name was Maybelle," she said as she turned and disappeared into the station's caverns.

What must it be to have had, but no

longer have, a name! Pushed to its final isolation, homelessness becomes a violent unnamable. I can allow you to be homeless because you really aren't anybody anymore.

For the price of a couple of sandwiches and a coat, Maybelle had reached through to my soul and begun a tumultuous conversion.

In prayer, I brought my over-turning soul before God. I asked about the lilies of the field, the birds of the air, the hairs on my head that only God could number. How, in the great Maternal Intimacy that I understood as "God," could there be someone who didn't have a name? It was a raging question I was to long carry.

I was still terribly weighted by it when I met Joe. I was driving some of the extra lunches into a city shelter for homeless men. On the way, I passed Joe. He was sleeping on a steam vent in the shadows of a swanky downtown hotel. I pulled the car around, grabbed two lunches and went over to him. I stooped



down so that my body too became enveloped in the dusty-smelling steam. "Hi," I said. "Would you be interested in a couple of lunches?"

"Yeah, thanks," he answered. His response was lucid and civilized. So was his follow-up.

"What I'm really interested in is some juice. I'm pretty dehydrated."

I don't know why I had the idea that the homeless should have no specific wants; that they should want only what they were fortunate enough to get. Joe was a challenge to my prejudice. I gave him a six-pack of boxed juices and asked if he went to the shelter to sleep at night.

"Nah," he said. "I sleep here. This vent is my home. I don't leave it. It's too dangerous in the shelters. People get robbed there all the time."

"Dear God, robbed of what?" I thought. Again the slow dismantling of my predetermined expectations.

Joe was an enigma to me. I was pretty certain that I recognized him as someone from the shelter I had volunteered at several years before. If I was right, he had been semi-connected then. I could remember him rising early before the other men and leaving to wait at the truckers' union hall for a chance at a day's work. In the years since, he had become a vent person, never moving lest he should lose it to another.

And yet he had retained something that Maybelle had surrendered. When I asked his name he said, "Joe. What's yours?" Not only did he have a name, he knew that I did and he cared to know it.

I liked visiting Joe. Every Saturday, I stopped with lunch. We would exchange brief pleasantries. It was as if we had met one another in our yards or kitchens. I began thinking it was probably best to leave my concept of the world behind when I went out among the homeless. They were living in another order. I had yet to learn its dimensions.

One afternoon, when I stopped with lunch for Joe, he was curled up in his

sleeping bag, somnolent with fever. He said he couldn't eat, not to leave him anything. I heard him cough. It was a deep, tight cough. He agreed that it might be pneumonia.

"Can I take you to a hospital?" I asked.

"No," he said. "I can't leave my place here or my things. This is my home. I'll lose it if I leave."

It crossed my mind that I could call the police, demand they do something to help this sick and homeless man. But that would be a violent intrusion into the world Joe had built. The graciousness with which he had allowed me into that world would not permit my violation of it.

Later in the evening, I returned with hot broth in a thermos, an expectorant and something for the fever. A young man was crouched beside Joe on the pavement. They were both smoking. The man's name was Gary. I assumed that he was homeless. I didn't think the homeless had friends outside their own society. But Gary was not homeless. Joe's vent was between Gary's work and home. He passed Joe every day. They had exchanged conversation over the past two years and become friends.

"I invited Joe to my house for dinner last Thanksgiving. But he didn't come. When I walked over here to get him, he had disappeared," Gary said.

So! Joe did leave the vent in case of emergency, if such was necessary to protect his chosen isolation.

Joe seemed to know what I was thinking. He chuckled. "Look, I live in another world. I'm glad you two care about me, but I don't want to come back to where you are."

I began to decipher in Joe the extreme dimension of my own need to *live* my life. The forces that threatened to deprive Joe of that right were much more elemental than the forces that challenged me. But it was the same basic dynamic. No matter how small we have to make

our worlds to have some control over them, we will do it. Otherwise, what's the point of having a life . . . or a *name* . . . at all?

I returned to prayer with the new understanding Joe had given me. I began to see that between Joe and me and Maybelle and Gary there were not really the great distances that I had gone out with my sandwiches to traverse. God had been good enough to send prophets to awaken me to the reality that existed between us: We are incredibly *near* one another in the things that really matter.

My experiences with Maybelle and Joe were pregnant parables of how we are with God. I, for one, spend so much time focusing on a God "out there" whom I want to come into my life to perfect it according to my plans. All the while God is incredibly near, immersed in our lives, sleeping on vents, carrying sandwiches, stopping to smoke with a friend in the evening.

Our greatest ministry is to help each other to the level of mutuality, where we are brought to awareness that God is never in need of our definitions to be present among us.

TW

sleep

one pitiless night
in the year of our lord
in the city of the angels
Four of your children
(once newborns,
perfect and amazing)
separately,
without even the common bond of
leprosy
to warm them,
deciding, in the face
of a howling wind
off the Sierra Madres,
the struggle would have to continue
without them,
curled up like babies
against the demonic cold
of the street
and went to sleep.

Leonora Holder

Attorney Linda Backiel's sentence called outrage

“Outrageous! One of the worst decisions since attorneys were being harassed during the McCarthy era.”

That is how civil liberties lawyer Arthur Kinoy characterized the Dec. 10 sentencing of attorney Linda Backiel for refusing, in principle, to testify against a client before a federal grand jury. Some 25 supporters gave Backiel a standing ovation as federal marshals led her from the courtroom to begin a prison sentence which could last up to six months, when the grand jury disbands. The legal community is concerned that this might signal a nationwide increase in subpoenas requiring lawyers to testify against their clients.

The case, tried before U.S. District Judge Charles R. Weiner in Philadelphia, had sent shockwaves throughout the legal profession. An amici brief supporting Backiel had been filed by 14 legal and community groups, including the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the National Lawyers Guild, PRISA (an Ecumenical group of Puerto Rico), and the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys.

Backiel was subpoenaed by U.S. prosecuting attorney Ronald Levine, who wanted to use her testimony against a client, Elizabeth Duke, a political dissident charged with possession of explosives and illegal firearms. Duke disappeared while under bail in 1985.

“My testimony would be not merely a betrayal of my client, but a betrayal of my role as a defense attorney,” Backiel told the court. “We have an adversary system of criminal justice. On the one side, there is the government of the United States with all of its power. On the other, there is an individual accused of a crime. We criminal defense lawyers are supposed to somehow even the odds. To my clients I say, you must trust me with the truth; I will defend you with all

my wit and skill and integrity. I am your advocate. I will never betray you.”

This is not an extraordinary promise to a client, “but the minimum required of our profession,” Backiel said.

Backiel's plight had broad implications, according to Monroe Freedman, an expert in legal ethics who testified on her behalf. Freedman referred to lawyer-client confidence as “a sacred trust” and “the glory of our profession.” The decision to jail Backiel would have a whip-saw effect on the bar, Freedman said. “Rule 1.6 of the American Bar Association laws of conduct demands that a lawyer shall not reveal information relating to the representation of a client without the client's consent. Ordering a lawyer to testify against a client will have a chilling effect in a systemic way.”

Backiel, a former public defender in Philadelphia, has spent much of her legal career defending political prisoners. She was a consultant to the Episcopal Church Publishing Company in the '70s and '80s, when Maria Cueto, former director of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, and Steven Guerra, former member of the ECPC Board, were imprisoned for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating alleged terrorist activities of the FALN, a Puerto Rican liberation group.

Speaking on behalf of the 14 friends-of-the-court groups, Dorothy E. Roberts, who, with Kinoy, teaches at Rutgers School of Law, addressed the “broader issues” of the case. She pointed out that the grand jury subpoena forced Backiel to become an informer against her client, “and that's important to all potential criminal clients, to all of society.”

Others who testified on Backiel's behalf were David Rudovsky, professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, who said that Backiel's career as

a defender would be jeopardized if she testified, since no clients would trust her in the future; and Gloria Guard, a social worker and director of the Philadelphia People's Emergency Center, who stated that incarceration would not shake Backiel's resolve. “Her work is almost spiritually connected to her principles and her ethics; for her to go against them would be unimaginable,” Guard said.

“What we have here is a clash of principles,” Judge Weiner told Backiel. “And if you want to stand on principle, you can, but you have to take the consequences.”

In her closing statement Backiel said, “The U.S. Department of Justice has long known my position. I have testified against its abuses of the grand jury in Congress and written briefs about the illegality of efforts to force lawyers to testify against clients. I have also appealed to the international human rights community to recognize human rights violations committed by the United States, especially in relation to the people of Puerto Rico and political prisoners. This does not make me popular with the Department of Justice, which has the power to force me to choose between betraying my clients and going to jail.

“I do not want to go to jail. But my dignity and my commitment to my clients, which is my commitment to justice, are not intimidated by the threat of jail.”

She blew a kiss to supporters as she left the courtroom, calling out, “Thank you all.” Then she turned abruptly and left to spend the Christmas holidays, and many days thereafter, in Bucks County Prison.

Backiel's attorney, Patricia V. Pierce, is seeking an appeal, meanwhile, before the Third Circuit Court.

— Mary Lou Suhor

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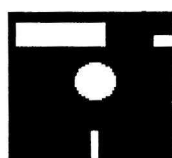
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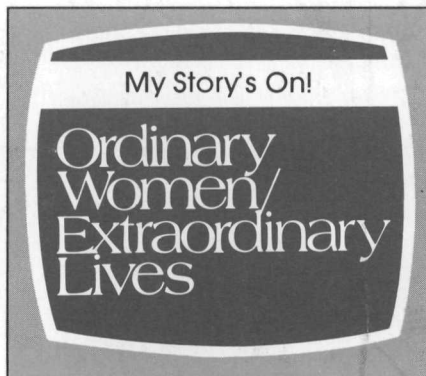
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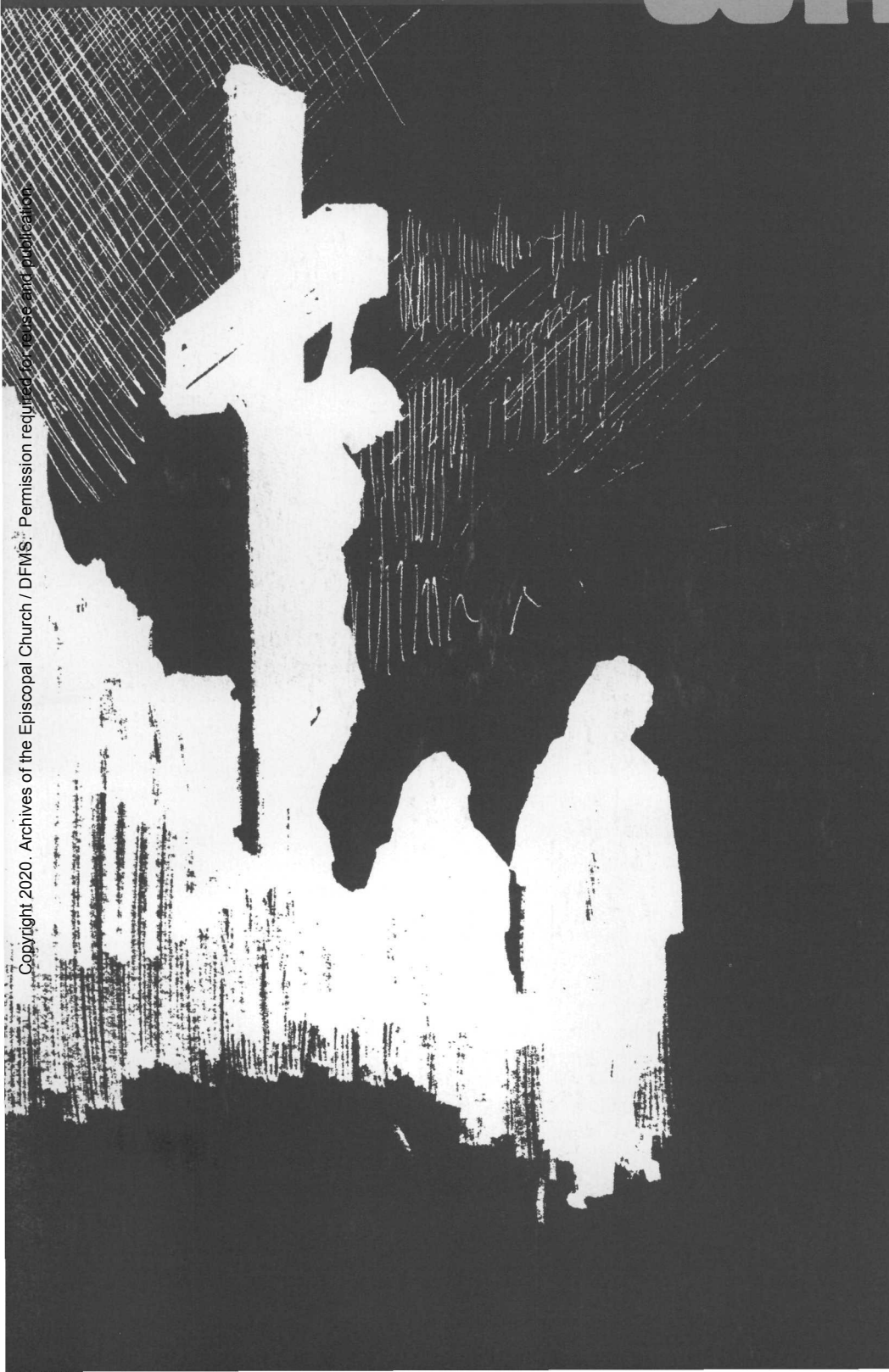
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THE WITNESS



Demons of conflict

Mary Lou Suhor

'War is not the answer'

Church leaders' statement

Blacks and the Gulf war

Andrée Nicola McLaughlin

Hastening the inevitable

Charles Meyer

Letters

'Afterlife' unjust

The Rev. Charles Meyer, writing on death (November WITNESS) perpetuates a Western, especially Judaeo-Christian dualism. For all his claim to be speculating on a great mystery, Meyer axiomatically accepts human "free will," a moment-by-moment ability to choose "light" or "darkness" which, after death, results in a reality corresponding to those selections.

Of course, Meyer rejects the theologically outdated tortures of hell — along with overly carnal versions of the felicities of the elect. But the unjust dichotomy persists.

Apparently it seldom occurs to our clerical consolers that should a human being, regardless of race, gender, social class, or mode of religious indoctrination be fully responsible for selecting one action over another, then for the sake of justice and moral consistency, that person should certainly have been allowed to choose the brain, body, parents, genes, race and level of social domination, oppression or ostracism that would be his or hers at birth. These factors obviously merge, to determine "choice." Does Meyer actually believe that all human beings, irrespective of their different genetic endowments and cultural conditionings, enjoy not only "freedom of choice" but a common "free will" that would justify punishment after death, or eternal bliss?

The question is not simply abstract. Operating by this Christian free will principle, our courts daily sentence victims of poverty and social and intellectual degradation to even further humiliation — vile prisons, or sometimes execution, for their "freely chosen" crimes. Without questioning the clichés of "moral freedom," Meyer continues to extend the predilection for separating righteous folk from sinners to the after-death sphere.

Typically, God's moral elite attribute

omnipotence to God, but deny the Omnipotent any responsibility for the many and perverse conditions in which the starving, the socially trampled, the intellectually enslaved, the majority find themselves. Yet these conditioned and oppressed earthlings are said to be fully "responsible" for crucial choices that may lead to everlasting estrangement, a fate that will be "their own fault."

Today, in the Persian Gulf, humanity sees the fortunes of literally millions becoming involved in a potential war that may result in an apocalypse. To many historians, wars have occasioned unprecedented crimes. Soldiers kill one another and enemy civilians for little better reason than an accident of birth. If the same brain in the body that fights for "freedom" and despises Saddam Hussein as a Hitler had been born and acculturated in Iraq, it would almost certainly venerate Saddam, glorify Allah, and despise the Western intervener.

There is no question here of some "free will" to choose the "superior" side; soldiers are the ultimately conditioned fledglings of higher authority, regardless of nation. Are they then morally responsible agents?

Perhaps conscious of the collective coercion involved in war, clergy have ordinarily rejected the idea that soldier-murders might be destined for some post-mortem "estrangement." Haven't, indeed, most warriors been admirably obedient, thus showing good will toward men? They are almost always said to be killing, or dying, for a holy cause.

Oddly though, the same Christians who obscure questions of guilt and responsibility on the battlefield will, when it comes to the private sphere, attribute guilt and responsibility freely. The family, for instance, is sacred. You may wipe out hundreds of thousands of them from the air, and be a hero. But if you abuse spouse, parent, or child you may be a sinner requiring penitence and re-

form. Some even argue that if you defy your country or religion, their god will condemn and estrange you.

The contrary likelihood seems far more logical; that given exactly the same life-situations as the person we condemn, we would have performed exactly the same acts. In wars, we hold people guilty of the wrong place of birth, hence the wrong loyalties, for which they must pay by being killed. In avenging crime in our domestic society the same principle holds.

When compulsive leaders threaten further disintegration of our fragile planetary order by planning still more savagery in the Middle East, can we ask less of a saner future than the goal of overcoming our archaic dichotomies — of moral blame; of true versus false religions; of class, race, gender and sexual orientation; of absolute "good" versus absolute "evil?"

Norris Merchant
Louisville, Ky.

Article lacks hope

When I read the article by Charles Meyer on "Afterlife," talking about the kinds of answers he gives people who face the death of loved ones, or perhaps death themselves, I felt that THE WITNESS was in a theological area that is not its calling.

Death, dying, and afterlife are so much in the speculative realm of the churches' mission that the discussion of those subjects does not fit next to social concerns, which are tangible and visible. Though we may not always agree how to address and remedy these concerns, we at least *know* that something *could* be done to do away with them.

We cannot do away with death or know any more about afterlife (or the absence of it) no matter how much we talk or search for the answer. Though I am inclined to agree with most of what

Meyer said, I do not think that the answers he gives are what people facing death *need* nor *want* to hear.

The church is — or should be — in the business of giving *hope*, even if that hope turns out to be unfounded. Without hope, life cannot go on and the living will be dead before they die, without that hope.

Meyer is not the kind of person I would want to go to for help, consolation, and reassurance. Dying people or those facing a loved one's death need assurance that prayers help and work, that there is a personal God who listens, and that those who went before are with God, and are not just dust returned to dust.

**Annette Jecker
Vernon, N.J.**

Meyer responds

Yes, I actually do believe that we all have been created with freedom of choice. To argue otherwise, as Norris Merchant appears to do, is to enslave us to a scientific doctrine of "genetic endowments and cultural conditionings" that parallels the equally ridiculous religious doctrine of God's Perfect Plan for Your Life. (Both of which are responsible for their share of wars.)

I do not believe in "punishment" in afterlife, but rather see that existence in "darkness" is the result (logical consequence) of the choice to reject the presence of God. I also said that God is still seeking those in the darkness and that there is eternal opportunity to welcome light. And I cannot imagine that one's earthly endowments, conditionings, and predispositions would have much effect in that setting.

The Good News of Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius and other lesser known folks in obscure places is that we are both morally responsible and free to choose in the face of overwhelming odds

to the contrary resulting from the social, physical or religious lottery of our lives. According to Jesus' stories, the Kingdom of Heaven has no patience with either scientific or religious sociopathy.

The point of any discussion of afterlife, speculative as it may be, is not absolute good or absolute evil — but absolute love.

To Annette Jecker I would suggest that the kind of theological injustices done to those who are dying (and their families) *are* proper fare for discussion in THE WITNESS. A good deal of any chaplain's time is spent addressing, undoing, discussing, and offering sound alternatives to the U.S. civil religion that passes for Christianity. This is especially true in the realm of terminal illness where we daily deal with patients terrified at what they believe will be an eternity of horror and damnation because they weren't "a good enough person" or had "not given enough to God."

Just as there is no such thing as "blind faith," there is ultimately no comfort in "unfounded hope." The job of the church is to tell the truth in love, to offer the reassurance of realistic hope — hope that includes the inevitability of death and the belief that, whatever faces us in afterlife, we are, or have the option to be, with a God who wants to be with us eternally.

**The Rev. Charles Meyer
Austin, Tex.**

Gays bad role models?

In response to the Rev. Malcolm Boyd's "America in search of itself" in the December issue, I believe that whatever gays or lesbians do *privately* to express themselves sexually is as much their personal business as what heterosexuals do.

But society has an ethical objection to a homosexual of either gender being in a social position that allows pre-adults to be influenced, and/or molested, sexually.

And such positions include those theological, such as Boyd's, and others, such as Scout leaders.

Was it not most appropriate that another article in that same issue was headed, "Abused children: Harming our most precious natural resource"?

**James Heermance
Eugene, Or.**

Boyd responds

I appreciate having an opportunity to respond to James Heermance's remarks because they cry out for a clear answer.

Sexuality is never really private. People cohabit (and the neighbors know). Heterosexuals are married in legal ceremonies. When children are born, their births are registered, and at another level, people who love each other hold hands, kiss, and give outward demonstration of their affection and deep feelings.

Pre-adults look at TV and go to movies; here (and from their peers in school) they receive more sexual education than they do at home. They are constantly influenced sexually by a vast array of public stimuli, including the advertising industry. Gays are not converted; they are born this way. However, sexual molestation is another matter. More than 90% of it is committed by heterosexuals in dysfunctional families, often in the confines of incest.

At the deepest level of his objection to my article (which, incidentally, dealt with gay/lesbian issues only at a peripheral level), James Heermance reveals that he does not like, or want, gay/lesbian role models. Gay men and lesbians in this view should remain hidden, closeted, in the shadows. They should never be celebrated, identified as people of honor who express valid opinions, or published (and thereby validated) in a

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THE WITNESS

Pray and work for peace

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Demons of conflict

Where were you when the war was launched against Iraq the night of Wednesday, Jan. 16? Editors of THE WITNESS were putting the finishing touches on this February issue.

I had just left to work on last-minute copy at home, leaving Sue Pierce at the computer keying in final corrections. Then on my car radio, 10 minutes into the evening news — wham! I pulled over in shock and tears and listened, then raced home to call Susan to tune in at the office. Instinctively I turned to the crucifix on my kitchen wall and prayed for God's forgiveness for me and my people . . .

Like facing death, we are never quite prepared to face war. We had been

buoyed up by anti-war turnouts after the Congressional vote, and increased attendance at church vigils for peace. Even through the night of Jan. 15, Martin Luther King's birthday, people were commemorating the birthday of the Civil Rights saint of non-violence and praying for a solution to the Persian Gulf crisis.

Ironically, Rep. Henry Gonzalez of Texas on Jan. 16 had introduced a bill in the House citing five counts why George Bush should be impeached.

Mary Miller of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship had called to report on a packed Washington National Cathedral prayer service for peace followed by a march to the White House. Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning had

preached at the service before thousands, after which he and his wife joined the demonstration for peace at the White House. He appeared on national TV the morning of Jan. 16 to say basically, that while President Bush was Episcopalian and a friend, they disagreed on war as a solution to the Persian Gulf crisis.

(It was announced later that Billy Graham was a guest at the White House during the invasion and prayed with Bush the day after at an Army Chapel.)

By 10:30 p.m. or so Jan. 16, General Trainor was announcing that "2,000 sorties had been flown and 18 tons of ordinance" had been dropped — the equivalent of Hiroshima, he said.

My heart broke for the victims, which possibly included our friend, Agnes Bauerlein, mother of 11, grandmother of 14. Agnes, who launched our Montgomery County Peace Center, joined 250 others at an international Bedouin-type peace encampment in Southwest Iraq near the Kuwaiti border on Jan. 12.

And like many of you, I have family in the war. I realized that I was furiously taking notes on the backs of envelopes during TV broadcasts. One received that day was from my niece, a sincere plea to write her husband in the Persian Gulf, even if I "didn't agree with the war," to say how important his job is "to preserving our freedom."

I will indeed write, expressing my love for him and concern for all war victims. But I am committed to educate that the war is not about "preserving our freedom."

To confront this Lent the principalities and powers that have unleashed the dogs of war will not be an easy task. But the anti-war movement has galvanized quickly, and the religious community, which during the Vietnam War took so long to register opposition, has already stated that resorting to massive violence in the Gulf crisis "would be politically and morally indefensible." (See state-

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Hastening the inevitable

by Charles Meyer

*“The traditional sanctity of life arguments no longer apply when we are faced with new situations — such as persistent vegetative states, comas, and numerous congenital or drug-induced anomalies — that look like ‘life’ but are not. Some of the ‘life’ we have created or into which we have ventured is **not** sacred, that is, in need of protection and preservation at all costs.”*

When is it okay to kill yourself? When is it permissible to cause or allow another’s death? Under what conditions or circumstances is it ethical to assist someone to accomplish his/her own death?

Until very recently these questions were answered quickly and with relative ease: Never. Never. None. It was only in extreme circumstances that such actions might be reluctantly acceptable: to save the life of another during wartime conditions, to hasten one’s death under circumstances of torture, severe war injury, or intractable accident-induced pain.

But medical technology has created simulated war and battle conditions in hospitals, intensive care units, and nursing homes across the country. A walk through any of these facilities finds patients in various stages of debilitation, unconsciousness, indignity and suffering, cared for under siege from the incredible instruments of mechanized life we have devised. Our technology now supplants vital functions, extending what is ostensibly “life” beyond the normal limits of compromised organs.

In some instances, where there is a need for such temporary substitution of organs or organ functions, the technology is life-saving: a machine breathes for lungs, pumps for a heart, provides nutrients or hydration when ingestion, swallowing, or digestion are impossible. But for persons in an incurable or irreversible condition, the technology is of-

ten death-prolonging. And it is clear from repeated comments of patients, particularly older persons, that what is feared most is not death itself, but the possibility of prolonged attachment to medical devices that merely sustain bodily functioning.

For the ultimate question is not “Will I die?” but “How will I die?”; and further, “In what state of indignity will I die?”

To exercise some control over a healthcare system that seems bent on sustaining life at all costs and to avoid spending one’s last days and hours as an impersonal attachment at the end of a machine, many people are exploring the concept of euthanasia.

Literally meaning “good death,” euthanasia is characterized by proponents as a means of assertively maintaining control of one’s life and death, rather than passively accepting the seemingly limitless presumptions of medicine. It is seen as a way to maintain a remnant of dignity in the face of the excesses of high-tech death practiced in the United States.

Limits are set on treatment to permit one to die in a “timely” fashion, in contrast to “natural” death which requires letting the disease or disability ravage the body, or mechanical death — allowing ravaging while attached to machines — both of which seem to some interminable (no pun intended). Finally, euthanasia is thought to reinforce the value of quality of life rather than quantity of life.

Opponents view euthanasia as a sign of hopelessness; persons who desire it are judged to have thoughtlessly “given up” too soon. It is believed to be a selfish endeavor, demanding death on one’s

The Rev. Charles Meyer is Assistant Vice President of Patient Services at St. David’s Hospital in Austin, Tex. This article is excerpted from an updated edition of his book, *Surviving Death*.

own terms, wasting the potential moments of happiness for the ill person or family, and sacrilegiously usurping God's prerogative to determine how and when one dies.

There is further disagreement on whether there is any difference between "active" and "passive" euthanasia. Some will argue that removing a respirator is an "action" and therefore constitutes actively causing the death of the patient. Others say that removal of artificial interventions and "allowing" death to occur simply gets the technology out of the way and permits the natural process of death to proceed; this "getting out of the way" is considered to be *passive*.

There is also a middle ground, the standard practice of permitting "tangential euthanasia." Narcotic and other pain relievers are ethically administered to terminal patients, which further reduces their respirations and hastens death. The intent is not death, it is pain control, and it is ethically unconscionable *not* to offer relief from that pain for fear of hastening demise.

It is clear that there is a difference between active and passive euthanasia. To argue otherwise is to play word games. Passively removing interventions and allowing death to occur has a different moral and intuitive feel than purposely causing that death.

Tangential euthanasia is still passive, as it aims to relieve pain, not cause death. The goal in treating terminal patients is to alleviate suffering, and for these patients there is less suffering in death than in being forced to endure further pain. Likewise the traditional medical goal to "do no harm" is upheld by pain control rather than aggressive imposition of further discomforts.

The difficulty in defining what we mean by "active," "passive," "tangential," and even "euthanasia" itself, indicates an important historical occurrence. *Medical technology has outpaced not only our ethical system but our vocabu-*

lary. We can now keep bodies functioning for longer and longer periods of time, beyond the point where they would have died or been considered dead 20 years ago. Old descriptions both of what that condition is, as well as what to do about it, no longer accurately depict the situation.

Euthanasia was traditionally considered to be a reluctant "mercy killing" of a dying or disabled person, not unlike putting down an animal to avoid unnecessary misery or suffering. The new definition includes the concept of a merciful death, but goes beyond the rationale of misery and suffering to include relief from unwarranted medical prolongation of incurable conditions. In fact, euthanasia has taken on new meaning, as has the word "suffering" itself.

Suicide used to describe the immoral and unwarranted taking of one's own life, usually with a sense of hostility, defiance, or despair. Today it may mean anything from the ethical refusal of treatment, to the planned self-death of a person with an irreversible condition — often with a sense of triumph, dignity, and control.

Murder, until recently, was thought to be causing or purposely allowing the death of another. Now these actions are called "withdrawal of artificial interventions," "pain management," and even "assisted suicide."

Death used to be defined as "cessation of heartbeat and respiration." Now, "whole brain death" may describe a body whose heart beats and lungs exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide. "Neocortical brain death" (cessation of function of the higher cortical areas of the brain) describes "death of the person," as in a persistent vegetative state, or end-stage Alzheimer's disease.

Clearly, new words are needed. In the meantime, it may be helpful for purposes of discussion to combine the terms euthanasia, murder, suicide and assisted suicide under the rubric of "hastening

the inevitable."

The word "hastening" is carefully chosen. It is ironically akin to "quickening." If quickening is an indication of a desired life, hastening is an indication of a desired death.

The word also has a softness to it that conveys a sense of welcome, of caring and consideration for the life and values of the person. It is in contrast to the harsh, sterile, prolonged high-tech death that many face as the alternative.

Other words will arise through further discussion and debate. One leader in this field, J. Russell Hoverman, M.D., suggests we need verbs, not nouns ("hastening," not "euthanasia") to describe what we are doing because it involves process, not conclusion.

Theological parallels are obvious here. We are in constant process with our God, interacting as we grow and learn together, even developing new language by which to know and relate to each other. We are never rigid about God — whose Hebrew name is a verb — and we ought never to be rigid on these ethical issues.

Passive hastening

Getting out of the way and allowing death to occur may take many forms. One may choose to refuse treatment from the initial diagnosis of a terminal condition.

It is also possible to refuse or withdraw treatment at any point along the way. Contrary to the belief of many healthcare practitioners, it is simply ridiculous to assume that "once a treatment is started, it cannot be stopped." If *any* treatment is begun and found to be useless, harmful or futile, it is stopped — whether that treatment is antibiotics, blood products, medications, or mechanical devices. In fact, one could argue that under such circumstances there is a moral obligation to stop.

This does not mean, however, that care is withdrawn. Stopping aggressive

treatment means changing the goal of treatment from curative to palliative, from restoring health to enhancing the dignity, pride, and comfort of the patient and family. The controversy arises in determining *when* such passive hastening is begun.

Most people have little difficulty withdrawing respirators, artificial hydration and nutrition when death is imminent. For others, the inevitable outcome, combined with the futility of treatment, emotional and financial costs, expected side effects, and, most importantly, quality of life, lead them to opt for palliative care as early as the initial diagnosis.

The courts have generally recognized the legal right of persons to refuse treatment and to permit "passive hastening," especially if there has been some written directive such as a Living Will or Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare. The medical community is somewhat reluctantly recognizing this patient prerogative and sees it in accordance with the physician's duty to "relieve suffering," and "to do no harm." It remains for the church to fully endorse the ethical nature of such decisions at any point on the spectrum of irreversible conditions.

Active hastening

Due to the advancement of biomedical technology, there are, and will continue to be, situations where the active hastening of death is appropriate:

— A woman learns through an ultrasound at 34 weeks that her baby has anencephaly (no upper brain), a condition incompatible with life. She wishes to induce delivery now rather than be forced to carry the fetus to term.

— An AIDS patient knows that his otherwise strong body and organs will take a month to slowly and painfully deteriorate, gradually reducing him to total dependency as he becomes skeletal, dehydrated, has seizures, becomes demented, and dies. He wishes to die now,

either by his own hand or with the assistance of someone else, while his dignity and faculties are still intact.

— An advanced Alzheimer's patient develops pneumonia, refuses food, knows no one. His wife of 53 years refuses to allow insertion of a feeding tube. She wishes to hasten her husband's death, as he had requested when he was first diagnosed, and had consistently stated until he was rendered incompetent.

— A head injury or stroke patient faces the prospect of long-term rehabilitation, the end result of which will be the ability to sit in a wheelchair, incontinent, artificially fed and hydrated, having minimal interaction with her family. They believe it is consistent with her undocumented wishes to cause her death now, rather than force her to "live" in this condition.

These four examples illustrate the current dilemmas created by our otherwise immensely helpful medical technology. We have ventured into territory heretofore unknown and find ourselves with situations that our words do not accurately describe. Otherwise obvious ethical and moral guidelines — such as "Do not kill" — no longer prevail, and we must make decisions that seem intuitively

right even though they are extremely dangerous if not carefully circumscribed and severely limited.

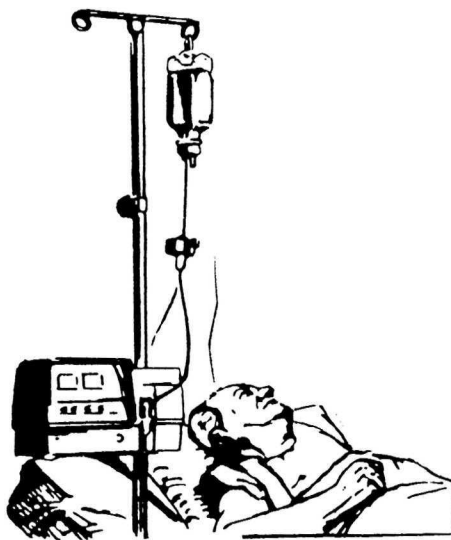
Guidelines must be developed which are ethically, medically and legally sound, to enable patients to circumvent the current system of medically obligatory high-tech, low dignity, high expense, low quality prolonged living/dying. We need to replace that model with the *option* of high dignity, high quality, life-affirming hastening of death.

In The Netherlands, there are five criteria for such active hastening. Patients must: a) be terminally ill (certified by two physicians); b) make the request themselves; c) be in intractable pain; d) make the request over time; e) be found to be in good mental health.

If such criteria are met, they may apply to their physician and receive a lethal injection. It is estimated that between 10-20,000 such deaths a year are hastened in this manner.

Because the United States is a more heterogeneous culture (and the most litigious in the world), we might start with the Dutch criteria and require additional guidelines such as the following:

- A written directive clearly stating the desires of the patient must be in evidence. It would perhaps be best if the directive had been in effect for some period of time preceding the need for it, but current wishes clearly stated should, in any case, be honored.
- Anyone assisting in the hastening process at the written request of the dying patient must be immune from criminal prosecution. Such assistance must be carefully designated and limited to physical intervention when the patient is no longer physically or mentally capable of carrying out his/her own wishes
- Likewise, anyone assisting in the hastening process must be immune from civil lawsuit, as must be the



patient him/herself. (Further limitations must be developed: e.g. assistants must not be related or stand to inherit.)

- Insurance companies must be directed by law to honor the existing life insurance policies of patients hastening their own deaths. Such companies must not be permitted to consider these actions "suicide," therefore negating the policy.

- There must be evidence that the patient's estate is in good order, to indicate that the decision is not precipitous and takes into account the persons who will be left behind.

- There must be letter(s) of evidence from friends or family to the effect that this decision is consistent with the life of the patient.

- There may be a need to further develop the ethics committee concept, using the current hospital model of interdisciplinary representation, to discuss each individual application for active hastening in a relatively public forum, just as hospital ethics committees now are asked to review decisions to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining interventions.

Deaths in healthcare institutions would be handled through existing committees. Home death requests would be reviewed by an ethics committee established through the home healthcare agency, an affiliated hospital or nursing facility, the physician's practice group or large clinic, or perhaps even a community ethics committee functioning as city-wide institutional review boards for the protection of human subjects in research protocols do now.

Such committees must be constructed and procedurally designed to preclude the kind of bureaucratic nightmares usually resulting from good intentions. What is needed is a process that preserves the individual's freedom and right to privacy,

yet allows the state to legally protect meaningful life. If laws are clearly written, these committees might not be necessary.

With these guidelines in place, along with other safeguards, then federal and state guidelines may be designed to establish when the hastening of death is *prohibited*, when it is *permissible*, and when it is *obligatory*.

It would be reasonable to think of situations where aggressive treatment would be proscribed and the passive hastening of death would be obligatory, as in cases of brain death or other instances where aggressive treatment would be futile. Physicians already seem to welcome the concept of being prohibited from offering expensive and extraordinary treatments in situations that they and others know will be useless.

There may also be some disease/accident conditions and neonatal anomalies which are by definition always terminal and would rightly fall under the rubric of obligatory active hastening. Even so, the dangers of obligatory active hastening of death seem to far outweigh the presumed benefits. Such an active option must be permissible but never required if we are to maintain the protection of liberty that our society has traditionally honored and upheld.

The church's historic condemnation of assisted death is based on outdated knowledge, unaware of the extremes created by biomedical technology. The traditional sanctity of life arguments no longer apply when we are faced with new situations — such as persistent vegetative states, comas, and numerous congenital or drug-induced anomalies — that *look* like "life" but are not. We must come to terms with the fact that some of the "life" we have created or into which we have ventured is *not* sacred, or in need of protection and preservation at all costs.

In fact, the opposite is true. To truly preserve what it has traditionally held to

be the "sanctity of life," the church must become a willing partner in the development of carefully circumscribed guidelines permitting the passive and active hastening of death. To do less than that is to capitulate responsibility to medical technology and to condemn people to horrid deaths to which we would not submit our animals.

H. Tristram Engelhardt, Ph.D., M.D. of the Center for Ethics, Medicine and Public Issues, describes papal guidelines for refusing medical treatment which date from 1595. The guidelines included balancing the usefulness of treatment against social and economic cost, amount of pain, inconvenience, and "horror magnus." If the cost was more than the average person made in an average year, if the pain was greater than one wanted to endure, if it meant uprooting or leaving one's family and losing employment, or if the remedy caused considerable revulsion, then the person need not submit to treatment. Four hundred years later, these guidelines still may apply, not only to medical treatment, but to determining the required continuance or allowable ending of life.

The stance of the church, then, must be one of guidance, counsel, support, permission, absolution, mercy, acceptance, and forgiveness; in short, its traditional sacramental stance. It must indeed *be there* before, after and especially at the time of the hastening to provide sacramental and personal presence consistent with that provided at the other transitions of the person's life.

To do these things will require much study and debate, the formation of new vocabulary and the careful fashioning of guidelines that are mercifully fair and socially just. Even more importantly, to do these things will require the courage to follow the Holy Spirit in the development of a new moral understanding of who we are as the church in the world today, if that church is to have any meaning at all.

TW

Wylie-Kellermann new WITNESS editor

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, prizewinning editor of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan newspaper, *The Record*, will be new editor of THE WITNESS magazine, it was announced by the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. She will succeed Mary Lou Suhor, editor since 1981, who will retire July 31.

Election of Wylie-Kellermann was given final approval by the ECPC Board as THE WITNESS went to press. Wylie-Kellermann, a 1980 graduate from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, is the author of *Poletown: Community Betrayed*. She also produced a documentary film about Poletown, a low-income, integrated Detroit neighborhood which was destroyed to make room for a GM Cadillac plant. The film took first prize at the American Film Festival for social issues video. A profile of the new editor will follow in the next issue.

In other appointments, the Rt. Rev. John H. Burt, chair of the Episcopal Urban Bishops Coalition and retired Bishop of Ohio, was elected president of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company and the Rev. William W. Rankin, rector of St. Stephen's Church, Belvedere, Cal., chair of the board.

Other officers are the Rev. Nan Arrington Peete, canon to the ordinary of the Diocese of Atlanta, vice-chair; William R. MacKaye, communications consultant and former religion editor at the *Washington Post*, secretary; and Robert N. Eckersley, CPA, of the firm of Eckersley and Eckersley, Scranton, Pa., treasurer.

New members elected to the Board were the Rev. Reginald H. Blaxton, special assistant for religious affairs to the Mayor of Washington, D.C.; Christopher Bugbee, communications director for Trinity Church, New York; the Rev. Carmen Guerrero, vicar of Santa Fe Chapel, San Antonio, Tex., and former Theological Education Program Coordinator for the Diocese of Honduras; Andrew McThenia, law professor at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va.; the Rt. Rev. Douglas E. Theuner, Bishop of New Hampshire; and the Rev. Seiichi Michael Yasutake, of the Cathedral Shelter of Chicago.

The Rev. Alice Callaghan, a Los Angeles attorney who directs a center for garment workers and is a justice advocate for the skid row community, fills out her term from a previous election and rounds out Board appointments for the 1990-91 fiscal year. TW

Grand jury resister files for freedom



Attorney Linda Backiel

A "Grumbles Motion" will be filed Feb. 10 to show that the incarceration of Attorney Linda Backiel, who refused to testify about a client before a federal grand jury, is punitive and not coercive. The motion states that grand jury resisters cannot be kept in jail if it can be proved that incarceration has not persuaded them to testify, according to Backiel's attorney, Patricia V. Pierce.

Backiel was sentenced for contempt Dec. 10 and could serve six months or more should the motion fail. (See story January WITNESS.)

A former Philadelphia public defender and career-long advocate for reform of the grand jury system, Backiel has testified in Congress concerning grand jury abuse and has provided research data for the Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights concerning FBI misconduct. Her plight has sent shockwaves throughout the legal community, which fears an increase in attorney subpoenas. Efforts are underway to introduce a bill such as that pro-

posed in Congress by Sen. Paul Simon in 1988 which would have put restrictions on attorney subpoenas.

The testimony of Monroe Freedman, Esq., an expert in legal ethics, is being produced in pamphlet form to distribute to members of the legal profession and others interested in the ethical dilemma of lawyers called to testify against their clients. Freedman said that the decision to jail Bakiel for refusing in conscience to testify before the grand jury would have a whipsaw effect on the bar, in a systemic way.

Bakiel served as a consultant to the Episcopal Church Publishing Company when Maria Cueto, Raisa Nemikin, and Steven Guerra — all of whom had Episcopal connections — were imprisoned for refusing in conscience to testify before a grand jury investigating Puerto Rican liberation groups and “terrorism.”

Bakiel recently informed THE WITNESS that she is

in good spirits, and works diligently on her writing. A published poet, she sent a number of her new efforts including the piece below, written years ago for a previous grand jury resister.

WITNESS readers can write urging the release of Bakiel to:

Judge Charles Weiner
Room 6613
U.S. Court House
601 Market St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Messages of support can be sent to:

Linda Backiel, A-40
Bucks County Correctional Facility
1730 S. Easton Rd.
Doylestown, PA 18901

No time for neutrality

**There are times to be silent.
The inquisitor leers. He wears
a businessman's suit, a judge's
robes. He offers the keys
to your tiny cell, promises
protection, security, an end
to the torture. He threatens
madness, compromise.
There are times to be silent.**

**There are times for patience.
Days when there is too much
time and not enough space and every
sound rhymes with the clang
of metal gates. There are times
to cling to the calm of glaciers,
the strength that endures
sudden thaws. Prisons rust.**

**But there are also times
to pierce the sleep of patience
and howl 'til the world hears
how hunger tunnels the dreams
of children, and fear stalks their waking.
How grown men threaten to steal their sun
extinguish the small animal clans and burn
their little straw beds. There are days
to pierce the sleep of patience
and howl.**

**There are times to speak out, to say
to the world: I saw that soldier,
that boy running down the street,
stopped short, 11 years old; I saw that woman
pleading for her daughter,
before they were raped. I saw. I heard.
I will repeat every word.**

**There are times when silence sings,
times to keep the names and the faces
lost in the dark safety of our dreams
part of the blood, part of a history
that can only be known by those who lived it.**

**And there are times that silence will use us,
render us accomplices to injustice,
aiders and abettors of poverty, grand larceners
of self-respect.**

**Listen, when the hunters are out
with their high-powered rifles, and you
have just seen a band of white-tailed deer,
you know what to do, without thinking.**

**By your singing, and your silence
they will know you, the hunters
and the deer.**

— Linda Backiel

U.S. Gulf strategy fueled by racism

by Andrée Nicola McLaughlin

While the president of the United States equivocates about whether to use “our way of life,” “vital interests,” or Iraqi “naked aggression” as a basis for an offensive war against Iraq, many people recognize, in George Bush’s massive deployment of troops, a historical pattern of Western racist aggression against people of color.

Nelson Mandela, speaking in France in November last year pointed to the hypocrisy and prejudice of “the whole of the West [which] is screaming and sending armies” to the Middle East because the people of Iraq are “brown-skinned.” Mandela also noted that the West has conveniently ignored its own recent military aggressions.

Many black Americans know through experience that issuing ultimatums and exercising knee-jerk militarism, instead of negotiating and dialoguing, characterize the racist posture that defines U.S. foreign and domestic policy toward people of color. There are no summits with the West’s formerly and still colonized peoples — just gunboat diplomacy. These facts and 400 years of firsthand knowledge underscore black Americans’ national lead in opposing war in the Middle East, as indicated in a variety of U.S. polls.

When George Bush speaks of the American “way of life” and “vital interests,” or Secretary of State James Baker

of “American values” and “American jobs” as reasons for a military offensive against Iraq, black Americans understand only too well that these government officials are not referring to *black* America’s way of life, *black* America’s economic interests, or *black* America’s values and jobs. Indeed, the polls suggest black America recognizes that some variation of “our way of life,” etc. has always been the pretext for U.S. aggression against people of color. We very likely discern modern euphemisms for “manifest destiny,” and its coterminous constant, the subjugation of black people.

Surely, black America cannot be expected to support another war for Western interests that have yielded so paltry a reality for blacks: a handful of superstar entertainers and athletes; a minimal number of professionals and businesspeople whose job protection or economic viability is continually undermined by federal Supreme Court decisions against civil rights; a growing underclass of unemployed and underemployed adults; disproportionately high numbers of prison inmates, and members of the armed services (30%), who lack other employment opportunities. No self-respecting people would want its sons and daughters to die for *these* life options. Or to be made *more* vulnerable by U.S. military action and its economic consequences.

Bush’s invocation of Iraqi “naked aggression” to toot the horn of war does not have much credence either. More than a few black people remember U.S. government acts of aggression against black and African peoples in the 1980s

and ’90s. We have not forgotten the invasions of Grenada and Panama, the bombing of Libya, Bush’s expressed readiness to lift sanctions against racist South Africa, the ongoing economic blockade against Cuba, the unlawful sponsoring of contra mercenary violence against Nicaragua, and the continuing destabilization of Angola.

Yet black Americans do not have to look abroad to sight the U.S. government’s hegemonic drive for profit, power, and privilege for the benefit of the wealthy. We, on a daily basis, are cognizant of the unchecked infusion of drugs in black communities, none of which owns the airplanes that transport these substances into the United States; escalating and unprosecuted police murders of innocent black citizens; a pattern of criminal indictment of elected or appointed black officials and grassroots community leaders nationwide; the erosion of available, affordable housing; the elusiveness of quality education for our children in urban centers; and the establishment media’s pejorative representation of black communities.

Early during this Middle East crisis, the clergy of the National Baptist Convention of America, representing over 7.8 million members, urged a peaceful diplomatic solution. The Baptist resolution called on the U.S. government to “prevent the loss of countless lives and spending [of] billions of dollars that should be utilized to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, train the unlearned, house the homeless, and encourage the lonely.”

In this action, the clergy pick up where African-Americans Martin Luther

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King, Jr., Malcolm X, ex-boxer Muhammad Ali, activist Kwame Ture (Stokely Carmichael), vocalist Freda Payne, and actress/vocalist Eartha Kitt, among others, left off, each having personally paid with his/her life or livelihood for speaking against U.S. aggression in Viet Nam and elsewhere.

As Bush vetoes the 1990 Civil Rights Bill and appoints as a Supreme Court justice David Souter, who believes "affirmative action is affirmative discrimination," polls of black Americans about the U.S. war option in the Middle East clearly indicate our predominant sentiment: *No Iraqi ever called me "nigger."*

For the majority in black America, the war is not 10,000 miles away; it is here in the United States against a domestic and foreign policy that devalues the lives of people of color and the poor.

Euphemisms for "manifest destiny" to justify the U.S. military industrial complex's grabbing of Arab oil won't fly with black America. Too many of us smell twin rats named *racism* and *greed*, and know the havoc they have together wreaked.

At this writing, the possibility of a U.S.-led offensive against Iraq appears even greater and, likewise, the reasons for black opposition to racist aggression are more compelling.

On one hand, Arab heads of state have actively sought a peaceful diplomatic solution while, on the other hand, a series of events have demonstrated the unyielding nature of U.S. (and Western) governmental intransigence. For months, the option for dialogue was there; however the Bush Administration initially forewent dialogue with Iraq in favor of pushing a U.N. Security Council resolution to use "all necessary means" against Iraq by a Jan. 15, 1991 deadline. Although the resolution did not pass with the required affirmative vote of all permanent Security Council members (i.e., China abstained), profound misrepresentation

of the text of the United Nations Charter by American political leaders, as with the Bible during the era of professed "manifest destiny," has become the basis for aggression against people of color.

By December, the racism in U.S. foreign policy was blatant, as Bush arrogantly insisted that Iraq choose among his proposed dates for any diplomatic talks, accompanied by his dispatching of more U.S. forces to the Middle East. Even as he insisted he wanted dialogue but no negotiations, Bush publicly threatened to kick Saddam Hussein's "ass," exposing not only a racist double standard in diplomacy, but a clear absence of a moral premise for the U.S. military build-up, and a penchant for violence.

The U.S. government's resistance to negotiating with Iraq stands in stark contrast to the flurry of activity to approve billion dollar loans and giveaways to member nations of the U.S.-led coalition. Shockingly, at the same time, the Bush Administration went to great lengths to block the use of government funds for minority higher education scholarships, as though 25 years of civil rights legislation could compensate black America for 300 years of slavery and 100 years of apartheid. Is this how the United States plans to help pay for a war in the Middle East? Such actions again make clear the linkage between racist aggression abroad and at home, and why U.S. foreign and domestic policy must be transformed.

The birth of a genuinely new world order requires repudiating both the character of the old imperial order — racism and greed, and its mode of operation — violence, exploitation and oppression. U.S. government officials who proposed death and destruction on the Jan. 15 birthdate of the late Martin Luther King, Jr., author of the civil rights revolution and Nobel Peace Prize winner, reflect an appalling cynicism not lost on black America. **TW**

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War is not the answer

A message to the American people

Eighteen church leaders, including Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, took part in a Middle East peace pilgrimage Dec. 14 to 21 and issued the following statement upon their return.

We are marching toward war. The stakes are horribly high. Military experts predict casualties in the tens and hundreds of thousands. And it won't end there. War would unleash a chain of human tragedies that will be with us for generations to come.

Our Christmas pilgrimage to the Middle East has utterly convinced us that war is not the answer. We believe the resort to massive violence to resolve the Gulf crisis would be politically and morally indefensible. One clear message emerged from our many conversations in these holy lands: "War would be a disaster for us all." We were told again and again, "Please go home and tell the American people that a way to peace can and must be found." We have concluded that in the Middle East today it is no longer a question of right and wrong; it is also a matter of life and death.

The unspeakable loss of lives, especially innocent civilians, would be unacceptable on moral grounds. Nations hold in their hands weapons of mass destruction. It is entirely possible that war in the Middle East will destroy everything. No cause will be served, no crisis resolved, no justice secured.

War will not liberate Kuwait, it will destroy it. War will not save us from weapons of mass destruction, it will unleash them. War will not establish regional stability, it will inflame the entire Middle East. War will not resolve longstanding conflicts, it will explode them wider and deeper. War will not unite the Arabs with the West, it will rekindle painful historical memories of past

efforts by the "Christian" West to dominate the "Muslim" East and divide us as never before, with potentially disastrous results for the local Christian communities. War will not stop aggression, it will instead rapidly accelerate the cycle of violence and revenge, which will not be limited to the Middle East.

We will also be ravaged here at home by a war in the Middle East. Given the make-up of U.S. volunteer armed forces, we know that those who will do most of the suffering and dying in the Gulf War will be disproportionately low-income and people of color. Similarly, if "Desert Shield" continues to swallow up limited national resources in a time of economic contraction, the prospects of justice at home will disappear like a mirage in the sand.

Again and again during our pilgrimage we heard the sentiment that peace in the Middle East is indivisible. While we do not accept the proposition that the resolution of all other conflicts must precede the solution of the Gulf crisis, we do believe that there will be no lasting peace in the region until interrelated issues are dealt with in a comprehensive framework. What is required is not "linkage," but consistency in the implementation of U.S. foreign policy. Our government should support the convening of an international Middle East peace conference by the United Nations.

We have prayed in Jerusalem for the peace of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's vocation as the city of peace will not be realized until both Israelis and Palestinians are free and fully protected in the exer-

cise of their human rights within secure and recognized boundaries.

We have seen both the hopes and the frustrations of Lebanon as it emerges from its 15-year nightmare of civil war. A durable peace in Lebanon requires the withdrawal of all foreign forces — Syrian, Israeli and Iranian — and international support as Lebanon seeks to rebuild its shattered society.

We have felt the anguish of a divided Cyprus, which seems to have been forgotten by the world community. Cyprus can be united and free only when occupation forces are withdrawn from the island, and a unified and pluralistic Republic of Cyprus is acknowledged as the only legitimate government of the entire island and its population.

There is no such thing as a benign occupation. Occupation of the lands of others is wrong. It breeds frustration and frustration leads to conflict. Even as we oppose the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait on moral grounds, so also we believe that the West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon and Cyprus must be free. These occupations must end before even more precious human blood is shed.

We have looked into the faces of children in Iraq. In Jordan we have witnessed in dusty refugee camps the compassionate response of a democratic government and the churches to the thousands of evacuees who descended upon a country already impoverished by the Gulf crisis. We have seen fear in the eyes of people who could lose their homes or their lives in the event of war.

Having seen the faces of victims and

potential victims, we believe that there must be an alternative to war. That alternative is negotiations — serious and substantive negotiations. If the United Nations can be mobilized to impose sanctions and to set deadlines, it can also be mobilized to provide a forum to resolve disputes between nations. The United Nations can be the place where the deadly escalation of armaments of mass destruction in the Middle East can be reversed. The United Nations should be given the opportunity to provide a framework for an Arab contribution to the resolution of the Gulf crisis.

Our nation must not submit to the inevitability of war. By acting now on a very broad scale we as people of faith will mobilize on behalf of a peaceful alternative. Citizen action and the strength of public opinion could literally make possible a solution to this crisis without war.

We call upon the churches and upon the nation to fast and pray for peace, to pursue every means available of public dialogue and popular expression to find a way out of certain catastrophe, to resist the war option and help point the way to peace with justice.

At this moment, the resolution of the Gulf crisis will take a miracle. But in this season we are reminded that the Middle East is the cradle of miracles. That miracle must be acted and prayed into being.

Delegation members

Bishop Vinton Anderson, Moderator, Black Church Liason Committee of the World Council of Churches

The Rev. Dr. James Andrews, Stated Clerk, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Most Rev. Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop, Episcopal Church

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary-elect, National Council of Churches

The Rev. Herbert W. Chilstrom, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Dr. Milton Efthimiou, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of

North and South America

The Rev. Mac Charles Jones, National Baptist Convention of America

The Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, President, National Council of Churches

The Rev. Dr. Fred Lofton, immediate past President, Progressive National Baptist Convention

The Rev. Dr. Donald E. Miller, General Secretary, Church of the Brethren

The Rev. Edwin G. Mulder, General Secretary, Reformed Church in America

Dr. Patricia J. Rumer, General Director, Church Women United

Dr. Paul Sherry, President, United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. Robert Stephanopoulos, Dean, Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Cathedral of the Holy Trinity

Bishop Melvin Talbert, California-Nevada Annual Conference, United Methodist Church

The Rev. Angelique Walker-Smith, National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.

Jim Wallis, Editor, *Sojourners*

The Rev. Dr. Daniel E. Weiss, General Secretary, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

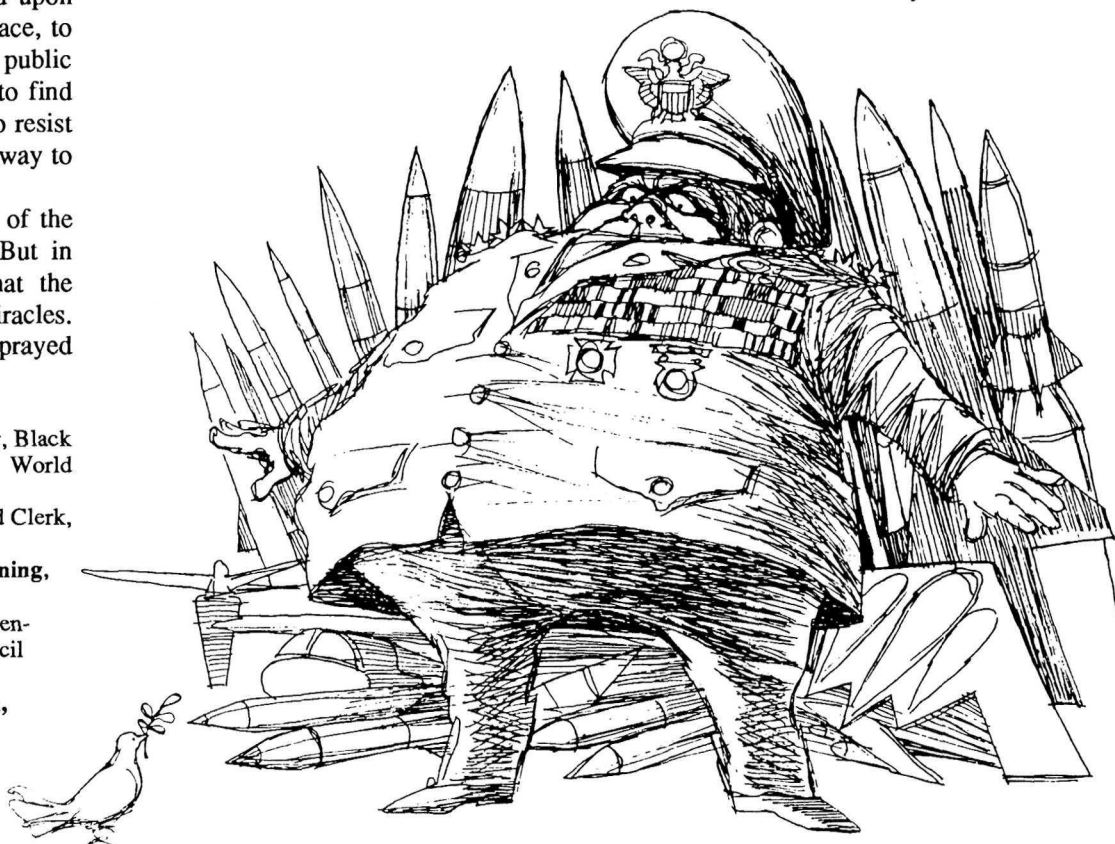
Demons . . . Continued from page 5 ment by religious leaders, "War is not the answer" following their visit to Iraq, page 14 this issue.) To his great credit, Bishop Browning has spearheaded that effort.

And aware that some demons are only cast out by prayer and fasting, the Episcopal Peace Fellowship has launched a fast until the war is over.

So now we have a war to stop, and it's into the streets. We will be at the national demonstration Jan. 26 in Washington, D.C. and urge readers to sign onto the nearest anti-war activity, as well as praying, fasting and working for peace.

Finally, endless cups of coffee and seemingly endless hours of prayers and surrealistic news broadcasts later, we send this issue to the printer, pondering: Has George Bush launched a "splendid little war," or possibly, Armageddon? Either way, the world loses.

— Mary Lou Suhor



The Consultation urges General Convention Committee: **‘No business as usual’**

“No business as usual.” That was the plea from The Consultation, an umbrella group of progressive Episcopal peace and justice organizations, to a special Executive Council committee appointed to deal with “unsettled questions” after Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning refused to move the church’s General Convention from Phoenix.

The site became the center of controversy when Arizona in a recent public referendum rejected a holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. and a number of national organizations canceled their conventions, perceiving the vote as a racist slur. Bishop Browning called a special meeting of the Executive Council Jan. 5 in Newark to announce that he had decided to keep the Convention in Phoenix, but that the Council could “challenge” his decision. In the end, the Council voted, with one abstention, to back the Presiding Bishop. After the vote, the Rev. Austin Cooper, Council member, presented a resolution to be voted on by Convention that would establish a “Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy” with a minimum of \$1 million. The legacy would fund scholarships for minority students.

Short of recommending a total boycott of Convention, which would abandon it to “reactionary forces,” the Rev. Joseph H. Pelham, convenor of The Consultation, subsequently wrote to the committee urging among other things that customary exhibits be eliminated and that all official breakfasts, lunches and dinners customarily held by Convention and affiliated groups be canceled.

Full text of the Pelham letter follows:

The organizations related to The Consultation urge that the Chair and members of the special committee appointed to deal with unsettled questions in regard to the 1991 General Convention give most serious consideration to certain matters.

The Consultation deplores the decision by the Presiding Bishop, affirmed by the Executive Council earlier this month, to lodge the General Convention in Phoenix despite the state of Arizona’s rejection of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

That decision having been made, we now urge that the following steps be undertaken that will avoid a Conven-

tion which would, in effect, be “business as usual.”

Specifically,

1. We suggest that the customary exhibits which have been associated with the Convention be eliminated at the Phoenix Convention.

2. We support the notion that all official breakfasts, lunches, dinners and such events customarily held by Convention groups be canceled; and that affiliated groups be urged to cancel plans for such activities.

3. We strongly suggest that, if any “Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy” be established by the General Convention, the amount to be raised for that purpose be increased from one million dollars to three million dollars in light of the conversation that has occurred about the possibility that these funds be divided among several different groups. Further, we suggest that scholarship monies raised through the legacy be equally divided among men and women.

4. We urge that those planning the Convention take seriously a commitment to the use of minority-owned vendors and caterers, and that a list of them be made available.

5. We suggest that any Convention planning meetings be held in sites other than Phoenix to avoid spending in Arizona in advance of the Convention.

The members of The Consultation have considered the total boycott of the Convention, but we have rejected that alternative lest the Convention be abandoned to reactionary forces. We will be present in Phoenix in order to work for progressive legislation and to assure that the Convention focuses on a witness against racism. However, we feel strongly that this should be a modest, “no frills” Convention. We believe that the adoption of these suggestions would contribute to that end.

In support of The Consultation’s proposal, the Episcopal Church Publishing Company at its January meeting canceled the ECPC awards dinner customarily held during General Convention, as well as THE WITNESS/ECPC booth in the Convention exhibit hall.

Short Takes

Airlines harass Arab-Americans

Over the past several years the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has received numerous complaints from members reporting harassment and discriminatory treatment while traveling on various U.S. airlines . . . Recently, we have come across information which may explain the overzealous behavior of airlines in singling out Arabs and Arab-Americans for discriminatory treatment. A clue comes from a recent incident in Detroit where two Yemeni-American women were illegally strip-searched by Northwest Airlines security personnel. While investigating this case, it has become apparent that the root of the problem is with the security firm hired by Northwest, International Consultants on Targeted Security (ICTS). Several other airlines have also employed ICTS. Strangely enough, ICTS is an Israeli-based organization which undoubtedly has extensive experience in harassing and intimidating Arab travelers.

Albert Mokhiber
ADC Times 12/90

Quote of note

When we try to pick out something by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.

John Muir

Women and children last

The total federal share of Aid For Dependent Children (AFDC) payments in 1987 was \$8.8 billion, covering approximately 11 million people, mostly women and children, nationwide. AFDC represents less than 1% of the federal budget annually. National defense consumes 27% and in most years increases faster than the pace of inflation. The total federal share of AFDC is just over 1% of the projected cost of bailing out the savings and loans and other financial institutions; it's less than Bush's proposal for the "war on drugs" this year.

Theresa Funciello
Ms. 11-12/90



This thing called death

I stand on the seashore. A ship spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and heads out across the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty amid strength and I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud on the horizon where the sea and sky meet to mingle with each other. At my side someone says: "There! She's gone!"

Gone where? Gone from my sight — that is all. She is just as large in mast and spar and hull as when she sailed close by, and just as able to bear her load of living freight to the place of destination. Her diminished size is in my vision alone. At the moment when someone at my side says, "There! She's gone," other eyes watch her coming, and other voices take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!"

And that is dying.

Grace and Peace newsletter
St. Mary's Church, Dorchester, Mass.

God's call

One day, as he began his daily prayer, a Desert Master saw pass by him a cripple, a beggar, and a beaten man. Seeing them, the Holy One went deep into prayer and cried, "Great God! How is it that a loving Creator can see such suffering and yet do nothing about it?"

And out of the depth of prayer, God said, "I have done something about it. I made you."

Tales of the Desert Masters

EUC meeting set for Camden

The Episcopal Urban Caucus will hold its annual assembly Feb. 27-March 2 in Camden, N.J. The theme will be "Urban Ministry: Holding It Together in the Decade of Evangelism."

The banquet speaker will be Dr. Gibson Winter, professor of theology at Princeton University and author of *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches*. The Rev. Michael Doyle, a Roman Catholic priest and community activist from Camden, is set to preach at the assembly Eucharist. A presentation by the Christic Institute on its campaign to expose U.S. government involvement in the international illegal drug trade is also scheduled. A bus trip is planned to visit neighborhoods in Atlantic City that have not benefitted from the casino boom.

For registration information, contact Ann Marie Marvel, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, 138 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111 or call (617) 482-5800.

Cow pollution

A \$1 million study by a team of government and industry scientists shows that, as part of their normal digestive process, the world's 1.3 billion cattle annually release 70 million tons of methane gas. The study cites the gas as a cause for as much as a fifth of the greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere.

Autoweek 4/30/90

The myth of Columbus

I think the whole notion of celebrating Columbus Day is part of American foundational mythology. It is an illusion that people on this continent live with. My argument would be that illusion is not healthy for white Americans, that it is in fact living a lie.

You have to understand that from an American Indian perspective, celebrating the Columbus quincentenary is in fact celebrating Indian genocide. Indian people like to remind white Americans that the only thing Columbus discovered is that he was lost.

George Tinker
Sojourners 1/91

Bishops should 'come out' for gays

by Jack Gessell

One of the most astonishing developments in the donnybrook over homosexuality in the church is the startling report that Bishop John Howe of Central Florida plans to present a resolution to the next General Convention establishing a new canon specifically inhibiting the ordination of gay men and lesbian women and specifically inhibiting advocacy of the same. Howe appears to take his cues on homosexuality and politics from the infamous and bigoted California congressman, William Dannemeyer.

This proposed canon would, for the first time in history, establish a biological, in addition to the theological and moral, qualification for admission to Holy Orders. This is unheard of, although the debate over the ordination of women implied the possibility of altering the canons to restrict Holy Orders to males. If such a canon were approved it would be contrary to scripture, reason, tradition and, indeed, would be heretical.

Homosexuality is a natural variant in creation and, as such, morally neutral and participates in the essential goodness of God's created world. The proposed canon, by declaring homosexual persons ineligible for Holy Orders, would also negate a portion of God's creative grace. We may as well retroactively declare women ineligible while we are about it, and preserve the purity of an all-male heterosexual priesthood.

Equally troubling is the proposed inhibition on advocacy. Logically such canonical provision would be a matter of

prior restraint and inhibition of the natural liberty of all persons.

It is also troubling because it seems to reflect an ignorance of the depth and richness of the spirit of Anglicanism, which has always embraced and held in tension differences and diversity. If the opinion of some is to be notoriously silenced by the authority of legal provision, then we will elaborate a church which would be unrecognizable to, say,



the Tudor and Caroline divines and to William Porcher DuBose, all of whom stood for a liberal Catholicism which is our church's foundation.

DuBose's beliefs have, as much as that of any other one person's, formed the life and spirit of the Episcopal Church. His liberalism was expressed in his commitment to a critical study of Scripture, in his recognition of the development of doctrine, in his unending search for truth wherever it might be found, in his understanding of evolution, process and growth, and in his efforts to reconcile historic theology with modern ideas. The canonical proposal against

ordaining gays and lesbians violates this tradition.

Cutting off discussion because of a phobic paranoia which refuses to entertain alternative views will destroy the church as a community of moral discourse, frustrate the search for truth, and will deny Anglican spirituality, which is rooted in the human as a disclosure of the divine. This would be a grave violation of that charity which we are sworn to exemplify.

Is this what we wish?

But while the proposal of such a novel canon may be based on mischievous and political motives, it leads me to recommend that we become serious about this discussion of homosexuality in the church, and clear away the rubbish which prevents clarity and resolution.

Much of the discussion of homosexuality is confused because of the often unstated premise — held by those who would deny to gays the church's blessing of stable committed relationships and the grace of ordination — that homosexuality is a perverse moral choice. But not to acknowledge that there is substantial historical, social, scientific, and experiential evidence to the contrary is perverse, regardless of one's own personal view.

There is evidently no clear and unambiguous warrant in Scripture or tradition for the condemnation and marginalization of homosexual persons, and it is equally unreasonable in light of increasingly compelling contemporary data. Thus if theological objections and moral condemnations fail, as they will, then the continuing hysteria on this matter is simply political. In other words, who will gain power and money by manipulating the issues of sexuality in order to control the church? My exegesis of the reports

The Rev. John M. Gessell is professor of Christian Ethics, emeritus, The University of the South, and founder and executive director of the Cumberland Center for Justice and Peace, Sewanee, Tenn.

from the recent House of Bishops meeting strongly urges me to this conclusion.

I am persuaded that the present discord on this question is so destructive that immediate action is required lest further inaction of the House of Bishops occurs. If this issue is not soon resolved, it will create grave disunity, acrimony, and temptation to power.

The struggles over the inclusion of blacks in the mainstream of church life, and the ordination of women were not edifying or healthy. We might have learned, however, from these struggles that full inclusion *will* happen. Just as with blacks and women, so gays and lesbians who meet the canonical criteria will be ordained by the church. But if the struggle is protracted, the loss of purpose, vision, and energy will be incalculable, and will vitiate the mission of the church in the world.

This crisis is so dire that it may destroy the capability of the church to carry out its mission. To marginalize, dehumanize, and oppress homosexual persons in the church is, in part, to be complicit with those who deny the humanity and rights of homosexual persons, and with those who subject them to violence and even murder. Homosexual persons share the same right to life as abused women and children, racial minorities, and the unborn.

I believe that the present impasse on this issue, because of the character of recent events, can be resolved only in the House of Bishops. A parallel case concerned the matter of clerical alcoholism, the resolution of which, by God's mercy, began with the bishops. The power of denial regarding alcohol abuse and its devastating results is instructive. Once that power was defeated, healing began to occur. In the present instance, denial is more complex. It takes the form of closeted bishops and clergy, and denial that gays and lesbians may be fully included in the life of the community of Word and Sacrament.

Therefore, to begin the task of clearing away the rubbish, and of healing and restoring, I suggest that the bishops consider taking the following steps:

Let the House of Bishops become that place where love and compassion are given unconditionally, and change will begin to take place. The gays can dare to leave their secret lives and be enlivened and ennobled by who they are. The straights can dare to confront their fear and hatred and be ennobled by the purification of their thoughts and feelings.

Specifically I suggest that:

(1) In circumstances which must be guarded by strict and careful confidentiality and which must be maintained indefinitely, the gay bishops, perhaps beginning with three or four who can agree together, "come out" to their fellows in the House.

(2) Support systems must be provided for both gay and straight bishops to enable the gays to withstand the inevitable trauma of personal disclosure following many years of secrecy, and the straights to withstand the inevitable blows to their perceptions and their emotional commitments. No one not a member of the House need know the process by which this is done.

(3) These steps will be very painful and very difficult, but if they are carefully planned and entered into in full confidentiality and mutual trust, the House can begin to discover a freedom to show the way of loving acceptance and heal the considerable wounds which have been inflicted.

Then we may all get on with our business in furthering God's mission for this church.

TV

Pillar of Salt

*(She was known only as a wife.
She had no name, but history
remembered her tragedy —
that of being trapped in an
unhealed past.)*

Don't look back,
battered child.
Time then hurt you.
Let time heal you.
Don't look back.

Don't look back,
beaten child.
They knew not what
they did except
what was done
unto them.
Don't look back.

Don't look back,
abandoned child,
abused, neglected child.
Denial is salt in your wounds.
Dwelling is repeating
the deliberate disappearance of your soul.
Don't perpetuate this harm.

Break the cycle, wait,
stop it here.
Speak out the paralyzing secret
and begin to come back
to yourself.
Cry it out to compassionate ears
and be held in the hearts
of your witnesses.

The truth shall make you free
but first it will shatter you.
What was broken can be mended,
what was lost, restored.
Find yourself, then,
pure and whole,
a child of God.
Look back long enough to let go.

— Alla Renée Bozarth

Exiles of the ‘crying room’

by Chris Ambidge

I found myself recently in a church with a “crying room” off to one side. My companion found this upsetting. When I asked her why, she said “because it implies that babies and their mothers aren’t really part of the Body of Christ.” I had thought that the room was a good idea, since at least this way they weren’t exiled completely from the congregation — but the service was about to begin, so we couldn’t debate the issue any further.

Halfway through the first hymn, I knew I had to leave. They were using incense, and I have asthma. If I was to continue breathing, I had to place my lungs out of range of the thurible — so I headed for the crying room. Spending time there was an educational experience.

I *didn’t* feel part of the congregation in it. The glass was invisible to me, but it made me invisible to the rest of the people. It was like being outside a fishbowl — or watching the proceedings on television. Normally I love singing hymns, but not in there. Even the quiet little mumblings I did utter made me feel silly, as if I was arguing with the radio announcer, or standing up in my living room for the national anthem at the beginning of a hockey game on TV. At one point in the service, the congregation was asked to make promises. I did, but I got the impression that what I said didn’t really count. I wasn’t one of the people.

I emerged from the crying room feeling differently about how the church includes, or doesn’t include, various groups. The temple in Jerusalem had dif-

ferent courts, and the ones you were allowed into depended on who you were. Women were allowed no further than the Court of the Women, and non-Jews only made it as far as the Court of the Gentiles. That crying room felt like a Court of the Gentiles. I got the message, “You are allowed to come this far and watch, but you may not come further.” That is exclusive, not inclusive. All God’s children are loved, not just those with healthy lungs.

My asthma is an invisible disability. It is easier to deal with visible disabilities. Though the situation is far from perfect, people who use wheelchairs are being included more, as the increasing number of ramps shows. One cannot pretend that someone in a wheelchair could make it up the chancel steps, but many people say to me “It’s not very often, or for long; you could manage, couldn’t you?” The answer is no. I love my church and what goes on in that community, but I cannot stop breathing in order to participate in liturgies.

My homosexuality, though anything but a disability, is also invisible. In many ways, that puts me in another crying room. The social pressure is for me to appear to be straight: If I do, I can sit in church. If I want to be out, the church doesn’t want to see me, and I must sit in the crying room. The official pressure is worse. Were I to have someone whom I wanted to make my spouse, to share my life in love, the church would not bless it; indeed they would say it was wrong. My lover and I would be welcomed individually (every choir needs another tenor), but there would be no recognition, or support, of us as a couple. Back out into the Court of the Gentiles. Were I ordained, the situation

would be worse still. I could not be open about my love for another on peril not only of acceptance by my church family, but also my livelihood.

God has made me, as everyone else, with the capacity to love and the need to be loved. Those are both very real and positive forces in my life. I could pretend that I am straight in order to be accepted by my church, and in the short run that might be easier; but if I stop breathing for long, I’ll turn blue. I have been advised to stay closeted “just at church, just on Sunday mornings.” The answer is no. I love my church and what goes on in that community, but I cannot stop being gay, any more than I can stop breathing, in order to participate in liturgies.

In a way, a crying room is an improvement. One can actually see the service. It is not a good solution, though; it is a crummy solution. Those inside do not feel part of the Body of Christ, and I can well understand a mother of young children leaving, saying, “Nuts to this, I’m not really part of the community when I’m behind the glass.” Likewise, our church’s attitude towards gay/lesbian people is an improvement. We’re now acknowledged to be children of God, and we’re not being burned at the stake any more. It is not a good solution, though, it is a crummy solution. We are not allowed to be full human beings to bring our full lives and loves into the community of the faithful. Too many lesbian/gay people have said “nuts to this,” and left the mainline churches.

It isn’t easy to see this from inside the fishbowl. I thought crying rooms were wonderful ideas until I was confined to one. Those with good lungs don’t always realize how exclusive incense can be;

Chris Ambidge is a member of the Integrity chapter in Toronto, Canada. This article first appeared in the *Integrator*, the newsletter of Integrity/Toronto. Reprinted with permission.

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

journal like THE WITNESS.

But we are out of the Middle Ages. This is 1991. The year 2000 beckons. Our responsibility as Christians is to be bearers of Christ's love in a world of hatred and misunderstanding, and to be open to Jesus Christ's openness.

Malcolm Boyd
Santa Monica, Cal.

Proud to be a liberal

In the past I have apologized for being a "bleeding-heart liberal." After reading Mary Lou Killian's article about abused children (Dec. 1990), I am going to say it with feeling and with force and pride, I hope.

Joan Brewer Warner
W. Lebanon, N.H.

Integrity chapter kudos

We appreciate your granting permission to run two articles from the November WITNESS — Jan Nunley's "Churches' silence on gay bashing deadly" and Bishop Spong's eloquent response to the House of Bishops — in the December 1990 newsletter of Integrity/Austin. We have a thriving chapter that is in its sixth year, and a circulation of just under 400. Not infrequently we hear from someone who has been receiving our newsletter that it is their only contact with the church or with healthy Christian gay and lesbian folk. This includes isolated clergy in tiny towns in Nevada and Kan-

and those who fit the heterosexual norm may not realize how cruel they are being when they insist that their way or celibacy are the only acceptable lifestyles.

Jesus dies for everyone. The church should be inclusive, with no one as outcast. That includes babies, asthmatics, gays, lesbians, people of color, those in wheelchairs, women, men — we are all children of the one God. It is my belief that God has not made a Court of the Gentiles in heaven; I just wish that humans had not made any here on earth. **tw**

sas. And we are very proud of the award for Best Small Chapter Newsletter which Integrity, Inc. awarded to us at their fifteenth anniversary national convention in San Francisco in 1989.

From time to time we have plugged THE WITNESS in our newsletter. Your excellence inspires us all. Please keep up the great work.

Integrity/Austin
Austin, Tex.

Keeps him in the church

Keep up the good work. If it weren't for people like you in the Episcopal Church, I would have changed my denomination long ago.

Tim Edgar
Hanover, N.H.

Go to Phoenix

I have been pondering the editorial "No to Phoenix" in the December issue of THE WITNESS

The one obvious question to ask is: What would Dr. Martin Luther King have us do?

I would suggest that Dr. King would come to Phoenix, as he did Selma, Washington, D.C., Montgomery, and other wayward places of hostility and discrimination during the 1960s.

We here in Arizona do not believe the conditions of racism, although alive and well, are as deep or intense as in Selma, Montgomery, or for that matter Houston in the 1950s.

But we welcome our Episcopal brothers and sisters to bear witness and enter into the racial struggles that we do have here in Arizona during the July General Convention.

The Rev. Paul W. Buckwalter
Tucson, Az.

Appreciates tribute

Thank you for Susan Pierce's article on my father, Lyman C. Ogilby (Dec. WITNESS). It was a kind and accurate tribute. I was pleased with your account of his opinions on key issues, principally because this is what we must remember as we continue forward and carry out

God's mission. However, I would like to point out one error that, on the surface, might seem trivial. In printing the Ogilby family statement, in which some of my father's last thoughts were recounted, you interchanged the words "peace" and "justice." The statement should read; "We are needed to work for justice and peace." From his hospital bed immediately prior to his death, my father emphatically reminded my brother, sister, and me that "justice must come before peace. You cannot have peace without justice. Justice then peace." This is a point I'm sure he would want to share with your readers.

Peter R. Ogilby
Albuquerque, N.M.

Thankful for WITNESS

Words cannot express what THE WITNESS means to me as an Episcopalian who is at times very impatient with the mainstream clergy and laypeople who are afraid to take a stand on controversial matters. As you know, many who are not Episcopalians appreciate your courage. I share my copy with people here at a Quaker retirement home.

Mary Austin
Newtown, Pa.

Best wishes

I am enclosing a check for my own renewal and one gift subscription. I am hoping you can send it to the Diocese of Mityana in Uganda c/o the Rt. Rev. Wilson Mutebi, for him to circulate as he wishes. My very best wishes for continuing courage in 1991.

Margaret Sheets
Philadelphia, Pa.

ARE YOU MOVING?

The Post Office will not forward THE WITNESS. You must notify us for uninterrupted service by sending a corrected mailing label from a recent issue to: THE WITNESS, P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002. Allow six weeks for processing.

Life in India: Poor to the point of panic

by Jo McGowan

I live in India with my husband and two children. For the last seven years, we lived in New Delhi, the capital of the country and the home of many powerful citizens. In terms of basic services, it is one of the better places to be; nevertheless, daily two-hour cuts in electricity are not uncommon, especially in the summer with temperatures as high as 115 degrees Fahrenheit. Several months ago, we moved to a small city in the foothills of the Himalayas and we are now aware of how lucky we had been in New Delhi.

Living in India has taught me how much I take for granted. Having grown up in America, I assumed electricity was my birthright, like oxygen or love, there to be taken at any time of the day or night. Now I know how precious it is and how few people in the world have it. When the fans come on again after we have been sweltering for three hours, I realize how lucky we are. Human nature being what it is, this is momentary, but it happens so often that its cumulative effect is considerable. A few hours spent without fans can provide a good perspective on the reality of most Indians' lives.

At home in the United States on a recent visit, I was telling my brother about some wretched aspect of life here (maybe the open sewer systems) when he interrupted to ask why I was doing it. The look on his face expressed more clearly than words his total bewilderment at why anyone would choose to

live in so primitive a style.

It is a question I have been asked often, of course, but it struck me with special force this time because I saw something besides confusion on his face. There was also an element of contempt. It was easy to recognize because I have felt it so often myself. Why can't this country get it together, I wonder, why can't it provide basic services like electricity and water? Why does it have to be so damn poor?

For quite a few years after first coming here, I carried on a little monologue in my head. It was a voice that played almost constantly, so monotonously that it seemed like a mantra. Every now and then I would stop and pay attention and realize that it was my own voice and that the message was always the same: "It's all right. It's all right, I can live with this, I can still go home and everything will be O.K."

I realize now that I was on the edge of panic. I required almost constant assurance that there was an escape route if I needed it, that I didn't have to live this way.

Many of the Americans and Europeans in India (and plenty of wealthy Indians, too) continue to live in that panic mode for the duration of their stays here. With the inflated salaries that organizations like the Ford Foundation and the World Bank provide, they can afford a lifestyle beyond their wildest imaginings. Perfectly ordinary middle-class people suddenly find themselves in enormous, luxurious houses with servants in every corner, sleek foreign cars at their disposal and more cash at the end of the month than they know what to do with.

Even those who bridle at the unaccus-

tomed *sahib-memsahib* role, do little or nothing to change that image. In part, it is the fault of a system which provides numerous incentives to lure foreigners to a "hardship" location, but the larger reason, I think, is that people feel safer with wealth and privilege defining and protecting them. On a different level but with the same motivation, I invariably return from trips to the United States with suitcases full of consumer goods: shampoos, soaps, raspberry jams, Dijon mustard, chocolate, spices, pens, stationery and other pleasant things. Not one of them is necessary (except perhaps the chocolate) but I can't bring myself to even consider returning empty-handed. In part, it's just because I like these things and would miss them if I didn't bring them, but the larger reason is, again, a sense of security in possessions. I love opening the cupboard to find a year's worth of supplies.



Jo McGowan has lived with her family in India for eight years. This article first appeared in the Spring 1990 issue of *The Critic*, 205 W. Monroe St./6th Floor, Chicago, IL 60606-5097. Reprinted with permission.

More than any one thing, what is most notably absent in India is a feeling of well-being and prosperity. This is, of course, stating the obvious, but the presence of the same feeling in America (I mean in the middle and upper classes) is so taken for granted as to go unnoticed. Recently, after an absence of two and a half years, I returned to the United States for a visit and was astonished by the plush, deep contours of life here, everything luxurious to the point of absurdity! The dash-boards of even ordinary cars like airplane control panels and seats like couches. Refrigerators dispensing water and ice from their doors and glowing through the night in the off chance that someone might get up for a drink and not want to switch on the overhead light. Ordinary bathrooms with Jacuzzis. A computer in just about every child's bedroom and a staggering array of expensive toys. Grocery stores like shopping malls and actual malls so dazzling one hardly knew which way to look first.

Perhaps it was simply the starkness of the contrast, but the feeling I kept getting throughout that visit was that this state of affairs couldn't possibly last. It was just too much. Everything felt overblown, out of proportion. I certainly don't expect to see the United States become like India, but to people used to an extravagant standard of living, even small sacrifices can feel quite dramatic.

I remember back in 1980, when my husband Ravi and I were packing for our move to India, there was a drought in New Jersey. Water rationing, though often mooted, was never imposed, but people were asked to voluntarily cut consumption. Every day the papers were full of dramatic stories of how the drought was affecting daily life in East Orange and Hoboken.

We had given up our apartment and were staying with some Indian friends for our last two months in the United States. Like almost everyone else, I was finding the water shortage to be a bit of

a burden. By contrast, Ravi and the friends with whom we were staying hardly seemed to notice the change. I don't recall them even bringing it up in conversation except to express amusement at the fuss everyone was making.

When I got to India, I began to see why they were so composed. Our problem was nothing compared to the water scarcity they had faced for their entire lives. At my in-laws' house in Bombay, for example, water comes for 90 minutes a day, beginning at 6 A.M. Someone has to get up at that time every morning to


“Being able to live without running water and electricity is like knowing several languages — it allows one to cope in a variety of situations.”

organize the complicated system they have devised to collect and store enough water for the day. It all works reasonably well as long as there are not too many unexpected demands on the supply, i.e., guests needing to take baths and wash clothes. But since there are guests at least 50% of the time, and since, in India, the guest is God, more often than not the family members must get by on less than one bucketful apiece for the entire day. And Bombay is not unusual. All over the country, peoples' lives revolve around the task of collecting water. In the cities people wait for hours in lines at the common taps while in the villages women and children trudge miles every day to fill their buckets.

Most Indians have conservation in

their blood. They also have patience. Systems — water, electric, communications — break down so regularly that one grows to expect them not to work and to regard it as a special boon when they do. Lines for everything from public transport to groceries and health services are long. People know how to wait.

To give just one example of patience: crowded buses are a fact of life here. My instinctive behavior when on one is to spread out to take up as much space as possible and so prevent others from invading my territory. My attitude is defensive and mercenary: “I paid for a full seat — why should I give up one inch of it?” I am quite capable of maintaining this snarling self-protectiveness for the duration of the journey (say, the seven-hour trip from our town to Delhi). The automatic response of Indians on the other hand, is to squeeze over, make room, create tiny pockets of space for one more passenger (and another and another and another). Often as not, those so accommodated would actually be more comfortable standing, but this cannot be tolerated. There is always enough space for *everyone*. This generosity and willingness to sacrifice their own comfort almost always makes me furious — obviously, I don't appreciate being forced to confront my own selfishness.

On my better days, I see living here not as constraining but liberating. Limits seem more and more arbitrary. The conditions under which I can live quite happily have extended far beyond what I would have once considered possible. Being able to live without running water and electricity is like knowing several languages — it allows one to cope in a variety of situations with composure and flexibility. And once it becomes a habit — doing without, being detached — the possibilities are endless. I am not at that stage yet (far from it) but I get glimpses of it in the lives of the poor, who know how to share in ways we, with all our surplus, have not even dreamed. 

Vacations with a conscience

by Parker Rossman

Most of us have friends who return from overseas vacation trips to tell of the horrors they experienced: raw egg and seaweed for breakfast in a rural Japanese inn, diarrhea in Mexico, lice and no ice in Calcutta, and being stoned by children in Goa. They tell tales of being cheated by cab drivers, of theft by maids, being deceived by travel agents, and more.

Now, however, we are beginning to hear the other side of the story. For example, foreigners hiking through the mountains in Nepal think nothing of paying 50¢ for a breakfast egg. But by doing so, they have raised the price of eggs beyond the reach of most local residents, essentially depriving the mountain people of a formerly inexpensive source of protein.

Virginia Hadsell challenges us to take a new look at the ethics of international tourism. She has shown what one person can do, beginning as a volunteer with limited resources, to challenge governments, powerful tourism corporations, the media, the churches, and everyone's apathy. With a small core of dedicated volunteers and a part-time secretary, she started the North American Coordinating Center for Responsible Tourism in an office provided by the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, Calif. The Center publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Responsible Traveling*, and has become an increasingly influential organization, encouraging Americans to take their consciences along when they travel.

Hadsell was born and grew up in Berkeley, Calif. and received a master's

degree and teaching credentials from the University of California. She taught in Nigeria for a year in the mid-sixties, while her husband, a professor at San Francisco Theological Seminary, was working with the Student Christian Movement there. When they returned to the United States, she worked as a reading specialist for the Berkeley schools.

In the 1970s, organizing mission studies for her parish, Montclair Presbyterian Church in Oakland, she began to lead tours to the countries church members were studying, beginning with Nigeria. Since then, the tours have visited 16 countries, including China, Brazil and the Soviet Union. Her international vision is shared by her two college professor daughters who have "international husbands," one from Iran and one from Brazil.

Hadsell began to see that most U.S. citizens are slow to recognize the negative and oppressive influence of insensitive foreign tourism on the planet's ecology and cultures. We have been even slower to respond to appeals from those in tourist areas who plead for help in coping with the overwhelming economic and political, cultural and environmental exploitation, with tourism prostitution, and other serious problems which an unregulated tourist industry imposes on them.

The overseas division of her own church and of other denominations help give voice to those who seek support from the Christian community to sensitize travelers to social justice issues in tourism areas.

Many North Americans, unfortunately, can be seen photographing starvation and misery as "quaint." Most of us seem irresponsive to injustices which visitors

help perpetuate, Christians among them. For example, youngsters on a church tour once climbed on and desecrated a statue of Buddha in Thailand, and when scolded for it said: "Oh it's all right. That's a pagan statue and we are Christians."

The World Council of Churches and the Vatican, together with many European churches, held conferences and programs in the 1970s to explore the growing negative impact of tourism in the Third World. They began to prepare travelers for experiences in different cultures through study sessions in congregations. The groups created orientation films which are shown on flights to Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, and other materials to challenge the Christian conscience.

In 1980 the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), in cooperation with Catholic and Protestant bishops of Asia, sponsored a consultation in advance of the World Tourism Organizations Conference in Manila where industry representatives would meet to praise the glories of tourism. A "code of ethics for tourists," was developed by the CCA and the consultation sent a message to the World Tourism Organization, pleading for more responsibility and awareness. Data was gathered on cultural and ecological pollution and the abuse of people by tourism, country by country.

One outcome of that CCA workshop was the creation of an increasingly effective organization for giving voice to Asians, Latin Americans, and Africans — and Christians in other tourist areas such as Hawaii and the Caribbean — called The Ecumenical Coalition of Third World Tourism (ECTWT).

Its quarterly publication, *Contours*:

Parker Rossman, a freelance writer and author of numerous books, lives in Niantic, Conn.

Concerns for Tourism, includes factual studies and reports from most Third World countries of how tourism effects the people and the environment.

There was not much North American response until Hadsell returned from a ECTWT workshop in Thailand in 1984. She organized a seminar in San Anselmo to tell the stories she had heard from workshop speakers, mostly Asian, who spoke of negative experiences with tourism in their homelands.

As a result of this seminar, a North American support group was created — the Center for Responsible Travel. The Center's newsletter connects the growing network of denominations and churches, individuals, agencies, and organizations that are concerned about ethical tourism.

The Center is also involved in the international movement against "sex tourism." Hadsell attended a workshop in Korea where Church Women United presented the plight of poor Korean women, exploited by the sex tourism industry. Japanese corporations, for example, reward employees with tours to Korea and other Asian countries, with a choice of a young woman companion to play with and sleep with while there. One Japanese woman complained at a press conference that her husband had five times brought venereal disease back to her.

Church women's groups and others working for justice and rights for women began to publish research reports on the sexual exploitation — often knowingly by a callous tourism industry — of children and women in Third World countries. Indeed, investigating Japanese women found that some of the pimps of high school girls in Manila were members of the police vice squad.

For 10 years now conferences, workshops and publications on ethical tourism have been promoted by the ECTWT and its supporting organizations which include Asian, Latin American, Middle

Eastern and African members of the Third World Conference of Churches, and a European support network of churches and development agencies. The Center for Responsible Tourism coordinates North American support.

The Center is encouraging North American churches to adopt Third World tourism issues for their mission study programs. A Center-sponsored handbook, *Having an Excellent Adventure*, edited by Stacy Kitahata and Peggy Weaver of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, brings together materials from the experience of many congregations and denominations. It hopes to educate individual travelers to be more responsible, and to assist congregations and church agencies in planning overseas experiences which are mutually beneficial and spiritually enriching for both visitors and hosts.

For example, in Fiji, travelers can chose accomodations that benefit the local community, not a multinational hotel chain. The Anglican Diocese of Polynesia operates its own small luxury resort there, the Daku Estate Resort. A stay includes tours by local Anglicans and visits in their homes and church.

The Center is also facilitating the completion of a biblical/theological book, *Christians and The World of Tourism and Travel*, for publication in 1992. A meditation in its preface says:

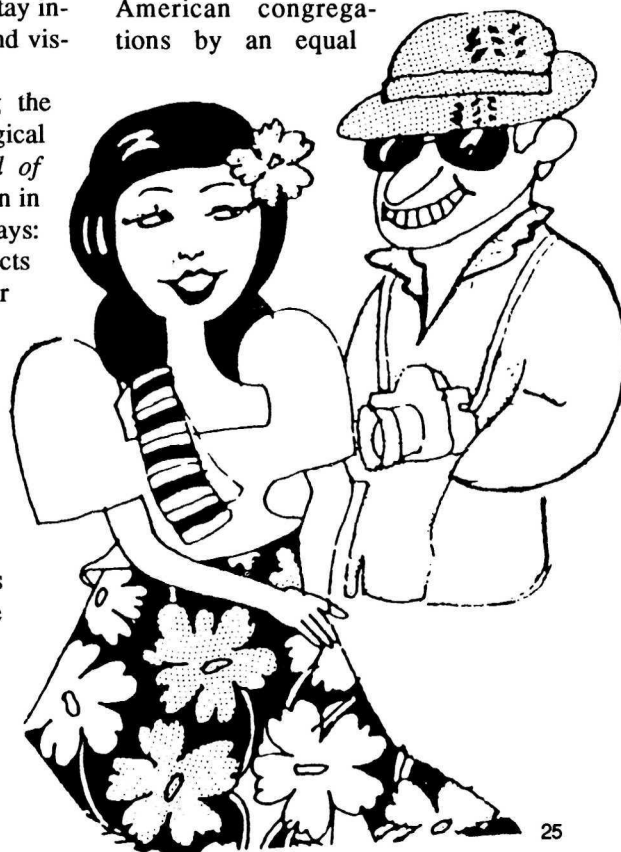
"Christ . . . is the one who perfects the Creation — fallen into disorder through disobedience to the Creator. The suffering caused by tourism, the wickedness sometimes to be found in tourist industries, the neglect of governments for their people . . . the exaggerations of travel journalists, the impoverishment and exploitation of people who work in hotels and on buses and trains, the squalor of noise and nuisance in city traffic jams and the related pollution of the envi-

ronment: God in Christ is bringing these to an end . . .

"We foresee the promise of a new sense of vocation, of ethics in tourism, of a new community of Christians — visitors and hosts who meet as equals — in the world of travel . . . because Christ is present and coming in the world of travel."

One hoped-for result, an awakening of concern in parishes, is beginning to happen. Workshops, planning conferences, and pre-departure orientations are available for those intending to travel overseas. Many U.S. congregations now have "sister churches" in other countries — or in some denominations congregations adopt foreign churches as "partners."

Organizations such as Plowshares and Witness for Peace sponsor overseas "in-depth encounter experiences" which are intended to enrich faith and enlarge vision, a new and effective kind of transformational Christian education. For example, when a group of 30 Americans spent a month visiting churches in Africa, they arranged a return visit to American congregations by an equal



number of Africans.

One Plowshares-affiliated congregation, the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, Conn., has as its sister church a Methodist church in Soweto, South Africa, to which Winnie Mandela belongs. On exchange visits Old Lyme people have lived with Soweto families, the Soweto pastor came as "missionary in residence," and the Episcopal and Catholic Churches have helped bring a school boy from Soweto over to study for a year. Old Lyme church members have found this kind of tourism/travel to be an agent for change in the lives of individuals and the congregation.

Old Lyme was the site of a recent conference on transformational education, sponsored by the Christian Conference of Connecticut, which includes Catholic and Protestant churches. This day-long workshop was set up to allow congregations involved in such encounters to report and interest other parishes in doing so. As congregations told of continuing relationships with their overseas counterparts, with parishes on American Indian reservations, and between inner-city and suburban churches, it became clear that real "conversion" and transforming experiences were taking place in the lives of many.

These encounter experiences remind Christians that "travel" is a metaphor for the Christian life. We meet many travelers in the Bible: Abraham, Jonah, Joseph, Noah, the Queen of Sheba and St. Paul, for example. Those who travel today, as Hadsell and her volunteers make us aware, can find Christ present as companion, guide, judge, sustainer and host. We are also reminded that the Christian faith was carried all over the known world in the first century by travelers who witnessed not so much by words and preaching as by the example of their lives, compassion and concern.

Christians are discovering their lives can be enriched by in-depth encounters with other cultures. These tourists can be a blessing — instead of a curse — in the lands they visit. TW

Code of ethics for travelers

The Center for Responsible Tourism promotes the following Code of Ethics for Tourists:

- Travel in a spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to meet and talk with local people.
- Be aware of the feelings of the local people; prevent what might be offensive behavior. Photography, particularly, must respect persons.
- Cultivate the habit of listening and observing rather than merely hearing and seeing or knowing all the answers.
- Realize that other people may have concepts of time and have thought patterns that are different from yours — not inferior, only different.
- Instead of only seeing the exotic, discover the richness of another culture and way of life.
- Get acquainted with local customs; respect them.
- Remember that you are only one among many visitors; do not expect special privileges.
- When shopping through bargaining, remember that the poorest merchant will give up a profit rather than give up his or her personal dignity.
- Do not make promises to local people or to new friends that you cannot keep.
- Spend time each day reflecting on your experiences in order to deepen your understanding. What enriches you may be robbing others.
- You want a home away from home? Why travel?

Resources

Publications:

Responsible Traveling Newsletter, The Center for Responsible Tourism, PO Box 827, San Anselmo CA 94979. (The Center will also soon be publishing a *Directory of Third World Travel Alternatives: A Resource for Responsible Travelers*, \$7.50, postpaid.)

Contours: Concerns for Tourism, Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism, P.O. Box 24, Chorakhebus, Bangkok 10230, Thailand.

Organizations:

Plowshares, Box 243, Simsbury CT 06070.

The Center for Global Education at Augsburg College, 731 21st Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55454.

Witness for Peace, 2201 P Street, NW, Room 109, Washington DC 20037.

Ministry of Money, c/o Courtney Burns, 104 Bentwood Rd., West Hartford CT 06107.

The International Campaign to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism — For an informational brochure, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Center for Responsible Tourism (above).

A meeting in a Belfast cemetery

by Robert Hirschfield

The weeds grow wildly among the headstones of the Milltown Cemetery in West Belfast, Northern Ireland, as though it were a stretch of marshland. I was standing in the Republican plot, in a spot where no weeds grow. The graves are relatively new, the flowers fresh, and the names on the headstones (some of them at least) familiar. I was visiting the grave of Bobby Sands, the Irish Republican Army hunger-striker whose 1981 fast to the death in prison gained worldwide attention.

A woman with an armful of flowers and two little children passed behind me. She stopped at the black marble slab where Mairead Farrell, Dan McCann and Sean Savage are buried. The three IRA members, who were unarmed at the time, were trailed and killed in Gibraltar by an undercover British Special Air Service unit in March 1988.

Was she related, I asked, to any of the three?

"Dan McCann is my husband," she said. Margaret McCann did not correct herself. Even after two and a half years, widowhood was still something extraneous, a garment of stone not easily worn.

She removed the old flowers from the black vase in front of the grave, and gave her children, Daniel and Maeve, the new ones to arrange.

Margaret has black hair and white skin; her glasses — large, almost rectangular — gave her face a madcap look that deflected her grief.

They met at the Royal Victoria Hospital in West Belfast. She prepared surgi-

cal instruments, he sorted supplies. She was 29, he was 19 ("He was starting to go gray, so he looked much older.") She is 44 now.

"Dan's death left a hole in my life. I still haven't recovered. There was a time early on when I just wanted to die, but I tried to build a life around the children."

Margaret looked over at Daniel, her seven-year-old son.

"It's been really hard on him. He and Dan were close. He is sad a lot. Maeve is only five, she doesn't remember her father very well. The other day Daniel came over to me and said, 'I remember what dad looks like, but I can't remember his voice.' I never told him how Dan died, but once he said, 'Wasn't it far away?'"

With its weeds and breezes and bird song, it was hard to imagine the cemetery as it was the day they buried the three. Into the sea of mourners, a lone Loyalist lobbed his hand grenades, opened fire. Then came the mad chase among the headstones. By the time it was over three more dead were added to the three being buried.

"We were married at Long Kesh Prison in 1982," she recalled. "I wore a cream-colored suit. There were no photographs."

The year before, McCann had volunteered to go on hunger strike. But he had only a month more to serve on his sentence, and the IRA wouldn't let him.

"He would have died then."

She estimated McCann was in jail roughly six of the twelve years she knew him. Their life together pivoted on a tense wire of arbitrary endings and beginnings.

McCann would write poetry to her. He would say, "We are unique. We have a strong, close relationship."

Margaret's capacity for endurance was formidable. Once, after sentencing her husband to two years, a judge, taking into account the time he had already spent on remand, ordered him to serve just three weeks.

"Daniel wouldn't do it. He refused to cooperate. He did the two years. I understand that was the principled thing to do. You couldn't be married to him if you didn't understand that."

Every week Margaret brings her pain to this place. To the Republican plot come many hollowed-out women like her. Women with children to raise and houses to run and memories to be sorted out carefully like bombs that can go off at any moment.


She condemned the British government for its part in her husband's death. "Margaret Thatcher ruined my life," the widow declared angrily. "I know she would say Dan ruined the lives of people. I don't know what I would do if I was alone in a room with her."

Margaret McCann and the relatives of Savage and Farrell journeyed to Dublin to try to get the Irish government to bring the case of the Gibraltar three before the European Court. They had no luck. They are trying to open a civil case against Britain in the courts of Northern Ireland.

Daniel and Maeve, after arranging the new flowers, returned to their mother.

"Did we do good?" Daniel asked.

"Wonderful!"

For a moment, they could have been an ordinary family on an outing. 

Robert Hirschfield is a freelance writer living in New York City.

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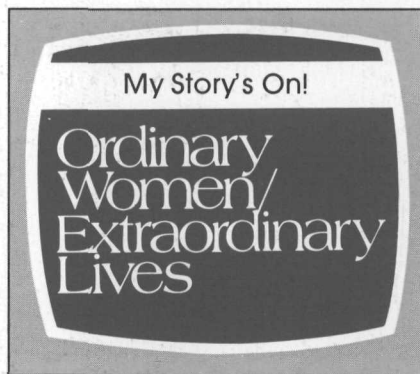
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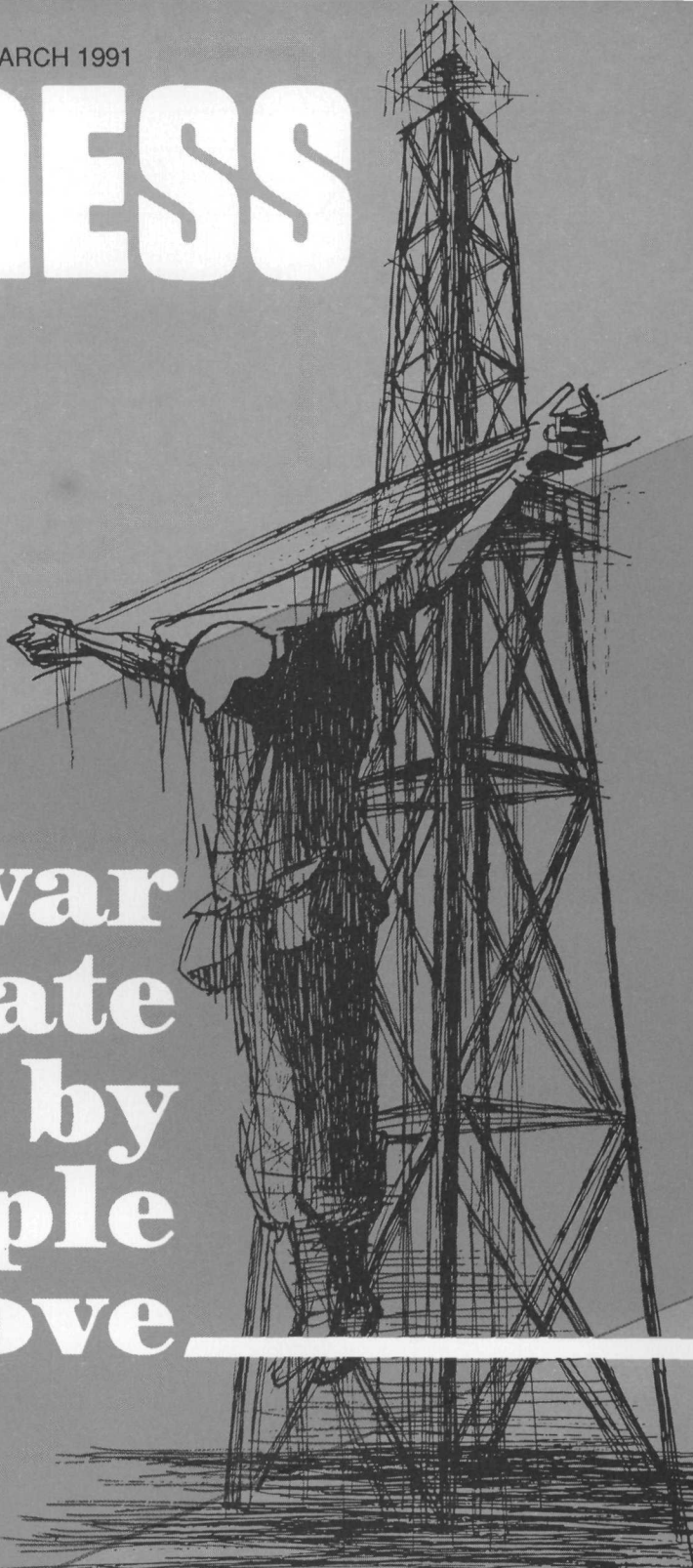
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THE WITNESS

**A war
we hate
fought by
people
we love**



Handwritten signature

Letters

Moved by Jon's story

As one blessed by being among Jon Daniels' friends from the Keene, N.H. days, I have read many pages about his life and death and significance. Nonetheless, I was particularly moved by Bill Rankin's article, "Jonathan Daniels: Civil rights martyr," in the January issue of THE WITNESS.

Although it is not as evident from the outward circumstances of my life as it is from Rankin's well-known commitment to peace and justice, I too was deeply influenced by the perceptive friendship of this intense and so fully human young man. It is remarkable — or perhaps it is the mark of the great saints — that Jon's Christian understanding, his "living theology," far from dimming with so many other memories and impressions and ideas from our mutual youth, grows ever more meaningful as I, now twice Jon's age, walk this earthly part of the journey.

Like Rankin, I give thanks for Jon's embodiment of Christ's sacrificial love, which we talked excitedly about over many a beer on many a summer evening of those visionary days in Keene, but which Jon proceeded to live out to the fullest. As the hymn says, "We feebly struggle, they in glory shine; yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia!"

The Rev. Carlton T. Russell
Wheaton College
Norton, Mass.

Doing what Christ asks

Thank you for the beautiful retelling of the Jonathan Daniels story. I would just like to speak a word of caution, however. I remember that shortly after Jon was killed Bill Stringfellow wrote that Jon's giving of his life should not be regarded as something extraordinary for a Christian. It is the calling of all of us to be prepared to lay down our lives like that.

Jon's example is powerful and his story should be retold forever; but I worry about the icons and the statues and the notion of some special sainthood. Let's not put his loving act so high on a pedestal that we fail to realize he was simply doing what Christ asks us all to do.

The Rev. David Gracie
Philadelphia, Pa.

Laments church's turn

As a lifelong Episcopalian and a combat veteran of the Korean War, it is heartening to see recent articles in THE WIT-

NESS concerning the life and heroic deeds of seminarian Jonathan Daniels, martyred during the civil rights period. Here was a man who championed the underdog, who was shot while trying to protect another human being. During this period in my life, as a guest of the Rev. Richard T. Hawkins, now rector of St. Thomas, Whitemarsh, Pa., I visited the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. It was a moving experience for me to find so many concerned seminarians and clergy committed to the issues of the time. Then, Episcopal Church membership was much higher and we were in the forefront of social justice.

Jailed war protestors weave a

This is a note to THE WITNESS to let you know that I am being held on two federal charges of trespassing at Ft. McCoy, a military staging area north of Madison, Wisc. I went to the base with others Jan. 17 to support the troops by advising them of possible war crimes charges against them arising out of the Persian Gulf conflict. About a dozen people were involved in the two actions. I will be behind bars at least until March 1, the date of my second trial. The maximum penalty: A year in prison and \$10,000 fine.

That's a tall order for a 64-year-old, half-blind pensioner who, some might say, would be better off staying home with his wife, his evening sherry, and his Wednesday poker game. It's true I miss those three, but jail is where I feel I ought to be.

I'm one of many Americans — a minority, but still numbering in the millions — who oppose this war from the depths of our being. We hold no brief for Saddam Hussein, but we view

the conduct of our own national leadership with the deepest shame. We believe our women and men in uniform can best be supported by bringing them home.

The war is still in its earliest state, with the bloody land battle still to come, but already the damage has been incalculable. It can be measured in many ways — the lives of innocents in the war theater; the exacerbation of long-held hatreds in the Middle East; the stirring of ugly passions, mislabeled patriotism, among our own people; the further entrenchment of the military industrial complex in our midst; the debasement of other agendas, other causes, other goals important to the well-being of all Americans.

Our government's senseless, selfish blunder into war, camouflaged in pious hypocrisies, has hurt our country and the world in ways we may never know. A longtime friend, Jeanie Bernstein, whose protest also broke the law, writes to me from an Orange County, Calif. jail:

"In 50 years of peace activism I have never felt such heartbreak, such frustra-

I feel we have since taken our eyes off some of the serious and most pressing social problems of our society. Many of us pretend that they don't exist.

Sadly, it appears that we, the church, are now siding with our national political leaders who oppose civil rights. Presently Desert Storm has a disproportionate number of African-Americans who are carrying the burden to liberate Kuwait, yet back in the States unfairness is a fact of life.

I salute your magazine for telling it like it is and applaud your courage, honesty and integrity. I look forward to the day when once again, our prayers con-

cerning justice and peace will be reflected in our actions as a church.

Ronald G. Andrews
State College, Pa.

Congrats for concern

Let me enthusiastically congratulate you for your deep and effective concern for a *relevant* Christian faith. How in the world those who claim the name "Christian" can object to the church's involvement in God's creation, every corner and aspect of it, is all but beyond my comprehension.

The church, I fear — I *know* — has been lamentably ineffective in under-

standing and proclaiming her doctrine of the Incarnation, and in comprehending and unveiling the incarnational dimension of *Matthew 25:40*.

The Rev. O. Sydney Barr
Grahamsville, N.Y.

Not in compliance

I don't know where you found my name and address, but remove me from your mailing list. I try to live my life in accordance with the teachings of Jesus and I do not think your literature is in compliance with that.

Anthony Brady
E. Syracuse, N.Y.

fabric of hope for peace

tion, such rage. Never have I been so close to hopelessness — to the realization that the dearest dream of my life will not be fulfilled, nor even approached, before I die.

"And now I have two grandbabies whose chance for a decent future — along with all the other babies in the world — has been all but destroyed.

"It is as though some evil current courses through the human genetic material that inexorably impels our kind to choose the worship of power and wealth over reverence for life — without that reverence the seed of love can only starve to death.

"The connection with you and all the rest of us is what stands between me and total despair."

Well put, dear Jeanie. I feel the connection with you; with my co-defendants locked up somewhere in the concrete vastness of this county jail; with the street people who keep a round-the-clock peace vigil on the front steps of Madison's city-county building, and with others who, all across the land, in

myriad ways, march and rally and speak and write and otherwise agitate against the war.

The connections that we feel are bands that weave the fabric of hope. They sustain me in this grim place and in these desperate times. They fortify me in my determination to play no part, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of the war, to withdraw my consent as completely as it is possible for an American citizen to do, and to serve as an example for others whose circumstances permit them to follow this course.

Sam Day
Rock County Prison
Janesville, Wisc.

(Sam Day, a longtime editorial and promotion consultant to THE WITNESS, is co-director of Nukewatch in Madison, Wisc., as well as a contributing editor to The Progressive. In 1989, he served six months in prison for taking part in an anti-nuclear protest at a Missouri missile silo — Ed.)

Right-wing tide rising

Thanks for the important piece by John Gessell, "Bishops should 'come out' for gays" in the February issue. I hope his challenge does not go unheeded.

We may need a miracle at General Convention to stop the right-wing onslaught. Episcopalians United for Revelation, Renewal and Reformation, and they're only one of the pack, has instituted a nationwide telephone campaign to raise several hundred thousand dollars so they can "field a small army of people to be a visible presence throughout the Convention." I wish I could say that Integrity is doing likewise, but as of now it appears we will fall far short of even our modest financial goal for our Convention presence.

It appears that the progressive wing of this church has either grown complacent or, as is the case with many lesbians and gays, weary of the struggle which so far has yielded little and whose accomplishments are mostly measured in defeats of "bashing" resolutions rather than passage of "affirming" resolutions.

R. Scott Helsel
Editor, *The Voice of Integrity*
Guttenberg, N.J.

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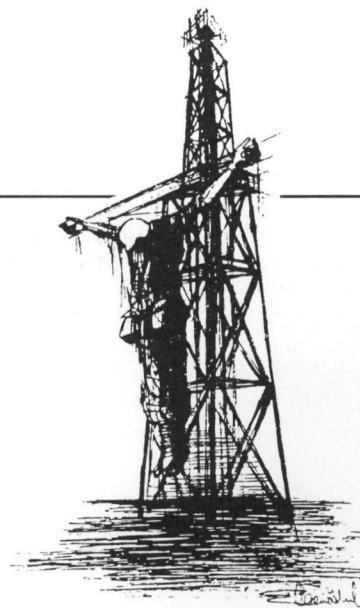


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What they're saying about the war

"Every bomb we drop on Baghdad costs \$1 million. Every bomb is a school we didn't build, a road we didn't pave, a thousand children we didn't feed."

— **Jesse Jackson**

"Why is it that all the wars the Bush administration calls are against people of color? (While the Pentagon worries about the possible use of chemical weapons) the children of farm workers are (chemically) bombarded every single day in the fields of California, leading to incredibly high rates of cancer."

— **Dolores Huerta**
United Farm Workers

"It is our understanding that the percentages of Appalachian women, men, minorities and working class people in the Armed Forces are significantly higher than the representation of many of these groups in the general population. We renew our call for decent jobs at decent wages so that these native Appalachians are not forced into the Armed Forces to earn or supplement income for a quality life. We are saddened by this latest exploitation of Appalachian resources; first, our timber, then our coal, and now Appalachian sons and daughters . . . As a region whose natural resources are controlled by and have been depleted by outside corporations, we cannot support a similar process in the Mideast . . . As a people who have lost ownership of our homeland, we empathize with the Kuwaitis' loss of their homeland. Yet we feel that, as a nation . . . we must also support the right of other people to theirs. We feel that it was wrong for Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait; however, we believe that the nations and the world must begin to think of ways to live together rather than continue to build and maintain empires by violent means."

— **Part of Appalachian People's Service Organization statement on the war**

And last but not least, here is what Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez of Texas said

as he introduced a resolution in Congress Jan. 16, 1991 to impeach President George Bush:

"The Constitution provides for removal of the President when he has committed high crimes and misdemeanors, including violation of the principles of the Constitution. President Bush has violated these principles. My resolution has five articles of impeachment:

"First, the President has violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution. Our soldiers in the Middle East are overwhelmingly poor, white, black and Mexican-American. They may be volunteers, technically, but their volunteerism is based on the coercion of a system that has denied viable economic opportunities to these classes of citizens. Under the Constitution, all classes of citizens are guaranteed equal protection, and calling on the poor and minorities to fight a war for oil to preserve the life-styles of the wealthy is a denial of the rights of these soldiers.

"Article II states that the President has violated the Constitution, federal law and the United Nations Charter by bribing, intimidating and threatening others, including the members of the UN Security Council, to support belligerent acts against Iraq. The debt of Egypt was forgiven; a \$140 million loan to China was agreed to; the Soviet Union was promised \$7 billion in aid; Columbia was promised assistance to its armed forces; Zaire was promised military assistance and partial forgiveness of its debt; Saudi Arabia was promised \$12 billion in arms; Yemen was threatened with the termination of support and the United States finally paid off \$187 million of its debt to the UN after the vote President Bush sought was made. The vote was bought, and it will be paid for with the lives of black and Mexican-Americans.

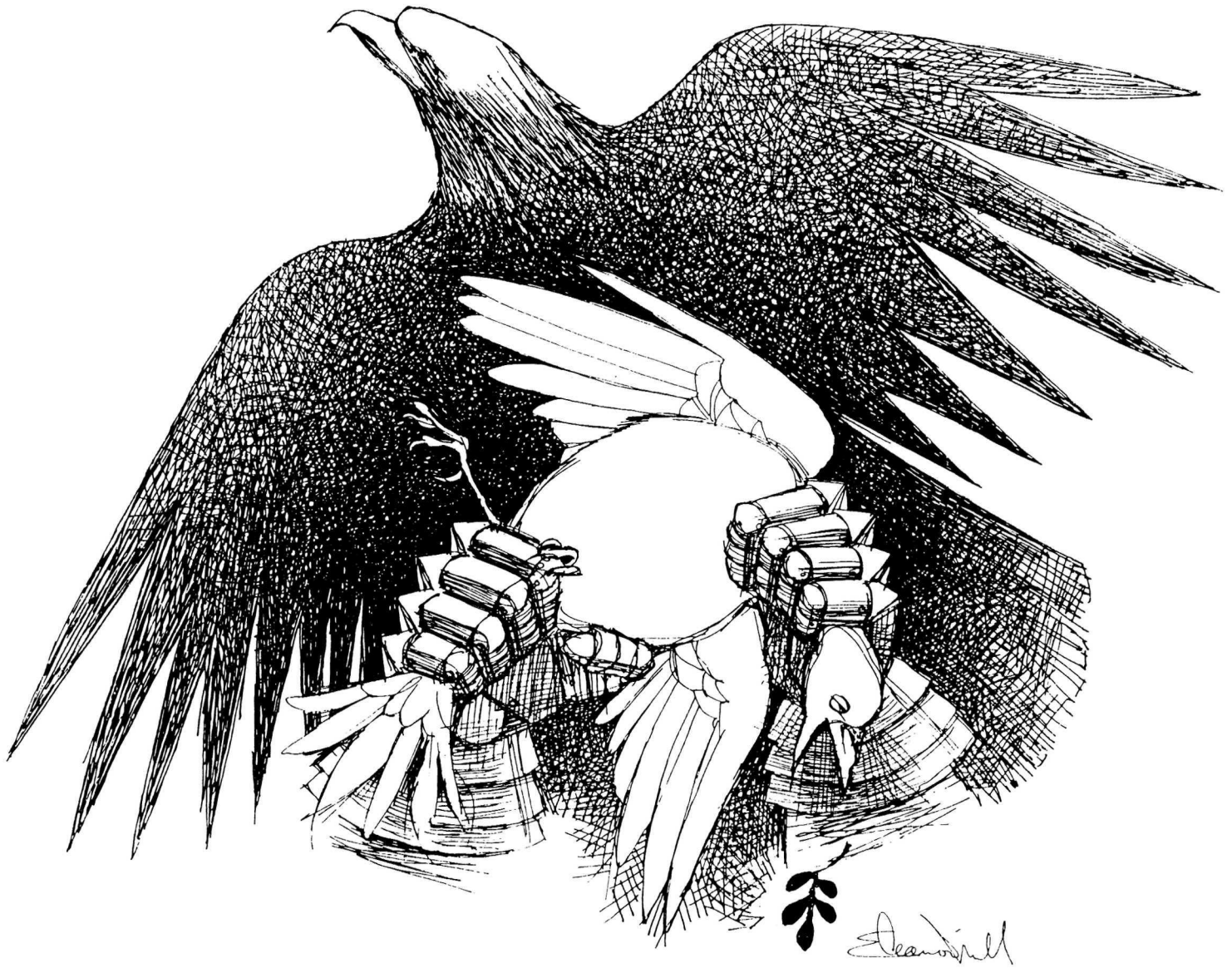
"Article III states that the President has conspired to engage in a massive war against Iraq employing methods of

mass destruction that will result in the killing of tens of thousands of civilians, many of whom will be children. No civilian lives have yet been lost that we know of, but when we start using the methods of massive destruction that are in place for this war, there is no doubt that thousands of innocent civilians will lose their lives. As killings occur, the principles laid down in the Nuremberg trial will be applicable. Their deaths will not only be a moral outrage, but they will constitute a violation of international law.

"Article IV states that the President has committed the United States to acts of war without congressional consent and contrary to the UN Charter and international law. From August 1990 through January 1991, the President embarked on a course of action that systematically eliminated every option for peaceful resolution of the Persian Gulf crisis. Once the President approached Congress for a declaration of war, 500,000 American soldiers' lives were in jeopardy — rendering any substantive debate by Congress meaningless. The President has not received a declaration of war by Congress, and in contravention of the written word, the spirit, and the intent of the Constitution has declared that he will go to war regardless of the views of Congress and the American people. Congress abdicated its responsibility, but the President violated the Constitution . . .

"Article V states that the President has conspired to commit crimes against the peace by leading the United States into aggressive war against Iraq in violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, the Nuremberg Charter, other international instruments and treaties, and the Constitution of the United States. Again, there is a violation of law by a President who, believing he is king, decides for the country — unilaterally — that war is the answer."

— **Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, D-Tex.**



The bitter fruits of war

by Manning Marable

Years from now people will wonder with amazement how and why the United States became embroiled in the Persian Gulf conflict. Because despite the rhetoric in the Congressional debate over granting President Bush the power to initiate warfare, and the media's constant coverage of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, the American people are more poorly informed about the reasons for this conflict than any other war in our history.

Let's begin with the essentials. The United States did not send its troops into the Gulf to "oppose aggression" or to defend "democracy" or support the right of Kuwait to resist Iraq's aggression. For decades, "aggression" has been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy. Eight years ago, the United States launched a massive, illegal invasion of Grenada on the false pretext that American lives were endangered. Much of the world opposed U.S. aggression in Panama and the imposition of a puppet regime loyal to American interests. The American response was to veto several United Nations Security Council resolutions critical of the invasion.

Nor does the United States oppose "aggression" when it is committed by its allies. When Israel invaded neighboring Lebanon, bombing Beirut and killing about 20,000 people, the United States vetoed UN Security Council moves denouncing this aggression. When South Africa institutionalized apartheid, murdered and imprisoned thousands of the regime's critics, and launched invasions against Namibia, Angola and Mozambique, the United States said virtually nothing. When Iran was our enemy a few years ago, the United States did

nothing when Saddam Hussein gassed Kurdish rebels in Iraq. The Reagan administration indirectly helped Iraq obtain sophisticated weapons to use against the Iranians.

It's also difficult to characterize the former regime in Kuwait as a bastion of democracy, or to applaud the current corrupt monarchy of Saudi Arabia as a fortress for liberal values and beliefs. No one doubts that Saddam Hussein is a despotic dictator. But the same is also true of the Emir of Kuwait and the ruling class of Saudi Arabia. In Kuwait, the vast majority of the population were noncitizens, politically disfranchised. Censorship in the press was pervasive, and Kuwaiti dissidents claim that if the Emir ever reclaims power in his country again, the level of political repression will be intensified. The Saudis have a long history of torture, executions, suppression of women's rights, and an absence of democracy.

Why is the United States fighting on the side of these despots? The crocodile tears being shed for Kuwaitis murdered and raped by Saddam's troops explain nothing about George Bush's decision to send 400,000 troops into the Gulf, a force larger than the number of Americans who invaded Europe against Hitler in World War II. The basic reason is the political economy of oil, and the singular fact that Americans, who represent 5% of the world's population, consume conservatively 26% of all petroleum. The Saudis, the Kuwaitis, and the other oil-rich sheiks are actually junior partners in a corporate conglomerate system involving Wall Street, the multinational corporations and capitalist elites in the United States and Western Europe. Dependable control over cheap and reliable sources of energy is essential to the corporate and military hierarchies in this country. That's part of the reason why George Bush thinks it is cheaper to spill American blood in the sands of Kuwait than to give up domination and control

over international oil sources.

Perhaps the biggest tragedy of the Gulf crisis was the manipulation of the nation by Bush into a confrontational situation with Saddam's regime. A token American force, preferably under United Nations command, would have been sufficient to halt Saddam from attacking Saudi Arabia. Bush's secret decision to double the number of American troops in the region, announced after the 1990 Congressional elections, made a negotiated settlement almost impossible. Bush, not Saddam Hussein, made the confrontation inevitable.

Pushing the world to the edge of war, every action by the Bush administration was designed to make conflict with Iraq a national obsession. By resorting to locker room boasts, vowing to "kick Saddam's ass," Bush needlessly personalized the conflict, undercutting the possibility of negotiations. By increasing the number of American troops without Congressional authority, he transformed what was initially a defensive tripwire to check Iraqi aggression into an offensive force. At the United Nations, Bush refused any linkage between Kuwait and Israel's occupation of the West Bank, even though a regional security conference connecting the problems of the Middle East will be the only means to move toward peace. In Congress, Bush even asserted that he alone had the power to take the country into war, despite Constitutional provisions to the contrary.

In retrospect, years from now, the focus of inquiry on the Gulf War will not be on Saddam Hussein and the invasion of Kuwait. Rather, it will center on the domestic prerogatives of American political, military and corporate power. All international politics is based on domestic realities. If we want to understand why war occurred, we need to analyze the system of American power.

In the aftermath of the Cold War, with the collapse of Communism in Eastern

Dr. Manning Marable is Professor of Political Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, and a contributing editor to THE WITNESS. His column "Along the Color Line" appears in over 170 newspapers internationally.

Europe, the United States was in a paradoxical situation. The \$300 billion military budget could no longer be justified, as domestic critics called for a "peace dividend" — increased expenditures for education, jobs, health care, and human needs. With the retreat of Soviet troops from the center of Europe, it became difficult to justify the presence of thousands of American troops across the world.

Ideologically, the demise of the Communist threat undermined the political consensus which united the forces of Reaganism. With the end of the Cold War, American conservatives no longer felt obligated to support Bush's domestic or foreign policies. By the summer of 1990, even before Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, there was significant evidence that America was slipping into a major economic recession. An external crisis was needed to divert the attention of Americans standing on unemployment lines or awaiting pink slips.

By sending American troops into the Middle East, Bush accomplished several political objectives. First, American intervention reestablished this country's central role as the world's mercenary police, suppressing Third World nationalism and preserving western corporate and political domination. The Arab world's greatest threat is not Saddam Hussein, it is the power and exploitation of Western governments and corporations. U.S. intervention ensures more decades of American dominance, and is a warning to all non-European countries

struggling against neocolonialism.

Second, American intervention justifies expansion of the military budget and increased production of nuclear and conventional weapons, eliminating the peace dividend. Thirdly, in terms of domestic politics, it divided the Democratic party into pro-war and anti-war camps. Pro-war Democrats were manipulated to grant Bush unprecedented authority to initiate massive warfare abroad.

In the euphoria generated by America's blitzkrieg against Iraq in the opening days of the war, the stock market soared and oil prices fell. The American people were told that the fruits of war would be the easy destruction of an evil dictator, the crushing of international terrorism, and the reestablishment of the United States as a superpower.

Few measured the real human costs of war upon both its victors and victims — young children who must be told that their father, a young flight lieutenant, was shot down in his F-16 fighter over Baghdad, never to return; mothers and fathers of wounded and captured soldiers who worry as only parents can about their children and yet are powerless to do anything about it; young men and women who will lose their limbs, or be paralyzed or blinded by mortar fire; the thousands of American families who are pushed to the edge of bankruptcy, or fall behind in mortgage payments because one parent in the reserves has been shipped out to the Persian Gulf.

Television reporters tell us about "surgical air strikes" by U.S. bombers, a concept both absurd and dishonest. Pilots speeding at 1,000 miles per hour, dropping one-ton bombs guided by lasers, are not conducting kidney transplants or brain microsurgery. They are obliterating families, homes, and mosques. The 16-year-old boys in the Iraqi army are not the security thugs who raped and murdered Kuwaitis. They are also innocent victims sacrificing their lives under American bombardments.

This unnecessary, avoidable and indefensible war is not against Saddam Hussein. It is in effect a massive attack against the Iraqi people specifically, and generally against the entire Arab world. The fruits of war for the United States will be guilt, shame, and responsibility for immoral acts of military terrorism which equal or exceed those committed in Kuwait by Saddam Hussein.

The only positive results of this war are the protests of those who oppose death and destruction. People of conscience are taking a stand. In Hiroshima, survivors of the 1945 atomic bombing staged a sit-in. In Germany, 100,000 marched the day after the war began. In San Francisco, nearly 1,000 anti-war demonstrators were arrested, the most ever in a single day in that city's turbulent history. In New York City, 5,000 protested, tying up traffic for hours. Two major demonstrations in Washington, D.C. drew hundreds of thousands of people from across the country.

The only language the American political and corporate elite understand is resistance. This means conducting teach-ins explaining why the war is unnecessary. It means civil disobedience, marches, demonstrations, and political organizing, bringing together religious groups, trade unions, civil rights, feminists and other progressive constituencies. Creative, democratic protest for peace abroad and social justice at home should be our focus.

TV



To potential WITNESS authors

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WORDPERFECT, MICROSOFT WORD, MICROSOFT WINDOWS WRITE, XYWRITE III, MULTIMATE and DCA files prepared with IBM DISPLAY-WRITE 3, SAMNA WORD, VOLKSWRITER 3, and WORDSTAR 3000. **Do not send original disks.** We cannot be responsible for damage in transit. Send a copy and a hard copy printout.

New editor/publisher lauds magazine's 'prophetic tradition'

by Susan E. Pierce

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, veteran peace activist, war tax resister, and diocesan editor, was notified that she was chosen editor/publisher of THE WITNESS by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company on Jan. 15. And on Jan. 16 the Persian Gulf war began. "It was a schizophrenic experience," she recalled.

"I was very excited, because I have always loved THE WITNESS, but then war broke out, so I was also very distressed — it was a real mix of highs and lows," she said.

Trained at New York's Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, Wylie-Kellermann went from wire service work to freelancing to being an award-winning diocesan editor for *The Record*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Michigan. In the meantime, she wrote a book, *Poletown: Community Betrayed*, about the destruction of a Detroit neighborhood to build a new auto plant, and produced a much-lauded video documentary on the same subject.

She is married to Bill Kellermann, a United Methodist minister and contributing editor to *Sojourners* magazine. They have two daughters, Lydia, 4, and Lucy, 13 months.

Wylie-Kellermann looks forward to continuing THE WITNESS tradition of being a voice of the oppressed and living out the Gospel in action. She said she learned about active faith from her mother Beatrice, and her late father, the Rt. Rev. Samuel Wylie, Episcopal Bishop of Northern Michigan.

"My parents had a keen appreciation



Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

for people who lived the Gospel by taking risks, and often paying for it. My father loved the Little Brothers and Sisters of Jesus. He was drawn to people whose consciences were really alive," she said.

Her upbringing was imbued with the traditions in the church, she noted, but not in a stultifying way. "In some senses it was quite orthodox, but even though my father was a bishop, he was against triumphalism and the pretentiousness of power. His parents had been first-generation Northern Irish immigrants who lived in the Bronx."

Raised in New York City and New England, she moved to rural Menominee, Mich. at age 15 when her father was made bishop. It was a big transition, but a positive one because, among other things, the move made her aware of a way of life very different from what she

had experienced back East.

"My first year there," Wylie-Kellermann said, "I signed up for an art class and the assistant principal didn't have the heart to tell me it wasn't for college-bound kids. I really enjoyed the girls in the class, but one day they told me, 'Jeanie, we can't understand anything you say.'"

"I realized that everything I had learned at private school in New York went right over their heads. It took me two and a half years in Menominee to learn how to communicate."

She went to Detroit in 1980 after graduate school. "Being in the Midwest has been really good for me," she said. "There's a lack of pretension, and a more deep-seated radicalism than is found on either coast."

When asked why, she replied. "It's because there's less bondage to the principalities and powers — the most powerful institutions are on the east or west coast, whether government, defense, universities, or even the churches. There's this kind of confident self-glorification that the coasts are where all the weighty decisions get made. People in the Midwest have a different value system — more grassroots and populist."

Her early activism in Detroit initially took her away from her Christian roots. "I wanted to find a way to try my wings without repeating what my parents had done," she said.

She got involved in secular justice and peace movements, even at one point

Continued on page 23

Episcopal Peace Fellowship office

Where can I get information about conscientious objection?

What can I do to deepen my efforts at peacemaking?

Do you have any suggestions for peace liturgies for our parish?

These were the questions put most frequently to the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's national office in Washington, D.C. during the months leading up to the Persian Gulf War and beyond, according to Mary Miller, EPF executive director.

"The January 15 deadline did terrible things to people," Miller said. "The Administration's spending five and a half months deliberately walking into war, and only five hours in peace talks raised anxiety levels to a new high. Prior to the outbreak of war, we had a barrage of queries. I would reach for the phone to make a call and it would ring before I could get to the receiver. Then I would get calls waiting while I was talking. By the time January 14 and 15 arrived, the atmosphere on the streets of Washington was somber and troubled to the point of depressive. January 16 was like Holy Saturday after Good Friday — all you could do was wait."

One consequence of the war buildup is that new EPF chapters are coming in full-blown — four have organized in the last three months and four or five are in formation, Miller said. She cited the experience in California of Ann McElroy, national EPF chair, and theologian John Kater, who presented a workshop at Church Divinity School of the Pacific recently on the Gulf war and expected, perhaps, 20 people. Some 70 showed up, and 20 remained afterward to apply as a new EPF chapter on the spot.

Another consequence of revitalization

of the peace movement is that EPF is having difficulties keeping up its stock. The office is out of its conscientious objectors packet and is trying to reprint materials most in demand. "In December we had a flurry of tax resistance inquiries," Miller said, "and we're reprinting and updating *Cross Before Flag* — Episcopal Church statements and Lambeth statements on war and peace since 1930."

The EPF exec said she was told that the Youth Ministries office at the Episcopal Church Center had 300 requests this fall for CO information and hundreds more since the beginning of the year. And EPF has been on the phone with concerned campus ministers in literally every part of the country. Many are currently signing up for training in draft counselling.

She refers requests for information about such training, as well as counselling of military conscientious objectors, to the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors in Washington and the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors in Philadelphia. (See addresses at end of article.)

When youth call about CO status, they are sent the Episcopal Church Center pamphlet, *Military Service and the Young Episcopalian*. The booklet discusses conscientious objection, conscientious resistance and conscientious participation.

Those who opt for CO status are advised to register as soon as possible in the confidential Register at the Episcopal Church Center. (Address at end of article.)

The Military Selective Service Act of 1967, amended in 1971, concerning COs reads:

Section 6(j). Nothing contained in this title shall be construed to re-

quire any person to be subject to combatant training and service in the armed forces of the United States, who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form. As used in this subsection, the term "religious training and belief" does not include essentially political, sociological or philosophic views, or a merely personal moral code.

Today, those who decide to be COs usually do so, according to *Military Service and the Young Episcopalian*, because of the following convictions:

To take human life, or to participate in a process which may lead to the taking of human life, is immoral and un-Christian . . .

Under the conditions of modern warfare, it is impossible to wage a justified war as defined by Christian tradition.

While some Christians believe limited war both justifiable and possible, many others object to any war on the basis that the present state of military art makes it impossible to have a "limited war" within the framework of Christian moral obligations. The danger of nuclear war, which may lead to the destruction of all human life, is so great that no considerations are strong enough to justify war of any kind.

Those youth who believe accordingly should sign up immediately with the registrar at the Episcopal Church Center, Miller urged.

In support of conscientious objectors, the last General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution that declared that "non-violent refusal to participate in or prepare for war is a faithful response of a member of this church, and

flooded by war queries

by Mary Lou Suhor

a decision to participate in or prepare for war should be made only after careful and prayerful consideration." The convention further resolved that "persons making such a conscientious decision either not to participate or so to participate have the respect, the support and the ministry of this church."

The "open-endedness of this war" has caused nightmares for many Americans, Miller believes. "Everybody worries about when the ground war will begin. Saddam Hussein hasn't denied that he will use chemical weapons. And we now know that the United States has nuclear warheads on ships in the area. This raises concerns running the gamut from Armageddon theology to 'fate of the earth.'"

Another question EPF is getting these days is "will there be a draft?"

"The quick answer is that the President isn't talking about that right now, and it depends on how long the war goes on," Miller said. "But it is always on people's minds."

She is appalled by the language used by the Pentagon and the President — the double-speak of "collateral damage" for civilian victims and the macho posturing of the phrase "kicking ass."

"And when George Bush says *we*, he means Americans — 'we will prevail.' But 'they' always means *he*, Saddam — it's very demonizing."

In the January 26 March for Peace in Washington, Miller said that EPF did not gather under its banner as such, because EPF members had signed up with various delegations to which they belonged such as campus groups, Jobs With Peace, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, etc. EPF's liturgical representation — a cross atop the peace symbol on a staff — can only be carried in church processions. If carried sideward and not upright on the streets it is considered a dangerous weapon by police, she explained wryly.

She is gratified at the number of worship services that have been developed as people gather to pray for peace. EPF

was instrumental in arranging the service at the Washington National Cathedral before war broke out. Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning played a major role in the service, and later walked with his wife, Patti to the White House in a candlelight vigil. And even in Hawaii, a highly militarized society because of Pearl Harbor and other bases, Bishop Donald Hart led an all-night peace vigil at the Cathedral on Jan. 12.

The EPF office is currently distributing a peace liturgy adapted from one devised by Bishop Edward Jones of Indiana.

EPF views with alarm the rising anti-Arab sentiments in this country, including "very troubling" FBI behavior toward Arab-Americans, Miller said. And she is deeply concerned that the British have set up a compound "read concentration camp" near London and has held Iraqis there.

In addition to calls from youth and campus ministers, Miller has received queries from individuals, some already actively involved in justice and peace efforts, who simply ask, "What *more* can I do? How can I deepen my personal efforts?"

"If they are not hooked up with a local group, I urge them to get connected, or build a group around themselves — don't hang out there alone. Of course they should keep writing: the President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, their Congressional representatives. Then I invite them to join the EPF fast for peace, as they are able, until a peaceful settlement is negotiated between George Bush and Saddam Hussein. Some people choose one day a week to fast; some choose to fast totally. Our hope is that at all times in every part of the church there will be someone fasting and praying for peace."



In Washington, D.C., Patti Browning (left) and Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning joined thousands in a Jan. 14 candlelight march to the White House and all-night vigil.

EPF is circulating an idea that began with St. Thomas parish in Denver, Col. Parishioners sign up to fast one day a week, and at the end of the week the Rev. Sandra Wilson, rector, sends the names of those on the list to George Bush at the White House, as its witness for peace.

The staff at the Episcopal Church Center in New York inaugurated a fast Jan. 15 in which staff members choose a day to participate. The cover letter to President Bush, signed by participants, reads in part:

"As a fellow Episcopalian, you must understand that war and the threat of war are incompatible with the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and contrary to repeated pronouncements of the church. We pray that you will find the wisdom to engage in peacemaking instead of political posturing."

Founded on Armistice Day, 1939, the EPF celebrated its 50th anniversary two years ago. Currently EPF operates out of a one-room office on the grounds of Epiphany Church, 1317 G St. NW, in Washington, D.C. The office welcomes inquiries about its work.

Resources

Episcopal Peace Fellowship: Those wishing further information about membership, activities, or seeking to make a tax-deductible contribution can contact Mary Miller, Executive Director, EPF, P.O. Box 28156, Washington, D.C. 20038 (202-783-3380).

Registry for Episcopal Conscientious Objectors: Youth Ministry, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 (1-800-334-7626, Ext. 5237 or 5239).

National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, 1601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 750, Washington, D.C. 20008 (202-483-4510).

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, P.O. Box 15796, Philadelphia, PA 19103 (215-545-4626). TW

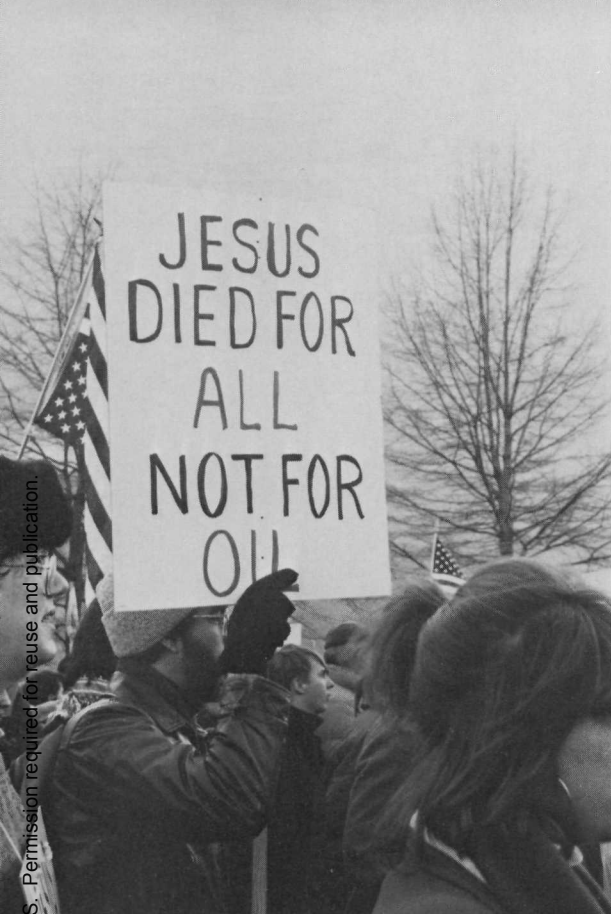


Over 200,000 protest Persian Gulf War

More than 200,000 anti-war protestors marched in Washington, D.C. Jan. 26 in the largest demonstration since the Vietnam War, according to the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, sponsor of the event. An equal number demonstrated simultaneously in San Francisco, and a march in Bonn, Germany that day drew 150,000 against the war.

In Washington, a mix including students, war veterans, religious and ethnic groups, and military families, trudged down Pennsylvania Avenue amidst an array of flags as marchers indicated their patriotism and support of U.S. troops by demanding that they be brought home. It was estimated that 53% of the marchers were women, 47% men. Youth dominated the march with representatives from more than 600 campuses across the country. Vermont's Bread and Puppet theater was also on hand with its huge grieving mother figures; also, their characters in black, carrying replicas of dead bodies weaved throughout the crowd to add a note of stark realism to the event. Perhaps most poignant was the attempt of the marchers to witness, frequently through homemade signs and symbols, how they felt about the war. Accompanying photos show some of their efforts. For information about future war protests contact: the National Campaign, 212-227-0221, and the National Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, 212-777-1246.





Protesting the Gulf War with Becca

by Joyce Clemmer Munro



Becca and Joyce Munro display their signs for the peace march.

Except for an orange-tinged rim near the horizon, it is still dark. The cold passes through my sweater, turtleneck, and woolen long johns as though they aren't there. How much of this cold is temperature, how much fear? I have put on my hiking boots but this is no hike. I wish it were.

Then I remember last night, when my daughter Becca, 9, stood on a stool to lead her 3-year-old brother Ian in a homemade peace chant. Seeing us pack knapsacks, he ran for his, and we played along, so for Ian a peace march means a chocolate bar that he can keep in his room. Meanwhile Becca pored over a piece of posterboard with her rainbow of markers.

Now she is beside me. Together we

are going to march in Washington to protest the war in the Persian Gulf.

It is the first march for both of us and I am afraid. Becca is a small spot of green that will wash in the color that thousands of people make. But if I keep my eye on her sign, which she is holding high even as we wait in gray dawn for the bus, I might be able to track her. I worry secretly about tear gas, but I have damp washcloths with baking soda on them hidden in my pack. I hope Becca won't see something that I don't want to or can't explain. Then again this war is something I can't explain. Mostly what I fear has a more subtle edge. That no one will notice and care that we are there. That the belief one person can make a difference will end up false, and this march will be dismissed as child's play.

We board the bus. Almost at once we wolf down the sandwiches we brought, and start on the tangerines and candy.

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After three hours we arrive at the RFK Stadium. Looking out the window at the brown and black and white and yellow people, I begin to get excited. They shuffle in a clumsy dance. Some wear prayer shawls, others long dangling peace earrings. According to their license plates, they come from Maine, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Indiana, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York. Hundreds of thousands of people.

Briefly, we of the same bus try to keep track of each other, but we have had such a short time to become recognizable faces, and after a few moments of trying to turn every stranger's face into a new friend, we break apart like a cookie. Five of us hang onto each other's coats through the Metro turnstiles and up the escalator into sunlight.

We get news that the march has begun, but nothing happens where I stand. I am cold no longer, and I have memorized the pattern of the woman's scarf in front of me.

Who is here? Vietnam veterans are leading the march. Then military families. Next Arab-Americans. Then religious people. Followed by labor unions and students. There are almost as many men as women. "I'm glad you're here," one gray-haired woman says to Becca, patting her head, but she is by no means alone. Babies bobble in backpacks, and below them children, at the elbows of their parents. This is a march about relationships between people.

I want to be part of the religious group. From here I can read only their signs, not their faces: Quakers Have Always Been Opposed to War, Hutterites for Peace, One Presbyterian for Peace. Banners identify Methodists, Catholics, and Episcopalians. My sign expresses my concern but not my faith. From where I stand, no Mennonite banner billows out above me, and I feel alone and small.

I look up. There is President Bush on

Becca's sign, complete with elbow pads and a pencil in his pocket. He looks harried but with one hand is throwing away missiles and machine guns, while the other hand is picking up a flower and a recycling symbol as he moves to fill the empty bowl of a skinny frowning child. A plump dove with tiny feet tilts forward at his knee. Under the President's perfectly tied shoes are the letters: !!P!E!A!C!E! Then I remember: I am here with my daughter, my friends Loey and Marilyn, and I have met an ex-Catholic woman who works for justice issues among Episcopalians. I am in good company.

Finally we begin moving. It could be a party. People have climbed light poles to take pictures. Someone goes past selling homemade cookies big as pies. We walk near the edge where there is air and we can set our own pace. With loud voices a group of students behind us leads a chant. "Hell no, we won't go, we won't die for Texaco." Becca makes a slight adjustment to the language and adds her strong Sunday school voice.

We have been warned that there are hecklers along the march, but we never see them. People on our side of the sidewalk wear peace buttons and holds signs, or stand quietly watching.

But they are not the only ones watching. In front of the White House, the cold knot in my stomach comes back. White, blue, and yellow cars are bumper to fender. Behind them a row of police stand with legs apart and arms folded. Next, a dashline of their motorcycles and sleek brown horses. Just behind the wrought iron fence are groups of police. Across the lawn against the building in the glare of the sun are more of them. I am shocked. They look tense. They are expecting someone that is not me. This could be another country, but it isn't. It is Becca's first look at the White House and she takes a picture.

The confusion and despair I have felt in the past weeks and months as I lis-

tened to Congressional speeches, live coverage of the war, and call-in programs fall away. I can read and hear pieces of the truth all around me here. "The New World Order is an Old World Order" — of course, imperialism. Democracy? We could be in the Baltics and El Salvador. Human rights? Why not invade South Africa? "Invest in solar and wind energy, not war." How about a viable energy policy that emphasizes efficiency, alternatives, and independence of imports? And a more just economic policy for that matter. An act of conscience and citizenship would be for me to say I am willing to pay a humanitarian tax. Hungry mouths in the world, poor schools, and struggling clinics are not beside the point in this war.

Like one sign I want to shout: "This is not a video game." The "peace dividend" that was reaped in 1990 is being used up now as drawing board missiles, tanks, helicopters, and bombers get their reality check. They are "tools in the toolbox" — the act of destruction has co-opted the language of construction. What is being built in the Persian Gulf? I search my heart. I could believe in "smart bombs," for I have benefited from other "smart" things, but I suspect the most insidious real gain in the Persian Gulf will be a greater shift in our economy toward military development. To call these weapons "tools!" This is a war of words, and I am here to protest language that turns to dust in the mouth.

Suddenly every dream I have for Becca seems past. People around me are noticing a Vietnam vet's sign. It is President Bush holding an American flag. As the vet walks along, he pulls down on a stick and the hair and flag change to Hitler and the Third Reich. "The policies don't change, just the faces," his sign says. In a flash I can see it — skin with bone sticking through it — my daughter's wasted body. It is too real. I look away to the sidewalk where two African-American police officers stand, a man

and woman. The vet has just flashed his sign at them. Their bellies shake.

This is not the Third Reich. I am here because I live in a country that gives the minority opinion room to express itself. I am in Washington to remind the government of my rights. I am in a peace march because food, education, medicine, clean air and clean water are what I want for the innocent children of the world. And a rainbow of markers so they can pour out their thoughts for us. Until then these children might as well be little stones crying out.

Jesus welcomed the little ones. He also said people who didn't treat children with reverence should have millstones put around their necks. Only those of us who are like little children can enter the Kingdom. Jesus welcomes the child in each one of us. I am here because of the tenderness of Jesus.

Tomorrow I will go to church. I'll probably bawl my head off as I tell them about this march. I'll see tears in their eyes, in empathy for the mess I'm making but also because Jesus wept. I know we'll pray, maybe we'll even get down on our knees. We'll talk in quiet groups. Some people will hug me. Some will tell me they disagree with me. I hope we try to answer the question: Who is the enemy I am to love? Sooner or later after more tears, talk, and prayer, I hope we will want to do something. Maybe we'll write some catchy songs about peace. Or print armbands that say, "We're using the tools of peace," and volunteer at Habitat for Humanity. Maybe we'll go to members of Congress with warm bowls of water to wash their hands. Or throw a feast for the homeless. Or put on sackcloth and ashes.

But what if my fellow Christians are numb? What will I do then? I may lose my faith.

I grab at Becca's sleeve. "This is a good thing, Mom," she says with eyes shining as we enter the rally on the Ellipse. "I want to go on a peace march

again soon." The coordinator is telling the crowd where those who wish to participate in an act of civil disobedience should register. I want to pull her tightly into my arms, because suddenly she seems too young to be on the journey that this march has become.

For me right now, my enemy is the government of my country and myself. I will need more opportunities than just this march to engage my enemy. Becca jumps up on my back to see the rap group on stage. They ask us to hold hands with persons next to us in a long quiet moment of silence. A seagull rises above us. Each throbbing thing, great and small, in this world has wings,

whether I can see them or not. God help me see, please, whatever the cost.

This walk has purged me of lassitude, but it stretches out to some vanishing point I cannot see. More problematic than my indifference is the possibility that I may act with courage. How would God work in my life, if I opened myself up more to prayer? How else will my daughter want to express her hope for peace? I suggest we ride the antique carousel outside the Smithsonian, but she pulls back. On my wooden horse I make silly faces and call out to her; for some time after that she doesn't talk to me. Right now, she does not want any part of today to be mere child's play. **TW**

My father was a hero in the war

**My father was a hero in the war.
He was a flier and he got a medal.
He lost his stomach to an ulcer fifteen years later.
That didn't kill him either.
That was when I was thirteen.
I remember his cries and screams in his sleep
No matter how much he drank to try to silence them.
That was when I was twenty-one or so,
a quarter of a century after the war.
He used to wake me when I was home from college.
I am almost forty now.
Last night I went to bed late.
He doesn't scream anymore.
Now he only mutters and groans.
But I can still tell that he is dreaming
about Messerschmitts and nightmare bursts of flak
that were a part of his daily life in war.
As a child he told me all about it.
Yes I learned all about it at my father's knee.
He flew in B-24's.
No one knows what they are anymore.**

**I didn't fight in Viet Nam.
I had learned at an early age that war makes
madmen, cripples, addicts and corpses.
My father was a hero in the war.
I wasn't.
I hope my son understands.
I hope he became a pacifist at his father's knee
like I did.**

J. P. Gallagher

Short Takes

Blacks will suffer worst casualties

Overall, blacks make up about 20% of all active-duty military personnel, but their percentage is higher among the enlisted grades, especially in the Army and particularly in front-line combat units like the infantry and tank forces.

This means that African-Americans — about 12% of the population, "could become 25% of U.S. casualties in a massive ground conflict with Iraq," notes Edwin Dorn of the Brookings Institution in Washington. This is a bitter prospect for those who believe that blacks did more than their fair share of the dying in Vietnam.

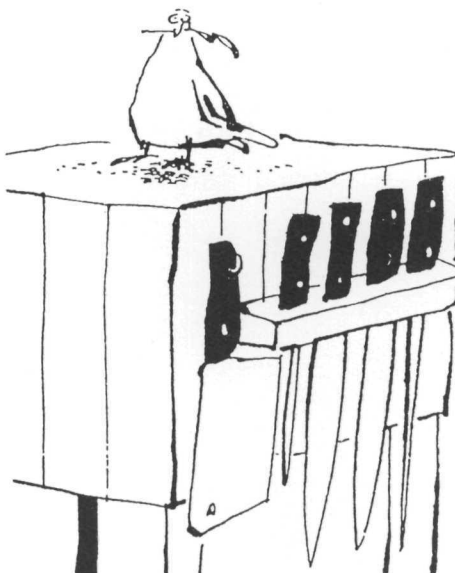
Michael T. Klare
The Guardian 1/30/91

U.S. as world policeman

With the U.S. military buildup (of 460,000 U.S. servicemen and women) in the Persian Gulf, 40% of all active-duty American military personnel currently are deployed outside the United States and its territorial waters. Prior to the Gulf conflict, 435,000 U.S. troops already were assigned to 395 major military bases in 35 foreign countries. Accompanying them were more than 168,000 civilian Pentagon employees and 400,000 family dependents. Another 47,000 U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel were stationed aboard ships in foreign waters and 10,000 U.S. troops were stationed at 20 military bases on the American overseas territorial possessions of Guam, Johnston Atoll, the Marshall Islands, Midway Island, the Virgin Islands and Wake Island, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Altogether today more than a million American military personnel and civilian Pentagon employees are stationed abroad. Prior to World War II, the U.S. maintained only a handful of military installations in foreign countries. When troops were dispatched overseas they generally were returned home in short order. The first permanent U.S. bases in foreign countries were established in Cuba and in the Philippines following the Spanish American War in 1898.

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Center for Defense Information



Quote of note

Why do grown-ups always say, "Don't hit" and then they go and start a big war?

Benjamin Rottman, age 6
Letter to the Editor, LA Times

Can't support war in Mideast

War is evil. What happened in Panama leads me to say that I cannot support the war in the Middle East at this time. With all the problems we face in today's world, it is unbelievable that we still use war as a solution.

Bishop James Ottley of Panama
Episcopal News Service 1/25/91

Words from Will

You can't say civilization don't advance. In every war they kill you a new way.

Will Rogers

Bishops say don't obey

Twenty-six Roman Catholic bishops signed a Pax Christi USA statement urging U.S. forces in the Gulf not to obey orders or policies aimed at killing non-combatants. They expressed support for conscientious objectors and condemned any blockade of food or medical supplies to Iraq.

Peace Media Service 12/90

CCR sets up hotline re FBI visits

Since the beginning of the Persian Gulf crisis, the FBI has stepped up its surveillance of the Arab-American community and anti-war activists, according to the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York. Although claiming to investigate anti-Arab violence, the FBI has been asking about political beliefs and affiliations and about terrorism, making the illegal assumption that people know something about terrorism just because they are Arab or opponents of U.S. government policy.

The Movement Support Network of the Center for Constitutional Rights has collected a list of such incidents and has distributed a fact sheet in English and Arabic explaining the right to refuse to talk to the FBI. It states in part: "You have a right to tell the FBI: 'If you want to talk to me about anything, please make an appointment to see my lawyer.' Ask for the agent's business card, and tell them your lawyer will call them." CCR has set up a hotline to advise persons of their rights: 1-800-388-1277.

You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.

Jeannette Rankin

War against HIV/AIDS

Women are now the fastest growing group of persons contracting HIV/AIDS in the United States. In New York City, HIV/AIDS is the primary cause of death for women 25-34 years of age, and soon to be the leading cause of death among women of childbearing age.

In New York City, 51% of women with AIDS are black; 32% are Hispanic.

As of 1989, 29% of women with HIV/AIDS in the United States were infected through heterosexual contact, an increase from 11% in 1984. Some 60% of women living with HIV/AIDS have been infected by intravenous drug use. More than two-thirds of HIV-infected children in the United States were infected by their mothers.

Inter-Unit Working Group on HIV/AIDS
Episcopal Church Center



A Way of the Cross for the lesbian and gay community

by Claudia L. Windal

Jesus, I have watched you make this journey countless times and only now do I realize why I have felt your pain and anguish so intensely. Your pain, Jesus, has been my pain, and your journey to Calvary, mine also. Be with me as my example. When I despair and feel I can do no more, when I believe I can go no further, let me turn to you, who despite pain and agony continued in order to complete your earthly mission.

I

Jesus is condemned to death

You knew the accusations were false and the charges against you exaggerated, and yet you did not retaliate despite the death sentence. Be with me as in hatred I am called faggot/dyke, as I am falsely accused of causing the devastation of AIDS, of a sinful and perverse life style, and as I am condemned to gay/lesbian bashings, job losses, rejection by family and friends and loss of self-esteem. Like you, Jesus, let me turn to my inner strength so that I might continue the journey.

II

Jesus takes up the cross

You might have easily been tempted to push away the cross, Jesus, but instead, you extended your arms and shouldered the heavy burden. Rather than respond-

ing, "No, not me!" let me embrace my crosses of homophobia, fear, prejudice, violence, sickness, and rejection, and be about that which I am called to be — your visible presence in the world today.

III

Jesus falls the first time

The weight of the cross and the distance to Calvary became too much and you fell. It would have been so easy to remain on the ground trying to regain your strength and composure. You didn't hesitate, Jesus. You struggled to your feet, picked up the heavy cross and continued the painful walk to Calvary. Help me, Jesus, not to retreat to a dark "closet" when I feel the pain of the journey, nor turn to drugs and alcohol to dull my senses, keeping me from feeling that pain — when the weight of rejection, ridicule, and physical violence becomes too heavy for me to bear.

IV

Jesus meets His mother

As the crowd jeered at you, you must

have felt as if no one cared; then you saw the sad, yet warm and compassionate, eyes of your loving mother. Not all eyes that I meet, Jesus, are filled with prejudice and contempt. There are many who care about me. Some are supportive "straight" women and men, employers and parish communities. Others are family members who love me as son/daughter, sister/brother without concern or condemnation of my sexual orientation. Let my eyes continue to meet their eyes as sources of strength and assurance that I am cared for and loved.

V

Simon takes up the cross of Jesus

As the soldiers feared that you might die on the way to Calvary, Simon became your unwilling assistant, taking your cross upon his shoulders. Despite his upset and grumbling, you loved him and appreciated his gesture of support. Everyday I meet people who are upset that I am gay/lesbian; they mutter and grumble about my presence and yet they interact with me, work with me, employ

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me, and worship with me. On occasion, despite themselves, they react kindly to me. Jesus, let me take advantage of these opportunities and view these persons as sisters and brothers, accepting their kind gestures and not being put off by their grumbling.

VI

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Jesus, you responded to Veronica's compassion by leaving the image of your face on her towel. We lesbians and gay men can leave our imprint on the world; a lasting image of caring, compassionate, justice-seeking, giving, and loving persons. Give us the courage to "come out" so that the world might know of our existence and our work. As we are known, so we will make our imprint on the world.

VII

Jesus falls a second time

Even without the weight of the cross, you fell, Jesus, and once again you mustered your strength and continued the journey. Despite my best intentions, Jesus, I occasionally fall back into self-pity and when I do, I look longingly to the safety of my "closet" and I want to retreat there. Let your example remind me that I have the strength to overcome obstacles so that I might leave the "closet" door closed as I continue my journey.

VII

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Jesus, your weakness and pain must have been nearly unbearable, yet you transcended that pain to reach out to others in need. I know that prejudice, ridicule, gay/lesbian bashing, and discrimination will always be a part of my life, causing me much pain and anguish. Help me, Jesus, to reach out beyond my pain, and in my own woundedness reach out to others who have experienced similar fear, oppression, and rejection.

IX

Jesus falls a third time

The journey was nearly complete and yet you fell once again. Let me never become smug and over-confident about my ability to handle hurt and rejection, fear, and anger, since I, too, may fall repeatedly as I journey through life. When I do fall, Jesus, be there for me as my example of strength and courage.

X

Jesus is stripped of His garments

As you finally reached Calvary, Jesus, the soldiers roughly stripped off your clothing and gambled for possession of your tunic. Sometimes Jesus, I feel as if I too have been stripped of everything important to me: my family, a parish community, the privacy of my sexual activity, a decent job, and even my dignity. Help me understand that although these things give life a sense of fulfillment, they are not everything, for you are with me to stretch out your arms and embrace me in love.

XI

Jesus is nailed to the cross

You were placed on the hard wood of the cross then nailed to it, Jesus. Through the torment you spoke nothing, nor did you cry out. How difficult it is for me not to strike out when I hear homophobic slurs and read accounts of the violence against gay men and lesbians; as my church's House of Bishops votes to disassociate itself from the ordination of a gay man, and as a movement builds to canonically prohibit the further ordinations of lesbians and gay men. Jesus, let me look to your example of courage and strength.

XII

Jesus dies on the cross

From the beginning of this journey to your last breath you spoke only forgiveness, Jesus: "Forgive them for they know not what they do." May I too forgive

when I am laughed at and labeled dyke/queer, when I am told by a supervisor not to mention my sexual orientation because employees will lose respect for me, when I must remove my pink triangle from my name tag (there for those with AIDS in an attempt to put them at ease), because those in charge feel it is a political statement, and when I witness a lover denied a place at his lover's side in an emergency room or life partners separated for the holidays because their families are not comfortable with the relationship. Help me to forgive them, for certainly they know not what they do.

XIII

Jesus is taken down from the cross

Finally, the struggle came to an end. Your limp and lifeless body was placed in the waiting arms of your mother. I often worry that I will have to face tribulation, sickness, violence, fear, and finally, death, alone. Reassure me, Jesus, that I am not now, nor will I ever be, alone, and at the end of my journey I will find myself placed in your loving and outstretched arms.

XIV

Jesus is placed in the tomb

At last, your suffering ended and your body was put to rest. As you promised, Jesus, in three days you rose from death and fulfilled your guarantee of eternal life for each of us. These is much for me to do before my death, so much to accomplish, so many dreams and aspirations to realize. I find comfort in your assurance, Jesus, that the pain I have known as a lesbian/gay man will someday come to an end, and that acceptance and unconditional love will be mine in eternity where suffering, sickness, prejudice, violent crime and homophobia will be no more. Amen.

Medals on our blouses?

by Mary E. Hunt

Women in combat came to public attention during the U.S. invasion of Panama in late 1989. The current situation in the Middle East raises the question of their presence once more. The result of the discussion is a no-win situation for women, damned to discrimination if they cannot fight and damned to combat if they can. This reality presents a dilemma for religious feminists who believe in the equality of women but reject combat as a solution to global conflict. The dynamic is reminiscent of the struggle for equality in the board room though we may reject capitalism, equality at the altar although we may reject patriarchal religions, and so forth.

Little did I dream that the current Persian Gulf War would emerge, adding analytic data to my earlier concern. At this writing, thousands of U.S. service-women are baking in the desert and dodging missiles along with their male counterparts. Some may be home in body bags by the time this article is published. The issues take on even greater urgency than they did following the Panama incursion when no one really raised the question until a U.S. victory over a weak opponent was assured. This time such a victory is not as likely. Ironically, tabloid stories of grandmothers going off to war and style section accounts of husbands left behind struggling to find the diapers are the flimsy substance of the current public debate. Will women simply fight and talk about it later?

Mary E. Hunt, a Roman Catholic feminist theologian, is co-director of WATER (Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual) in Washington, D.C. A version of this article first appeared in WATER's newsletter, *Waterwheel*.

There are more than 225,000 women in the U.S. combined armed services making up 11% of the total; estimates of their numbers in the Middle East indicate that they are probably about 10% of the total there. Officially they are in non-combat roles, but the threat of chemical warfare and the rigor of the conditions in Saudi Arabia render that distinction dubious if not moot.

What begs analysis is whether this is a feminist achievement or a patriarchal ploy. Is it proof that women can and should do anything men do, or a good example of how even feminism can be coopted to serve the end of patriarchal power structures?

On the one hand, I urge women's equality in and access to all avenues of society. On the other hand, I oppose combat almost without nuance. Thus I am left in a kind of feminist limbo, having to sanction, at least implicitly, something that I oppose in the name of affirming something that I support.

I embrace the notion of women in the military with all of the enthusiasm I reserve for women in the episcopacy, and perhaps a little less. While I understand that cosmetic changes alter the aesthetic, I am not persuaded that they finally change structures at all. Rather, I suspect that in certain instances, as in the case of women in hierarchical leadership in sacramental churches, such additions of women to the structures may serve to maintain rather than to dismantle those structures. The Roman Catholic Church, like the military, is hierarchical by design, de facto and de jure excluding women from leadership and decision-making roles, and using outmoded reasons for doing so that mask the real issue, namely, whether this model of reli-

gion, like this model of military, is good for anyone, male or female.

My basic worry about women in combat is the liberal claim that equality demands it. I wonder if there aren't really places, the combat-ready military for one, where alleged equality is really the diminution of the human spirit, beginning with women's and including men's, hence reinforcing rather than shifting the power equation.

Many issues call for attention. Inevitably the point is raised about women's competence and suitability for combat. In 1991 this sounds like a pitiful pedestrian concern about women's strength and spunk when evidence is plentiful that some women, as some men, are more than qualified for combat. Since modern warfare is based more on technology than brute strength, and since some women's physical strength surpasses some men's, this issue no longer commands sustained discussion except to point out how dated it is.

Politely speaking, combat does not require the highest mental, physical or spiritual capacity known to humanity. Just as some men are not physically and/or psychologically suited for combat, neither are some women. The point is that one qualified woman would be enough to justify inclusion of women in combat on the grounds of equal access, just as one Afro-American, one Hispanic and/or one Asian-American man was, in principle, sufficient to integrate the ranks.

Asking the question, "Should women be in combat?" borders on the disingenuous. It presumes that women are not in combat and that it is an ethical question asked by those who would protect women's virtue out of concern for

women's well-being. The fact is that women are in combat already, virtue or no. It is time to reframe the question to reflect the reality.

Captain Linda Bray led her troops in Panama to a dog kennel where enemy troops were alleged to have been hiding. Gunfire was exchanged. This is combat by any definition, and Captain Bray is a woman. Hence my claim that women are engaging in combat is proved albeit by an incident that was embarrassing to the military when it handed out combat medals. The question would be usefully reframed as "What does it mean that women are in combat?" this being the concern of those who stress strict equality; or "Should anyone be in combat?" or "How can we avoid combat?" These questions, virtually absent from public debate, are kept at bay by continually asking the wrong "should" question.

Another issue is whether war is really a male construct, something that women will imitate when given the chance but would probably not come up with on their own. I am increasingly leery of any brands of feminism that make earth mothers of all females, positing certain qualities of harmony and well-being to women, while saddling men with the blame for aggressive, bellicose behavior. I have seen enough pacifist men and been involved in enough feminist battles to know the difference.

Still, at times when men have held sway, which would be most of recorded history, conflicts have been solved by fighting rather than developing consensus. Women, on the other hand, have been responsible for a range of anti-war efforts, prominent recent ones including the Jeannette Rankin Brigade during the Vietnam War, the Greenham Common and Seneca Peace Encampments against nuclear weapons, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and other groups of relatives of disappeared persons in Latin America, the leaders of which are usually women.

The most persuasive case for women

advancing in the military, something that combat hastens, is the practical case in terms of employment and future benefits. While it is true that combat is a sure route to decorations and promotions and for this reason women should have access, such arguments miss another point; namely, the erosion of military benefits at a time when those who sign up are disproportionately poor, people of color, and lacking in basic educational skills.

The G.I. Bill, long considered a ticket

"Asking the question, 'Should women be in combat?' borders on the disingenuous. The fact is that women are in combat already . . . It is time to reframe the question to reflect the reality."

to higher education after military service, now requires that military personnel contribute financially during the time served in order to be eligible afterwards. This is something many women who struggle to make ends meet on a military salary, especially if they have children, cannot afford and/or do not think they will ever use. Hence they lose out from the beginning due to inadequate counseling and the economic disadvantage with which they began their service. So much for an equal opportunity employer in an unequal society.

Likewise, many military training programs that attract women have little

transfer value outside the military.

The much touted military discipline, "guaranteed to make a man out of you," is similarly dubious for women. Hazing and harassment that bonded men to other men in the homosocial environment that used to be the military in "the good old days" has not been redesigned to take into account women's ways of bonding.

Sexual harassment is common. Abuse, even rapes have been reported. The notorious case of a woman student at the U.S. Naval Academy, Gwen Marie Dreyer, being chained to a urinal by eight of her male classmates, then photographed for their pleasure just before the Army-Navy football game, touched off an investigation of that institution. The Committee on Women's Issues, including Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland), found recently that "there are structural impediments to assimilation of women" at Annapolis and that "breakdown in civility and discipline contributes to sexual harassment at the academy." It is reported that "low-level sexual harassment can pass as normal operating procedure" among some students and faculty.

The Catch-22 for women in the military, and especially for women in combat, is that they must conform to a norm in which what is feminine is inferior. Recruits are taunted with the epithet "girls" if they do not perform properly. It is one thing for a young man to have stereotypically masculine traits ingrained into him, quite another for women. Women must choose between participating in the implicit degradation of all women by tolerating the abusive macho practices, or distinguish themselves as feminists or be accused of being lesbians because they maintain their integrity as women in a system in which being a woman under any circumstance is wrong. This dynamic leaves me pessimistic about rapid changes in military life even if women enter combat, and fearful that women who do will be vic-

timized by enemies on both sides, including their would-be comrades. Who would want her daughter in such a situation?

Even patriotism is gender-linked in a patriarchal society. While for men the ultimate expression of loyalty to one's country is to serve honorably in the military, in combat if necessary, women are given a very different message. To serve in the military, other than as a nurse or in some other support position, is at best anomalous, at worst invading men's territory, in short unpatriotic. It never occurs to people that groups like Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike for Peace and similar groups express a kind of patriotism that both women and men would do well to imitate. Rather, the gender-bound nature of patriotism, like every other gender-bound dimension of society, is kept under wraps until women cross the gender line as in the case of combat. Then it rears its ugly head, confusing those who do not perceive the message and punishing those who do.

This analysis, while only hinting at the complexity at hand, helps to highlight the feminist dilemma around women in combat. It is further complicated by the problems that such women face when they seek combat positions in a society in which fundamental equality in other arenas is denied.

The major impact is on children who, despite feminists' best efforts at shared responsibility, are generally cared for by women. While there are cases in the current "Operation Desert Storm" where both parents are on duty with children being left in the care of grandparents, future combat for women may mean increasing problems for children especially if, as is the case with many, the mother is a single parent.

It does not follow that

women should not be in combat, but that men ought to assume an equal role in child rearing. Such not being the case, women's entrance into combat, and the injuries and deaths that will inevitably result, will bear disproportionately on children. Our society seems reluctant to equalize such responsibilities outside the combat situation, and/or to develop adequate support structures for most children. Perhaps women's increased participation in the military will have the unexpected side benefit of hastening the day when men assume their fair share of child-rearing.

This difficult scenario admits of no easy feminist solution. Involved are not only deeply held beliefs about the inferiority of women, but also economic, political and racial structures that guarantee that the impact of such beliefs will be felt most profoundly by young, poor women of color who will be the first female canon fodder when combat is officially opened to women, and the ones to suffer most economically if it is not.

I suggest three preliminary moves toward resolving the question from a feminist perspective. First, it is important to insist on reframing the question, begin-

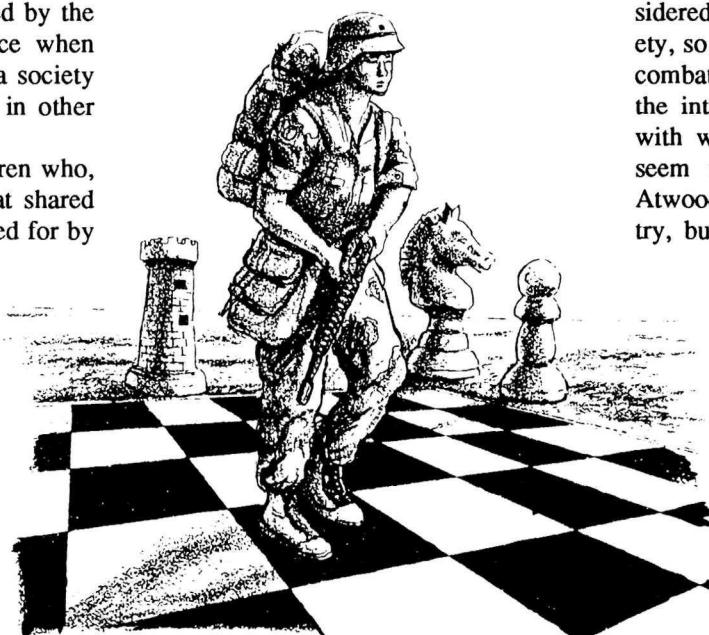
ning with acknowledging that women are in combat and then asking whether *anyone* should be. Women have learned that how such questions are framed, indeed who frames the questions, determines the answers.

We can redirect the analysis to question whether anyone, male or female, is usefully dispatched to combat at a time when nuclear, chemical and even some conventional weapons virtually assure mass destruction. We are not talking about hand-to-hand combat with national security at risk due to women's lack of upper body strength.

A second feminist ethical move is to take the debate to where women are, to listen to their perceptions, and to theorize out of that base. This kind of grassroots, participatory ethical model avoids the pitfalls of dogmatic liberal feminism wherein mostly white women in no danger of combat make decisions for those who are faced with the choice. More important, it avoids the pitfalls of patriarchy by educating women to listen to one another instead of to the conventional wisdom, especially in this kind of life-death situation.

Women's lives have always been considered expendable in a patriarchal society, so there is reason to think that once combat is open to women it would serve the interest of society to fill the ranks with women. Such a sinister plot may seem more the stuff off a Margaret Atwood novel than of a civilized country, but the U.S. track record on abortion,

for example, seems to indicate that women's well-being is a low priority. As in the abortion case, I trust women to make responsible decisions as women have made throughout history. Opening combat to women and then coping with the massive numbers of women who conscientiously object would be a strong statement. Sup-



C. Harris

port for such a move will be garnered by inviting women to discuss these matters and then to strategize creatively on the basis of their discussions. I would bet on this or another equally creative option as an alternative to gung-ho militarism from most women.

A third feminist move is to broaden the ethical umbrella to include men in the company of those who, in the name of equality, stress peace, justice and cooperation. This is perhaps the most promising strategy because it accomplishes two goals at once. On the one hand, it models equality by insisting that whatever solutions we hope to implement will have to include women and men working together (in sharp contrast to the military decisions about women in combat that are made by all-male combat-trained soldiers). On the other hand, it offers an alternative to the "equality at any price" liberalism that would tolerate women in combat in order to achieve that goal. It takes account of the reality of unequal power dynamics for women and men that assure that equality is impossible in patriarchy and that women will always pay disproportionately for their rights.

This strategy is also practical since it gives peace groups a concrete "both-and" goal. Both gender equality and peace can be pursued through creative educational programs, counseling for women and men about alternatives to military service that will result in job skills and express their patriotism. Children of both genders can see Mom and Dad resisting participation in a military machine that would happily take both of them. And even men and women in the military can consider their role in preventing future wars. Obviously this is a long term, perhaps unachievable goal, but it sets a trajectory for educational programs, lobbying, resistance efforts, tax withholding and other effective strategies that women and men can engage in together before it is too late. **TW**

New editor . . . continued from page 9

"flirting with Marxism," in her search for a meaningful witness, but still found something missing.

"I was reacting against the church," she said. "I felt the church needed to stand up in the world against injustice, and it wasn't doing that. So I translated church things to the secular, but in doing that I always felt a loss."

Her hunger for a community of activists which shared her Christian perspective persisted, until she found the Detroit Peace Community, which she characterizes as an ecumenical, faith-based group originally founded to do "acts of resistance to the nuclear arms race within a liturgical response during the church year." The community, based in the city's Catholic Worker House, has broadened its agenda since its inception, she noted, to include issues such as U.S. involvement in Central America and, more recently, the Persian Gulf war.

When she joined the community, she said, "It was a relief to be able to express politics from a Christian point of view."

She met her husband through community meetings held at his house. When they were both arrested during a 1983 Advent action against a local arms manufacturer, romance blossomed as they wrote letters back and forth in jail, and tried to sit next to each other in court. They married in the fall of 1984.

She and her family live in a low-income, racially-mixed neighborhood. She explained that staying in the inner city comes out of "a consistency of values" to live simply and to focus on justice and peace issues both at home and abroad.

Living in Detroit, a city largely abandoned by industry and the middle-class, plagued by unemployment, drugs and one of the highest murder rates in the country, made Wylie-Kellermann and other activists aware that "while we were protesting injustice in Central America, we were living in a city where

kids are also in pain, where kids are also dying every single day."

She said that she looked forward to editing *THE WITNESS* because, "I have the greatest respect for its 75-year history and the remarkable job it's done of standing with the oppressed and outcast, and its prophetic tradition."

She said that disillusionment with the bigotry and rigidity of mainstream media caused her to take her journalism career in another direction. However, she did so reluctantly, she said, "Because I still have the feeling that if Gospel convictions are going to fly, they will fly in the 'real world,' too."

However, she added, "My experience in secular media showed that they have a very small newshole and what they are willing to print is usually biased."

Citing the importance of publications like *THE WITNESS*, Wylie-Kellermann quoted a former CIA researcher who went to work for *Soujourners*. "He said, 'Power is the ability to control people's reality. The biggest threats to the Pentagon's version of reality are the small religious communities and the alternative press.' "

TW

Hart Island

Today they are burying
the city's derelict dead.
There are no mourners,
no women bringing spices:
only these prisoners
from a city gaol,
digging a final home
for the homeless,
chalking their names
on the pine coffins.
There is no need
for seal or guard
on this Island sepulchre:
and on the third day
no stone will be rolled away.

Godfrey Wilson

(Hart Island, near Ellis Island in New York Harbor, is the "potter's field" for New York City. Prisoners from Rikers Island dig the graves.)

Remembrance, pain and hope

by Dorothee Sölle



On the night of Nov. 14, 1940, the Anglican Cathedral town of Coventry, England was carpet-bombed for 11 hours straight after Adolf Hitler selected it to be an example of how German military might intended to break the spirit of the English people. The morning after, as townspeople gathered at the smoking ruins of ancient St. Michael's Cathedral, a caretaker said, "We cannot respond to this in hatred." Thus was born the idea of a ministry of reconciliation, founded by a now-international community of prayer and reconciliation called the Cross of Nails after a simple crucifix fashioned out of nails salvaged from the shell of the old Cathedral. After the war, when a new modern Cathedral was built next to the ruin, among the first guests invited were Germans. The following article is excerpted from a lecture delivered by noted German theologian Dorothee Sölle last year at ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombing.

It is not easy to be German in this century, carrying the burden of collective shame and responsibility. I would like to introduce to you my generation of German intellectuals, writers and artists, by recalling the haunting question under which we started our spiritual journey. It has been a question that took at least 10 years of my young adulthood and will never leave me.

Today, living in a world of confused spiritual orphans, I sometimes feel that legacy of this frightening and unanswerable quest has given us a certain advantage over the generation of young people now wrestling with a thousand questions. We who were 15 years old when the war ended had but one question we asked our fathers and mothers, our teachers and professors, our textbooks and traditions: "How could it have happened?"

The most terrifying responses went like this: "We didn't know." "We had no Jewish friends." "We heard rumors but never saw those things with our own eyes." These were not isolated responses. We heard them over and over again.

I got my hands burned touching these responses because I knew they were evasive self-protecting lies people used to claim their innocence. They preferred to plunge into oblivion.

During the controversy surrounding President Reagan's 1985 visit to the Bitburg military cemetery, Chancellor Helmut Kohl contended that he could not be held responsible for the events of 1933-45 on the basis of the "grace of being born too late" and thus was too young to share responsibility — an outrageous use of the theological concept of grace.

What "grace" is he talking about? Can there be a grace that never saw the night the people in Coventry endured? Is grace to be restricted to the daylight only? My sense of this is that "God is memory," to borrow a phrase from process theology.

In other words, to live in oblivion is to separate oneself from God. There is no grace in being born late. Grace shines through those who do remember, but living in the limbo of oblivion is to dismember oneself from God.

We need re-membering in the most literal sense of the word: making us into members of the human family again. This is specifically true today, as a new page in the book of history is opened before our eyes. What is the spiritual meaning of the reunification of Germany? Will it kill the process of remembrance? Will it legitimize German and Western militarism, including the export of arms and atomic and chemical technologies? Will Germany's unified economic power increase our capacity to exploit the poor in the Third World? In other words, will we Germans dismember ourselves again and live with the arrogance of economic power?

There were times in my life when I doubted the possibility of re-membering my German people into the human family. Yet shame is, as the great 19th century Jewish thinker Karl Marx says, a revolutionary virtue. It leads beyond the status quo. The shame we were born with has transformed in an essential way the theology of my generation. What do we have to say about pain and suffering, about innocent people killed in Coventry and elsewhere? Do we have to accuse God? Can we defend God? Historical experience has shaped our theology, especially the concept of God's acting in history.

In a recent conversation about God being the all-powerful ruler, a young woman from an evangelical perspective remarked, "Auschwitz was God's will. Otherwise it would not have happened." When questioned, she added, "God has created the world and us without asking our opinion. He can act as it pleases him. Our task is to glorify him nevertheless." In these words I heard a traditional timeless theology, untouched by reality and

conceived in a coldness free from pain and love. The young woman identified God with Fate, and obviously believed more in the power of destiny than in God's love. Her God has become a sadist.

I suppose Christian theology has to pose the question of human suffering anew after Auschwitz and Coventry, Hiroshima and Chernobyl, to name just a few. What is the role of the theologian after such events?

I like to speak of God's pain — *der Schmerz Gottes*. I am not speaking of something God could do away with or avoid. If we speak of God's pain, then we have another concept of God than the purely masculine one. This God is our mother who weeps over the things that we do to each other and to the animals and the plants. God comforts us like a mother. She cannot make the pain go away by magic — although occasionally that happens — but she holds us in her lap until we stand up again with renewed strength.

God could not comfort us if she were not connected to us in pain, if she did not have this wonderful and rare ability to feel another's pain in her own body. To have compassion means to suffer with, to be present. The Gospels describe Jesus as one who has this ability. If Jesus is there when someone is slapped in the face, Jesus winces and feels the blow. If someone is lied to, Jesus is there with the need for truth. If a whole people is trampled down by the brutal might of the empire, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

I have just said in a realistic and limited way, "if Jesus is there when these things happen." But now let us try to think of God, and we can remove this limitation. *All* who suffer are in the presence of God. There is no longer any "if." God does not forget.

The religious question of suffering is not the one we so often hear: "How could God allow this to happen?" but rather one we have yet to learn: "How

does our pain become God's pain?"

Before we can think of God's pain and our pain together, we must learn to distinguish between them. The New Testament is very clear on this point. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul distinguishes between "worldly grief" and "godly grief." Worldly grief, Paul says, produces death. It knows no hope and leads to nothing. When I think about worldly grief, I think of the dreadful diseases spreading among us, like alcoholism, anorexia, and workaholism, to name a few. These diseases arise in a climate of affluence, which manipulates our non-material needs so they are transformed into addictions.

Paul contrasts this worldly grief with another kind: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret." (II Cor. 7:10.) What is this godly grief which does not just revolve around itself but calls forth conversion? How is our pain, so often expressed only in worldly grief, different from God's pain?

Is not each pain, each heavy suffering, each kind of torture and torment, such an unbearable misfortune that we should combat it with all means available to us? That is the response of an atheistic consumer culture which says, "Take a pill. Get rid of it right away." Suffering is pushed away like a bothersome shadow. Human beings are thought of as machines — they function, they produce, or they are broken, don't work anymore, and need new parts or must be replaced. This technocratic model dominates our thinking. A machine feels no pain. There are some theologians who seem to conceive of God as an indestructible giant machine, which will presumably continue to function even after a nuclear war and the destruction of creation.

I can see how such fantasies of God perfectly express God's might, greatness and independence, and yet I can't find in this way of thinking any hint of God's pain and God's connectedness. I find it

difficult within such a system of thought to believe in God's love. The totally transcendent God is not bound to us through pain, and Paul's distinction between worldly grief and godly grief loses its meaning if there is no sorrow dwelling in God.

Paul mentions to the Corinthians the fruits which God's grief has called forth in them. "For see what eagerness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment." (II Cor. 7:11.) That the guilty are called to account is certainly one aspect of this blessed grief.

Would the Argentine "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," who call for the punishment of those who tortured and murdered their family members, partake in God's pain? Would all those in Argentina and West Germany who want to let the past rest in peace close themselves off from the pain of God? Yes, this is what the Bible means — if we do not participate in God's pain, then we do not partake of God.

Godly grief arises from God's pain over a barbaric world filled with injustice and the destruction of life. To participate in this pain of God means to become aware of the grief of God. Accordingly, signs of godly grief, or the sorrow that God wants, are: to become outraged, to engage in resistance, to long for change and force it to come about, to call the guilty to account. This grief does not just brood over itself. It is the kind of grief we find in the hearts of those who resist the extermination of creation and the plundering of the poor. It is the grief that was in Martin Luther King and Dag Hammarskjöld, the outrage, which cannot be lulled to sleep, over the brutality of a system that does not participate in God's pain and refuses to believe in God's vulnerability.

In John's Gospel, Christians in first-century Palestine experienced their day-

to-day lives as prisons of fear. Life is hopeless. Mary Magdalene, weeping inconsolably over Jesus' murder, is the clearest witness to the pain. Mary Magdalene neither accuses nor defends God; she weeps, which means she is deep in God. To accuse — or defend — she would have to have distance from God. She would have run away like the male disciples. But she is in God's pain and surrounded by it. "Truly, truly, I say to you," says Christ, "you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice." (John 16:20.)

The world rejoices in the triumphal march of the Roman Caesars when yet another people is forced to its knees, pil-

"Will Coventry be a symbol of the past, or will to 'conventrize' a city, a region or a country be a word of the future because of our silence?"

laged, raped and sold into slavery. The world rejoices in the glittering gladiatorial combats and sports shows the Romans hold to distract people from the misery of hunger. "You will weep and lament," because in a world of legalized violence, each word which speaks seriously of justice and peace is clubbed down and mocked. The Romans knew exactly what a threat the Christian community posed to the politico-religious state consensus.

Visiting El Salvador helped me to understand the New Testament better. In this tiny country, under the military boot of the empire, the poor weep and lament when their harvests are burned, their teachers and trade unionists abducted and disappear, when the secret service and security forces routinely torture prisoners for weeks. "You will weep, but the world will rejoice." Meanwhile, television there, firmly in the hand of the empire and its local collaborators, broad-

casts sports programs and fashion shows.

In El Salvador, the pain of the poor is also God's pain. God suffers with them and transforms their pain. God will liberate them and heal the land. The most important image the Bible uses for God's pain in the world is an image from the experience of women, that of giving birth. (*John 16:20.*)

How does this transformation from fruitless, senseless pain to the pain of God happen? How do people move from the pain which crushes their hearts to the labor pains which lead to birth? How is our pain connected to God's pain?

I don't think it's possible to transform worldly grief into joy. That would be too much to ask, as though we could simply rearrange a grief deep as an abyss. It would also be too little to ask, because it would only replace worldly grief with worldly joy, which is essentially the joy of having, possessing, using and consuming. I think our task is to transform worldly grief into the pain of God.

With God's pain I have experienced something unusual. Without soothing, dulling or lying about the pain, I have been brought into a deep joy. It is as though I had touched the power of life which is also in pain — pain, after all, is life's protest against illness and death.

I am not speaking of an automaton God who after pain sends joy and after rain, sun; rather, I see the sun *in* the rain. I don't want to look for this power outside of pain, for that would mean separating myself from God and betraying God's pain. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." (*Is. 9:1.*) Where does such a sentence come from, if not out of the pain of God? How can we see darkness and light together, if not in the one who embraces both?

The questions of suffering upon which western European Christians must reflect today are not just, "How shall I bear my pain? How shall I deal with my loneli-

ness, my fear, my illness?" These individual human questions can be answered entirely within the framework of the self-help boom, in which individuals whirl from group to group, from personal growth experience to personal growth experience, from encounter to encounter. The task of theology is not to follow the wisdom of this world, pastorally useful though this may be.

If we want to move from worldly grief to godly grief, then we must learn to become aware of God's pain. Then our questions will be, "How do I conduct myself toward the nameless suffering which I cause? What stand do I take toward the business deals my bank carries out in cooperation with torturers and racists? How do I deal with the large-scale destruction of foodstuffs? How am I tied in with the war industry? How much energy do I consume, and at what cost? How much longer can I stand to be an accomplice in a system of injustice?"

All these questions belong within the question of suffering. We cannot afford to stick these questions in a "political" box, and our personal questions about suffering in a different box, as though we could keep our entire relationship with God in a little box marked "Private." If we think this way, then we take away from God the possibility of drawing our pain into God's pain; we make ourselves incapable of taking part in God's pain and experiencing it as the labor pangs of birth.

We do not want to relieve the grief of this world and our pain with the methods of this world, with tranquilizers. For God calls us in the midst of our pain to God's kingdom. God wants reunification of all our separations. God's pain originates in separation of human beings from their siblings.

Listening to God's cry means entering into the process of reconciliation between ourselves and our neighbors. It is a call to resist the war against the poor, to undermine the walls and ghettos we

construct for self-protection, to reverse the so-called "military-related" research and industry, to stand up for a different economic world order.

We live in a time of a new concentration of power in Europe, a power that threatens rather than invites and reconciles the poor nations. Will Coventry be a symbol of the past, or will to "conventrize" a city, a region or a country be a word of the future because of our silence and cynical resignation about the crimes we commit?

We should nourish our hopes and gather the good news in our surroundings. But we cannot make ourselves completely dependent on the results of our own actions. Under the spell of being successful we are still in Egypt.

Many times interviewers have asked me after I participated in actions like blockading a military camp where chemical weapons were stored, "Do you really think you will succeed by actions such as this?" I try to explain that there are things in life you have to resist on behalf of your own dignity.

There is a cynic in me who knows how useless non-violence and civil disobedience are, but there is "that of God" as well. And God loves the world and asks me to do so, too. Sometimes I reach that point of no return with others involved in justice and peace struggles. Then we act, inside or outside the law. We learn resistance, create islands of freedom from the need to exploit and destroy. There is this indestructible hope, hidden in all of us.

Let me remind you of the words of St. Augustine, who said that hope has two lovely daughters, anger and courage. Anger so that what cannot be, may not be and courage so that what must be, will be. Many of us lost hope for a more just and loving world because we lost sight of the two daughters. We need both anger and courage, just as we need God's remembrance, God's pain, and God's hope.

TW

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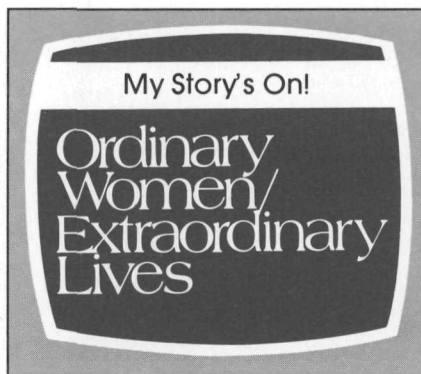
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Sue Hiatt

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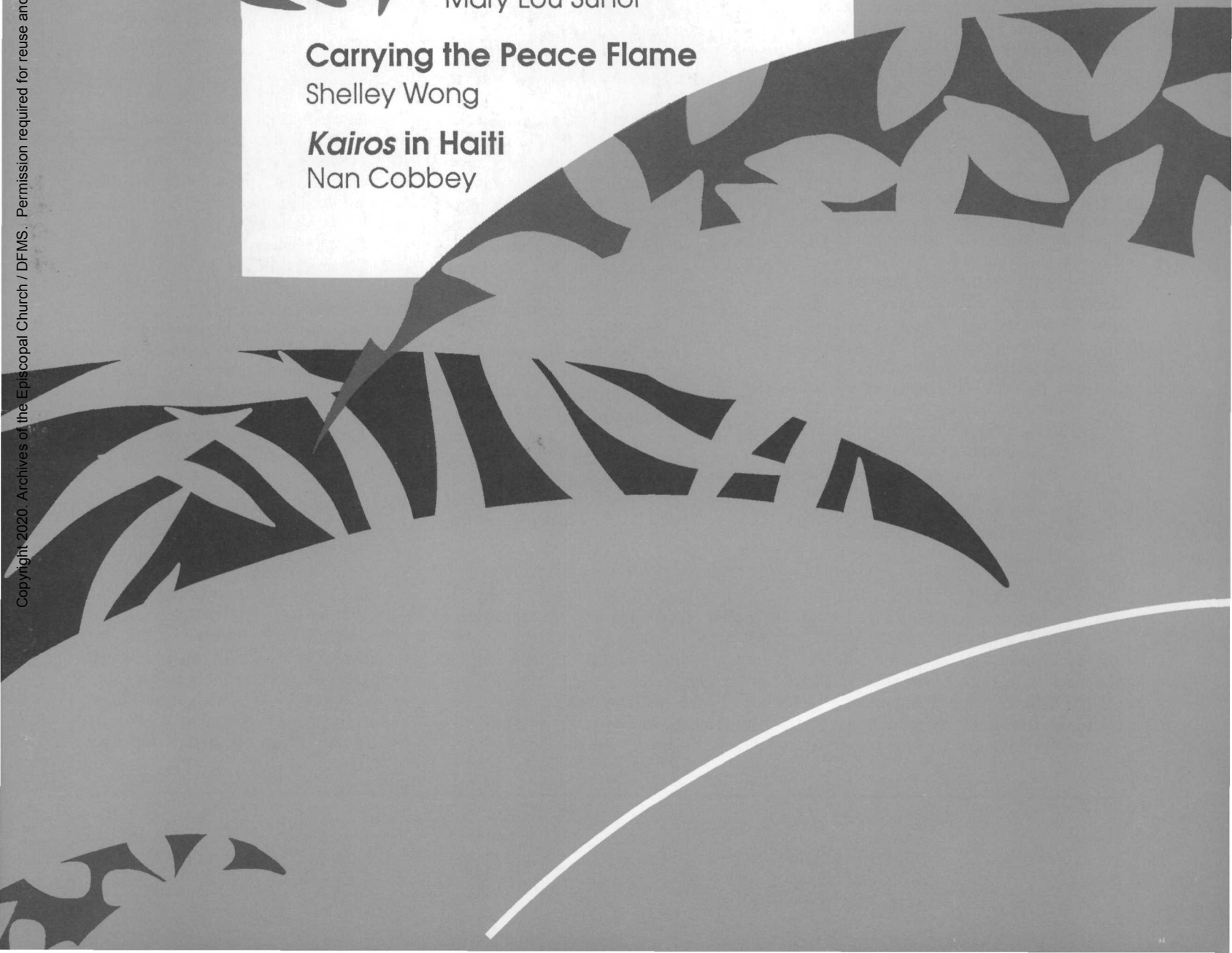
Mary Lou Suhor

Carrying the Peace Flame

Shelley Wong

***Kairos* in Haiti**

Nan Cobbey



Letters

Her kind of priest

I wish to express strong support for the articles by Charles Meyer — both the one on the afterlife and the one in the February issue entitled “Hastening the inevitable.” I do so as a recently bereaved person who has volunteered for hospice work.

I shall confine my remarks here to the article on the afterlife. I do not have it anymore for ready reference because I have passed it on to someone, saying that it was the best thing on the subject that I have ever read.

Charles Meyer’s remarks hit me in the solar plexus because they expressed exactly the way I have felt about these things for many years. What struck me was that the article was refreshingly free of the conventional Christian dogmas about the need for Christ in salvation.

Here there was no dogma, no conventional Heaven or Hell, no requirement of blind faith.

I originally got this idea from a traditional Christian author, Dante — not from his Scholastic philosophy, nor from the vivid descriptions in the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* or *Paradiso*, but rather from that one concept that outshines all the poetry and the theology: the Beatific Vision. The Beatific Vision is given, I believe (and I would gather that Charles Meyer does, too), to anyone who fervently seeks the Light, who in seeking the Light will endeavor to walk in the Light — regardless of the person’s sectarian beliefs, race, nationality or class, and regardless of whatever evil that person may have done in the past. The fact that the light is “the Light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world,” may be unknown to the person who experiences it. To the Christ who is that Light, I believe, that is unimportant.

I found it difficult to believe that the various critics of the Charles Meyer ar-

ticle had really read it. Perhaps they just read the title and assumed it would be “the same old churchy stuff.”

I believe, contrary to the reader who wrote from New Jersey, that Charles Meyer is exactly the kind of priest that I will want at my bedside when the time comes — either his kind, or a Quaker.

Virginia Gunn
Nottingham, Pa.

Irritated by IRA story

St. Mary’s Library has been receiving *THE WITNESS* for a good number of years, and I read it with interest and appreciation. But I find myself irritated at Robert Hirschfield’s story sympathetic to the widow and children of an IRA member slain unarmed by the British in Gibraltar in 1988. (February issue)

Granted that the British acted vengefully and probably unlawfully, and granted that the widow and children deserve concern and sympathy, there is no acknowledgment that the IRA has any responsibility for the results. Maybe that’s all author Hirschfield wanted to say, but given the long history of the IRA’s unrelenting senseless terror against innocent civilians — not just “tommies” — singling out this sad tale without comment ignores and trivializes the terror and death the IRA is responsible for in the first place.

The Rev. John M. Scott
Philadelphia, Pa.

Hirschfield responds

Reading John Scott’s letter, I am reminded of the time prior to the *Intifada* when journalists were reluctant to write sympathetically about the suffering of Palestinians under Israeli rule because the Jewish response would always be, “What about the terrorism of the PLO? Why don’t you write about that?”

I believe the suffering of Margaret McCann is not mitigated by her late husband’s membership in the IRA. I don’t believe she should have to endure conditional compassion because of the all too frequent killings of innocents by the IRA. Unfortunately, we are all at times prone to the kind of tit for tat thinking that trivializes human suffering and has done so much to exacerbate the situation in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and everywhere else.

Robert Hirschfield
New York, N.Y.

APSO backed CORA

The March issue is, as usual, great. I particularly appreciate your picking up on APSO’s statement in “What they’re saying about the war.” Would it be possible, however, to note that APSO endorsed or adopted the statement as it was written by the Appalachian Development Projects Committee of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (ADPC/CORA)? It is important that it be known that the churches were following the lead of the grassroots community groups with whom they are in partnership through CORA.

Sandra Majors Elledge
Communications Director, APSO
Blacksburg, Va.

War just and moral?

Thanks for the continued anti-war stance of *THE WITNESS*, especially appreciated since President George Bush said in his State of the Union message that the Gulf War is “just” and “moral.”

Oh, were it that simple and clear! Just a matter of an evil bully on a rampage, raping his helpless neighbor and needing to be stopped by Sir Galahad in shining armor. Such imagery makes it too easy for us and effectively avoids our own

moral struggle and tough questions:

- What about our "using" Saddam Hussein against Iran?

- What about the arming of Iraq by us and the Western Alliance?

- What about the curious selectivity in our righteous indignation over human rights abuses:

- Our own role in El Salvador (where military murders continue), with the Contras in Nicaragua, and elsewhere in Central America?

- Lack of relief for Panama's invasion victims? —

- Amnesty International-documented cruelties and abuses by nations we don't want to upset?

- Our own history of slavery, racism and invasion of Native American nations?

- Our neglect of the most needy and alienated at home, and the torture and cruelties resulting from this neglect?

- What about the unrepentant glee over exorbitantly priced high-tech weaponry?

- What about the suspicion that this war was carefully planned even before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait — from the statement of our ambassador to Iraq that the United States would look the other way in regard to Kuwait — to the rhetoric painting Saddam Hussein into a corner — to refusing to deal with the Palestinian question — and finally to handing Saddam martyrdom power on a silver platter?

We have put the spotlight on the speck in Saddam's eye (and it IS a brutal one). But in so doing, we have neatly blinded ourselves to the hefty logs in our own eyes.

The murder, mayhem, destruction, suffering and alienation caused and to be caused by this war have yet to be recog-

nized or fully realized. When they are we'll be like that pathetic figure in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel painting of the Last Judgment, holding his face in shock and horror.

The Rev. Henry L. Bird
Richmond, Maine

Litany on Gulf weather

I would like to share with THE WITNESS this Litany I composed on the occasion of hearing the Persian Gulf weather forecast on local TV:

2/6/91 "Clouds over Saudi Arabia. A little snow possible over the mountains of Iraq. But then clearing. Should be a nice day in Riyadh and Baghdad. Locally cloudy and a chance of rain at the Coast."

So matter of fact. So business as usual. It made my gut wrench! What has become of us? What has become of us all?

I will not accept it.

I will not say, "How nice!"

They'll have good weather tomorrow when they blow the *hell* out of each other!"

Hear us good Lord.

Save your people.

From acceptance of war

Good Lord, deliver us.

From complacency when streets run with blood

Good Lord, deliver us.

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From closing our eyes to the nightmare that surrounds us,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From turning away from reality

Good Lord, deliver us.

From self-righteous pity and imagined innocence

Good Lord, deliver us.

Hear us, good Lord.

Save your people. Amen.

Anne Geiger Graham
Cannon Beach, Ore.

No thanks

After I get through financially supporting the *Christian Challenge*, the *Advocate* (Episcopalians United), *Foundations* (Episcopal Synod of America), *The Trinitarian* (Anglican Catholic Church), and *Ecclesia* (American Episcopal Church), I just don't have the resources nor the inclination to pay any attention to publications such as yours.

The Rev. Clayton T. Holland
Bonham, Texas

Moved by conflict

As a first time reader of THE WITNESS, I was impressed with the March issue as a whole, and especially moved by the article "Protesting the Gulf War with Becca" with the soul-touching description of a parent's deeply felt emotional conflict. The writer was torn between a desire to teach a heart-felt belief while at the same time dealing with the fear of all that the reality of this teaching holds for this child's life.

As a Mennonite myself, I was encouraged and inspired by the fact that an Episcopalian magazine published a Mennonite writer, given the stormy history of our two churches' relationship in the past.

Diane Alderfer Kropf
Harleysville, Pa.

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THE WITNESS



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Transform the 'culture of death'

The shadow of the Persian Gulf war has loomed large over life in the United States and the Middle East, but was also a brooding presence at the recent World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia. Particularly striking was a keynote address by Korean feminist theologian Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung on the assembly theme, "Come, Holy Spirit, renew the whole creation." Her presentation included liturgical dance based on traditional Korean forms and a ritual where she read a list of martyrs and then set the list aflame. She removed her shoes to honor the spirits of Australia's aboriginal people and asked the audience to follow her example.

Chung is a citizen of a country that has suffered devastating war, occupation and colonial exploitation. The following excerpts of her testimony are powerful indictments of the "new world order" and a call to First World people to repent and join in a world community devoted to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

I came from Korea, the land of spirits full of *Han*. *Han* is anger. *Han* is bitterness. *Han* is grief. *Han* is broken-heartedness and the raw energy for struggle for liberation. In my tradition people who were killed or died unjustly became wandering spirits, the *Han*-ridden spirits . . . Without hearing the cries of these spirits we cannot hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. From my people's land of *Han*-filled spirits I came to join with you in another land of spirits full of *Han*, the spirits of the indigenous people, victims of genocide . . . I wish I could celebrate our coming together, but my heart is overwhelmed with sadness due to the war in the Persian Gulf.

This is a time to weep. The cries of mothers, wives and children who lost their beloved in the war break our heart. Now we need a wailing wall in order to weep with them . . . In the midst of this senseless destruction of life with billion dollar war machines, we call upon the Spirit who "intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (*Rom. 8:26*). We pray to the Spirit asking her help desperately, "Come Holy Spirit. Renew our whole creation."

But what do we mean by this prayer? "Oh God! We messed up again. Come and fix up all our problems." Are we saying "Come Holy Spirit, stop the Gulf War and repair the ecological catastrophe," or are we saying "Oh God, we

know you are the strongest warrior, so powerful — we are sure your armament is stronger than Saddam or Bush"? . . . Isn't this our temptation, to remain in our passivity, using prayer as an excuse not to struggle in solidarity with all forms of life? . . . I know there is no magic solution to human sinfulness and healing our wounds. I also know that I no longer believe in an omnipotent, macho warrior God who rescues all good guys and punishes all bad guys. Rather I rely on the compassionate God who weeps with us for life in the midst of cruel destruction.

The spirit of this compassionate God has been always with us from the time of creation. God gave birth to us and the whole universe with her life-giving breath — *Ruach* — the wind of life . . .

However, what we see around us in this time are the signs of death . . . What makes us separated from this life-giving breath of God? I want to call it the unholy spirit of Babel. It is a spirit of so-called upward mobility, acquisitiveness and division. Our brother Jesus called this greedy acquisitiveness "Mammon" . . . This evil spirit produces nuclear bombs and chemical weapons to keep its peace without justice.

Mammon is active not just in the Gulf but everywhere. It is in the division of North and South Korea; apartheid in South Africa; genocide of indigenous

people in Australia, the Americas and many other parts of the world; devaluation of women and children, people of color and differently-abled people. . . and finally, the ecocide of our earth. This is the same evil spirit that crucified Jesus on the cross . . .

What is happening right now in the Persian Gulf is the best example of the "culture of death" . . . Who goes to war and sheds their blood? They are mostly young people from poor families. Many of them are people of color. Why do they go to war? For the economic and political interests of the few in power . . .

War is the consequence of the patriarchal culture of "power-over" . . . Women know that patriarchy means death. When their men shed blood, women shed tears. Their powerful tears have been the redemptive, life-giving energy for the tearless men's history. Only when we have the ability to suffer with others can we transform the culture of death into the culture of life . . . The movement for justice, peace and a healthy ecology is a movement for life . . .

Dear sisters and brothers, with the energy of the Holy Spirit lets us tear apart all the walls of division and the culture of death which separate us. And let us participate in fighting for our life on earth in solidarity with all living beings and building communities for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Inauguration is *kairos* moment in Haiti

by Nan Cobbey

When radical Roman Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide became president of Haiti, where opulence lives next door to penury, the mighty were put down from their thrones and the last became first. His inauguration Feb. 7 was a moment of *kairos*, one of those special times when divine judgement and grace unite.

For the rest of our lives, those of us present will remember the joy of watching this meek-looking priest take over the reins of government, leaving behind the cruelty, cynicism and corruption of the regimes of "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son, "Baby Doc."

The poor of this Caribbean nation, despised for nearly two centuries and thought by the rich to be too immature for democracy, braved the threat of violence to vote last December. They chose by an overwhelming majority the one they believe will never let them down.

Aristide is their priest and prophet who stands by them even at the risk of his priesthood, often at the risk of his life. He denounces injustice, names the guilty, and teaches the people to see clearly the roots of their oppression.

Affectionally known as "Tiuid," he is now Haiti's 40th president and in a position to turn the established order upside down.

The day of his inauguration he declared to his people — brutalized for over 30 years by the *Tonton Macoutes*, the terror squads of the Duvalier dictatorship — that not one more drop of blood was to be shed.

Nan Cobbey lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. and is Features Editor for *Episcopal Life*. She spent two years in Haiti as a Volunteer For Mission.

The next day he led tens of thousands onto the grounds and into the cells of the infamous Fort Dimanche where the Duvaliers tortured and killed as many as 60,000 of their political enemies. Under banners that read "*Jamais plus*" (Nevermore), survivors and families of victims reclaimed their sense of freedom and dignity. Aristide pledged to turn the place into a museum, a permanent reminder of what must never be allowed to happen again.

The Sunday after his inauguration, the new president invited the poor to the palace for breakfast. So many came the event was moved out to the courtyard where, before the TV cameras of the world, Aristide told the comfortable in his country and in the Haitian diaspora: "Listen. You can hear the voices of God in the voices of the poor. I want you to hear those voices."

One by one he invited guests to come forward. He held the microphone for them as they told what their lives were like, what their hopes were. One man with no fingers or feet, who lived on the busy Rue Pavee in downtown Port-au-Prince and begged from passing cars, pleaded for a chance to work his own bit of land. Even without fingers, he said, he could plant plantain.

With his arm encircling the man's shoulders, Aristide spoke directly to the wealthy, encouraging a response, encouraging involvement, saying that by working together Haitians can solve their own problems. Then, in a gesture that left no doubt how he views his new role, Aristide lifted one of the bowls to be served to his guests, walked across the lawn, knelt in front of a woman going blind, and fed her breakfast.

The 37-year-old Aristide is 5-foot-4,

slight, bespectacled, soft-spoken, gentle. But he is fire in human form the minute he opens his mouth. He can blast the corruption of his country's government, the imperialism of the United States, and the thievery of the powerful in every nation with impassioned eloquence.

In 1987, with the economy deteriorating and violence mounting, he challenged his congregation to take historic risks, saying, "This is the time of resurrection for our people. It is the theology of liberation we are talking about . . . it is coming to fruition with this generation, a generation pitting itself against a corrupt system, against a mentality in church and society that allows some to sit in comfort while millions suffer. Our history today is that of the Jews who refused to be slaves."

Such words win him few friends among the powerful. His own order — the Salesians — expelled him in 1988 for his political preaching. Since he started his denunciations five years ago, Aristide has been surrounded with enemies. He has survived a series of assassination attempts, seen his church burned and his congregation brutally attacked (12 killed, 70 wounded trying to protect him), but he seems to fear no one.

And yet this man can sit in front of the TV cameras of the world with tears streaming down his face and talk about his grief for the four children burned to death at *Lafamni Selavi* (Family is Life), the hostel he founded for street children in the capital. The hostel was set on fire in the middle of the night, five days before his inauguration.

At the funerals, he spoke to his nation first as priest, crying, praying for the strength to love those who hate him and asking God not to let the people who

chose him be discouraged or hurt by his sufferings; then as prophet, accusing those who wounded him of cowardice; then as president, dry-eyed and forceful, pledging a new era of democracy and peace.

This is the man who is leading the nation, and for whom hundreds of thousands of poor people cleaned the streets of a capital city drowning in garbage because few public services had been performed for months. In each tiny village and town, hundreds of freshly-painted murals of him, symbols of his campaign, and the Creole proverbs he used to enliven and inspire them, appeared on newly white-washed walls. The proverbs teach of working together, building a future, depending on one another, learning about each other's burden.

The word *lavalas*, is seen frequently. This Creole word means literally, "torrent, a rush or flood of water." It is used in reference to the vast masses rising up to reclaim their freedom and their country. Symbolically and spiritually, the word means a torrential sweeping away, cleaning out of corruption, of evil, of all that would sully the freshness of this new day.

Since its adoption as motto for the election campaign, *lavalas* is part of every blessing, greeting and description of hope. It appears on walls, on headbands, on T-shirts on banners and has even been added to a beloved Creole proverb that is now the rallying cry of this new movement:

*"Yon sel nou fèb
Ansanm nou fò
Ansanm, ansanm nou se
lavalas!"*

(Alone we're weak

Together we're strong
All of us together are *lavalas*!)

The day Aristide was inaugurated president — five years to the day after "Baby Doc" Duvalier fled — was a national holiday. No businesses opened, no public or private transportation was permitted into the city center. The streets belonged to the people and hundreds of thousands took them over, waiting in front of the Legislative Palace where he would be sworn in, in front of the Cathedral where a Mass would be sung in his honor, and at the National Palace where he would address the country as the first democratically elected president in Haiti's history.

The speech was a masterpiece, delivered in Creole, the language of the people, and not in French, the language of the elite. Aristide, who speaks six languages, called forth the pride and joy of a people too long ignored by their leaders. He reminded them of their glorious

history and heroes. He tapped their collective memory and affirmed their struggle. Most important, he entered into dialogue, calling forth from them the words that told how they would build their common future.

"Titid" and his people reminded each other what they believed above all else: "Alone we're weak, together we're strong, all of us together are *lavalas*."

Over and over they chanted it. Hands clasped and raised above their heads in great chains, they sang this promise and commitment to each other.

There will be plenty of sacrifices ahead for this nation of 6 million. The new Aristide government faces a budget deficit projected at \$20 million, depleted foreign reserves, declining agricultural production, ecological devastation and desperately inadequate health care.

But this sunny afternoon at the presidential palace was a celebration of hope. Aristide reminded the populace of the



New President of Haiti Jean-Bertrand Aristide feeding woman at inauguration

words their ancestors sang during the 13-year struggle for freedom and independence at the turn of the 18th century: "*Libete ou lanmo*" (Liberty or death). He told them that today the cry must be "*Demokrasi ou lanmo*" (Democracy or death).

He delighted the youth in his audience by teasing them into a rhythmic question-response about their values and their future. "Would you live in a dog-eat-dog world?"

"No!"

"Would you walk together, supporting each other, loving each other?"

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Yes!"

He paused. "Do you feel the blood of Charlemagne Peralte running through your veins?"

The thunderous response left no doubt that the young intend to live up to the valiant example set them by Peralte, the freedom fighter killed by U.S. occupation forces in 1919.

At the Cathedral just a few hours earlier, the president of the Conference of Bishops, Monsignor Leonard Petion Laroche, had compared Aristide to Moses. Now, before the microphone on the palace steps, facing a crowd that stretched as far as you could see — this priest-become-president sounded like Moses.

He was calling his people to be a family. He told them with breathtaking directness, "I love you . . . I can't keep myself from telling you, re-telling you, telling you, re-telling you 77 times 7 times."

Calling out over the heads of foreign dignitaries, guests and journalists directly to his real audience — the poor and the peasants — he said, "No amount of time would be enough, no bow of honor low enough to salute you. It is through your grace that we are fed. I may be here, speaking to you from the National Palace, but it is not the National Palace that gives us our yams, plantains don't grow in the National Palace; no one plants corn at the National

Palace. It is your gardens in every corner of this land, watered with your sweat, that feed this nation."

He made it very clear with whom he stood. "I will be asking the legislature to cut my salary. Pay me 50 *kob* (10¢). Pay me 10 *gourdes* (\$2). Pay me whatever, but a salary of \$10,000 a month is a scandal in a country where so many have no food, have no work." (*The Haitian dollar is pegged to the U.S. dollar and has equivalent value — Ed.*)

He paid homage to the women of Haiti, praising them for enabling Haiti to have life, to build democracy, to educate the children. Then, in the final chapter of this remarkable dialogue, he demonstrated his daring and his faith. He spoke a "message of love" to Lt. Gen. Herard Abraham, the head of the armed forces, who had put down a January coup attempt and saved him the presidency. And he announced that the long-awaited "marriage" between the Army of Haiti and the people of Haiti would be cele-



Aristide with Lt. Gen. Herard Abraham

brated from that day forward.

The marriage metaphor popularized during Aristide's campaign began to take on reality when, with a smile and a voice warm with emotion, the new leader said: "If you see a soldier in your neighborhood and he looks tired, give him a chair. If he looks thirsty, give him a drink. If he needs sleep, give him your *kabann* (bed). Because from today, the Army is wedded to us, our partner, bound to protect us from the *Macoutes* and *Zenglendes* (thugs)."

The soldiers standing in formation in the sun on the palace lawn were visibly moved. They were ready to hear him when he said, "Not one more drop of blood is to be spilled."

To Abraham, he gave the charge of making this peace a reality. Then Aristide told him he wanted the top generals — seven of them altogether — retired from service and he named their replacements. Within days, Abraham carried out Aristide's commands.

In the end, the three days following the inauguration became a time of transformation for the Haitian people. On the first day, crowds gathered at dawn for the march to Fort Dimanche. Thousands stayed at the prison complex for hours, fascinated, horrified, expectant. They seemed to be taking back what had been taken from them during the years of Duvalier brutality.

On the second day, the diaspora was invited to the palace and encouraged to come home, to invest in Haiti, to know they were welcome and needed.

On the third day, the poor came for breakfast with the president and were told the National Palace was theirs and they were to feel at home in it.

And everywhere, in the capital and the countryside, one saw the faces of hope, the faces of those who had been least and now were first in the heart of their new president.

May God help him — and keep him alive. TW

Short Takes

Be all that you can be?

The widely-held belief that service in the military can be economically and socially uplifting for the poor (if they don't get killed first) is sharply disputed by a new Defense Department study. A three-year study called Project 100,000 compared the post-military experiences of veterans who scored low on aptitude tests and were considered disadvantaged with a similar group of non-veterans and found that military service had provided "little, if any advantage" to the veterans.

Synapses Messages 1-2/91

Unhealthy ratio

The developing world has one soldier per 240 inhabitants and one physician per 1,950.

Bread for the World

Slap that wrist

How do you punish a white-collar criminal who happens to be the son of the president of the United States? Kindly and gently. An administrative law judge first recommended that Neil Bush, who helped cost taxpayers about \$1 billion as a director of the failed Silverado Savings and Loan in Colorado, be punished with a "cease and desist" order prohibiting him from violating S&L regulations in the future. The federal Office of Thrift Supervision thought the sentence too light, feeling that Bush should demonstrate that he fully understands conflicts of interest. As the *Wall Street Journal* paraphrased an agency spokesperson, Neil Bush should have to "take a class on ethical behavior or serve on a corporate board without incident." Tough or what?

Dollars and Cents 3/91

Woman's work is underpaid

Women college graduates have approximately the same earnings as men who are high school dropouts: the averages are \$20,000 per year for women with bachelor's degrees and \$19,000 per year for men with less than a 12th grade education.

Daughters of Sarah 1-2/91



America's incarceration addiction

The U.S. incarceration rate is not a reflection of the American crime rate, says Norwegian philosopher and criminologist Nils Christie. It is a reflection of America.

"I don't think you Americans realize," said Christie, a professor at the University of Oslo, "how extreme is your need to incarcerate."

Christie notes the U.S. has one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world. For every 100,000 citizens, 407 are in prisons or jails. That is nearly double the rate of 230 a decade ago. By comparison, the British rate is 100, the French 92, and the Norwegian, 47.

Whereas most people see imprisonment as a reaction to crime, Christie views it as a reflection of national character. What does it say about a country that overloads hundreds of prisons or jails, Christie asked.

Graterfriends 11/90

An unjustifiable war

If this war really was about Saddam Hussein's hatefulness, then we would have taken different sides in Central America, the Philippines, South Africa, Angola and many other places. If the war was about human rights abuses in Kuwait, how in the world would we justify our Central America policy?

**Margaret Swedish
Central America Report 2/91**

Blood for oil began on U.S. soil

The war for oil did not begin on Jan. 16, Aug. 2, or any other date in this century. The United States began fighting its petroleum wars in the 1890s in Oklahoma, and the Osage Nation was one of its chief targets. In the three decades after 1871, when Osages purchased a reservation from land they had previously sold to the Cherokee in Oklahoma, your government engaged in low-intensity warfare designed to undermine every effort by Osages to organize our own government and control our own resources.

**Robert Allan Warrior
Christianity & Crisis 3/4/91**

Recycling good for economy

The United States recycles about 22.6 million tons of paper a year. Recycling can provide 36 jobs for every 10,000 tons of material, as opposed to six jobs generated for every 10,000 taken to a landfill.

**Columban Justice and Peace
Newsletter 10/90**

Linda Backiel update

Defense lawyer and civil rights advocate Linda Backiel, jailed last December for refusing to betray confidentiality by answering questions before a federal grand jury about a former client, recently petitioned U.S. Federal District Court Judge Charles R. Weiner to release her. Stating that continued incarceration will not force her to testify, Backiel, a noted authority on grand jury abuse, was joined by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who urged the court to free her "in the interest of truth and the Constitution of the United States."

Among those participating in the petition was past grand jury resister Maria Cueto of Los Angeles, formerly on the staff at the Episcopal Church Center, who was twice imprisoned in the late 1970s and early 1980s for refusing in principle to testify before a federal grand jury allegedly investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement. Friends of the court briefs urging Backiel's release were filed by 18 organizations, including the ACLU of Pennsylvania.

Fight against apartheid not finished

by Manning Marable

In a major parliamentary address last month, South African President F. W. de Klerk announced the repeal of the last major elements of apartheid. Calling for the "elimination of racial discrimination," and the abolition of "injustice" and "tyranny," de Klerk called for the abolition of the Group Areas Act, which limits where non-whites are permitted to live; the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, which allocated 87% of the nation's land to whites; and the Population Registration Act, which categorized all South Africans in strict racial groups, required everyone to carry identification cards, and limited the rights and privileges of non-whites. The abolition of these repressive and anti-democratic provisions would establish the basis for constructing a real democracy.

De Klerk was widely praised for these bold pronouncements. The parliamentary walkout staged by the right-wing Conservative Party in protest of de Klerk's speech only reinforced the sharp break with legal racism that the president's address represented. This was the culmination of a series of governmental reforms over the past 12 months.

In February 1990, the African National Congress was legalized, and ANC leader Nelson Mandela was freed from prison after 27 years. In May, hospitals were technically opened to all ethnic groups. Last October, the Separate Amenities Act was repealed, which ended the legal basis for racial segrega-

tion in many public places. In February 1991, government officials announced that parents would no longer be required to state the race of their infants when registering births.

The Bush administration was quick to announce de Klerk's speech as "dramatic and far-reaching." Apartheid's old friends in the U.S. Congress and corporate community called for an end to sanctions against the regime. U.S. businesses began to talk of reinvesting in South Africa, and announced the death of the divestment movement.

But has the leopard really changed its spots? What is actually occurring inside South Africa is a desperate attempt by the white establishment to consolidate its power and privileges, while simultaneously transforming the political system to permit non-white participation — even opening up the possibility of a black president.

However, three years ago, then-President P. W. Botha announced the start of an official "privatization" program, which would sell off government-owned monopolies to white corporations. In Oc-



*often enough
their bodies
are broken
but nothing
can now break
their spirit*

FROM THE
KAIFOS DOCUMENT

Dr. Manning Marable, Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado, Boulder, is a contributing editor to THE WITNESS. His column, "Along the Color Line," appears in over 170 newspapers internationally.

tober 1989, the regime sold its Iron and Steel Corporation to private interests for over \$1.4 billion. To foster the development of a petty capitalist class among Africans, the government announced its intention to sell its breweries for African-style sorghum beer to blacks.

This rush towards privatization represents a sharp repudiation of past governmental policies by the ruling whites. Despite pro-capitalist rhetoric, the apartheid regime developed a series of powerful state-owned monopolies, including railroads, airports, telecommunications, petroleum pipelines, television and radio

stations, and harbors. Now that the specter of black domination of the government exists, whites want to push government-owned assets into private hands.

More ominously, South Africa has not moved to reform the system in all aspects. Many political prisoners still languish behind bars more than a year after Mandela's release. Two weeks after de Klerk's address, the South African police arrested 11,000 people in a two-day period. Although the massive arrests were declared to be aimed at violent crime, the ANC questioned the regime's motives and called for a breakdown by

race of all prisoners.

The struggle to abolish apartheid has two phases. The first phase, which is the outlawing of all discriminatory laws, is nearly complete. The second stage, the establishment of a political and economic democracy in which all citizens have opportunities for development, is just beginning.

The struggle to free South Africa isn't finished, and we have a political and moral responsibility to make sure that the Bush administration doesn't embrace the so-called "reforms" as the final phase of democracy in South Africa.

Archbishop Tutu calls for continued sanctions

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, head of the Anglican Church in South Africa, has announced his continued support of economic sanctions against South Africa to protest its policy of apartheid.

In a recent column written for the *Los Angeles Times* responding to the recent reforms proposed by South African President F. W. de Klerk, Tutu described de Klerk as "a bold, courageous reformer," but presented four conditions that would have to be met before Tutu would call for an end to sanctions:

- Schools must be open to all races without qualification, under one education ministry;
- All political prisoners must be freed and exiles allowed to return home under a general amnesty;
- The Population Registration Act — which classifies all South Africans according to race and undergirds white rule — must be abolished without qualification; and
- There must be a mechanism for negotiating a new constitution "which is representative of the people of South Africa and which does not allow groups defined by race or ethnicity to veto de-



Archbishop Desmond Tutu

cisions which are democratically reached."

Tutu said he was angered by the euphoric reaction of Western governments to de Klerk's announcement. He was particularly critical of the government's plan to replace the Population Registration Act with "transitional measures." Tutu denounced the announcement that the law would be repealed as a "stratagem."

U.S. sanctions cannot be lifted unless the law is repealed, Tutu insisted.

"A key reason for our demand for the repeal of the Act has been because it enables the exercise of political power to be limited on the basis of race," Tutu said.

"Yet the government clearly intends replacing the law with measures having substantially the same effect in that crucial area," Tutu continued. "The implications are that white South Africans will have the right to veto the terms of a new constitution. This is totally unacceptable."

Tutu also said de Klerk's proposal also did not deal with "the very serious questions raised by the government's use of police and army death squads," nor did it deal with the freeing of all political prisoners and the return of exiles "under a general amnesty."

"At its core, apartheid is not simply the segregation of facilities and suburbs," the Archbishop said. "It is the denial of political power to people on the basis of their race. This will be ended only when black South Africans have the vote, and the central thrust of our struggle against apartheid."

— **Episcopal News Service and Southern Africa Church News**

Thou shalt not kick butt

by Sue Hiatt

Listen to the words of a distinguished American, Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his old age recalling his youth and his generation's youth as soldiers in the Civil War: "We shared the incommunicable experience of War. We have felt, we still feel, the passion of life to its top . . . In our youth, our hearts were touched with fire."

For Holmes, perhaps for men always, war was an "incommunicable experience" — "the passion of life to its top." Recently, I heard Secretary of State James Baker speak of the passion that war engenders for him — "the deepest passions have been stirred" even in this apparently passionless man. For generations, perhaps even still among many men, war is apparently life's pinnacle — a "high" that most women don't understand. Perhaps our "high" is something else — giving birth? Motherhood? Nurturing children? In any case, love and war have been and are closely intertwined in the human heart, at least the male human heart. What are late 20th century Christians to make of this as we face the consequences of yet another war?

The Bible is, as always, of many minds on the subject, but certain passages are very clear. The prophet Micah speaks of the latter days — some distant eschaton when God's ways and laws will at last be in effect. Nations, confident of God's judgments solving their squabbles, will beat their swords into

plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and no one shall learn war anymore. War will be unnecessary and nobody will act out of fear. We will all sit under our own vines and fig trees at peace with each other forever.

Clearly this is a future the prophet longs to see — war has lost its thrill for Micah. But at the same time it is a future the prophet doesn't expect to see any time soon. Not until the nations come to the house of God and obey God's law. Not, in short, until human nature is redeemed by God.

Paul asks the Colossians to let the peace of Christ rule in their hearts — to forgive each other and above all to love

each other in mutual gratitude to God. (*Col. 3:12-15*) Paul envisions peace among the believers, not in some future time but here and now.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells the crowds assembled to hear him preach upon the mountain that they must love their enemies. This just after he has told them not to resist those who mean them ill, but to turn the other cheek when struck and to give away their cloaks to those who would rob them of their coats. When faced with murmurs at this radical teaching, Jesus reminds his hearers that they must behave better than other people. Believers must in fact be perfect, even as God is perfect. (*Matt. 5:38-48*)



The Rev. Suzanne R. Hiatt is Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.

There is not much confusion here about what Jesus thinks of violence, and by extension, war. Human nature is no excuse for violence toward others. Even self-defense is not sufficient provocation to fight; certainly hatred of an enemy is not. The dominical mandate, like much of the biblical witness, is clear. War is wrong — some might claim it as an occasional necessary evil, but the weight of the evidence is that it is always wrong.

Why then do we still engage in it? Why does a Christian leader of a great power see it as an acceptable tool of diplomacy and policy? When George Bush asked Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning for the Episcopal Church's blessing of his Persian Gulf War he didn't get that blessing, and Browning urged him to continue diplomatic efforts. Bush turned instead to another clergyman, Billy Graham, who blessed it willingly (there are always court prophets around if Elijah or Isaiah or Jeremiah say something you don't want to hear). But the president appears not to have been upset or alarmed by Bishop Browning's advice. He did not take it seriously since the church hasn't made its anti-war message very clear over the years.

In a way one can't blame him for not knowing that Christianity teaches that war is wrong. It hasn't taught that very often through the ages. In Bush's youth perhaps his heart, too, was touched by fire in World War II. A mere hundred years ago Holmes said that as a fighting man honed to kill other men, he "felt the passion of life to its top." That didn't, and still doesn't, raise many Christian eyebrows.

The churches, with the exception of the peace churches — the Society of Friends, the Mennonites and a few others — have been unable to absorb Jesus' message of non-violence and non-resistance. In recent years we have tacitly told people like George Bush that war is OK — not to be preferred, but acceptable behavior.

We've done this by supporting the military establishment with a far-flung chaplaincy program that includes a bishop for the Armed Forces. By contrast, early in this century another American bishop — Paul Jones of Utah — was tried and removed as diocesan for his pacifist positions.

We've done it by failing to speak out about the creeping militarism in this country. Forty-five years ago we forced upon Japan a constitution outlawing militarism — now we resent their not having to burden their economy with large military commitments.

We've done it by arguing a "just war" theology. We find cases when war is permissible rather than condemning it across the board and making exceptions only after the fact and in the presence of contrition — the way we deal with other forms of sin.

We've done it by not objecting to bellicose language in the domestic sphere — by supporting a "war on poverty" and a "war on drugs," by tittering when leaders and generals talk about "kicking butt" instead of challenging such de-meaning and violent language.

We've done it by not protesting over the past decade when war was used as an instrument of policy in Libya, Grenada and Panama and more subtly in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Many Christians, many Episcopalians don't believe war is wrong because we haven't preached that part of the Gospel. We've told them certain kinds of sexual behavior are wrong, we've even told them greed and stealing and murder are wrong, but we neglected to mention organized murder — war. Many good Christians, including Episcopalians George Bush and James Baker don't think war is always (or even often) wrong. As ministers of the Gospel we need to work on that.

Let us look again at what Jesus preached and lived. How could we have failed to notice, much less convey to

others, that Jesus' teaching includes non-violence, forgiveness and a constant striving for peace and justice?

We begin to redress the balance by asking God's forgiveness for our failure to speak out. We go on from there by praying to God for the strength to stand against each and every war and to offer our compatriots less evil alternatives for national leadership in the world.

A new world order can only come from new methods. Wars never solve problems; they only breed new ones. Any student of history knows that. For the love of God and out of respect for humanity let us say what Pope Paul VI declared in his stunning address to the United Nations General Assembly, "No more war — never again war." TW

Etiquette

Of course we raped her.
That's how it's done around here.
A stranger approaches.
Someone offers hospitality.
After dark the townsmen
pound on the door until the host
throws out his virgin daughter.
It's the mannerly thing.

The girls don't mind.
They want to maintain
the town's gracious name
as much as we do.

Word is spreading
about our village.
The strangers tell others
about our charity.
Our population's on the rise.
See all those fine boys
wrestling in the dirt?

You ask where the girls are.
Why would you want to know?
They're useless creatures, so
useless that even their mothers
cry when they're born.

May Jo Cartledge-Hayes

Herstory from Persian Gulf war zone

by Mary Lou Suhor

Since her safe return from the Persian Gulf, Agnes Bauerlein, mother of 11 and grandmother of 14, has dedicated herself to speaking engagements "to put a human face on a war in which thousands were slaughtered."

Unlike U.S. conquering heroes coming home eager to celebrate "a brilliant military victory," Bauerlein wishes all the yellow ribbons could be changed to black for mourning and purple for repentance, after what she witnessed in the war zone.

A peace activist who has been jailed many times for non-violent civil disobedience, Bauerlein left January 12 for the Persian Gulf Peace Camp in Iraq. She and 73 others went to interpose themselves between opposing armies at a site only one and a half miles from the Saudi Arabian border.

The group had celebrated Bush's "deadline" night of January 15 as it ended without incident. But when a steady drone awakened them the following night, the sound was all too familiar. Bauerlein wrapped her blanket around her, went outside, and wept. She had survived the bombing of her Nazi-occupied city of Nijmegen in Holland during World War II as a teenager, although she lost a sister, 18, and brother, 9, to British bombs in 1944. She wrote in her Gulf journal on January 16:

We awoke last night to the droning of airplanes overhead. I knew what that meant. It was 2:30 a.m.. We left our tents and gathered outside, and soon could see, in the direction of Baghdad, the night darkness light up from the explosions created by the bombs dropped on that poor city.

God help us all! We've gotten our-

selves into another bloody war. Unbelievable as that may seem, men's cold and hard hearts have not yet been touched or opened themselves to God's deep love for all. What our presence here now means, I don't quite know. We will suffer with the people, on all sides. The people, the poor people on all sides will suffer the most. God be with us in this dark hour . . .

Bauerlein had gone to the Bedouin-type encampment to spend three weeks as part of a creative peace initiative in the area. The desert site was formerly used as a stopover by Muslims enroute to Mecca. It consisted of corrugated tin roofs under which tents were pitched on a cement floor. Seven to fifteen campers shared a tent. From the campsite, Agnes, 62, wrote to Charles, her husband of 40 years:

Giving birth is a long and painful process, as I well know. The need to give birth to a presence of peace in the Gulf area became blatantly clear. A non-violent resolution to the conflict is the only answer. Pray God our mission will bear fruit.

After the first bombs fell, Bauerlein said, "I was overcome by an utter feeling of powerlessness. We had lost control of the situation, of our lives, and I didn't know if I would ever see my family again. It was only when I abandoned myself to God and said 'thy will be done' that a great peace came over me. I felt a bond at that moment with poor, powerless people all over the world who have no control over their lives either. One night one of the rockets came over our camp very low and exploded nearby, and I thought, this is it."

The peace activists dedicated themselves to the everyday operation of

maintaining their camp after war broke out, and to discussion of whether they would move if asked to leave. All were not of one mind about this.

"As I look back on it, we were a microcosm of the world," Bauerlein said. "We represented 17 nationalities and ranged in age from 22 to 79, the median age being 40. We were about equally divided, male and female. Among us were environmentalists, naturalists, secular humanists, people of faith. We were all agreed that war was not an option, that we were there to be a non-violent presence for peace. All of us were strong-willed, or we wouldn't be there. We soon found out that we had our work cut out for us just to run the camp efficiently."

Many of the international campers were shocked at the "aggressive behavior" of their American and British colleagues, Bauerlein said. "The eight Indians, especially, were scandalized and rendered almost mute at first. But then after many disagreements we divided into affinity groups of 10 to 15 and formed a representative steering committee to run the camp. The Indians had also brought a sewing machine and sacks of material and spent their time making clothes for the Iraqis."

Bauerlein was troubled that patriarchy was alive and well in the camp, and that it was difficult for feminists to stand their ground.

The camp had two meals a day, consisting mostly of vegetables and rice and pita bread. No meat was served, but there were a few eggs and some cheese. Meals were at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. "We even had arguments over what time they should be served," Agnes said. Campers cooked and cleaned the area. There were

showers and simple standup latrines common in the Middle East. Water came from tanks used by a contingent of some 30 Iraqi boarder guards nearby. The camp also had electricity until 6 p.m. when blackouts were initiated after the war began.

"This made for very long, lonely nights. To make matters worse, the nights were bitter cold and I hadn't brought enough clothes. I slept with hat and gloves on, in two sets of clothes and my down jacket. I was under two blankets and a sleeping bag, with two blankets underneath me on the cement floor. The Brits were wise — they had brought hot water bottles."

Throughout the day, campers did their chores, wrote or prayed, held meetings, and played soccer and table tennis with the Iraqi guards and exchanged family photos with them.

"The Iraqis were gentle souls," she said. "Not one of them wanted to be fighting this war. And considering they had recently gone through an eight-year war, that was understandable. Many carried prayer beads and prayed five times a day, and this is reflected in their demeanor toward people."

Ten days into the war, Iraqi administrators sent two buses and a truck for the campers, fearful that they would be killed by bombs. On that same day Charlie Bauerlein and daughter Ann were boarding a bus in Philadelphia to join more than 200,000 others at a massive peace demonstration in Washington, D.C., Agnes later discovered. Her husband, who served in World War II and comes from a family of career servicemen, is now a member of Veterans for Peace. "Charlie appeared throughout my time away on radio talk shows, on TV, and gave many interviews about my peace venture. Not all of my children felt the same way. About half were supportive, I would say."

"The buses arrived to take us from the Gulf Peace Camp at 2 a.m., and we were

asked to pack," she reminisced. "It took us five hours to shut down the camp. Then three of the British sat down and refused to leave. The bus driver went to the post and returned with soldiers. He asked them to force the protestors to board the bus. But they laughed and refused, saying these were their friends. The bus driver had to drag the three himself, and we finally left at 11 a.m. for Baghdad, 248 miles away.

"Enroute to Baghdad, the driver used back roads to avoid attack. He dodged huge craters and bombed out vehicles along the way.

"We arrived at the Al-Rashid Hotel, around 7 p.m. and were just getting supper when the air raid siren sounded. Some went to their rooms, but I spent that night and each night thereafter in an underground bomb shelter with Iraqis and foreigners, but no military. A Palestinian woman reporter for a Canadian paper was there, as well as the CNN people. I slept right next to Peter Arnett," she laughed. "Of course, the press ignored our story."

Bauerlein felt that the media was collaborating in its own censorship. The

anti-war movement was very strong in Germany, France, Holland and Belgium and people in the States didn't hear about it, she said.

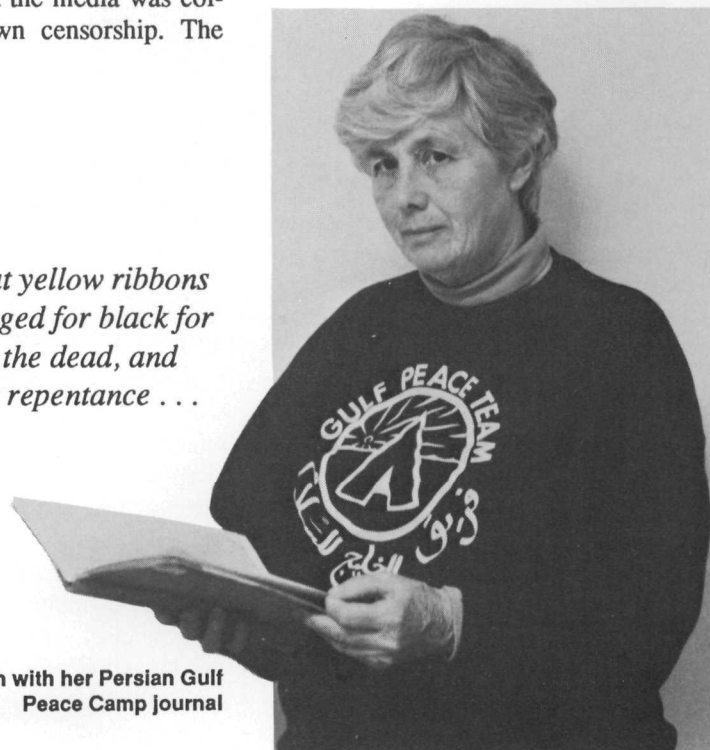
The Gulf Peace team was able to confirm that what the Iraqis claimed was a milk factory bombed by the Allies — and which the United States claimed produced chemicals for warfare — was actually a milk factory. "We visited the site; it was built by the French, and there was no doubt that it produced baby formula. Also, the air raid shelter which we bombed, killing hundreds of women and children, was indeed a bomb shelter. We heard later that the U.S. military had acted on old information."

"We were also taken to a hospital, perhaps the saddest experience of all. It had nothing — no topsheets, no water for the doctors to wash their hands as they moved from patient to patient. I still can't understand why we had to bomb the infrastructure so thoroughly. Why take out the water and sewage systems? We now know that people are using the

Continued on page 19

*Would that yellow ribbons
be exchanged for black for
mourning the dead, and
purple for repentance . . .*

Agnes Bauerlein with her Persian Gulf
Peace Camp Journal



Community church or state church?

by Reginald G. Blaxton

Rarely do public officials have an opportunity to describe from their perspective the relationships existing between church and state, or more precisely, in this instance, between the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Washington and the city of Washington, D.C. In this article, I will attempt to describe the social context in which the institutional identity of the diocese has been shaped. I will also suggest a reason for the gap between pastoral practice and public ministry, which I perceive to be at the root of the diocese's institutional identity crisis.

I write as a native Washingtonian of black-American descent, who has spent the better part of 38 years in the District. I was educated in Washington's public schools, and have worked, since 1984, for its municipal government. Over the last 30 years, I have been affiliated with two parishes of the diocese in different capacities — in the 1960s with the Church of Saint Stephen and the Incarnation and since 1982, as an assistant rector at Saint George's Church.

In common with many other Episcopalians, I have a citizen's interest in the well-being of this particular political jurisdiction; my identity as a citizen has been formed in the crucible of this city's social, economic and political life. And in saying so, I want to make a theological point. As Daniel Day Williams observed in the late 1960s:

The search for identity always

takes place within the history of a people. No one belongs to humanity in general. We live in communities with concrete traditions, values and faiths. The search for identity involves the search for the people to whom one belongs or can belong.

If Williams is right, public identity always entails a choice. I choose, thus, to identify myself by reference to the social, political and economic life in the District of Columbia. My primary identification is with the city itself, its "concrete traditions, values and faiths."

If the federal government were to relocate to Boston or Atlanta tomorrow, my primary identification would not be seriously impaired. For unlike other U.S. citizens who see Washington first and foremost as the nation's capital, my sense of belonging is not dependent on the city's peculiar status in federal law. Furthermore, the acceptance by District residents of the home rule charter in 1974, and the decision by voters in 1980 to approve a statehood initiative argue powerfully that the majority of residents do not view themselves as belonging to the federal establishment. Rather, their primary identification, like mine, is with the city itself which, to distinguish it from the federal enclave, we will call "D.C."

In 1790, when Charles Pierre L'Enfant was surveying the Potomac region — eventually to plan a city stretching from Georgetown to the Anacostia River — he imagined the federal city as "a city oriented to a new nation and a new continent, and the future."

What L'Enfant could not anticipate was the clash between the federalism inherent in the establishment of a capital city and the competing claims of local

democracy as they have developed over the last 200 years. According to author Frederick Gutheim:

In [L'Enfant's] overall conception, the federal and local functions were closely interwoven. There was no sense of economic or social class segregation. If the city as a whole was to function as it was planned, L'Enfant was correct in asserting that its various functional elements should be simultaneously developed and be able to interact with each other.

We know that as the city grew beyond the bounds established by L'Enfant, interaction between the federalism of the nation's capital and the democratic yearnings of its residents became more and more competitive, with the local community struggling hard against the federal establishment to find its rightful place in the political sun. Most of the political struggle for self-determination took place during the last century, a period roughly coterminous with the establishment of the Diocese of Washington, independent of the Diocese of Maryland.

What I have tried to describe in very broad strokes is the social matrix in which the Episcopal Church finds itself today. Historically, the presence of the church in the city antedates the founding of Washington by some 80 years. But in its modern political form, as the Diocese of Washington, the Episcopal Church now finds itself buffeted by competing claims.

On the one hand, with varying degrees of intensity, the Episcopal Church has aligned itself and defined its interests with the federal establishment in the District of Columbia. Thus the church

The Rev. Reginald G. Blaxton, special assistant for religious affairs to the Mayor of Washington, D.C., is on the board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. This article is adapted from his recent address to the Washington Episcopal Clergy Association.

has been able to boast of its unique role in the spiritual formation of the nation's leadership elite — presidents, cabinet officers, members of Congress and the federal judiciary. Interestingly, the church's Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul explicitly invokes L'Enfant's plans for a church "for national purposes" in the federal city as the *raison d'être* for its current mission and ministry.

The alignment of the Diocese of Washington with federal interests has had an extraordinary effect on the way in which the diocese sees itself and is perceived by others. For example, during the recent election of an Ordinary for the Diocese of Washington, one of the can-

didates, formerly rector of a local parish, cited his pastoral relationship with the current President as a qualification for office. In this example, the alignment of the local church with federal interests is explicit. It calls to mind the warning about the public character of the Episcopal Church sounded by one of the seminal figures of the 19th century, the Rev. William Reed Huntington. In 1870, Huntington wrote:

If our whole ambition as Anglicans in America be to continue as a small but eminently respectable body of Christians, and to offer a refuge to people of refinement and sensibility, who are shocked by the irreverences they are apt to encounter elsewhere; in a word, if we care to be only a countercheck and not a force in society; then let us say as much in plain terms, and frankly renounce any and all claim to Catholicity. We have only in such a case to wrap the robe of our dignity about us and walk quietly along in a seclusion no one will take much trouble to disturb. Thus may we be a church in name and a sect in deed.

But if we aim at something nobler than this, if we would have our Communion become national in very truth — in other words, if we would bring the church of Christ into the closest possible sympathy with the throbbing, sorrowing, sinning, repenting, aspiring heart of this great people — then let us press our reasonable claims to be the reconciler of a divided household, not in a spirit of arrogance . . . but with affectionate earnestness and an intelligent zeal.

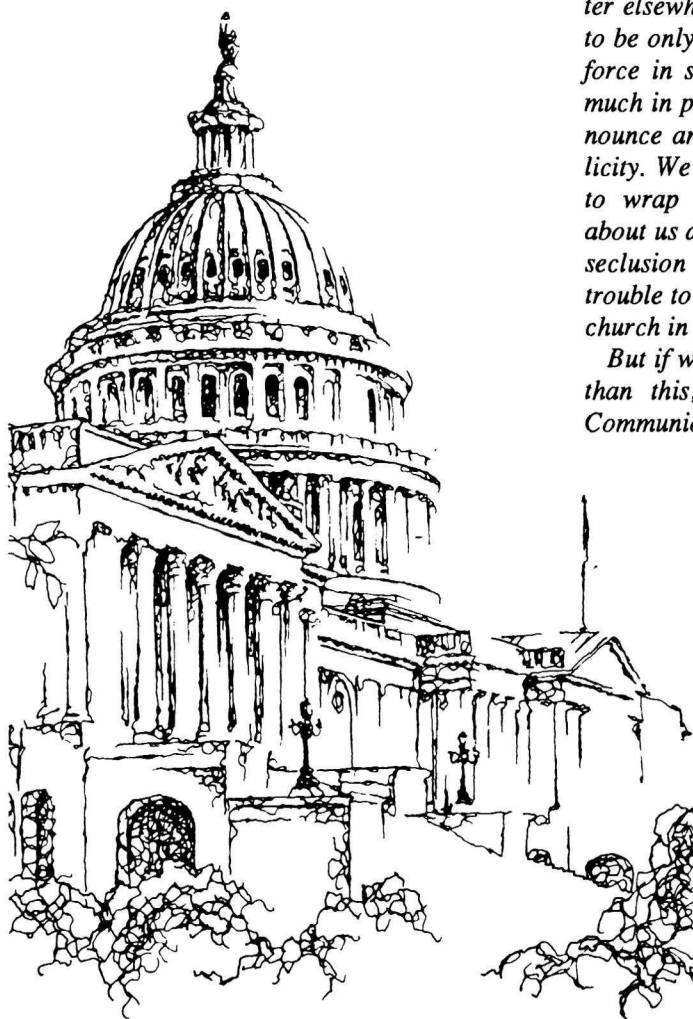
We should note that "national" in Huntington's

usage does not denote any kind of federalism. Rather, the task of the church, according to Huntington, is to align itself publicly and comprehensively to its local community in such a way that it is able to establish an empathetic and responsive relationship with all those who live, work and worship within its spiritual bounds.

In recent memory, the Diocese of Washington has been able, at times, to establish with D.C. the kind of relationship Huntington envisaged. Its alignment with the federal establishment, while strong, has never been total and complete. During the 1960s, in response to the winds of social change then blowing through this community, Suffragan Bishop Paul Moore co-chaired with Baptist pastor Walter Fauntroy the Free D.C. Movement — a citizens' coalition to secure legal self-determination for residents of the District.

Throughout that decade, the Diocese of Washington evinced a strong and substantive interest in the development of local democracy, as D.C. matured as a political entity independent of the federal establishment. Several of the clergy of the diocese were recognized and respected as community leaders — for example, Dean Francis Sayre, the Rev. William A. Wendt and Canon John T. Walker — who could be relied upon directly to address local issues and concerns.

I have attempted to describe the tension between the church's chosen, dominant role through most of its history as chaplain to the federal establishment on one hand, and its more hesitant engagement in local democracy on the other. I suggest that the public place of the Episcopal Church in the life of the city is unclear at present. The ambivalence of the church toward D.C., complicated by the geographical extension of the diocese across several jurisdictional boundaries, is a reflection of this tension. This ambivalence is not likely to be



overcome without a thoroughgoing, self-critical assessment of the role the church is prepared to play in the life of the local community. In this regard, the church is much like another local institution, *The Washington Post*, which attempts simultaneously to live out both a local and a national identity. When there is a contest between the federal establishment and the competing claims of the local democracy, the church, like the newspaper, will inevitably be caught in the crossfire and, despite its attempts at verbal evenhandedness, will be seen as favoring the interests of the federal establishment.

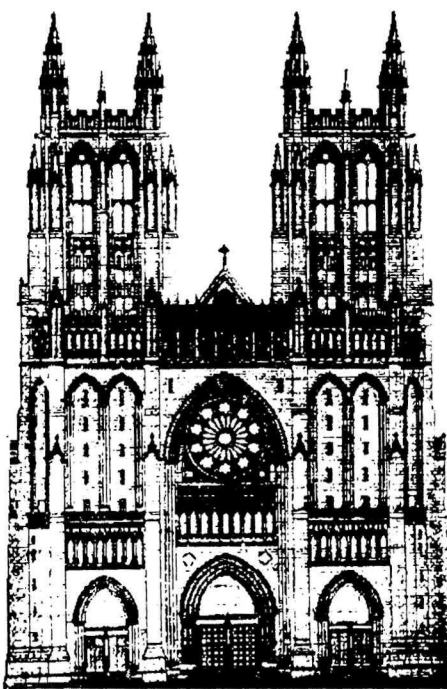
For example, I was surprised that when Episcopalian George Bush twice vetoed the 1990 Appropriations Bill passed by both the Council of the District of Columbia and the U.S. Congress — citing his religious conviction that local, public monies should not be used to fund abortions — diocesan officials maintained a discreet silence. Later, President Bush explained that he was justified in taking this action because the federal government gives the district most of its funds.

The truth, of course, is more complicated. The Episcopal Church's official posture of abortion is a moderate pro-choice position, at variance with the President's personal views. The federal payment to the District, more than 19% of appropriated General Fund revenues in 1985, declined to about 15% in 1989. Thus, the federal payment has remained stable in monetary terms and decreased as a percentage of D.C.'s total operating revenue. Yet the diocese managed to say nothing publicly to clarify the issues involved. Nor did it publicly discuss the morality of the President's use of the veto to make his personal religious beliefs the basis of local public policy.

Here is a clear example of the conflict inherent between federalism and local democracy. Without a serious attempt within the church to discover its public place — or in other words, to achieve an

institutional identification with the citizens of D.C. — we may expect that the church will be widely perceived to be indifferent or even hostile to "the traditions, values and faiths" of the people who view this as their home rather than as the nation's capital.

As community-based leaders, parochial clergy have, I believe, a special role to play in clarifying the public purposes, identity and goals of the local Episcopal Church. It is not the role to which Episcopal clergy here have grown accustomed. They see themselves instead in a "pastoral" role. According to this view, Episcopal clergy function best when they are able to influence parishioners by means of the pastoral relationships they have established with them. The work of pastoring — traditionally, the cure of souls — is essentially a private transaction between clergy and laity which centers on healing, guiding, sustaining and reconciling parishioners when they come with problems of interpersonal friction, grief, or moral confusion.



Pastoral care as it is taught in Episcopal seminaries is individually-focused, private and apolitical. It is modeled on contemporary disciplines of psychotherapy and social work.

The question remains, however, whether merely private pastoral care, divorced from a sensitive appreciation of the public context of life, can ever be fully responsive to the felt human need for spiritual resources, support and nurture. As Robert Bonhous has written:

To date, the term pastoral care does not connote any kind of ministry to the social conditions which help create, continue and complicate individual problems . . . pastoral care is quite proper when it is given to sick persons but not to sick cities . . . The trouble is that the same attention to a dying community (not to mention death-dealing institutions like war) is regarded as "meddling" when the pastor gets involved.

Bonhous concludes with the observation that the nature of existence in an urban society will require that pastors relate differently to the community than they have been relating. I could not agree more. TW

Resources

Daniel Day Williams, *A Theological View of Identity*, and Robert A. Bonhous, *The Impact of the Urban Crisis on Pastoral Theology*, in William B. Ogelsby, Jr., *The New Shape of Pastoral Theology: Essay in Honor of Seward Hiltner*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969.

Frederick Gutheim, *The History of Planning for the National Capital*, National Capital Planning Commission, 1977.

William R. Huntington, *The Church-Idea: An Essay Towards Unity*, in James Thayer Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States 1779-1931*, Boston: Scribners, 1969.

Tigris for water and in addition to the war victims, 15 to 20,000 are expected to die from diseases like typhoid and dysentery."

In the hotel, Bauerlein, a Roman Catholic who represented the organization Pax Christi at the Peace Camp, would do an hour's meditation to begin her day. So as not to disturb those around her, she would go to the hotel vestibule very early. There she noted a daily ritual. The hotel manager would rouse two men who had been offered shelter in the lobby. He would fold their blankets while they visited the bathroom and then quietly slipped into the street.

"We never saw homeless on the streets of Baghdad, even under these conditions," she said. "The people told us that Arabs traditionally would not tolerate that. If a person needed shelter one would offer his or her home. The fact that we have homeless by the millions is unfathomable to them."

As she prayed, Bauerlein said she had an inter-faith experience which remains with her. The Buddhist monk in the peace camp would pray, beating on a drum and gong as she meditated, and at the hotel a Muslim would spread his prayer rug and chant. "Here we were, our prayers rising like incense to the same God, each praying in our own way. I felt a profound sense of unity with them," she said.

On the fifth day campers were put on a bus which had been sent from Jordan to take them to Amman. As they left, Iraqi guards asked Bauerlein if she could mail letters for them. And one, with tears in his eyes, pleaded, "Pray for us."

The trip took from 7:30 a.m. until midnight, on secondary roads. On the border, Bauerlein came face-to-face with another result of war — thousands and thousands of refugees. This, too was familiar to her, since her family had worked with the Dutch underground to

help Jews escape during World War II. "We saw long lines of cars, loaded down, waiting to enter Jordan — some had been there for three days," she said.

During their eight days in Amman, peace campers met with the Austrian director of the UN refugee program. In August alone, Jordan processed 800,000 refugees, at a cost of \$52 million. The government had been promised certain sums by various countries but had only received \$17 million, the director said. They were processing 3 to 5,000 refugees a day into 30 camps. Every other day the Red Cross and Red Crescent met refugees at the border with food and blankets; some refugees died from exposure. Trucks go to the 30 camps daily with supplies from the Red Cross and Red Crescent, but still fall short of what is needed, he told the campers.

In Jordan, Bauerlein and the others helped set up a Peace Camp, which members are now bringing medical aid to Iraq. While there they also met with women's groups, including Palestinian women; cultural and school groups, and the head of the PLO in Amman, who described the history of the Occupied Territories.

"In all our meetings, it became clear that our first world lifestyle is hurting two thirds of the world," Bauerlein said. "Each of us has to look at our own complicity in this. We love our materialism and violence — witness our TV and magazines. Our high tech war was totally destructive to human beings and to the earth. And people over there laugh when we say we're a democracy. They know we have the best Congress money can buy.

"The danger now is that we will put everything back the way it was before. Many saw Saddam Hussein as a Robin Hood. They didn't like his methods, but saw Kuwaitis as the greedy Arabs of the region. One has to be aware of the complex history of the Middle East, including the oppression of the Palestinians, to

analyze what went on," she said.

Bauerlein was not always a peace activist. She was shocked out of her numbness following her experiences in World War II when she offered her house to the Plowshares Eight, a group of activists who were awaiting trial for an anti-war civil disobedience act in 1981. Shortly after she returned from Iraq, one of the eight, John Schuchardt, was again arrested for speaking out against the war at a church service attended by George and Barbara Bush. Agnes phoned her congratulations, asking him what he was charged with. "Disturbing the peace, and that's just what we should be doing in our churches," he told her.

It is Bauerlein's fond hope that the churches, which for the most part, were non-supportive of the war, would continue to oppose war and future arms buildups. Her present fantasy is that her Catholic Church would encourage its 60 million members to hold back 5% of their taxes used for such things. The government couldn't possibly prosecute millions of people, she said.

Her optimism about the future flows from the reception she received upon returning to her Philadelphia home February 10.

"I was told that 80% of U.S. citizens were in favor of the war and that I would be facing a hostile public. If that were the case, I thought, it's easy to be pro-war when war has never been fought in your back yard. But the reaction was just the opposite. I have received stacks of supportive letters, and phone calls from total strangers praising what I did. People are searching for alternatives to war and are angry about the nuclear buildup.

"It is painful to hear the shouts of victory when I remember the victims — I see Iraqi soldiers, too, as victims of a military run by a tyrant, who were slaughtered by power-hungry Western countries in collaboration with rich Arabs. We need to acknowledge that." **TV**

Carrying the Peace Flame

by Shelley Wong



Judy Imai
with the
Peace Flame

Judy Imai, a third-generation Japanese-American, is a key figure in the current three-year peace pilgrimage entitled Global Walk for a Livable World. She carries a kerosene lamp lit from a flame burning in Hiroshima Peace Park, Japan, commemorating victims of the U.S. atomic bomb. Shelley Wong interviewed Imai in Washington, D.C. for THE WITNESS recently after Imai had walked across the United States in nine months during Phase I of the walk.

This spring the project is in Phase II, covering England and Western and Eastern Europe. In the fall of this year and throughout 1992, the walk will visit Greece, Egypt, India and Pakistan, and then go on to China, Central Asia, USSR, and Vietnam. From January to June 1993, the walk will move from Hanoi to Beijing. Then participants will fly to Tokyo and walk to Hiroshima, where the Global Walk will end on the anniversary of the atomic bombing, August 6.

What is the Hiroshima Peace Flame?

The flame was first lit in Hiroshima in 1965 when the Peace Park was dedicated. Thousands of people lit candles and joined their flames in a ceremony to light the Peace Flame monument. At the base of the monument is inscribed, "Rest in peace. We will not make the same mistake again." To remember Hiroshima is to ensure it will never happen again.

Dr. Shelley Wong teaches English as a Second Language, sociolinguistics and language education, and is a member of Washington's Chinese Community Church.

An emissary from the city of Hiroshima brought the Peace Flame to Los Angeles during the 1984 Olympics for the Survivalfest peace march. The Survivalfest was sponsored by a coalition of peace groups that helped bring the flame over to draw attention to world peace. Hundreds and hundreds of people participated in that march, and the Peace Flame was at the front of it. Since 1984, it has been kept at the Koyasan Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles.

In 1986 the flame was taken across the United States in the Great Peace March by Michael Mertens, a member of Asian/

Pacific-Americans for Nuclear Awareness (APANA). I took it on a peace walk from Leningrad to Moscow in 1987. It was an ambitious task to keep it going. Fortunately I had the help of a man from New Zealand, who carried a back-up flame.

We have to carry the flames in kerosene lamps. The flame takes on an entity of its own. I have to feed it fuel every morning and every night. Sometimes I have three flames going. The flame is sensitive to wind and rain. The big trucks going by kick up a lot of wind — a gust can easily blow it out.

What is the Global Walk?

The Global Walk is made up of people who believe we can achieve world peace and improve the environment. Many people on the walk are environmentalists; some are peace activists. We see the connection between our attitude towards human life and animals, trees, plants, the air and water. If our attitude is one of not caring, then of course we are not going to care about other human beings and other forms of life. We do community outreach in schools, churches and organizations, anywhere people gather, even along the roads as we walk. We want to change people's consciousness.

How many of you walked across the United States?

On average, about 90 people. We cook our own vegetarian meals. We have a potty bus, a kitchen, a refrigerator truck, a merchandise/office bus, and a gear bus. We do use fossil fuels, but it is the most efficient way we could find to move 100 people across the country.

Are you a *Sansei* — third-generation Japanese?

My mother is a *Sansei*. My father is a *Nisei* (second-generation), so I'm a *Sansei-hon* — that's three and a half. I feel like I'm caught in the middle.

My parents' assimilation experiences were very different from each other. My mother's early experience was in Hawaii — her parents were born there and her grandparents were early pioneers. My father experienced California-style racism towards Asians. My mother did not. I met some Japanese-Americans along the walk who said, "You're the same age as my mother, but you don't act like her at all. My mother would never be doing anything like this!"

Were you interned during WWII?

Yes, I was two and a half years old when my family was sent to Manzanar, a concentration camp in California. I don't

have a deep recollection of the camp, just sensations of confusion, anger and hurt on the part of the adults. It was an experience through which I always look at the world. It never leaves me. I remember the stinging sand. I remember the mess halls and gang showers. We had to stand in line for everything. My uncle Mino was in Italy with the 422nd U.S. Army regiment while we were in the camp.

My mother's family lived in Pearl Harbor. Her mother's family came from Hiroshima. In 1983 when I went to Japan I took a train to Hiroshima. The connections between being in the camp, Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, and my uncle being in the American military hit me one day. It just wasn't right. That's when I decided to become a nuclear disarmament activist.

Why are you doing this walk?

I wanted to get involved in the peace movement — there are very few Asians in the movement. And I have an adven-

turesome bent. I'm not tied to family responsibilities and now have the freedom to do things like the walk. Also I like to travel and I've always wanted to go around the world, but not as a tourist — I want to have a purpose to what I'm doing.

Can you talk more specifically about what the commitment to do the walk entails?

My commitment is to keep the Hiroshima Peace Flame burning. The other part of the commitment is to ensure that the walk continues every day.

When I'm cleaning the potties, I keep thinking to myself, "I'm committed, I'm committed," because sometimes it doesn't feel like it. But somebody has to clean the potties.

The commitment also includes working out human relationships. We ask everyone in the walk to pay \$11 a day. Some people don't want to pay the entire

Continued on page 27

Racism is America's *real* enemy

As an American of Japanese ancestry who has suffered imprisonment in a U.S. concentration camp, I abhor the mistreatment of people of color, war or no war. The end result is never justified whether they be Arabs, Vietnamese, Panamanians, Pacific Islanders, or Japanese.

In the past, wars engendered name-calling, threats, suspicions, imprisonment and genocide based on racial hatred — whatever fed the demonic war energy. We continue to be stuck in a racist coma that portrays people of color as backward, ignorant, inherently violent, inhuman and animal-like. Those who advocated the Gulf War call Arabs "treacherous" and "crazy." Of course the "patriots" must believe this because then it is all right to kill "them." The victims have become expendable monsters to be

eliminated like the "Gooks" or "Japs." Thus, we Americans are the heroes purging the "insane demons" from the world. This dehumanization is a manipulative tactic calculated to prey on people's feelings.

We were told that the Iraqis are the enemies, but the real enemies are right here in this country. They stem from emptiness and fear and manifest themselves in racism, greed, oppression, and violence.

Can we change our perspective and see the Arab people as loving, intelligent, and dignified, and as close brothers and sisters? Are we not kin in a world in dire need of cooperation and wisdom in order to survive today's environmental dilemma? All of us must turn our energies toward an authentic security — a livable world for all.

— Judy Imlal on the Gulf War

Breathing in the spirit

by Anne E. Cox

When we are fortunate enough not to have respiratory problems, we rarely think of our breathing. Our bodies do it for us — in and out. We can hold our breath for a while . . . and then let it out in a big whoosh. But then the automatic, totally involuntary action of breathing takes over. Those who have asthma or emphysema know what it is like not to have the process of breathing working smoothly. It's scary not to be able to breathe, for breath is life. Yet, unless we have difficulties breathing, we rarely think of the breath in us. We just breathe in and out, steadily sustained by the breath that gives us life.

Jesus' death is about breathing. At the moment of his death, two of the Gospels say that he "breathed his last." Matthew tells us that he "cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit." Yet Matthew is also talking about breathing, for "spirit" and "breath" are so closely wedded that they are interchangeable translations. "Respiration" and "spirit" come from the same Latin root.

Jesus breathes out; that is to say, he expires. What happens when Jesus gives up his spirit? Matthew says, ". . . the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised."

Jesus' last breath was not a gentle exhalation of air, but a great, earth-shaking expiration. He breathes his last, and in doing this, sends his spirit away and out into the world. Loose in the world, his

spirit dramatically changes the landscape. The earth is opened up — the holy of holies in the temple is no longer shrouded; rocks are split open revealing the depths of the earth; and the tombs are opened, releasing the dead.

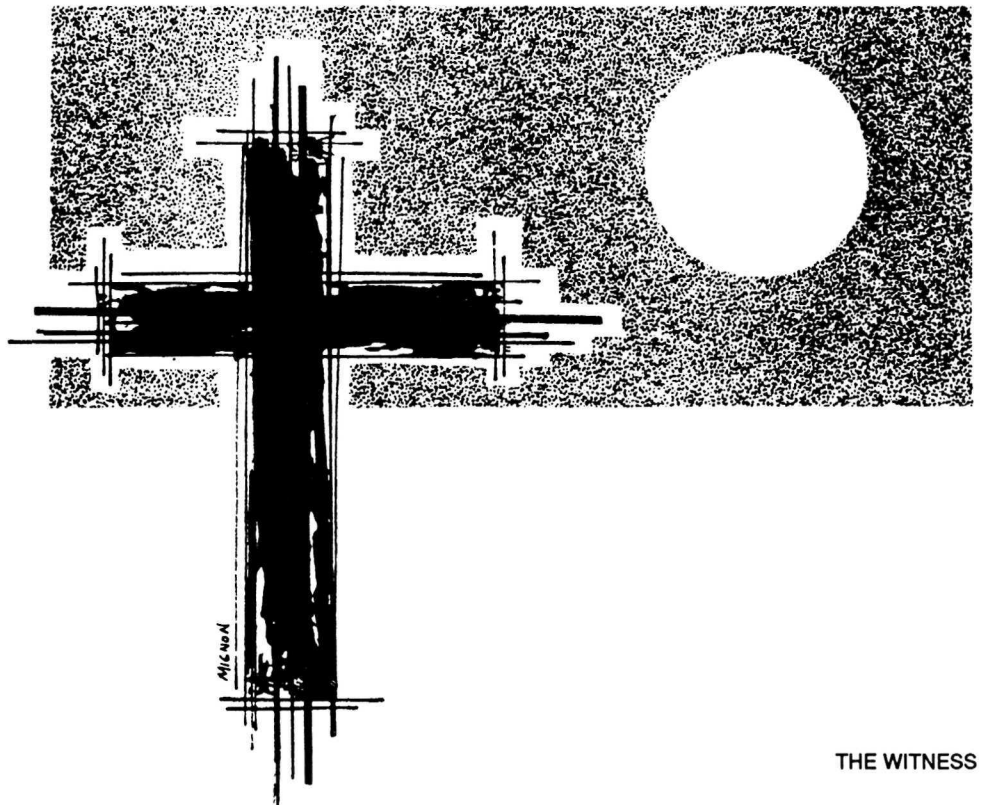
Boundaries fall away when Jesus breathes his last — inside and outside, the surface of the earth and the interior of the earth, the dead and the living. What had been separated comes together — all on account of the breath, the spirit.

Breath is used as another metaphor for rebirth in the Old Testament. God calls the prophet Ezekiel to speak to the dry bones and tell them that God will cause breath to enter them. And the prophet watches as the dry bones are knit together, and then stand, and at last have breath in them. The breath enters the bones, and after this happens God tells Ezekiel to prophesy further to them, say-

ing, "I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home from the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am God, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live . . ."

The same language is used in Ezekiel as Matthew uses for the saints or "holy ones" who are raised. In Ezekiel, the bones receive breath — God says, "I will put my Spirit in you, and you shall live." In Matthew, after Jesus breathes his last, the bodies of the saints who have fallen asleep receive breath; Jesus yields his spirit, and they receive the spirit. Jesus' breath goes from him to the people.

Breath is at the beginning of life. How did God create in the beginning? — by God's breath or spirit moving over the waters. One of the Psalms talks about our connection to breathing: "When you



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take away their breath, they die and return to dust. When you send forth your Spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground." Throughout our history, God breathes the spirit into us and we live; indeed, God inspires us.

Matthew saw Jesus' death as the pivotal point in all of history, as an exchange of breath. At the time of his death, Jesus' breath is released for all of

"Air molecules that were once inside me, giving me life, may well be inside you now, sustaining you. Jesus' spirit is like the air we share."

us. We all breathe in each others' breath. Little air molecules that were once inside me, giving me life, may well be inside you now, sustaining you. Jesus' spirit is like the air we share. Matthew tells us that with his death, Jesus' spirit was released for all of us to breathe in, to take into our beings. It was released to inspire all of us.

We need inspiration! The bones in Ezekiel have no breath; they say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off."

We are also the dry bones without breath. How many empty places do we hold inside ourselves that cry out, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off." Where are we dried up? Where are we without hope, and clean cut off? Where is the lifeless spot that we shelter from the world, keeping it concealed in a grave of its own? We each have our own private

dead places that we try to keep buried — maybe a wounded heart, shattered expectations, a lost job, rejection by family, no home.

As a society we have lifeless places that do not breathe and that we would like to keep buried — racism, violence, homelessness, abuse, addictions. Yet, even though we have buried places, we are also the dry bones who cry out.

Wherever we feel cut off, that is where the prophet is directed to come and prophesy. Likewise, it is where Jesus breathes his last. When he does, he breathes life into the lifeless, into the dead, and into our dead places.

Part of the process of Jesus' death reaching into our dead places is to reveal them, look at them, rather than continuing to hide them or bury them deeper. They are revealed the same way that Matthew says the graves of the saints are revealed after Jesus' death. Matthew lets us know that there are no longer any boundaries. The pieces of life that had been held in opposition until now become part of the same fabric, pieces that had been opposing pairs become part of a totality. Just as the veil in the temple is ripped open and the earth splits apart, so too are our dead places opened up when Jesus breathes his last.

When do we know we are breathing in the spirit that Jesus released? When we are not sheltering dead, cut-off places, but exposing them to light and life, we are breathing Jesus' spirit. It is that spirit which inspires us toward life and wholeness.

When Jesus breathes his last, a whole new story begins. It is the story of the church, the story of those of us who share in his spirit, who are inspired by his death and resurrection. The death of Jesus then is about an ending, but is primarily about a beginning — the beginning of Jesus' spirit loose in the world. At his death our hope is not lost, we are not clean cut off; rather we are inspired and connected. TW

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Wellspring House:

A place of hospitality and hope

by Rosemary Haughton

Ten years ago seven people pooled their slender resources and began a venture which their friends regarded with the deepest misgiving. The group consisted of a married couple with a grown daughter, two women who had been directors of religious education in a parish, a nun, a teenager, and myself — a foreigner with a grown family who was at a turning point in her life and needed a new direction.

We had all been part of a group that met weekly to study and pray the Scriptures. In time, some of us found we could no longer only study and pray. We were led to make choices that would enable us to live the Gospel in a new way — a way of compassion, sharing and hospitality.

Each of us bought to the venture faith, a willingness to risk, and not much else. None of us had permanent jobs — several were leaving jobs. But we had a desire to create a place which could be a home for ourselves and for people in crisis. We drew up a statement of our common vision and began house-hunting — still with no money!

We found a 17th-century house on the outskirts of Gloucester, Mass., a fishing community whose shaky economy is inadequately propped up by tourism. Gloucester is on the island-like Cape Ann peninsula, and people in need are reluctant to go “over the bridge” inland

to the social service offices, one reason we chose to be there.

We moved there in August 1981, making the down payment the sale of the married couple's home, and a private loan from a congregation. We came with some furniture, some good friends to scrub and scour, and a vision. We wanted to respect the earth and people's privacy, and enable everyone to work together to help those who came.

The first two who came to the community were single women — a young girl escaping from an abusive home, and a woman whose long experience of rejection, homelessness and dogged survival had culminated in a fire that destroyed the precarious lodging she had found as combined nurse, housekeeper and guardian to an alcoholic. The first family was a mother with multiple sclerosis and her 4-year-old son, evicted after the father deserted.

What our community originally proposed was to provide a temporary home for people “in crisis.” In the years after the first guests came, we discovered that the “crisis” was homelessness — especially family homelessness — on a scale never before imagined. And Wellspring House, now incorporated and with an energetic and enthusiastic board of directors, set itself to respond to that crisis.

As Wellspring House stands at the beginning of its next decade, ready to launch into new and different projects, we look back and recognize what this place with such a modest beginning now means to so many people.

The community has helped over 200 families put their shattered lives back together and find permanent homes.

Many stay in touch.

Because shelter is not the answer to homelessness, Wellspring also means housing. In 1985 and 1987 the community bought two dilapidated houses, raised money to re-hab them, and created a small apartment house and a lodging house, both for low-income people.

It also means a place to which people want to come. A large group of volunteers, talented and capable men and women, have become part of a community committed to making a difference to the lives of people in need.

It is also a place where women come together to study, reflect and pray. Wellspring has, over the years, developed a strong spirituality which the community describes as “feminist” and also as “prophetic.” The two words blend, because they refer to the vision of a different kind of society, rooted in justice, in co-operation rather than competition, and in caring for and nurturing people and the earth.

The “right brain” awareness which “sees vision and dreams” is that of the prophetic tradition, and calls forth in women and men a commitment to a different social order in which women can grow to personhood free from violence and humiliation, and children receive from parents and society the love and support they need. Inevitably, our feminist awareness has been strengthened and deepened by the experience of living with women who are survivors of abuse, rejection, and incest, and are struggling to remake their lives and the lives of their children.

What is Wellspring House like? If you visit you will be greeted, probably by a

Rosemary Haughton, a theologian and writer, is part of the Administrative Team at Wellspring House. She recently published a book, *Song in a Strange Land: Wellspring House and the Homelessness of Women*, Templegate, 1990.

volunteer who will lead you through the kitchen, where someone is preparing vegetables for dinner. Members of the staff will take time off to talk to you and show you around. A volunteer is answering the telephone, perhaps taking calls for emergency food, since Wellspring does telephone intake for the local food pantry (up to 20 calls a day), or someone has called to ask for shelter or to talk to one of the shelter guests. Guests may be helping to set the table, or are in the playroom with their children, or in a meeting with the staff person who is each guest's "primary" worker.

In the office someone is organizing the bulk mailing of a newsletter, while others are dealing with letters and lists, and keeping the books. Perhaps it is a day to prepare for a board meeting, which takes place in the living room with its huge 17th-century hearth, once the kitchen and living center of the old farmhouse and inn. At Christmas the stockings hang before a chimney large enough for even a very stout Santa!

One of the staff who manages the Lodging House will take you to see this once rat and roach-infested but now comfortable home for low-income single people, five women and five men. They share a common kitchen where they prepare meals, have parties and entertain friends. In the front yard the garden is being prepared for spring planting by one of the tenants.

Perhaps on the way you passed the apartment house and saw a mother with a toddler coming down the steps. She cannot afford "market" rents, but can manage the low Wellspring rent for her tiny apartment.

And before you leave you will probably be taken to visit the office of the Wellspring Community Land Trust, a sister corporation formed to preserve and create affordable housing, both for sale and rent. It is part of a movement spreading across the country in response to the high cost of homes and the result-



Children playing in the sandbox at Wellspring

ing homelessness.

By the time you leave you will have a sense of a place that is alive and growing. What, then, of the future? This 10th anniversary year looks dark in many ways, as unemployment increases, more and more states cut back benefits for the poor, and ordinary people close their minds to the needs of those whose very existence arouses fear and anxiety.

This year Wellspring is sponsoring many events — concerts, plays, parties, a symposium — all directed to helping people understand better the world we live in, its needs and its dreams.

Following up on research we have conducted through interviews and discussion groups with formerly homeless women, in our Summer Symposium we shall lay the groundwork for new programs in housing, education, job creation and community organizing aimed at helping homeless and other disenfranchised women create a future for themselves. Wellspring has always been characterized by a combination of idealism and professionalism, and both will continue to be needed in the years ahead.

And we will need a lot of faith — to live day after day with women whose

lives have been shattered by abuse, rejection, incest, rape — and to deal with the abusive attitude of society towards them. There are also children caught up in such situations, carrying with them terrible memories and distorted impressions of what the world is all about. Mothers and children must struggle not only with the practical results — loss of home, family, security or income — but with deeper spiritual results which are far harder to heal: the guilt and anger, the loss of a sense of boundaries, the self-hatred and self-blame, the lack of faith in any good outcome.

Yet over and over again, we see the amazing human spirit take courage, the process of healing begin, new hopes entertained, and new dreams allowed to unfold. And in this recovery are the seeds of greater change as women begin to take responsibility not only for themselves and their children but for other people. The tiny shoots of a different kind of society — the kind Jesus dreamed of and talked about and started to create — begin to show.

Wellspring House is one of the small shoots of faith. As the community moves into new times, we hope to attract others

who will want to share the enterprise.

What the community does is, from one point of view, easy to describe — the lived reality is harder. It is based in a shared commitment to Gospel values, friendship, Christian feminist spirituality, caring, praying and hoping. It expresses itself in all that we do — making decisions together, baking bread, sharing worship, speaking in public, polishing the floor, writing “thank you” notes or newsletters, counseling homeless women or cooking their meals, playing with children or appearing in court on their behalf.

This is an exciting time to live and work at Wellspring. What will it be like 10 years from now, we wonder, as the story of what ordinary people can do when they really believe the promises of faith continues to unfold. **TV**

Lullaby

**Lullabies are work songs
not sweet and gentle
as a child remembers
but a cry.**

**Anyone who's ever rocked a baby
knows
that lullabies are work songs**

**Like the prisoner's song
for breaking rocks —
a song to give a rhythm to the
work
a song to ease the weariness
and voice the bitter longing
to be free.**

**there are times
when this beloved baby
is a shrill and tedious prison,
there are times
when I would rather break a rock
than rock a child,
there are times
when I am broken on the rock
of this unyielding, strident life
and shattered
into poetry.**

Virginia Barnhart

Christian lesbians organize new group

For the first time in history, a group led predominantly by Protestant clergywomen who are lesbians, has begun an inter-cultural, multi-racial, solidarity movement called Christian Lesbians Out Together (CLOUT). The 113 clergy and laywomen who signed the news release announcing the action say that the primary purpose of CLOUT is to empower Protestant and Catholic lesbian women and to challenge the churches to which they belong.

“While we realize the risks involved in coming out, we are aware also of the risks involved in *not* coming out,” says Irene Monroe, an African-American doctoral student at Harvard Divinity School who has worked as a Presbyterian pastor. Monroe explains that CLOUT is based on the conviction that lesbian Christian women continue to be victims of spiritual abuse in churches which insist that lesbians and gay men remain either celibate or silent about their sexual activity.

Carter Heyward, a white Episcopal priest and professor of theology at Episcopal Divinity School, concurs. “For the churches to coerce either celibacy or silence is morally unacceptable to us. To submit to this spiritual abuse is to participate in our own oppression, and, we believe, that of our sisters as well, whether lesbian or not.”

Signatories of the CLOUT document come from across the United States and Europe and represent 14 Christian denominations. According to Janie Spahr, a white, ordained Presbyterian elder who directs the Ministry of Light, a gay and lesbian advocacy organization in San Anselmo, Cal., “we see a common agenda between lesbians and gay men, but we are especially mindful of the issues lesbians face as women in the churches that are patriarchal and misogynistic as well as heterosexual and

homophobic.”

Margarita Suarez, a Latina minister, ordained in the United Church of Christ and currently a Milwaukee pastor, points out that the organizers of CLOUT include seminary and college professors, seminarians, layworkers, psychotherapists, theologians, physicians, chaplains, parish pastors and community organizers.

Suarez says, “We are sisters, mothers, and daughters, grandmothers and aunts, cousins and neighbors, friends and lovers of good Christian folk. We come from different races, ethnic groups and classes.” Diane Moore, ordained in the Christian Church, former chaplain at Brandeis University and currently a Ph.D. candidate at Union Theological Seminary continues, “We are the ones whose lives and work are at stake in all those church discussions about ‘homosexuality and the church.’ ”

A white lesbian ordained in the United Church of Christ who is pastoring a church in Minnesota, Cathy Ann Beaty, emphasizes, “CLOUT is committed to struggling not only against sexism and heterosexism but also against anti-Arab oppression, anti-Semitism, U.S. imperialism, racism, classism, clericalism, and other structures of domination and violence.”

“Especially in the context of the recent war in the Persian Gulf, it is important that we make connections between U.S. militarism, racism, and the ongoing oppression of lesbians and gay men throughout the churches and the world,” Coni Staff, a white pastor in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church in California, stressed.

The first international gathering of CLOUT is scheduled to take place in November, 1991. Those wishing further information can write to CLOUT, P.O. Box 758, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

fee because our buses burn fossil fuels — they will pay for everything else but fuel. This causes friction among the marchers. Which is more important, the individual point of view or the welfare of the whole? I help by doing conflict resolution and mediation. That's the crux and the hardest to deal with.

Another part is trusting that the environment will take care of us — this is a spiritual concept. An example of it involves our Blister Bus, a van that follows us. When people can't walk any further, they get into the Blister Bus. We've gone through three Blister Buses. The first was owned by a couple who decided to pull out — we were shocked. What were we going to do without a Blister Bus? The same weekend a man in Phoenix donated his Volkswagen van. Later it blew an engine and the same week a woman with a van joined our walk and said, "You can use my van." Things like that are happening constantly, so I don't worry much about material things.

What are some of the difficulties you have had?

Personality clashes, conflicts over sharing work, burn-out, divergent views over priorities. We decided in the first two weeks of orientation that we would use a consensus decision-making process. For some people that meant every decision had to come to the whole community. That process was cumbersome and unwieldy and created a lot of hard feelings. So what we've done instead is to give it to a small group of people, a committee. They listen and decide by consensus unless it's a major decision about money, like getting rid of a bus or purchasing another vehicle. Then it's brought to the entire group.

What are the kinds of problems that need to be handled by a committee?

All the problems we have in the larger society, we have on the walk: alcoholism, drugs, conflicts about money or because people are mistreating each other. There's also ageism, racism, and sexism.

For example, we had a homeless Vietnam veteran who was an alcoholic. He was willing to work his share, but he would go on drinking binges. One time he became violent and afterwards didn't remember anything. We gave him three chances. There were people on the walk who said we should take care of him, and that because of what the march stood for, we couldn't ask him to leave. Others said that we didn't have the resources to take care of that kind of addiction, and he was jeopardizing the walk. A small, randomly-selected group met to resolve the problem. The group asked him to leave the walk and encouraged him to enter a rehabilitation center. The process took many weeks.

I understand it's an international group — what nationalities are represented?

We have five Soviets — three women and two men. It was difficult for them at first, because beside having to adjust to the walk, they were in a new country and culture. We have a mother and daughter from Spain. At first, the presence of lesbians and people who shaved their heads bothered the mother, but she's come to terms with those issues. When you are walking along with someone whose life experience is totally different from yours and you find out they are just like your son or daughter in many ways, only with a different haircut, your consciousness has to change. I love it! I love when people get together like that.

There is a woman from Holland, a very dedicated peace activist who sends her walk newsletter out all over Europe and receives hundreds of letters in return. We have a Buddhist monk from Japan — he is one of the spiritual leaders of the walk. When there's a special

prayer to be said, he is there. He's dedicated to walking for peace. He doesn't have many material possessions. He walks and drums every day, rain or shine. We had a couple of West Germans for a short time. There's a guy from Puerto Rico who works hard at picking up aluminum cans. He's very dedicated to working for the homeless.

As a group, how much did you earn by gathering aluminum cans?

We could earn \$100 a week, easy. The problem is storing them. We separate our cans, our plastic, we do our own composting, which means finding a place to bury compost. We have our own wind generator, and solar panels supply lights in the buses.


What groups have you talked to?

Mostly students. We go to grammar schools, middle schools, high schools and colleges. Also, churches and community organizations have been receptive.

How does it work?

We have a coordinator and he or she will go ahead, make contacts with the schools and then come back and say, "We've got 10 classes tomorrow, we need 20 people." A new speaker will be coupled with an experienced person.

It's quite a commitment to make the walk, both financially and in giving of your time, and also very physically challenging. What sustains you?

Basically I believe people are good and that individually and collectively we can change human consciousness. People come and tell us about their local problems. Some come with tears in their eyes because they are so glad to see something being done for peace. They give us donations, saying, "You're doing this for us." I hear over and over, "Walk for me. Walk for us." 

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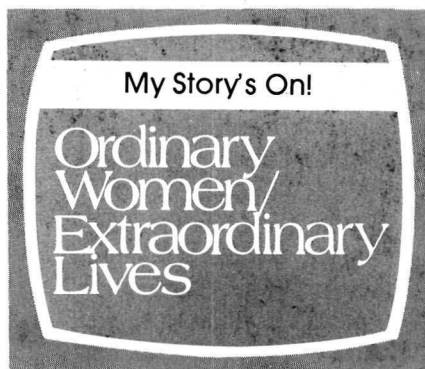
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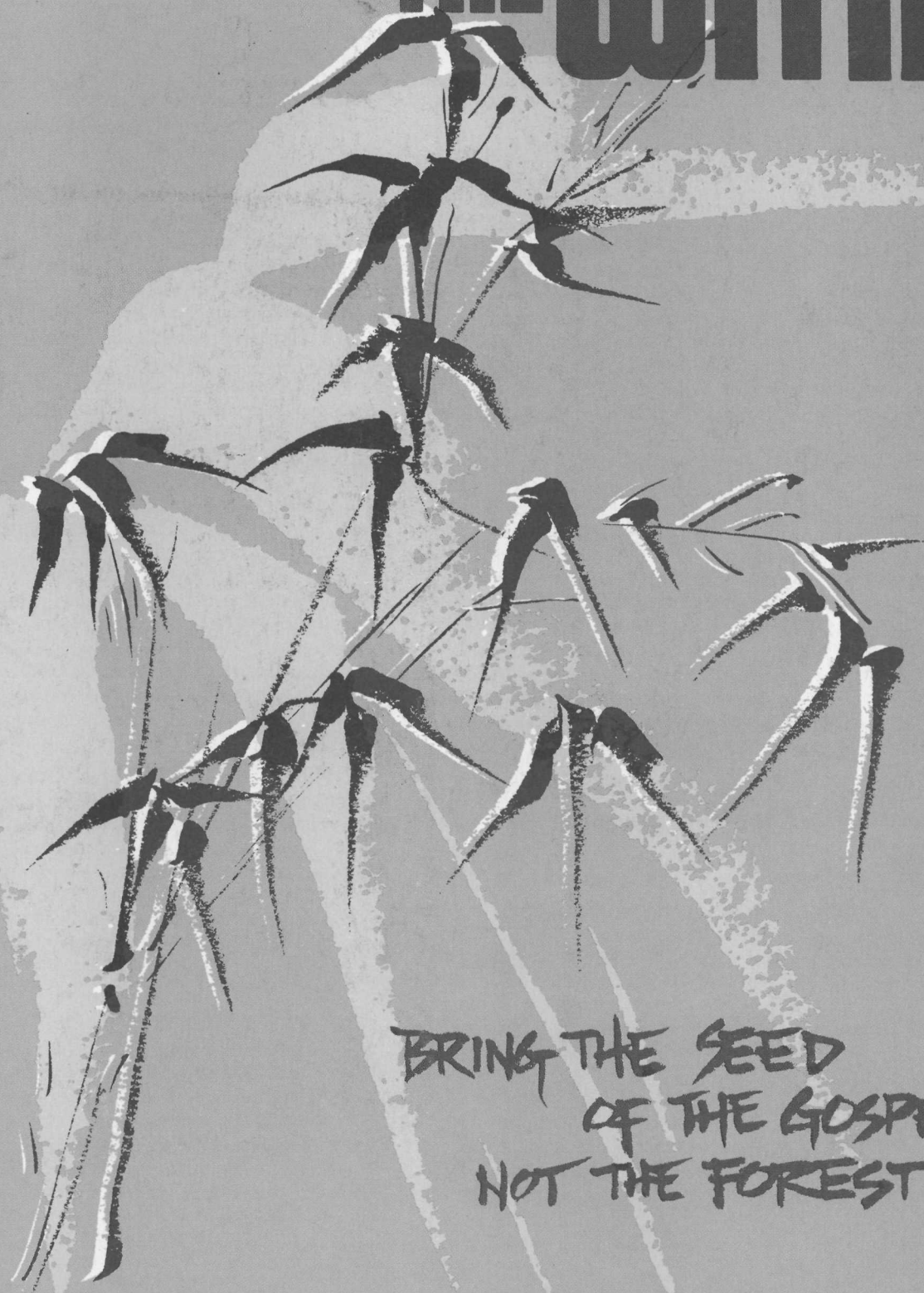
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THE WITNESS



BRING THE SEED
OF THE GOSPEL
NOT THE FOREST

Letters

Hail 'Pontius Bush'?

As I listened to the three-hour service on Good Friday, I ruminated on the role of political expediency in the death of Christ. Caiaphas considered "it was expedient that one should die for the people." Pilate reversed his judgment at the baying of the mob. Neither profited. Pilate was sacked soon after, and a few years later the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.

Political expediency is still to the fore. In the Gulf, Iraqis were urged to topple Saddam Hussein and his soldiers urged to desert. Then the West recovered Kuwait and the Iraqis that responded to our call became expendable. Piously we hold up our hands and protest that the Allies cannot interfere in the internal affairs of another country. The USA got what it wanted — the oil. Or has it?

The Iraqi rebels are Shiites and Kurds, and the West armed Hussein in his war with Iran to limit the spread of Shiite Islamic fundamentalism. The Kurds are a nuisance to the USA's ally, Turkey, so they can be victims of Saddam's chemical warfare.

Our betrayal of the Iraqis is on the par with Churchill's cynical handing back of Cossack prisoners of war to Stalin, who liquidated them (for his reward Churchill got the Iron Curtain and the Cold War); and the Red Army's deliberate delay in liberating Warsaw in 1944, to allow the Germans time to crush the Polish people. For that the Russians earned the undying hatred of the Poles.

In keeping with the West's callous use of political expediency and the season of Easter, I proclaim, "Hail, Pontius Bush."

Doug Kettle
Indooroopilly
Queensland, Australia

A sign of hope

Thank you for being a breath of fresh air and a sign of hope for those of us who stand for peace with justice here at home

as well as abroad. I appreciated very much Mary Lou Suhor's article "Demons of conflict" in the February issue and am grateful for her many years of service with THE WITNESS.

My heart rejoiced at the article "Remembrance, pain and hope" by Dorothee Sölle in the March edition. I have sent copies of it to many friends and family members. Sölle's article spoke to my experience of asking questions of my own parents about discrimination against black people in our schools and in our town when I was growing up in Ohio. In the final analysis, what really counts is human relations. We have to act out of our own integrity for the sake of humanity.

As a United Church of Christ clergywoman, I thank God for my Episcopalian friends, for the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, for THE WITNESS magazine and for Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and Patti Browning's witness for peace in Central America and the Middle East.

Frances Truitt
Ellsworth, Maine

(Frances Truitt is a co-founder of Witness for Peace. — Ed.)

'Time to mourn' — EPF

Let us give thanks to God for the cease-fire declaration by President Bush and the apparent acceptance of the UN conditions by the Iraqi government. In our call for an Episcopal Fast for Peace issued January 4, we asked that all Episcopalians "fast and pray until President George Bush and Saddam Hussein agree to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the current crisis in the Persian Gulf." (See February WITNESS).

We thank all of you who have participated in the fast, in prayer vigils, public demonstrations against the war, and other efforts to achieve peace. We also thank Edmond Browning, our

Presiding Bishop and dear friend, for his constant dedicated leadership in our struggle to prevent the outbreak of war.

This is not a time for celebration; it is a time for mourning — for the thousands of innocent civilians who died; for the men and women of the Armed Forces of all nations who were killed or injured, and for their families; for the destruction and pollution of the land; and for our country which once again resorted to weapons of war contrary to the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We must never accept such means of settling international disputes.

While some of you may choose to end your Fast for Peace in the Persian Gulf because of the cease-fire, others may wish to continue the discipline of fasting with special intentions for the people of the Middle East and other areas where our brothers and sisters in Christ continue to suffer oppression.

Some of these include Palestine, El Salvador, South Africa and our own country. All of you have our prayers and support.

Ann McElroy, Chair
Episcopal Peace Fellowship
Cupertino, Cal.

Sensible reading matter

I'm quite serious about sending this gift subscription for George and Barbara Bush. Someone has to knock some sense into his head. Perhaps he'll catch a glimmer of truth from reading THE WITNESS. One can always hope and pray.

Ann S. Lowell
Chestnut Hill, Mass.

Not to be missed

I just received a mailing inviting me to subscribe to THE WITNESS and I've returned the card along with my payment.

My reason for writing is to secure a copy of a recent issue, "Breaking Silence," mentioned in the promotional literature. I believe that issue will prove to

be invaluable in my work with the U.S. Air Force Family Advocacy Program. Had I subscribed earlier I wouldn't have missed that issue.

The Rev. Eugene W. Zeilfelder
San Francisco, Calif.

Commends coverage

Your publicity letter describes a recent issue with a story: Victims who suffered sexual abuse by clergy or family members call on church and society to confront the issue rather than hide "the shameful secret." We would appreciate a copy. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Commission for Women has engaged the church in a process of commitment and determination to make the church a safe place for victims of physical and sexual abuse, and we commend you for covering this story.

Mary D. Pellauer, Ph.D.
Chicago, Ill.

(See 'Breaking Silence' ad p. 11 — Ed.)

Issue saved day

I was going to give up reading THE WITNESS. I'm too old! But when I read "What they're saying about the war" in the April issue, I just couldn't.

The Rt. Rev. Francis Lickfield
Yarmouth Port, Mass.

Need deeper analysis

Lost in the hoopla over victory in a war that was packaged as a video-game was the eternal feminine question, "What is right?" It would have been the sort of problem that would get a Joyce Munro ("Protesting the Gulf War with Becca," March) to go to her first peace march to teach her daughter. Like me — Munro would choose a carousel ride over civil disobedience. And the kid would notice both of our limits. As Munro phrased it so well, "My enemy is the government of my country and myself."

Claudia Windal ("A Way of the Cross for the lesbian and gay community")

would have those of us who are gay identify with Christ in crucifixion rather than rock the boat while there is something so important as a war going on.

Mary Hunt ("Medals on our blouses?") seems upset that women are put on the spot of having to fight. One of the main arguments against the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment was that folk were "concerned" that it would mean women would have to fight. Now we see that may be the only "right" that some want women to have. That may be the best example of poetic justice in history.

In a letter to the editor about his and Jeanie Bernstein's predicament, Sam Day sums up the despair of our situation as America applauds a "peace" it probably doesn't understand; a "peace" that can be expected to destroy so many more.

Manning Marable ("The bitter fruits of war") hit at the gut of our problems when he said, "If we want to understand why war occurred, we need to analyze the system of American power." But his solution won't work when the government can make sure the war is over before the peace movement can really begin.

U.S. Representative Henry Gonzales (editorial) only had the solution half-right: The legislature was as guilty as the president. Both need to be impeached!

Men will continue to demand applause for atrocity until women insist on their half of the legislature so that diplomacy can have a chance. We gays will continue to simper for "mercy" until we insist on a fair division of power so we don't have to whine. People of color will continue to be both slighted and destroyed until they themselves insist on power being divided proportionally by race.

And Sam Day and Jeanie Bernstein will rot in jail until they agree that the system of government itself will have to be changed. Otherwise, all of our muttering won't be heard beneath all of the applause for the government.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, Mich.

Lost friend found

I'd wondered what happened to THE WITNESS after the Rev. William Spofford, Sr., died. I worked for THE WITNESS on an Antioch College co-op job, back in the early '40s.

It was quite an adventure. I met people like Dr. Fred Grant, Bishop Ludlow, Dorothy Day, and Dr. Joseph Fletcher.

I solicited advertising and sent out reams of letters seeking subscriptions — no computers or even electric typewriters in the tiny office on Liberty Street in New York City.

I'm glad to see you are still in there fighting for good causes

Anne M. Huff
Sacramento, Cal.

Non-stratum heaven?

I have noticed in Letters to the Editor various persons attempting to promote a caste system in the church.

In the top stratum would be White-American-Episcopalians. In the next stratum would be Any-American Episcopalian. In the third stratum would be Any-Anglican. In the next few strata would be a variety of people. In the lowest stratum would be integration activists, pacifists, food-stamp chiselers, homosexuals, inclusive language advocates, Jesse Jackson and a few bishops.

When we are gathered about the Lord's Table, I predict that only one out of 25 will be from the top stratum. I say there will be all sorts of persons: Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, African animists, Christian Scientists, Mormons, Unitarians, Pentecostals, etc. I base my prediction on *Matthew 25:11 ff.*

I am now 83. Within the next few years, I will, by the grace of God, be welcomed into the heavenly kingdom. I wish there were a way I could report to you the accuracy of my prediction in that post-mortem period.

The Rev. Eldred Johnston
Columbus, Ohio

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THE WITNESS



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The view from jail

As we went to press, Sam Day, a member of THE WITNESS Editorial Advisory Board and co-director of Nukewatch, was awaiting sentencing April 24, and a possible 18-month jail term for participating in non-violent civil disobedience protesting the Gulf War (see his story below). This piece, together with Jeff Dietrich's account of similar non-violent actions in Los Angeles, (page 18) are typical of those actions which give the lie to George Bush's words, "there is no anti-war movement out there."

One of the people I have come to know since my arrest January 17 for protesting the Persian Gulf War is a U.S. marshal named Randy.

It was Randy who drove the van that brought me and other peace activists to Federal Court in Madison from Ft. McCoy, a central Wisconsin training base for troops bound for the Middle East, the day after the war began. Randy has been my frequent handcuffer, guard, and chauffeur for court appearances in Madison during the 10 weeks of my stay in the Rock County Jail in nearby Janesville. And it was Randy who drew the duty of watching over me and my fellow inmate, John LaForge, during the concluding day of our trial March 26, when John and I and two others were found guilty by a Federal Court Jury.

"Mind if I ask a personal question?" he asked as John and I, shackled hand and foot, bone-tired and disconsolate after our long wait for the jury's disappointing verdict, ascended in an elevator with him to our new quarters in the Dane County Jail in Madison.

"Go ahead," I said.

"The war is over. You're 64 years old. You've been offered a signature bond. What are you doing in here?"

The question took me momentarily aback because, quite frankly, I had been wondering the same thing myself. I mentioned something about "not wanting to be my own jailer," explaining to him that I could have secured my freedom pending trial and sentence without promising not to do anything "bad" such as returning to Ft. McCoy.

It did not occur to me until later that a

better answer to Randy's question was the fact that he had asked it. My "prison witness" against the war and the policies that engendered it had touched the heart of one of my captors.

For two days in the Madison courtroom we tried to reach the judge and jury through a thicket of case law and procedural rules that can inhibit and ensnare the amateur. The government had charged us with knowingly violating an Army regulation that forbids "demonstrations" at Ft. McCoy. Our central defense was that we had gone to the base to distribute leaflets to the troops about rules against war crimes, not to demonstrate our attitude toward the war.

My attorney, Kary Love of Holland, Mich., brought a professional polish to our defense. He pointed out to the jury that we were helping the Army to do its job of educating soldiers about the war.

John LaForge, author of the leaflets we had taken to the base, incurred a stern lecture from the judge for his "improper argument" in attempting to remind the jury of the bloodshed caused by American bombs and missiles raining down on Baghdad.

Defendant Michael Miles, organizer of a 23-day Advent season vigil outside the base, choked back tears as he told the jury what compelled him to take his message into Ft. McCoy itself.

The fourth defendant was Steven Hardin, who teaches English to Southeast Asian refugees in his hometown of LaCrosse, about 40 miles from the base, and had been counseling Army reservists about applying for conscientious objector status. Like Mike, Hardin had become

convinced that the troops needed more information about war crimes and international law. Asked in court why he did not obey an order to turn around and leave the base, Steve put his finger on the heart of our case. To obey the order, he said, would have been to put himself under arrest.

We gave the trial our best shot but lost it because the weight of the law as clearly on the government's side. In the end we were grateful to our jury of 12 women for taking a long time — five hours — to come to judgment. It must have been a struggle for them. I think we won the battle for their hearts but lost the battle for their minds.

So now we await our sentencing — Mike and Steve at home and John and I on mattresses on the floor of a crowded cell block looking out on the shimmering marble dome of Wisconsin's capitol.

The government has indicated it will seek jail sentences for me and John. As repeat offenders we are subject to sentences up to six months for entering the base on January 17 plus up to one year for having done so while awaiting trial for a similar entry a week earlier. (We were fined \$360 each for the first offense.)

Disappointing as it was to me and my friends and loved ones, the outcome of our March trial was in a sense a victory. The verdict ensured continuation of a "prison witness" which I hope may call attention in some small, symbolic way to the needlessness of the bloodshed, the emptiness of America's military triumph, the injury to our national soul.

— Sam Day

Cells, souls, and people

by James M. Murphy

When we look at an adult person with the naked eye, we see a human being, not another kind of organism. But if we looked at this person through a 300-power microscope, we would no longer recognize that we were looking at a person. Instead, we'd see cells.

If we pricked this person's finger and put a drop of blood on a slide, we would see platelets, erythrocytes, and leukocytes or white blood cells. With a little help from staining, we could differentiate male and female leukocytes and know whether the blood came from a man or a woman, but we'd know we were not looking at a man or a woman.

The happiness and well-being of many people depend upon how we regulate certain social issues, such as parenthood, abortion, and genetic control. The cell versus people distinction and views of the soul influence these regulations. The ultimate choice is to make life on earth either better for its inhabitants, or worse through suffering for the sake of an anticipated happy afterlife.

A vital distinction exists between people and cells, despite the fact that cells are alive. One, two, or ten-celled organisms are qualitatively and quantitatively different from human beings. Although cells or single-celled organisms perform an amazing number of biological functions, they don't do what people do.

People can make sounds that are understood as speech or precursors of speech. As far as we know, cells cannot. People can think, feel, move and choose how to interact and relate with other people.

James M. Murphy, M.Div., M.D., is a physician, ordained minister and lecturer at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

Cells cannot. People live on their own, are self-sustaining, and are viable. Cells are not. People can exercise reasoning and logic, make and fulfill plans, have beliefs and values, and can develop standards for the ethical conduct of behavior. Cells cannot.

In the present debate over what constitutes human life, we are in danger of confusing people with cells and of elevating cells to the level of human beings.

When two cells come together and form a fertilized egg in a uterus, this fertilized egg is not a human being. A fertilized egg is a cell living within the womb, as it might live in a tissue culture. A fertilized egg — however one theologizes it — is still not a person by any rational definition. Removing cells from a womb or a tissue culture results in their dying, but it is cells that are dying, not people. Embryos and nonviable fetuses are not people and not babies; they are cells in tissue cultures. To remove them from their means of continued life — be it artificial or natural — is not killing people; it is causing fertilized eggs in tissue cultures to die. Human beings don't exist until they are outside the womb, are viable, and can be sustained on milk from a bottle or breast.

The sperm and egg cells out of which a child develops should not be confused with people and elevated to the status of father and mother. Parenthood should not be based on cells. For example, what does fatherhood mean? What do we mean by "real" father? A man who loves, cares for, and provides for a child and takes on the role of the child's father for a prolonged period of time — even to the point where the child has developed an attachment to him as father — may be viewed by certain laws, legislation, and court settlements as

"not the father."

A Canadian court ruled after a mother had died that the biological father had parental rights over a stepfather who had assumed for many years the role of father and provider. A male who had not assumed the role of a father but from whom the sperm cell came was given the right to determine and influence a child's life — even to the extent of being allowed to take the child away from the stepfather. A cell — specifically, one of several million sperm cells in one ejaculate of a male — was elevated to the status of father.

Similarly, if a man and woman adopt or provide foster care for a child, the child may later have to endure being removed from "Mommy" and "Daddy" because they are not the same religious, cultural or ethnic origin of the people from whose sperm and egg the child developed. Thus, we elevate cells and call them "parents." Can there be a Muslim sperm or a Buddhist egg?

Sperm and egg cells may be alive, but they are not parents. Cells cannot perform parental functions and don't take the role of parents and care for the well-being of a child. They don't love, communicate, and relate to a child; they don't have values and codes of ethics, don't reason and plan, don't communicate through language, and don't have the other characteristics of parents. Parents are the people who sign on for at least an 18-year task of caring for, loving, protecting and nurturing a child. The issue of the real parent can't be decided on a cellular level.

In the Western Hemisphere we generally separate the mind and body and regard the body and biological functions as the lower, animal-like aspects of humans. However, when it comes to certain body parts, such as sperm and egg cells, we

contradict ourselves, elevate cells to the status of parents, and regard cells as holy and sacred.

The elevation of the participants in reproduction and the products of fertilization to the level of the sacred gives genital acts much power and imbues the people who participate in reproduction with the right to determine the future of other human beings. This glorification of sexual acts and overvaluation of fertilized eggs may compensate for the Western beliefs that sexual activities are wrong, sinful, inferior or animal-like. The sacredness of family should be upheld for those who perform the tasks of raising the child.

People's ideas about soul or spirit influence the cell versus people argument. What are souls? Do all people have them, or do only certain people have souls? Do cells have souls? The word "soul" has many meanings. Soul or spirit may mean the essence of a person or what animates a person. It may be the quality that arouses emotion and sentiment. A person with much energy may be described as having much spirit. Soul may be the moving spirit of a group, such as a leader. Characteristics of a group may symbolize or represent the spirit or soul of a group. These definitions of soul characterize a person or group, alive and living on this earth.

For many religious groups, including Christians, soul may refer to the aspect of a human being that continues after death. Religions around the world and throughout the history of humankind do not differ much regarding beliefs that people or souls exist after bodily death. Followers of these religions believe that when the body and brain are dead, the soul or spirit continue to exist, either as disembodied people or with new bodily forms. Some believe

that spirits or souls exist in the mind of God.

Belief in life after death is a religious tenet, something that many accept on faith, though reason and logic and scientific exploration have not proved its existence. For many believers, scientific logic, common sense reasoning, and other values or goals are contrary to matters of religion, such as beliefs in life after death.

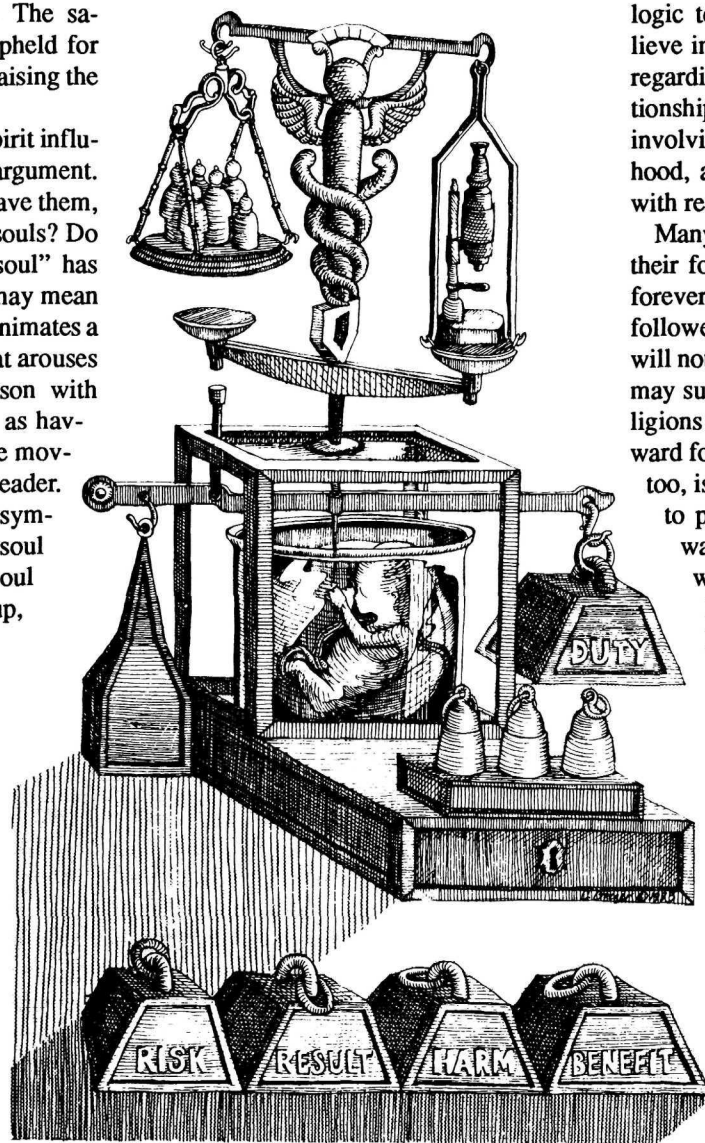
In the science versus religion debate, Christian Fundamentalists opposed a sci-

entific view of the world. For example, Fundamentalists were behind the indictment in 1925 of John Scopes, a high school biology teacher in Dayton, Tenn., for violating the state's anti-evolution statutes.

Followers may suspend or disregard rules of reason and logic and government regulations for freedom and justice. After all, what short-term values in society could compare with the long-term gain of eternal paradise? Even more liberal believers who ordinarily use reasoning and logic to approach social issues and believe in justice, democracy, and freedom regarding the regulation of human relationships, may in certain "religious" areas involving contraception, abortion, parenthood, and genetic engineering, dispense with reason and logic.

Many religions of the world teach that their followers' souls or spirits will live forever in paradise and those who are not followers will not have life after death, will not have happiness in the next life, or may suffer for eternity in Hell. These religions promise eternal paradise as a reward for prescribed behavior in life. This, too, is taken on faith. If there is no way to prove life after death, there is no way to prove any hypothesis about which kind of life on this earth leads to everlasting life. Some followers believe, in fact, that the more people suffer on this earth, the better their lives will be in the next world. Some believe that if people sacrifice their lives on this earth for a certain cause, they will have eternal paradise.

The Japanese Shinto kamikaze pilots were willing to fly suicide missions in World War II because they regarded killing Americans in this life as good preparation for life after death. To-



day, the Shiite Muslims of Iran are willing to undertake suicide missions to have eternal paradise, according to author Robin Wright in *Sacred Rage*. She warns of the danger of our failure to be aware of these religious dimensions in conflicts in the Middle East and their implications for international affairs.

Certain Christians also teach that self-sacrifice, deprivation, or even martyrdom are good preparation for life after death. Christians have been known to attack, kill, and annihilate those who don't agree with their beliefs.

The founders of the United States, the framers of the Constitution, separated church and state. They placed the value of the well-being of living citizens pragmatically above religious beliefs, even beliefs about life after death, if there were a conflict between the two. They wrote a document to regulate relationships between all citizens — including those who believed in life after death and those who did not.

Framers of the Constitution did not intend that religious freedom would undermine the use of reason and logic to deal with social organizations, institutions, and the regulation of behavior between people. They did not intend that religious freedom would destroy the Constitution. Are we now going to allow religious freedom to destroy the principles of government that were created to protect religious liberty?

In our day certain religious groups have arisen, as they have from time to time in American history, with sufficient force to threaten to override the concerns for the well-being of American citizens. A religious belief in life after death is crucial to the arguments of many opponents of abortion. They believe that when a sperm cell unites with an egg cell, a soul exists or is created. These groups believe fertilized eggs must be saved for eternity. They assume cells have souls and equate cells with people. Fertilized eggs, souls and people are all under one theological

umbrella.

If we pursue the logical implications of this belief that cells are equivalent to people, we should keep all sperm and egg cells alive in tissue cultures. If fertilized eggs are people with souls and the aim of life is to create souls that may go to Heaven, we should not allow any sperm or egg cells to die. The millions of sperm contained in one male ejaculate are potential souls; thus, we should preserve all ejaculates. If eggs are potential souls, we

“Sperm and egg cells may be alive, but they are not parents. Cells cannot perform parental functions and don't take the role of parents and care for the well-being of a child.”

should preserve all the eggs in all the ovaries of dead and living females and grow them in tissue cultures — a not impossible task — and attempt to fertilize them with sperm cells.

Within some forms of Christianity the reason for keeping a fertilized egg alive is that a “human being” with a soul is sinful until the church baptizes it. The doctrine of original sin is that the “person” is sinful because of the parents’ lust in sexual intercourse conceiving the fertilized egg. Without being baptized, the soul ceases to exist or goes to Hell and the “person” suffers for eternity. Yet, if unbaptized souls go to Hell, why not keep eggs and

sperms alive and allow the sperm to fertilize eggs in test tubes? We could create trillions of souls, baptize them, and save trillions of souls for Heaven.

If we grant the religious premise that fertilized eggs are souls that can continue to exist in a life after death, one might wonder why it is necessary to keep the fertilized egg alive at all. Why should one not remove it from its tissue culture in the womb, baptize it, let it die, and allow the soul to go to Heaven now? Why are those who oppose abortion so unconcerned about creating “souls” and saving the souls of all united sperms and eggs?

Certain eggs and sperm cells carry debilitating, deforming and lethal physical diseases in their genes. Which egg and which sperm unite can have far-reaching consequences for the medical conditions and physical well-being of people. If we want to relieve human suffering, we should do what we can to produce babies who are normal, healthy and free of diseases.

In many instances, predicting the outcome of uniting certain sperm and eggs is possible. In some cases where union has already taken place, genetic diseases may be determined by chromosome studies in utero, and abortions could be done at these times. Prevention of genetic diseases is a practical and technological possibility. We could prevent people from being confined for years in hospitals or from suffering immeasurable pain and disability. Had we implemented genetic controls previously, millions of hospital beds would never have been occupied. On a pragmatic level, the costs of medical care would not have skyrocketed to current levels. In one generation we could eliminate medical diseases by about one-half.

A decision to conceive and give birth to a person with a hereditary disease that will have widespread detrimental affects on other people, society, and future generations should not be a freedom of individuals, just as individuals do not have

the freedom to kill, rob, rape and injure other people.

Congress, the governing body charged to preserve the well-being of society, should prohibit the production of hereditary diseases. Individual freedom and religious freedom should not be interpreted to mean that people may condemn others to lives of suffering and disability. To condemn future generations to suffering from diseases is a heinous act. Why have we allowed so many parents to conceive and give birth to babies with hereditary diseases, when genetic matching could prevent it?

To believe that God hath joined together those who produce babies with genetic diseases is to blame God for human inaction. If we distinguished people and cells and if the relief of suffering mattered more than religious dogmas, we would actively encourage, legislate, and enforce the union of eggs and sperms that would produce healthy babies.

Both those who protest against abortion and those who advocate it seem to ignore the issue of the control of genetic defects and diseases. By failing to stop birth defects and hereditary diseases we are, in effect, giving consent to physically torturing thousands of Americans.

The enormous leap from knowing this to acting on it would entail staggering changes not only in ideas about parenthood, such as pride in having a child biologically, but also in religious ideas about the sacred quality of marriage and the family, in the operation of bureaucracies of the state, and in accepted definitions of liberty, freedom, and privacy. Despite the toes stepped on and the necessary changes in accepted practices, we must raise the issue because of its potential contribution to the relief of human suffering.

Some of us believe that if life after death exists, it will be based on the fulfillment of human potential in this life and on the principles and values that operate for the happiness and well-being of all

people on this earth. If God created a world that has many predictable rules of nature, has delicately balanced ecosystems, and can be understood by reason and logic, life on this earth may be continuous in some respects with life after death.

If life after death were completely discontinuous, it would be different from anything we know about God's creation. Life after death may involve a metamorphosis similar to that known in biology. For example, a larva goes through a metamorphosis to become an adult animal, such as a frog; or a pupa goes through metamorphosis to become a butterfly. The best preparation for life as a frog or butterfly is fulfillment of the potential for a healthy, functioning larva or pupa.

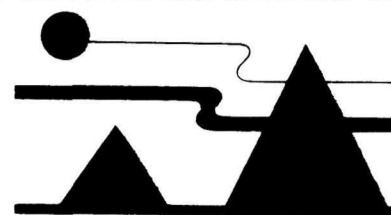
Analogously, humankind's best preparation for a metamorphosis in life after death would be the fulfillment of human potential in this life. In short, belief in life after death need not change and may reinforce the values, purposes and meanings that provide for the well-being of humankind in this life.

Life after death and the Kingdom of God may *not* necessarily be thought of as a temporal state of existence after death, but rather as an idea of a quality of life. Salvation may mean a person's fulfillment of human potential after being emotionally, psychologically and spiritually unfulfilled, or, figuratively speaking, half-dead in this life. In the Bible, Nicodemus puzzled over the idea of being born again and asked how he could enter his mother's womb a second time. Jesus replied, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (*John 3:5*).

Being born again of water and the spirit may mean living life fully with spirit and soul, with meaning and purpose, and with relationships that bring peace on earth and goodwill toward humankind. It may mean bringing the kingdom of God to earth now. The good news of the Gospel may be that people can realize God-given

potentials in this life.

Christians have opportunities to influence society for the well-being of the living in the areas of conception, pregnancy, and birth. This involves a three-pronged effort: to prevent the birth of unwanted children, to honor the sacredness of parents who commit to raising a child, and to control the conception of embryos so that medically healthy babies will be born. To accomplish these goals, we have to distinguish clearly between cells and people, stop living in ways that cause human misery and suffering for the purpose of life after death, and apply reason and logic to make life on this planet better. TW



Pro-choice issue available

This issue on procreative freedom gives a comprehensive theological and social analysis of reproductive freedom. Features penetrating interviews with Faye Wattleton, president of Planned Parenthood, and Beverly Wildung Harrison, feminist theologian. Also, an African-American male viewpoint by Faith Evans, past president of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, and articles addressing pastoral and legislative implications.

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Health not first consideration

by Ruth Hubbard

Before I comment on Dr. James M. Murphy's article, "Cells, souls, and people," I feel obliged to identify my own belief system. I am not a Christian and do not believe in the existence of a soul, hence also not in its continued life after death. I come at the issues Dr. Murphy raises from a feminist and secular perspective. Furthermore, while I am a biologist, I do not share Dr. Murphy's medical perspective, either. I do not believe that the biomedical sciences offer adequate or even relevant criteria of what constitutes a meaningful life.

Health is only one of the factors that contribute to the good life. In fact, I am skeptical of many of the medical criteria of what constitutes "normality" or "health." I do not consider disease the most important, or even a major, cause of "human misery and suffering." When I think about how best to make it possible for people to "stop living . . . in ways that cause human misery and suffering," I turn to a host of political, social, and economic measures before I think of medical ones.

For infants to look forward to a meaningful life their parents need to be secure in the knowledge that they will have food, housing, jobs, and when needed, medical care. They also need to live in a political system that will not pit their basic needs against those of their fellow citizens, hence in one devoid of racist, sexist, and

class hierarchies, and in one that will not send them or their family members off to kill or be killed in wars.

In other words, although I am a biologist, I do not think our biological shortcomings are what most seriously threaten or even limit our well-being. One reason is that I do *not* think that "people live on their own [and] are self-sustaining." People are social beings. We are born

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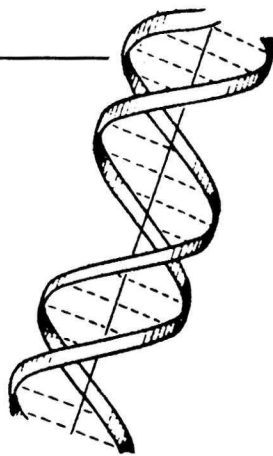
dependent on others and grow up interdependent. At what point dependency is identified as pathology and so becomes a hallmark of disability or disease, rests on social conventions and decisions. Similarly, whether a genetic variation is labeled a defect rather than a difference involves social criteria and, in our time of rapid technological innovation, technological ones as well.

"Defective" eyesight or hearing is not considered serious because we have the

means to fit children and adults with glasses or hearing aids. Children born with the metabolic "disease" PKU (phenylketonuria) can grow up to be "normal" adults, if their genetic "defect" is identified early enough to provide them with the diet they need in order to avoid its expression. Women over 35 were not thought to need special medical attention during pregnancy before certain technological means of surveillance had been developed. And even now that physicians have various ways to assess the health status of a fetus, many tests they use do not permit them to predict at what age (if ever) a specific condition will manifest itself or how disabling it will be. Medical and technological measures often determine what is considered a disability, which disabilities are considered preventable, and the ways in which they can or should be prevented.

Medical judgments about who is fit to live have a gruesome history. The eugenic and racial laws the Nazis enacted in Germany enabled geneticists and physicians literally to decide which adults and children should live or die. And although in the United States eugenic laws did not permit that degree of medical intervention, earlier in this century they empowered physicians to sterilize people against their will. Diagnoses of "insanity" or "mental retardation" constituted grounds for eugenic sterilization as did such questionable labels as "alcoholism" or "criminality." Needless to say, such diagnoses were used primarily against poor immigrants and minorities, not against affluent Caucasian-Americans.

Ruth Hubbard is Professor of Biology, Emerita, at Harvard University and chairs the Committee on Human Genetics of the Council for Responsible Genetics.



In this country, physicians, lawmakers, and clergy still are mostly white, affluent men, which necessarily limits their experience and perspective. They have their expertise and their role to play, but they have not the experience, training, or wisdom to decide who is fit to be born. Rather, our aim as a society must be to do what we can to provide the social, economic and, where needed, medical measures to enable each of us to live as fully as possible.

Much of the money that now goes into research on prenatal diagnosis could be spent more fruitfully on preventive and therapeutic measures and on basic social and health care services. A victim-blaming approach that suggests that the birth of a child with a disability is someone's fault and is to be prevented at all costs reinforces our society's neglectful, and often punitive, attitude towards people who have a disability. Meanwhile, people with disabilities say again and again that their disability is usually not the problem. The problem is the way they are treated.

As scientists claim to diagnose and predict so-called inherited tendencies to develop diseases that usually do not exhibit symptoms until mid-life or later, such as most cancers, high blood pressure with its increased risk of a heart attack or stroke, or Alzheimer's disease, Dr. Murphy's mandate not to bear children who have a knowable "genetic defect" becomes highly restrictive.

Indeed, these examples illustrate the arbitrariness of the decisions about which diseases — hence which people — should pass muster. There are no proper social

mechanisms for making such decisions. Certainly, individual physicians or lawyers must never be allowed to use their professional expertise to make judgments about who should, and should not, be born. The most we can ask of physicians, clergy or indeed the entire society is to do what they and we can to enable every woman to welcome and care for the children she decides to bear.

So far I have not addressed directly the subject of abortion, which is one of the issues Dr. Murphy tries to encompass. The reason is that I look upon abortion as a personal and social question, not a biological or medical one. I am not prepared to split hairs about whether eggs, sperm, embryos, and fetuses are alive or human. As long as they are of human provenance, I am willing to grant they are human. And they are as alive as any other living cell or organism.

The crucial issue is that their continued life requires them to be nourished within the body of a woman who, without doubt, is alive and human. It is for that woman — and no one else — to decide whether she is prepared to sustain that relationship. That may not always be an easy decision, but easy or not, it is hers to make.

Where society (including clergy and physicians) can help is by making it possible for her to feel able to bear and rear her child, and particularly if that child turns out to have a disability or disease.

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The blessings of sexuality

by Donna Schaper

Here's my bet. If American girls and women achieved normal sex, safe sex wouldn't be such a big issue. I know safe sex has come to mean sex free of AIDS. Safe sex means sex with condoms. For females, however, safe sex has long carried additional meanings. Safe sex is sex without the consequences of pregnancy. Except for the brief period when middle-class women or women who use birth control turn towards child bearing, the rest of our sexual life we are very interested in sex safe from the consequences of children.

That's why we use birth control and why, when birth control fails or we foolishly forget it, we have abortions. We want inconsequential or recreational sex rather than consequential or procreational sex. We are very much like men in these matters. We enjoy sex, we look forward to it, and we remember the experience fondly. In our projection of normal, legitimate lives for ourselves, we want sex more than we fear it. Maybe this is what is not clear. Perhaps the political passions aroused by abortion, linked with the seeming hatred of the body and its pleasures and the possibility that women might be enjoying these pleasures, derive from the illusion that women don't want fun, safe sex. It is clear that some people think we should not want enjoyable safe sex, that we are naughty to do so. But, like men, we want bodily pleasure whether we are supposed to or not.

If girls were taught the normalcy of such desire, and women permitted themselves to enjoy it, the rates of both teenage pregnancy and abortion would go down. That's my wager. Failing to use birth control is a pretended innocence —

we fake being "good girls" while being naughty. Girls raised in this fraud refuse to acknowledge their normal sexuality and have unprotected intercourse. The results are tragic. Abortion is a tragic choice precisely because it is avoidable.

Sex — both homosexual and heterosexual — normally involves petting from about age 12 on. I base this on the fact that I started petting 30 years ago at age 12, and I think my experience was pretty normal. For some it is before 12 and for some

*"I wager that
normal sexuality is
less costly than
abnormal repression."*

it is after; that's what normal means, it implies a range of behavior.

All my friends were doing the same thing. We were not in a big Northeastern town either. We were in rural South Carolina. According to my parents, their generation started petting around age 15, except for the very good, upwardly-mobile girls who ended up having a hard time enjoying sex or giving pleasure to themselves or to others for most of their lives. Their delay was abnormal, and that abnormality hurt them. Their reward was the approval of the highest, most repressed, layer of society which always takes more than it gives.


First experience of intercourse comes for some girls around age 16, according to the famed Kinsey Report on sexuality. The age range is wider here than for petting because of a greater disparity in how relationships are formed at this time. Most girls, according to groups that have studied teenage sexuality, want relation-

ships with sex. The majority of them are unprotected the first time, and most are lucky not to get pregnant.

The reason for such stupid risks is the sexual schizophrenia of "moral" mind over "immoral" body. Imagine what happens when a teenager pulls a condom out of her purse swearing that this is her first time. Normal sex would encourage parents to give their sons and daughters condoms for their 16th birthdays.

Of course, kids would and should sneak around a little. But the idea that parents of my generation would risk their children having an unwanted pregnancy or an abortion is obscene. We fought, some of us pretty hard, for the right to normal sex. Our parents fought pretty hard for what they thought was normal sex, too. But what was considered normal has changed, due to the availability of birth control. Thank God for birth control.

But birth control is a blessing only if it is used. If the social head can't keep up with the social body, and we continue to encourage fraudulent mental virginities in which we're not admitting to what we're really doing, the blessing dissolves. One consequence of this dissolved blessing is absurd quarrels over the morality of abortion. The supposedly elevated conversations about the sanctity of life only slightly mask social anxiety about women's free enjoyment of sex.

Another consequence of the unused blessing is teenage parents. A third is unwanted children. I wager that normal sexuality is much less costly than abnormal repression. You would think that all the losses caused by repression, particularly the lost and abused freedom of God-given sexuality, would cause me to win my wager. But lots of people seem to prefer unhappiness, and think it is normal, even moral. I wager it is neither. 

The Rev. Donna Schaper is pastor of First Congregational Church, Riverhead, N.Y.

Short Takes

The unknown clothier: What Jesus wore on Easter

What did the Christ wear on the first Easter morning? Well, it wasn't the "same old thing," that's for sure. His grave clothes neatly folded in the tomb, his robe gambled for by soldiers at the foot of the cross — what on earth was he to put on for Easter?

At first glance, Mary mistook him for a gardener. Could it be that was because he was dressed like a gardener? Is it possible that a gardener shared his clothes with Jesus — the first instance of "I was naked and you clothed me" in post-Resurrection history?

Did Jesus come bursting out of the tomb in grave clothes just as a gardener went by, and scare the poor chap half to death? Causing the gardener perhaps to say, "Man, you can't go running around like that, you'll scare people. Here, let me give you some of my duds so you'll look alive instead of like a corpse."

Or had Jesus stripped the grave

The Gospel According to Abbie Jane Wells

clothes off and folded them neatly before he burst forth, causing the gardener to say, "Man, you'll catch your death of cold, and besides, women come this way often. Here, let me give you some of my clothes."

It's said that Mary was the first who saw him that morning. But maybe not; it might have been the one who gave him the clothes who saw him first.

I wonder what effect this had on the one who gave Jesus clothes to wear on that first Easter? Did he (or she, maybe?) know who he or she was giving clothes to? Did that person always share clothes with anyone who needed them?

Well, anyway, Jesus was decently clad in someone's clothes when Mary came and Jesus didn't scare her by wearing grave clothes. The one to whom we never give a thought, or thanks, the unknown clothier who provided Jesus with something to wear on the first Easter, deserves some recognition. So here it is, belatedly, and with my thanks.

Abbie Jane Wells, 1915-1991
Episcopalian author, beloved of THE WITNESS staff, from an article which appeared in 3/83. (See obit p. 25)

Stats on Iraqi dead

In Nazi Germany many citizens claimed "We didn't know" to avoid responsibility for the ovens of Hitler's "new world order." In the United States today, as Johnny and Joanie come marching home victorious, having massacred Iraqi civilians and troops, brownshirted warmongers swagger rampant through the streets — with every bit as much indifference to the slaughter as displayed by the good Germans.

Listen up! Three hundred thousand Iraqis — including perhaps 100,000 civilians — were murdered by the U.S. military . . . The extent of the massacre at least got an airing in the British press. The *London Sunday Times* on March 3 estimated that "as many as 200,000 Iraqis may have died in the Gulf war, according to senior Pentagon officials. Preliminary reports suggest that allied bombing was much deadlier than previously thought and that thousands of Iraqi troops may be buried in bunkers and trenches . . ."

Mitchel Cohen
Quoted in *The Guardian* 3/27/91

Now they're asking?

The Federal Government has begun an extensive study to determine whether barrels of radioactive waste dumped in the Pacific Ocean could break open and spill their contents into a national wildlife sanctuary that is the richest marine habitat in the West.

From 1946 to 1970, an estimated 47,500 steel barrels containing chemicals including plutonium, cesium and mercury as well as empty cardboard boxes were scattered over an undersea area of more than 350 miles in the Gulf of the Farallones, 30 miles west of San Francisco. The wastes were from the Manhattan Project, which developed the atomic bomb, and two nuclear labs of the University of California, as well as some from the Navy.

Katherine Bishop
New York Times 1/20/91

Power corrupts; but lack of power corrupts absolutely.

Adlai Stevenson

Sounds like he's mad

There is a holy anger, excited by zeal, which moves us to improve with warmth those whom our mildness failed to correct.

John Baptist de la Salle

Ethic for sexual behavior

What is a good sexual act? It is honest and real — clearly conveying what the relationship really means, what its deepest meaning is. It is other-enriching, respecting the other person, never exploiting. It is faithful — "tonight's pleasures are not tomorrow's pain." It reveals a commitment, a trust, a tenderness for the other person. It is willing to take responsibility for sexual love's consequences — personal and social. Good sex connects us to the building of a good society. It is liberating, life-giving, joyous, fun, easy, ecstatic, fantastic. And it resists all cruelty, all exploitation, all impersonalization.

This kind of ethic for sexual behavior is appropriate, I believe, for both gay and straight Christians.

The Rev. George F. Regas
Sermon, *God, Sex & Justice* 11/11/90

Australian church oppresses women

by Sally M. Bucklee

‘Why,” the talk show host asked, “has the Episcopal Women’s Caucus in the United States raised funds to bring you to Australia?”

“Because we care about the Anglican women in this country and what’s happening to them,” I replied. “We want to express the support and concern that thousands of North Americans, in Canada and the United States, have for the 140 women here who are deacons and are denied priesthood simply because they are women. We also stand in solidarity with Caroline Pearce, an Australian woman ordained in the United States who is not permitted to exercise her priesthood here, and with the far larger body of women who seek full inclusion in the life and ministry of the church.

“I’m here as well to share the riches the ordination of women has brought to the North American church, and in particular, to my own congregation, which has grown spiritually, financially, and numerically with a woman rector, Jane Dixon, for the past five years. I want to dispel any notions that ordaining women has had negative effects on the Canadian or American churches.”

A deacon later told me that, hearing my statement, she burst into tears. “At last! Somebody cares!” That would be a common response to my presence as I moved through Australia’s major urban centers for three weeks in February speaking to gatherings of the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), clergy, semi-

nary students and faculties, and Education for Ministry groups.

That particular young woman had graduated from seminary three years before her husband. She shared with me the pain of processing as a deacon at her husband’s ordination to the priesthood last year. The tension created in their marriage by the church’s inaction is torturous. More than one deacon confessed she could not bear the agony of telling me her story. “I can’t cope with dragging it up one more time,” said a woman in her sixth year as a deacon.

I often found myself listening for the sacred in the pain of Anglican women and men. Many who talked with me so feared church reprisals for speaking out that they did not want to be named in this article. Sharing the North American experience proved to be the catalyst for ideas and action. Our story helped regenerate the commitment so essential for the next stage of the struggle, which centers around several questions about the autonomy of diocesan bishops to ordain women that have been submitted to the Appellate Tribunal (the national church’s supreme court), set to meet in May.

What would happen after the Tribunal responds was the question on everyone’s mind, but Dr. Janet Scarfe, MOW president, summed up how many felt: “It is lamentable and demeaning to see women — our vocations, and by implication our very natures — examined, picked over in effect, in terms of 19th-century laws and 17th-century canons.”

The Tribunal has determined that MOW is not eligible to be officially represented in court as an “interested party” because it is not considered Anglican on two counts: first it is an incorporated body and second, some of its members are not

Anglican. How many organizations, including the Episcopal Women’s Caucus, would be ruled non-Episcopal if the same rules applied here?

The Australian Church is a federation of 24 dioceses, formed in 1962 when it became independent of the Church of England. A handful of conservative dioceses assured that change would be difficult by requiring extraordinarily high voting majorities in all three houses (bishops, clergy, laity) on church law. The voting patterns of the General Synod (equivalent to our General Convention) in 1977, ’81, ’85 and ’87 have consistently shown two-thirds of the members approve ordaining women. This is as frustrating a deadlock as it was in the Episcopal Church between 1970 and 1976.

Women serve as deacons in 18 of the 24 diocese. Twenty-seven are now into their sixth year of assistant curacy. All this despite a shortage of priests. One of the 27 told me her archbishop has resolved he will not appoint another woman as vicar-in-charge because it is too difficult to schedule supply priests for the Eucharist.

When Bishop Philip Newell of Tasmania flew to a remote island to institute a new female vicar as the only Anglican clergy person, he consecrated sufficient bread and wine to last several months. By the time her supply runs out, a combination of factors may lead Newell to be one of the first bishops to priest women. Tasmania, isolated from the mainland, has traditionally and legally been one of the most autonomous dioceses. It has experienced the ministry of many highly respected deaconesses throughout this century and currently has a reservoir of excellent female deacons awaiting the priesthood. Furthermore, Tasmania is one of a half dozen dioceses whose synods

Sally M. Bucklee is vice-president of the Episcopal Women’s Caucus and a member of the church’s Standing Liturgical Commission. A trainer and consultant to non-profit organizations, she lives in Laurel, Md.

have already voted to support their bishops' ordaining women as soon as the legalities are clarified.

Although women occupy only about 22% of the "power" positions in the U.S. church, the glass ceiling is even lower in Australia, where women are few and far between in diocesan and national decision-making bodies. Women serve on vestries but are not usually involved in or knowledgeable about church politics beyond the parish level. Those who are, frequently pay a harsh price.

A woman in Brisbane shared her experience when she moved a motion at diocesan synod to support the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women: "I described the oppression of women in Third World countries and then moved on to the oppressive situation for women in the Anglican Church. One man moved an amendment stating that 'women are com-

plementary but not equal.' Thankfully this amendment was rejected. Another man tried to gag the debate, which was an attempt to treat women and their oppression as invisible.

"During another motion on domestic violence there was much laughter as a male priest recounted anecdotes about how he dealt with victims of domestic violence, including sending them back to submit to abusive husbands. I felt psychologically abused after that debate, which was even more moving because a female victim of violence had testified during it."

Mavis Rose, a doctoral student in theology, wrote in *MOW Magazine* that she has to come to think of herself as an "Anglican guerilla. I may not use bombs, but I believe it is my prophetic role to bombard decayed, patriarchal structures. A challenge which has yet to be resolved is a sign outside the Cathedral which reads 'Our Forefathers had a Vision for this Cathedral'. The historical record shows that our foremothers worked for years raising a considerable portion of the money that made the vision a reality. A paint brush would help, but the sign is high up, and has a wire fence around it."

One night I met Fran Toy, a priest from California, and Ann Smith, Executive for the Women in Mission and Ministry Office at the Episcopal Church Center, at a MOW potluck supper in Canberra, where they were attending the World Council of Churches' Assembly.

Priests from New Zealand were present, along with local deacons and national MOW leaders. The next day we would all participate in a non-ordination event to

commemorate Bishop of Canberra Owen Dowling's promise the previous year to ordain eight women on Feb. 24, which was postponed to await the decision of the Appellate Tribunal.

At the gathering, a deacon asked, "How do you get a radical act like Philadelphia to happen? How do you push a bishop to do it?" Another asked, "Is there no other way to ordination than the political route?" And then the question I'd heard so often, "How has the church treated the 'Philadelphia 11'?"

Only a few deacons in Canberra and elsewhere seemed ready to risk a radical act like the one that took place in Philadelphia in 1974 when three bishops ordained 11 women in defiance of an Episcopal Church ban. More often, they appeared resigned to their lot or took the approach that if they just keep performing well, some day they will become priests. They may not have the energy to be the motivating force for liberating action. Some are openly uncomfortable with the assertive tactics of MOW. A laywoman claimed that ordained women and seminarians in her diocese are told they may not join MOW or associate with its members. Another was absolutely certain the bishop had schemed to infiltrate the local MOW chapter and cause dissension in order to muzzle it.

In every diocese there are a multitude of reasons why deacons cannot get together to support one another, to organize, to subvert the system. A deacon's salary is limited — "No man could or would live on it for six years!" — and precludes travel to distant conferences. Ordained women are few in number and spread across vast distances. Their rectors keep them busy in the parish.

When I asked one group of deacons what I might bring up at a meeting with their bishop and diocesan clergy the next day, one said, "Well, this is rude, but don't ruffle their feathers." Another suggested, "Try to help them understand how hard it is for us to be in a male ethos all



the time, how hostile and unwelcoming that environment is." A third woman urged, "Tell them about why you came and about our church not recognizing the orders of your church."

Early on I discovered that Australians think the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, Suffragan of Massachusetts, is an *appointed* bishop. They only elect their diocesan bishops, who, in turn, appoint all subordinate bishops — and large archdioceses, like Sydney, have several. Clergy especially were astounded to learn that all bishops are elected by the people, lay and clerical — and that it is often the laity who steer the outcomes of the election. When I explained that after the diocese elects, a majority of the Standing Committees and bishops across the entire church must then confirm that election within a specified time period, they were well beyond the astounded state. It is much more difficult to dismiss the election of a woman to the episcopacy given this process of catholic affirmation.

People frequently commented that they'd met clergywomen from Canada and the United States before, but how important it was the Caucus had sent a layperson this time. I told them I was chosen partly because I could share our common "herstory"; I was deeply involved in the ordination movement throughout the 1970s. In addition the Australian Church's lack of reciprocity for priests ordained in the North American churches was an insult to which we did not wish to subject our ordained sisters. When a priest did not comprehend why women would be insulted, I said they feel the same as he might feel about the Roman Catholic Church's not recognizing his orders.

The Australian Church generally fails to acknowledge the ministry of women and laity, but the absolutely worst statement I heard was from a man who wrote to a daily paper that "conferring the sacrament of ordination on a woman is like trying to baptize a dog."

More and more, women in Australia realize that they participate only in a secondary way in the sacramental life and ministry of the church. Yet it is very hard for them to crack the solidly entrenched patriarchy and accompanying misogyny.

The first white women to come to Australia were prisoners, forced to sexually service the officers, guards and sailors for six months enroute from England. When they arrived in Sydney, they were auctioned off as slaves. From its very beginnings, Australia saw women as whores. I

"A man wrote to a daily newspaper that 'conferring the sacrament of ordination on a woman is like trying to baptize a dog.' "

was told that the strong homophobia I heard expressed also stretches back to those earliest days. And the Church of England collaborated with the government. Meting out punishment was a role for the clergy. The "flogging parson" is part of the national memory.

At a meeting, a seminary professor explained that the church in Australia never seriously attempted to serve the needs of the working classes or to adapt its ministry to a wholly different environment. To this day there is little indigenous theology. Another professor asked if the U.S. churches are still as ethnocentric as they are in Australia. Until the early 1970s, most Australians saw themselves as part of the British Empire and there was a strong "whites only" policy for immigration. Going to church was like stepping into England. I never saw a person of color in an Anglican church, al-

though there were many in the streets.

Wherever I worshipped, I saw few men other than those in the sanctuary. I was frequently asked about men's participation in the U.S. church. Australians were surprised to hear that having a woman priest seemed to bring in more men than it scared away, and that men make up 40 to 50% of U.S. congregations on Sunday mornings. In Australia they constitute no more than 30%.

The interim bishop of Adelaide, Bruce Rosier, asked, "How do you handle St. Paul and the concept of headship?" I confessed that I had never heard of the issue before, although supposedly it was imported from the United States.

Headship-subordination theology is nurtured in that most hedonistic of all Australian cities, Sydney. While there I spent an afternoon with a woman I had met in England at the 1988 Lambeth Conference. She had been raised in the Diocese of Sydney, which is something of a unique evangelical sect unto itself within the Anglican Communion. By virtue of its wealth, size — which gives it more votes than any other diocese — and abundance of canon lawyers, Sydney has blocked the ordination vote in every General Synod. It is expected to sue any bishop who ordains women.

The headship of men and subordination of women were part of my friend's identity as a devout young Anglican attending the University of Sydney in the 1970s. For example, she explained how marriages were not actually arranged, but relationships "were understood."

Several children and one divorce later, she is forging a new life and theology for herself. The institutional church has nothing to offer her. She has sought out a "woman church" to meet her spiritual needs.

Another Sydney woman noted, "If the blokes go into our Moore Theological College feeling OK about women, they learn to hate them while they're there. It's part of the course. That college has done

more to injure and oppress women than anyone could ever believe."

If my conversations are any indication, the Archbishop of Sydney has good cause to be concerned about the number of women defecting from the church.

I met with John Hazlewood, Bishop of Ballarat, near Melbourne, and his wife Shirley, and shared the very positive experience my parish has had over the past five years with a woman rector. Wondering how a woman could possibly serve as rector, Shirley Hazlewood asked, "How does she manage her family? What if she has an emergency?"

I asked her how she, as a physician who delivers babies, manages her household. To her, that was different; the responsibilities of a priest must always come first. Her husband, who attended the 1989 Fort Worth convention of the Episcopal Synod of America, which opposes women's ordination, paid close attention to my parish story and observed that it differed radically from what he has been told about the consequences of ordaining women.

Also sipping tea in the bishop's living room was Lorna Cousins, a soft-spoken woman who attends the Cathedral each Sunday, where no one speaks to her because the bishop has called her a "feminist Marxist." He instructed women's groups in the diocese not to accept her offer to address them on the subject of ordaining women. Recently two priests visited her husband to remind him of his duty to silence his wife in church. I was tremendously moved by Lorna's courage, as she sat there telling her bishop she would like the shunning to stop.

Clergy wives offered equally poignant and compelling stories. I met several who had been divorced in recent years. All had apparently been strong complements to their husband's ministry. Their identity, self-worth and financial security had been shattered. Some sense they are an embarrassment to parishes and bishops alike: few receive much emotional or financial support.

Late one night, I talked with a gynecologist who in her work had come upon two quite frightening instances of sexual exploitation by clergy — one involving a youth program, the other in premarital counseling. Taking her husband as a witness, she revealed her findings to the bishop. He heard her out, then opened his door and said firmly, "Get out! And don't ever come back!"

As Mavis Rose says, "It's very difficult at the moment not to get cynical about the God of the church's structures. Sometimes my desire to leave the Anglican Church becomes overpowering and I wonder whether I can stand another pathetic sermon addressed to the 'in' crowd or another exclusive language hymn or creed."

Anglicans make up about 24% of the population but parochial reports indicate only 10% of that number grace a pew each week. The Roman Catholic Church has the largest membership, at 26% of the people. Thus Australia's two largest churches — representing 50% of the nation — continue to provide the theological underpinnings for discrimination against women. This position is supported by groups such as Women Against the Ordination of Women, and the Association for the Apostolic Ministry, which reportedly has a war chest of \$2 million to fight all attempts to priest women in England and Australia.

Since returning home, I've been digesting the stories and making meaning out of a crowded, extraordinary experience. I often think of Lorna in Ballarat who asked, "How do you cope with a church that doesn't want you?" And the Roman Catholic nuns who appeared in Toowoomba and other places to hear of a church, 14 hours away by air, that is beginning to behave like the community of equals Jesus envisioned. I especially remember the young women who came up to me, excited to learn the stories of our mutual foremothers and eager for role models.

I recall laughingly plotting how to transform the patriarchy, and much more seriously exploring how to challenge *what is* with a vision of *what might be*. The church is an institution, a community, with a dream in it. It has always depended on its prophets to proclaim God's judgment and God's hope in that dream. Possibly the very best hope the church has today is the women, lay and ordained, who are emerging to reform and renew the Mother Church, so that she can hold up for all to see the vision of a new humanity in a new society — in biblical language, the Kingdom of God.

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Opting out of the 'New World Order'

by Jeff Dietrich

“Hey, Homes, you still in here?” The loud jocular voice of my fellow prisoner bounces off the steel walls of this jail house recreation room in reverberating echoes. “I thought they were gonna let all you protestors go home now that the war is over.”

“No, man, it looks like I’m kind of a prisoner of war now.”

“Well, I guess they must want your ass real bad, ‘cause they’re even lettin’ all them Iraqis go. Well, all them that want to, anyway.”

Even the guards here at the Federal Detention Center are a little surprised that I have not been released. Their concern is almost solicitous: “Mr. Dietrich,” they say, “You need to be about your business. You should be getting home now.”

But that is unlikely now that I have been officially indicted as a felon for a Feb. 15 protest in which three of us dumped 40 gallons of oil and two pints of human blood on the Federal Building steps.

“Was it worth it, Homes?” asks Mike, the cynical old jail veteran in a caring but sardonic tone that implies an affectionate contempt for simple-minded idealists like myself. “The war is over and you ain’t accomplished a damn thing.”

And again he asks, “Was it worth it?”

Who can say what convictions are worth? We are known as men and women of conviction only if we are willing to pay the price of that conviction. It is easy enough to protest a war. Far more

difficult a task, though, is to place our entire existence in the path of war. “The Cost of Discipleship,” as the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer implied from his Nazi prison cell, “must in some measure be commensurate with the price of war.”

But to speak the truth while none are listening, to continue protesting a war that is substantially over, to stay in jail when your presence is so obviously ineffective, is to appear foolish bordering

“Our task, now that the war is over, is to remain in jail praying and fasting even as America cheers and celebrates.”

upon the pathological.

Yet it seems that our task, now that the war is over, is to remain in jail praying and fasting even as America cheers and celebrates. Our task, as people of conviction is, in the words of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, “to save the soul of America.”

But the original prophetic intent of repentance was always addressed to the corporate transgressions of the community; injustice, repression, the violence of war were the traditional targets of the prophet. The authentic purpose of penance is to give substance to the otherwise ephemeral reality of evil in our midst; to take onto our own flesh the insubstantial spirit of malevolence which

otherwise remains unconscious and thus deadly. Just as the assembly-line worker feels no responsibility for the sometimes dubious fruits of his labor, in the same manner does the B-52 pilot feel disassociated from the deadly effects of his labor.

Despite all of our moral pretense and ethical posturing, the real message of Desert Storm heard by all the Third World nations is the Draconian edict of unrestrained power. The Vietnam era is indeed over and America is back with a vengeance, no longer concerned with “winning hearts and minds.” We will not hesitate to use our entire arsenal of technical omnipotence to enforce a vision of the “New World Order.”

But our cheap, tawdry victory does not carry with it a corresponding moral value. Such a moral victory would, as King said, “lay hands on the world order and say of war, ‘This way of settling differences is not just.’ ” In the same speech, he went on to make the prophetic characterization that remains unfortunately true today: “America continues to be the greatest purveyor of violence the world has ever known.”

This New World Order of the “Pax Americana” based upon meeting the voracious consumer needs of a gluttonous, bulimic economy that devours world resources merely for the perverse pleasure of regurgitating them again is pathological. It is the nature of such compulsive deviant behavior to be in denial. To challenge this state of non-recognition with the consequences of such dangerous behavior patterns, to intervene along the path of the addict’s collision course with destruction, is the task of people of conviction.

Despite the illusions that have been

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established of victory without sacrifice, of war without suffering, of battle without death, we know that actions have consequences. We mourn the death of over 100,000 Iraqis. And while our nation rejoices, we weep at the deep cost of such "cheap" victories.

It is this penitential task of putting flesh upon the disembodied spirits of unseen suffering, and the desire to confront the elusive reality of war with its unacceptable truth, that causes us to remain in this prison.

So we continue to fast, and each evening we gather in an obscure corner of this jail under a garish makeshift shrine of the Sacred Heart, to pray the rosary with a group of Latin Americans who cannot speak English. They too are P.O.W.'s for the most part, foot soldiers and underlings captured in the not-so-triumphant "War on Drugs." They do not pray for world peace or economic justice. They pray for a lenient prosecutor, a fair judge, a compassionate jury, a brief sentence, reunion with family and friends. We join our prayers with theirs in the deepest hope and profoundest conviction that such commingling of concerns may indeed "redeem the soul of America."

We know that the world counts us as fools. All the more so do the powers judge us in the wake of their startling victories.

We had predicted disaster, bloodshed, potential nuclear calamity, world conflagration. We had bet our lives, or at least some small portion thereof, upon their failure. Now their cool, efficient management and clear, rational assessment of crisis has prevailed. They are victorious while we remain in jail. Thus is our foolishness compounded with utter humiliation.

In the days and weeks to come, we will no doubt be subjected to barrages of breathless euphoria as the triumphalism of empire is celebrated in martial liturgies and rituals of military canonization,

confirming yet another generation of battlefield heroes.

With a flourish of unravelled yellow ribbons and unfurled patriotic bunting, we will confer upon every Desert Storm veteran from president to private, general to janitor, the status of military sainthood.

Though we may be fools here in our jail cells, we are not blind, and we can-

not be but appalled at the spectacle of unwarranted and unmerited pride in the vanquishing of so unworthy an opponent. This was not a battle — this was a debacle!

Like a lustful rapist too long denied satisfaction, we unleashed an orgasm of deadly technology, a battering of smart

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Jeff Dietrich, Mary Lopez, Sandy Perluss-Lejeune (right to left) dump oil and blood on the Los Angeles Federal Building steps.

Church after death

by Charles Meyer

Those who have experienced a deep loss know that the most prevalent feeling survivors have after the death of a loved one is vulnerability. Survivors may be physically weak from fatigue or lack of regular meals. They are also emotionally “weak,” not in control of whatever feeling spews to the surface from the lava-like reservoir inside.

Social occasions are frequently avoided and obligations postponed for fear of being “blindsided” by overwhelming thoughts or memories, and feeling humiliated and embarrassed when voluminous tears suddenly appear and an excuse must be made for a quick exit.

But for many persons a religious service is not simply another social occasion or obligation. It is instead a source of previous liturgical comfort where the chaotic world is put back in order. The familiar readings and well-worn trappings are reminders of the past and of the transcendence of God and the ongoing nature of the community. Ideally, it is in this community where people who knew the survivor before the death will still be there to uphold, comfort, console, and treat him or her like a normal person. So, when all other social obligations are avoided, survivors may well venture back to church seeking the solace and understanding they have been unable to find it in the world around them.

What they often discover, however, is surprise at their own difficult reactions to the service and a community unprepared or unwilling, liturgically and personally,

to deal with their grief. Having come expecting to find solace, survivors are astonished to note their own feelings of anger at scripture readings regarding resurrections and healing, sadness at stories of tenderness or loss, depression regarding memories of the loved one being in church, hurt and envy at others going on with their lives through baptisms, confirmations and marriages, and indignation when a reference is made to the justice and mercy of God. These emotions are often exacerbated by familiar, meaningful music that causes the spillover of tears again and again.

Many survivors report feeling isolated in church, met by uncertain stares from persons who want to help but don't know what to do, who want to comfort but don't want to increase the pain and tears, or who are embarrassed at undignified displays of emotion during an otherwise orderly service. Some survivors recount that it was suggested they not return to church until they could keep their emotions in check.

Otherwise caring people, due either to an inability to know what to say or an unwillingness to hear the truth about the depth of the survivor's feelings, tend to say things like:

“You look great! Are you feeling better now?”

“I'll bet things are going fine, aren't they?”

“It's time to get on with your life.”

“Don't cry! He's in a much better place now.”

“I'm sure that God is comforting you.”

“Time heals all wounds, dear. You'll be over this soon.”

“The Lord has a purpose in this. Just trust him.”

It is as though people shape their remark to receive only positive answers,

and to avoid confronting the desperate fear of death and grief inside themselves. Unfortunately for many survivors, the church turns out to be no different than any other social group they have been scrupulously avoiding. Disappointed, they stop their Sunday sojourn and remain at home, unable to face both their feelings and the insensitivity of the community in which they sought solace and healing.

To enable survivors to experience the faith community as a help rather than a hindrance in the journey through bereavement, the following suggestions are offered:

1. Decide why you're going to church.

Though it may not be possible to determine at first, give some thought to the reasons you are returning. There are many possibilities: for a first step back into social relationships in a “safe” setting; for the liturgy and service; to see people you haven't seen in a while, and perhaps only would see at church.

If you have some idea of what you are doing there, you will feel less befuddled when you walk in and are confronted with concerned faces and difficult questions, and you will experience a greater sense of achievement for having accomplished your task when you leave.

2. Prepare your response. It is important to realize that supposedly well-meaning people will say thoughtless things. Also, you will run into people with whom you have varying levels of acquaintance and intimacy, and will want to be able to respond appropriately to different situations. Some preparation — rehearsing probable scenarios in your head — may help relieve some of the normal anxiety about not being able to handle yourself.

When people you know well ask how

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you are, it may be appropriate to say: "It's really hard, but I'm doing okay." To others asking socially, you might respond: "I'm doing the best I can. Thanks for asking." (Then ask about them or change the subject.) For people you really want to connect with: "It's very hard. Would you call me at home this afternoon? I'd really like to talk with you." Some preparation beforehand will make those first moments of greetings less awkward and overwhelming. The important thing is to give yourself permission to say different things, depending on who you are talking to and how you feel at the time. That means it is also okay to lie and say you're fine as well as to tell the truth and dissolve into tears.

3. Return gradually. It is not required to begin by attending the most crowded and visible service. Many people report it is helpful first to go back to church on a weekday when no one else is around; to sit in your usual seat and get the feeling of what that is like now that the loved one is not there any more. This time of individual private prayer, rage, sadness or depression may be the beginning of real spiritual comfort that simply cannot be had if others are around.

Likewise, it may be easier to attend a weekday morning or evening service where the crowd will be smaller and perhaps more focused on a specific activity in which you can unobtrusively participate. On Sunday, go to the earliest service — or to a Saturday or Sunday evening service — to limit the number of people with whom you will have contact.

4. Go with a friend. Pick someone who either has been through a similar experience or who knows you well enough not to be disturbed by your tears, and will act as a support and a buffer when you feel overwhelmed by emotions. It may also be possible to go with a group of friends. In any case, knowing that the person sitting beside you will be accepting and avail-

able can ease the re-entry into church considerably.

5. Leave when you want. Unlike jails, mental hospitals, the Army, and some personal growth seminars, you are not required to stay in church until dismissed. Leave whenever you feel the need — if your emotions get too overwhelming, or if the timer in your gut indicates for no apparent reason that it is time to go. Leave when you have accomplished what you came for — whether that was to take a first step back into the community, or hear a specific person preach, or receive communion, or just to sing a hymn or two. Leave before or during the last hymn if you are not up to greeting people or answering questions.

To do this inconspicuously, it may be a good idea to arrive a little late and sit toward the back (though in most churches, you have to get there *early* to get a seat in the back).

6. Stay regardless. Though this may seem the opposite of number five, it is actually a corollary of it. The point is that it is okay for you to stay *or* go. If you need to leave, do it. But remember that you have a right to be there emoting up a storm, crying through hymns, blowing your nose during the sermon, and sitting when others are standing or kneeling because your legs just won't hold you up. It is, after all, your church too. It is precisely the place where it is, or ought to be, okay to bring *all* emotions to offer up to God for blessing and healing. Decide that you need to experience and express your feelings, that it is in fact a requirement if you are to survive your loved one's death.

The key here is your own need at the time. Some days you will be able and willing to stay and cry, especially if a friend is there beside you, and other days you will need to make a prompt exit. Either one is fine with God.

7. Go someplace new. Returning to the

church where you used to worship may be too painful, and emotionally complicated, or simply no longer comfortable or appropriate. Contrary to popular wisdom, it is not required to go back. After the death of their child, one couple joined a different church where only one or two people knew their circumstances. While the hymns and order of service were the same and thus filled with meaning and memories, the new surroundings and faces they encountered fitted their sense of becoming new people.

The important thing is not to feel obligated or stuck, but rather to do what spiritually feels best, and to find the community in which healing can best occur. For many people that will mean returning to their former place of worship. For others, it will involve finding a new community where they can be known as they are now, rather than who they used to be.

Whether you have a lifetime of memories established in a particular church, or whether going to church is a new experience for you, there will come a time when spiritual resources may be needed. Remember that "the Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath," and know that you may draw on those spiritual resources in whatever way is most meaningful, following your own schedule, and that there is no right or wrong way to do it. Give yourself the freedom to experience the healing of memories and relationships with friends, the loved one, and God at any level where you feel ready, regardless of how much that level may change from day to day.

Hopefully these guidelines will allow you to find the place that nurtures you, recognizing that it may be a different setting from the one that met your needs in the past. As with physical, social, and psychological changes, it is extremely important to allow your spiritual understanding of life to grow and change in response to the indelible experience of death and the incredible journey toward survival. TW



How to survive the sorrow of suicide

by Victor M. Parachin

Jenny had been battling depression and anxiety for more than two decades. During that time she had seen a succession of psychiatrists, psychologists, analysts and clergy. The treatments were as diverse as the people she sought out for help and included drugs, hypnosis, electric shock, talk therapy, prayer and meditation.

In the final analysis there was no effective help for her, and she was unable to deal with the depression and anxiety any longer. Her husband returned from work

one day to find Jenny had asphyxiated herself in the garage.

Suicide is the most difficult loss a family has to bear. With a single decisive act every relationship is irreparably fractured. In addition, the survivors' grief is often complicated by feelings of guilt. Adjustment to the loss is painful, arduous and lengthy.

Fortunately, society has become much more enlightened about the issue of suicide and looks more compassionately upon survivors. While recovery from a loss to suicide is still very difficult, there is more general support for those who have suffered such a blow. Survivors of suicide are now less inhibited about talking and writing about their loss and subsequent recovery.

When there is such a loss people want

to reach out and help. Following are some recommended strategies to offer survivors in the days and weeks following a suicide.

1. Encourage a public acknowledgment. While suicide still carries some stigma of shame, nothing is gained by hiding the fact that the death was a suicide. As a minister and grief counselor I have dealt with many deaths. However, one of the saddest was the suicide death of a prominent area politician. Even though he was highly regarded in the community and known by many people, the funeral was kept extremely private. Only his wife, two sons, their two girl friends, a neighbor, the funeral director and myself were present.

Unfortunately, the family made a very

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poor decision. They have set themselves up to carry a dark secret for the rest of their lives. Also, they deprived themselves completely of the love and support which would certainly have come their way from the broader community through a public funeral where the suicide was acknowledged.

One person who knows through experience that a public declaration about suicide is both healthy and therapeutic is author Adina Wroblewski of Minnesota. In 1979 her daughter, Lynn, took her own life. Describing her feelings about community support in the hours immediately following the loss, Mrs. Wroblewski states:

"The funeral period wasn't any different than what others go through, except people didn't seem to know what to say. I'd say to them, 'I don't care. I'm just glad you came.' I just needed to feel those strokes of love. Some people, virtual strangers, helped. There was a woman next door, a recluse. I hardly knew her but she brought chicken and cake over."

2. Invite them to reach out. Because our society has had a harsh and judgmental view of suicide in the past, many suicide survivors still experience feelings of stigma and shame. Even if there has been a public funeral, an almost natural tendency to isolate oneself after the service still exists out of fear of more rejection and hurt over the loss.

However, suicide survivors who have taken the risk to reach out during various times of sadness and depression have been pleasantly surprised by the acceptance and support they received. For example, Robert M. Myer, a pediatrician whose wife ended her life after a bout with severe depression, writes in a book edited by Earl Grollman, *What Helped Me When My Loved One Died*, about the benefit of reaching out:

"In the midst of my adversity I noticed a tendency to retreat, not to bother anyone else with my misfortune. What a mistake! The love and support of family and

friends, in letters, phone calls, visits and invitations, were so gratifying and so enriching as to defy description. This caring continues to stand out in my mind as a bright spot in an otherwise bleak scenario. Reach out! Martyrdom is not a necessary part of the mourning process."

3. Help them view the death sympathetically. A suicide triggers great amounts of anger and guilt. However, some of those feelings can be balanced by struggling to see that the suicide is not so much a deliberate, hostile act but a gesture of utter hopelessness and despair. Reminders that the person was so driven by emotional whirlwinds that it was impossible to sense any ray of hope can temper the emotional impact considerably.

One of the best responses to a suicide I have ever heard came through a sermon delivered by the pastor at the funeral of a young man who shot himself. With great eloquence the pastor was able to convey tremendous hope through these words:

"Our friend died on his own battlefield. He was killed in action fighting a civil war. He fought against adversaries that were as real to him as his casket is real to us. They were powerful adversaries. They took toll of his energies and endurance. They exhausted the last vestiges of his courage and his strength. At last these adversaries overwhelmed him. Only God knows what he suffered in the silent skirmishes that took place in his soul."

4. Recommend they seek information. The people who have managed their grief in healthy ways following a suicide almost always engage in a "crash course" on suicide. They search libraries to find books on the issue, and seek out articles written by survivors in order to gain more understanding. Information is power!

For example, Adina Wroblewski began to research suicide after her daughter's death in order to answer some of her own nagging questions. As a result of her ini-

tial studies she has published numerous papers, pamphlets and books on the subject. The insights she gained were personally healing.

Even the most basic research lets survivors know they are not alone. Almost every article on suicide cites the fact that some 31,000 people commit suicide each year, making it the eighth leading cause of death, according to the National Institute for Health Statistics. While no amount of information can bring the deceased one back, that same information can greatly ease feelings of isolation and abandonment as survivors realize they are not the only ones to experience such a loss.

5. Encourage exploration of faith. Whether one adheres to the tenets of Christianity, the Torah, the Koran, or the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, one's faith can become an anchor through the emotionally stormy time following a suicide. After his wife's suicide, one man made this discovery about faith:

"Prior to my wife's death I had been spared any great tragedies in my life. And I had regarded religion in the time of crisis as just another prescription for crutches. I surprised myself at just how comfortably I used those crutches. Surrounded by other worshippers at a service, reciting traditional prayers, or singing in unison, it was comforting to find that when my faith was running low, I could turn to another Faith which had stood the test of thousands of years. If that Faith and the people who trusted in it had survived, then so would I."

Fortunately, religious views about suicide have generally been modified and softened during the last few decades. Most spiritual leaders seek to help survivors experience a God of healing and a God of love who will support them through their grief. There is general awareness that the resulting anger and rage often directed toward God are not unusual.

In his book, *After Suicide*, John H. Hewett suggests: "If you're mad at God, tell God. Whatever you tell God is a form of prayer."

Also, he urges those who have had a loss through suicide to "allow the church to care for you. Learn to recognize their loving concern in whatever shape it appears. When they come to care, let them into your life. You need it, you deserve it and God wants you to have that fellowship."

6. Suggest joining a support group. Being with those who have had a similar loss eases the survivors' sense of isolation and loneliness. There, in the presence of others, feelings are validated and survivors begin to feel "normal."

One mother whose son took his life just before Christmas credits her support group with restoring her sanity. "Just talking with and hearing from people who have gone through the same thing was a tremendous help and made me feel nor-

mal again. One of the things which was particularly helpful was that we survivors read the letters left behind. Before I joined the support group I wanted to read my letter and talk about it but no one wanted to hear it. However, people who have gone through this know how important that is and are willing to listen and share."

7. Discourage drug use. Even though the depression can become acute, tranquilizers and alcohol should be avoided. Although the temptation to ease the pain is great, resorting to prescription drugs or other spirits usually lengthens grieving. Hewett emphatically cautions:

"Beware of simplistic medical treatment. Drugs may certainly serve a purpose in your situation but they won't cure your grief. In fact, they may complicate the healing process as much as they aid it. I agree with those physicians and counselors who believe that grief is handled best when you're awake, not drugged into

sleepiness. Tranquilizers won't end the pain. They'll only mask it for a while."

8. Recommend professional help. Psychologist Henry Seiden, co-author with Christopher Lukas of *Silent Grief: Living in the Wake Of Suicide*, offers this guideline to determine if a professional counselor is necessary. "If, months or years after the death, grief and anger still disrupt your day-to-day living, consult a psychotherapist. Studies have shown that the sooner people get professional help after a traumatic event, the better."

If a person does not know where to get professional help, a good source for further information is the National Institute of Mental Health Public Information, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.

Finally, every suicide survivor should be encouraged to let time do its own work of healing. While the sadness can seem unending and the pain relentless, it will pass, and those left behind will survive.

Opting out . . . *Continued from page 19*

bombs. An entire high-tech arsenal reserved for "superpower" conflict was finally given vent upon a diminutive street corner punk!

In what history will no doubt record as the perfect television war, wherein visuals were crafted and packaged as cunningly as the most expensive television ads, the medium was ironically reduced to its essence — projecting only hollow images of war without pain, war without sacrifice, war without suffering or cost, except to the enemy.

If it were not apparent before, surely it must now be manifestly clear that falsehood is the truth of our nation, that technical supremacy is its compassion, that war is its health. In the midst of this deception, in the heart of this abomination, we would not choose to be other than where we are. Our resolve is unshaken

by the superficial posturings of a morally bankrupt system. In faith our fortitude remains intact, for we are confirmed in our conviction that Jesus Christ is risen and the forces of darkness and deception are everywhere in retreat. War and violence are a sure sign of their inevitable downfall.

While our nation celebrates the vic-

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tory of the "New World Order," we are grateful to be in this jail, silent witnesses to that New World Order in which the last will be the first and the powerful will be vanquished; in which the comfortable will be afflicted and the afflicted, comforted; in which fools will surely speak with the wisdom, eloquence and foresight of the prophets themselves!

(On April 8, Dietrich and co-defendant Curt Grove appeared before Judge Richard Gadbois for sentencing on charges of destruction of federal property. Dietrich and Grove were credited with time served and ordered only to pay a fine and court costs, and to serve probation. They both declared they would return to jail rather than pay the fines and refused probation. Gadbois consequently dismissed all penalties, stating he did not want them to use prison as a forum for their beliefs. — Ed.) **TW**

Farewell to a feisty woman of letters

by Susan E. Pierce

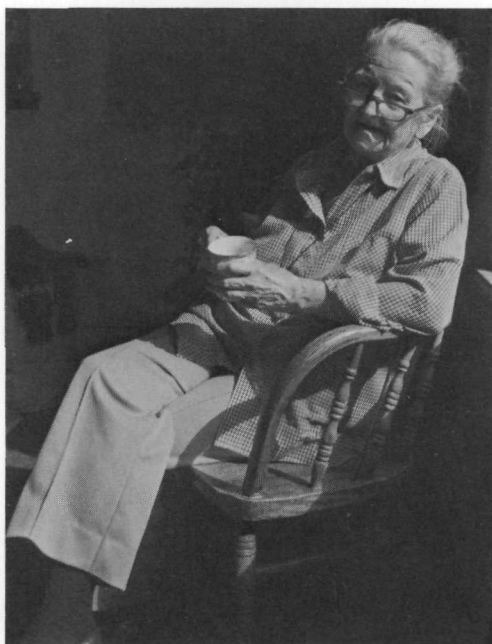
For as long as anyone could remember, a fat letter addressed in red or blue ink would arrive weekly at THE WITNESS office. We knew immediately it was another missive from Abbie Jane Wells, a self-described “crusty old broad” who lived in Juneau, Alaska. Her letters, which went out to a list of over 50 people, contained page after page of articles and essays from a wide range of sources, copied laboriously by hand and enriched by Abbie Jane’s own trenchant, witty observations.

But earlier this spring, we were deeply saddened to hear, appropriately enough in a letter from her long-time friend Judith Maier, that her prolific hand had been stilled forever by a heart attack at age 75.

To be on Abbie Jane’s mailing list was to be the recipient of a wonderfully unique and dedicated ministry. Judith Maier wrote, “We are the wealthy ones to have known her wisdom, her uncompromising integrity, her courage to go it alone.”

Night after night for decades, Abbie Jane would sit at her kitchen table in her cluttered one-room apartment down by the docks in Juneau and begin to copy. Outside her window, ships sailed up and down the Gastineau Channel as she, who rarely left her apartment, worked until dawn to prepare mailings of numerous copied articles on subjects she was passionate about — justice, peace, nuclear disarmament, economic justice, human rights and a host of others. By morning, a stack of envelopes were ready to be sent to a disparate and far-flung group of social activists, theologians, writers and friends scattered across the country.

A deeply faithful life-long Episcopalian, Abbie Jane had no time, however,



Abbie Jane Wells
1915-1991

for the institutional church. “I don’t think there was any church authentic or uncompromising enough for her — she felt there was too much watering down,” said Michael Kenny, Roman Catholic Bishop of Juneau and noted peace activist.

She spared neither herself nor others in the pursuit of truth. Kenny said when he got a letter addressed in red — Abbie Jane’s system was to write personal letters in red ink; batches of copies were done in blue — “I knew it meant she was talking directly to me, and probably chiding me. She was a very honest woman with herself and with others.” He welcomed her critiques, tough as they might be, “because her creative mind would always see what others would miss.”

This unswerving determination to speak the truth as she saw it often put Abbie Jane at odds with the world. When

she first came to Alaska from her native Texas, she operated a hairstyling business out of her home. Maier, who was one of her first customers, said, “You had to take Abbie Jane’s philosophy and theology along with a \$3 haircut.” In the 1960s, Abbie Jane became an increasingly vocal critic of the Vietnam War. Her customers, most of whom preferred reading movie magazines to debating politics while getting their hair done, began to drift away and her business eventually went under.

Her refusal to compromise was part of a strong ethic. Even though in later life Abbie Jane reluctantly subsisted on a small income from oil stocks, she refused to take Social Security or Medicare payments from a government she found morally bankrupt, though that meant living in virtual poverty without access to adequate medical care.

But her concern and caring for others knew no limits. One of her most famous correspondents and closest friends was the noted Jesuit, Daniel Berrigan, who recalled that when he went to Juneau in 1980 and finally got a chance to meet Abbie Jane in person, she had a pot of chicken stew waiting on the stove for him. Listing her in the company of William Stringfellow, Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton, Dan Berrigan wrote in a letter mourning her death, “That great woman . . . created of whole cloth a life we could all creep towards.”

Theologian Robert McAfee Brown was another well-known name on her list. Their decade-long correspondence began after she sent him copies of articles she thought would interest him. “She always would give me some new knowledge — I wouldn’t have known about a lot of things

Continued on page 27

The price we pay for homophobia

by Raz Mason

I work at Bradley-Angle House, a battered women's shelter in Portland, Ore. Women wanting to do volunteer work with us go through a 30-hour training period. Three of those hours deal with homophobia. We find it impossible for trainees to understand how abuses, sexism and racism can exist in the world without understanding the role homophobia plays in keeping them all in place. Society hands us the homophobic myth of the lecherous gay man abusing young boys. Statistics show that most sexual abusers are heterosexual — some studies report the percentage to be in the 90s. This kind of myth serves to marginalize a whole group of people, but it goes deeper than that.

What heterosexual people may not be aware of is that homophobia affects us all. It sets a tone in society in which the tools of healing — sharing stories, crying, having deep trusting relationships to turn to in crisis — are seen as indications that one is gay.

The stigma of being labeled gay keeps men from having intimate relationships with other men, which would facilitate their healing, and this stigma also discourages men from developing the tools to have intimate, non-sexual relationships with women. Since men are the primary perpetrators of violence in the world, they need a great deal of healing.

While women are allowed more access to their emotions and the inherent human sense of connectedness, the threat

of being labeled “lesbian” is enough to keep many women relatively mute and unresisting in the face of social injustice. This label is almost certain to be leveled against any woman who does challenge violence or oppression.

Where does this intense fear of closeness with members of our own sex come from? Largely from the societal stereotypes that have been handed down to us all, branding “other” as inappropriate and this particular kind of other as especially horrifying. Like victims of abuse who continue to be victims or switch to the role of abuser because they don't know how to step outside the cycle of violence, society hands down its unhealed wounds from one generation to the next.

We are abused by coming into a world in which people deprive, hurt, and kill other people. Whether or not we have encountered direct forms of interpersonal abuse, we all share society's brokenness. I'm convinced that homophobia is a reflection of this early hurt, and of our deep, rarely-spoken fears that maybe we are unlovable, and that's why our lives and our world don't work right.

When men love other men or women love other women they are challenging our defense mechanisms. We are all reminded how much we have to heal, and how much we would really like to have close, same-gender relationships. Why shouldn't *they* suffer like we have?

I wonder if people who have truly open, affectionate friendships with people of their own sex are able to harbor the intense hatred of lesbians and gays that some people do. Stereotypes, perhaps, but I think people with such friendships have resolved for themselves

that they are worthy of love, and there is really no good excuse for not getting it.

Integral to Bradley-Angle House's understanding of homophobia is the idea of loss. It's useful for heterosexuals to imagine how the threat of the following might impact their lives if heterosexuals were the ones oppressed:

- Loss of privacy: inability to be openly affectionate in public.
- Loss of family: risking ostracization for being “out”; being unable to be honest about the most important person/aspect in your life.
- Loss of job: very few laws protect people from being fired because of their sexual orientation. Most companies rarely hire people who are “out” in the first place.
- Loss of children: custody can be summarily denied.
- Loss of life: hate crimes continue to increase. There is a real threat of physical assault or murder based on one's (perceived) sexual orientation.

This list is by no means exhaustive. And remember that heterosexuals hold the power in society and are responsible for making a stand. Assuming that lesbians and gays are responsible for ending their oppression is, actually, like asking children to end child abuse.

I hope all heterosexual people can find the willingness to confront the acceptance of the lies we were told as children, both about lesbians and gays, and our own abilities to love and to be loved. It may be hard to say, “I don't think that joke was funny” or “I don't see that it makes a difference whether she's gay,” but it's a lot easier than living with the vehement hatred in society directed toward gay men and lesbians.

Raz Mason is director of volunteer services at Bradley-Angle House, Inc., in Portland, Ore., and attends St. Michael's and All Angels Episcopal Church.

Heterosexual questionnaire

The following questions are reversals of questions frequently asked of lesbians and gay men. (How do you feel as they are asked of you?)

1. What do you think caused your heterosexuality?
2. When and how did you first decide you were heterosexual? Was there something that happened to you?
3. Is it possible your heterosexuality is just a phase you may grow out of?
4. Is it possible your heterosexuality stems from a neurotic fear of others of the same sex?
5. Isn't it possible that all you need is a good gay/lesbian lover? Have you ever had a positive lesbian/gay sexual experience?
6. Heterosexuals have histories of failures in gay/lesbian relationships. Do you think you may have turned to

heterosexuality out of fear of failing again?

7. If you've never slept with a person of the same sex, how do you know you wouldn't prefer that?

8. If heterosexuality is normal, why are a disproportionate number of mental patients heterosexual?

9. Why do you insist on being so obvious and making a public spectacle of your heterosexuality? Can't you just be what you are and keep it quiet?

10. Heterosexuals are noted for assigning themselves and each other into restricted, stereotyped sex-roles. Why do you cling to such unhealthy role playing?

11. How can you enjoy a fully satisfying

sexual experience or deep emotional rapport with a person of the opposite sex, when the obvious physical, biological, and temperamental differences between you are so vast? How can a man understand what pleases a woman or vice-versa?

12. How could the human race survive if everyone were heterosexual like you, considering the menace of overpopulation?

13. Why are heterosexuals so promiscuous?

14. Could you really trust a heterosexual counselor to be objective and unbiased? Don't you fear s/he might be inclined to influence you in the direction of her/his own leanings?

Farewell . . . Continued from page 25

without her."

"She had the ability to take ordinary Christian doctrine and put a whole new light on it," said Brown, who encouraged her to finish her book, *The Gospel According to Abbie Jane Wells*, which was published in 1985 by Thomas More Press.

But even everyday people were drawn into her circle of compassion. Annette Jecker, who is active in the Episcopal Church women's movement, got a note from Abbie Jane commenting on a Letter to the Editor Jecker had written to THE WITNESS, which started a 15-year exchange. "She raised my consciousness about war, peace, disarmament and nuclear weapons, and I raised hers about feminism." They often did not agree on issues, said Jecker, but when Abbie Jane learned that Jecker was coping with a serious illness, she told her that she was trying to pray her back into good health.

Molly Rush, one of the Plowshares

Eight, whose anti-nuclear protest actions and subsequent imprisonments made international headlines in the early 1980s, said Abbie Jane wrote to her in jail and was "was so encouraging." Rush said, "She sent things I hadn't seen but were real important, and I would think, 'How did she know I needed this?'"

Abbie Jane's sense of humor was as strong as her compassion. She so disliked the bother of housekeeping that she never cleaned her apartment nor took down her Christmas tree. She told friends her philosophy was, "dust should rest in peace" and that if "celebrating Christmas was good one day, it was good every day." Above the piles of books, papers, and magazines, a poster on an equally crowded wall said, "A place for everything and everything all over the place."

But in the past winter and spring, with the recent Gulf War, the death of beloved friends such as homeless advocate Mitch Snyder, publisher Dan Herr, and her neighbor Frank Maier, she was over-

whelmed by grief. She told Judith Maier, Frank's widow, that she had cried for three months straight after not crying for years. Maier felt that Abbie Jane had died not of a heart attack, but of "a heart broken by a world gone mad."

Her friends held a simple memorial for her in Juneau and her ashes were to be scattered at sea, as she had wished. But her voice lives on the pages upon pages of looping handwriting reproducing the words of those who spoke to issues she found important.

She always cherished what she considered her greatest accolade from Thomas Merton, who was on her list for many years. In one of her last letters to THE WITNESS she noted, "(Merton) once wrote, 'You have all the best instincts of a monastic copiest,' and I consider that my diploma. I almost framed it and hung it on the wall over where I sit copying, copying, copying. A hermit and a monastic copiest in an inner city one-bedroom walkup, that's what I am!" TW

Christmas in May? Awesome!

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OK, so it doesn't look a lot like Christmas. But do we have a gift offer for you! Many WITNESS readers have told us that due to their preoccupation with the Middle East crisis, plus other major end-of-year distractions, they were unable to avail themselves of our three-for-one Christmas offer. So here it comes again. And since we even had some envelopes left over, you will find them inside this issue to use to your advantage. Ignore the old stamp rate; as we said, they're leftovers.

So, ho-ho-ho, in this **one-time offer** you can order three subscriptions — one may be your own renewal — **for \$21**. That's almost the regular price of one subscription (\$20). Additional gifts may also be ordered at this time for just **\$7 each**.

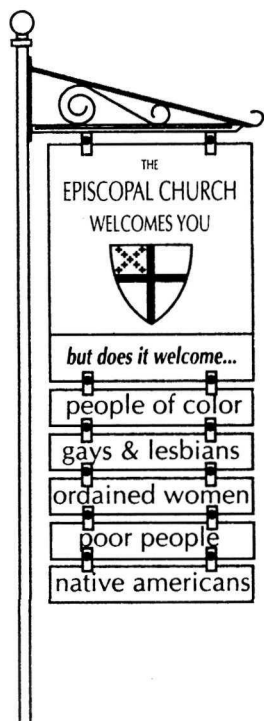
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Remember, use the handy, oldie but goody postage-paid envelope in this issue. If you need more room, enclose an additional sheet of paper. And peace be to you!

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Sexism, Racism, and Phoenix

Dear Friends,

This is the first chance I've had to be in touch with you folks who are bishops, deputies, alternates and Triennial delegates about the forthcoming General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Phoenix.

Situated in controversy, it is sure to prove a place where resolutions will test the question, "Which side are you on?" That's why we are sending you this Convention issue of THE WITNESS as a gift, with a special offer on the back cover.

Our lead article by Dr. Pamela W. Darling — **Sexism, Racism and Phoenix** — spells out historically how institutions change and why people hurt. She cites the opportunities this Convention will present to move the church toward a more just and inclusive body.

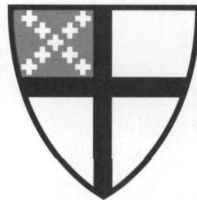
And if you are not familiar with The Consultation — the umbrella group of Episcopal Church organizations dealing with justice and peace issues — here is your chance to familiarize yourselves with its Convention agenda.

Also in this issue, Chaplain Sam Portaro examines the "H" word — Homosexuality — in terms of vocation and not just ordination. The Rev. Carter Heyward and Dr. Virginia Mollenkott discuss how the church deals with sexual ethics.

All this and more! (*See back cover.*)

THE WITNESS

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but does it welcome...

people of color

gays & lesbians

ordained women

poor people

native americans

General Convention 1991:

Racism, sexism & Phoenix
Pam Darling

Traditionalist who's who
Susan Erdey

The liberal agenda
Mary Lou Suhor

**Heyward, Mollenkott
view sexual ethics**
Susan E. Pierce

Letters

Need more peacemakers

Thank you for the excellent article in April about Agnes Bauerlein and her experiences in the International Peace Camp in Iraq during the Gulf War. Many of us were disturbed by the lack of coverage or slanted viewpoint given us by most of the media when relating anything to do with the peace movement during this war. I was glad THE WITNESS did not follow this line.

Bauerlein is a woman of courage and deep faith who lives what she believes no matter what the risk. We all need to hear the perspective of such people in order to gain a wider understanding of the complex issues involved in situations such as the Middle East. Too often we are kept uninformed by a media that allows itself to be censored by the government.

Though not all of us can take the actions of people who have found the strength to put themselves in harm's way for peace, we can all grow in a deeper commitment to work in whatever way opens for us to be peacemakers wherever we find ourselves. Perhaps it also helps give us the courage to say, "Yes," to opportunities which challenge us to take a stand.

Rebecca H. Cratin
Ft. Washington, Pa.

Words lack authenticity

In the February WITNESS you reprinted the message ("War is not the answer") from the 18 church leaders, including Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, who took part in a peace pilgrimage to the Middle East in December.

In the same issue is a Letter to the Editor from Peter Ogilby about his father's (Lyman C. Ogilby) belief that "justice must come before peace."

I must point out that of the 18 church leaders, only three were women. I suggest that the churches look inward and seek "justice" in their own ranks before they

go touring around the world speaking of peace abroad. Their words lack authority and authenticity to me.

Joan Brewer Warner
West Lebanon, N.H.

Articles great help

Your articles about the Persian Gulf have been a great help during this terrible time.

Linda Burton
Raleigh, N.C.

Universal legal order?

With every issue of THE WITNESS I write letters to you in my mind. I've found "the wilderness" less overwhelming because you were informing, guiding, witnessing.

The cover graphic for March was superb. The words, "A war we hate fought by people we love" tells it all. And the revealing herstory of Agnes Bauerlein added so much to the slowly emerging truth, a truth that pierces those fragile yellow ribbons and mocks the few who still wave the flag.

I've been in touch recently with a vintage friend with whom I worked in the federalist movement in the '40s and early '50s, spreading the idea of a world government. In some ways we are farther than ever from openness to the concept. In other ways, of course, we are closer (regional federation seems in the air); to say nothing of the pressure from environmental needs and the danger from present-day weapons! To me, it is insane that we have anarchy on the international level, and there is still nothing to prevent one nation from going to war against another. Outside of U.S. military might, of course, which scares me most of all. Who is going to control us? The United Nations, so used and abused by recent administrations, has developed as an organization but was denied from the beginning the structure of government.

We know that peace is not just the absence of war. But a legislated peace between countries, based on a democratic system of representation, would be a beginning. How can humankind develop spiritually when it is constantly being called to the killing fields?

I've sneaked in the idea of a "universal legal order" whenever there seemed to be an opening; this dreamer-commie-World War II-vet is about to join a newly formed chapter here of Veterans for Peace. We've got to start where we are.

Virginia S. Meloney
Syracuse, N.Y.

Ministry not a kingdom

I would like to take a moment to respond to the Rev. Clayton T. Holland of Bonham, Tex., in the April Letters to the Editor. Perhaps if he were to try THE WITNESS as a steady diet, instead of the other publications that he mentioned, he would discover what a call to ministry is all about.

After a typical day of responding to the needs of a family living with AIDS in Bonham from my office in Dallas, visiting my partner's mother in the nursing home, also in Bonham, I returned to my home after an 18-hour day and saw his letter. Sadly, Holland's attitude is typical of the many clergy in this part of the world who prefer to live in their own exclusive little kingdoms instead of realizing the global, inclusive nature of ministry. Give me THE WITNESS any day.

The Rev. Robert E. Hensley
Director of Client Services
Aids Interfaith Network, North Texas

On M. L. King holiday

Amidst the furor over the Episcopal Church's continued commitment to General Convention 1991 in Arizona despite that state's refusal to "honor"

Martin Luther King with a paid holiday in his name, the dubiousity of this honor for King and others before him puzzles me. A paid holiday for whom? Locally, it is for government employees at all levels, schoolchildren and their teachers, church staff, and some professionals and business people. For those in retail sales, however, work goes on at an accelerated pace, to accommodate those with the day off. At the same time, one observes rather sparse attendance at church services which *do* honor King. Perhaps everyone has shopped till they dropped at the imperative sales "commemorating" the occasion.

The Presiding Bishop's recent proposals for Episcopalians at General Convention, including "radical" stewardship in their use of money and spare time in Phoenix, with fasting and abstinence from alcohol, is commendable. In the past there has been a notable lack of restraint in these areas among convention-goers.

Mary Polom
Wilbraham, Mass.

Pro-lifer writes

Tears streamed down my face as I sat reading for the first time an issue of THE WITNESS and I knew I had to write.

Magazines like yours deceive women into thinking that abortion is a good and courageous decision. *Courageous* is the woman who despite the odds will plan a life for the baby, if not with herself, with an adoptive couple.

Reproductive freedom is knowing that when one starts to engage in sexual activity, there is the possibility of pregnancy, and with that comes the responsibility of taking care of whatever children there may be. My daughter will know that abstinence is the one and only birth control that is appropriate before marriage. It's the safest choice and most important, the Godly choice.

It's so hard for me to believe that churches are debating the question of abortion. Abortion is murder. At the day of judgment you will have to face those murdered babies and say why you thought it was the right thing to do.

J. Kennel
Christiana, Pa.

Political prisoners plea

I have been a silently enthusiastic consumer of THE WITNESS for about 13 years. I agree with (almost) everything you print. But it's the chutzpah, not just the professionalism that makes the magazine so special. I read just about everything I can get my hands on, from the daily *Times* to *The Nation*, *The Progressive*, *The Guardian*, *El Diario*, *Claridad*, and *Off Our Backs*. Not one of them has ever had the guts to print so many no-holds-barred negative Letters to the Editor. If I were in charge of giving out First Amendment medals, you would get one, in gold.

Your letters column is my favorite feature. A propos of which, permit me to add to the Rev. Henry Bird's April list of Human Rights violations that deserve our tough questioning, the shameful list of over 100 political prisoners held in soul-numbing conditions at U.S. jails and prisons. Two (Alan Berkman and Silvia Baraldini) are battling U.S. Bureau of Prisons Bureaucracy as well as life-threatening cancers. Berkman has long been eligible for parole; Baraldini's native Italy has asked for her repatriation.

About a dozen more, including Alejandrina Torres, subjected to the sensory deprivation chambers of the behavior modification unit at Lexington, Ky., are serving longer-than-life sentences for their participation in the movement to decolonize Puerto Rico. At least an equal number are victims of an FBI program (COINTELPRO) to discredit, disrupt and neutralize the

Black Panther Party to "prevent the rise of a new Black Messiah" after the assassination of Martin Luther King. Still other political prisoners are incarcerated for their efforts to make U.S. citizens look at atrocities committed in our name in South Africa, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Iraq, or to stop the deadly game of planetary ecocide played by the "peacetime" warmakers.

As a brief guest in the halls of injustice to which the United States consigns those whose tolerance for compromise and rationalization is found wanting, I beg your readers to add political prisoners to their list of human rights violations we must commit ourselves to eradicating.

Finally, allow me to thank you and your wonderful community of readers for your meticulous and compassionate attention to my case. The commitment we all share has stoked my fires when fuel was scarce.

Linda Backiel
Bucks County Prison
Doylestown, Pa.

(Linda Backiel is scheduled for release June 19, having served her full sentence for refusing to testify against a client before a federal grand jury.—Ed.)

Renews for three years

THE WITNESS staff of Mary Lou Suhor, Susan Pierce, Lynne Hoekman and Susan Small has done a superlative job day by day these many years. You have been a real team. I have my reliable spies. Well done!

Without reservation, I can testify that Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is truly in the traditions of Spofford, DeWitt and Suhor. Without hesitation, I renew my subscription for three years. I do this finding it more and more difficult to read what I want and need to read for my survival.

Hugh C. White, Jr.
Windsor, Ontario

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THE WITNESS



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ECPC Board moves WITNESS to Detroit

A decision by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company's Board of Directors to relocate THE WITNESS to Detroit will result in the departure of present staff in Ambler, Pa.

The decision followed the announcement that the Board had voted unanimously to affirm the appointment of Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann as editor/publisher of THE WITNESS. She will replace current editor Mary Lou Suhor, who retires July 31. Wylie-Kellermann is former editor of *The Record*, publication of the Diocese of Michigan.

Affected by the move are Susan E. Pierce, managing editor; Lynne Hoekman, promotion manager; Susan Small, editorial assistant, and artist Beth Seka.

The staff was invited to move to Detroit, but because of family or personal reasons, none were able to accept the offer.

Following Wylie-Kellermann's selection, the Rev. William Rankin appointed a committee of the board to explore the future of the magazine. In addition to himself, it consisted of Robert Eckersley, treasurer; William MacKaye and Christopher Bugby. They met February 1 with the new editor, who, according to Rankin, "leaned toward moving the magazine to Detroit." The Board, he said, was also "tilted in that direction if and when implications are carefully detailed to show the move is essential."

On February 6, with one abstention,

the Board voted to relocate the magazine. On February 7, the staff was informed that THE WITNESS would be moved to Detroit after July 31; severance terms were also spelled out. The Board's decision was made without consultation with the staff concerning the logistics of the magazine's production during the transition.

The Ambler staff had hoped that the Pennsylvania office might be usefully kept in operation. In fact, Wylie-Kellermann had intended to visit Ambler to discuss the move before she was called to the Board's February 1 meeting. But during a three day visit Feb. 18-20, Wylie-Kellermann affirmed plans to move the magazine in four months, beginning April 1.

On March 6, the Ambler staff presented a statement to the Board, saying that they protested not the move itself, but the process employed to effect the move, and the timeline in which the transition was expected to be made. They said it had the earmarks of a plant closing, which was hardly representative of the values traditionally championed by THE WITNESS.

The statement also noted that the Board had not supplied the staff with hard information or a feasibility study, spelling out timelines, budget, personnel. (Research shows that other denominations have spent as much as one to two years planning and implementing relocations.) Publishing options such as locat-

ing editorial functions in one city and administration in another and/or an 11-month phase-out plan were proposed by the staff as alternatives.

But Rankin affirmed the Board's decision to relocate as irrevocable. The July/August WITNESS will be the last published from Ambler; the September issue will be published in Detroit.

Meanwhile, Wylie-Kellermann has set up an office at 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226.

Editor's note: When I heard that Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann had been named editor/publisher of THE WITNESS, I sang the Nunc Dimittus. She is a gifted, prize-winning editor and longtime activist around social justice issues. But I deeply regret that the ECPC Board has not found a way to incorporate the Ambler staff into the process concerning the move to Detroit. To our peril are decisions made which do not ask the question, "Is this fair, and is every person valued in the outcome?" The staff now face unemployment in an uncertain economy, and a job market that holds little promise.

Still, we wish the Detroit operation success. The church and society at large need a feisty journal like THE WITNESS, with its long tradition of struggle around social justice issues. On the eve of the magazine's 75th anniversary, we wish it well.

— Mary Lou Suhor

Sexism, racism and Phoenix: A painful

Can a church historically led by white men come to grips with the racism and sexism of its structures?

That question will be a key issue as race and sex dominate the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Phoenix this summer. In response to Arizona's vote last fall to eliminate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a paid state holiday, the church's Executive Council authorized a fundraising campaign for minority scholarships, and Convention planners adapted the schedule to witness against the pervasive racism of U.S. social structures.

In counterpoint to this official emphasis, hearings and corridors will buzz with controversy over sex. Debate will likely focus on the conflict between the report on sexuality of the church's Standing Commission on Human Affairs, and a proposed canon, offered by the Rt. Rev. William Frey, dean of Trinity School for Ministry and former Bishop of Colorado. Frey's canon explicitly requires clergy "to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony," a not-very-veiled attempt to reverse the trend, reflected in the Commission's report, toward acceptance of lesbians, gay men and their relationships.

Historical connections

It is no accident that these two volatile issues will be competing for the Convention's attention this year. In fact, history shows a continuous interplay between the church's paternalistic treatment of people of color and its actions regarding the place of women, marriage, and sexual

behavior. For example, in the early 1870s, reports from the Freedmen's Commission, which served newly-freed slaves, and the new Woman's Auxiliary were both placed at the very back of the church's monthly magazine, *The Spirit of Missions*.

In 1916, Convention reinforced the age-old presumption that only white men could exercise authority over the whole church by authorizing a "racial episcopate" — non-voting suffragan bishops to minister to black clergy and congregations — and overwhelmingly rejected attempts to open church councils to women.

In the 1930s and early '40s, as Europe was overtaken by the deadly Nazi creed of racial purity and controlled reproduction, no black bishops were consecrated in the U.S. church, and women were deliberately and repeatedly excluded from the Commission on Holy Matrimony.

As the tide slowly turned, the association continued. An informal coalition of Woman's Auxiliary and black church leaders mustered liberal support to move the 1955 Convention from segregated Houston to Honolulu. In 1967, the church responded to the civil rights crisis by authorizing the General Convention Special Program, which gave grant money to advocacy groups in poor and minority communities, and finally passed a measure making women eligible to serve as lay deputies.

In 1989, it was Barbara C. Harris, an African-American, who became the church's first woman bishop. The Episcopal Church's leadership is laboriously being stretched to reflect the gender and racial composition of its membership.

Like virtually every other institution in Western culture, the Episcopal Church has been controlled by white men. This control is now shared symbolically with white women and with men and women

of color, but white men continue to dominate both its legislative and spiritual leadership.

These white men are ostensibly heterosexual. Efforts to exclude homosexual persons from church leadership have increased dramatically as exclusion on the basis of race and gender ceased to be officially permitted (though it continues to be practiced). This is not mere coincidence — profound prejudices connect racism, sexism and heterosexism.

Fig leaves of fear

Fear of difference is a deeply-rooted human characteristic, one of the many of our sinful condition. In the Genesis story, when the first human pair sinned, they became able to recognize their nakedness — i.e., their difference from one another — and immediately tried to cover it up. In their guilty state, the experience of difference prompted feelings of shame and vulnerability, so that they hid their bodies from one another, and themselves from God.

Fallen humanity's continuing attempts to control this primordial fear of our differences contribute to all the oppressive political and social structures through which the weak are dominated by the strong, the poor by the rich, the generous by the unscrupulous — and keep us hiding from God.

Throughout history we have elaborated complex hierarchies of difference, in which particular combinations of human characteristics determine how individuals are treated. In our culture, a straight Asian woman is treated differently from a gay white man or a blind white woman; a poor white man is treated differently from a rich Hispanic man or a middle class black lesbian, and so forth. Society's distribution of wealth and power is shaped by these distinctions: One group is defined as

Pamela W. Darling, Th.D., is consultant to the Episcopal Church's Committee on the Status of Women. She recently completed an extensive historical study of the changing roles of women, and resistance to those changes, in the Episcopal Church.

struggle around change

by Pamela W. Darling

the norm, superior to others and entitled by right — backed up by force — to the widest privileges.

The destructiveness of this process of differentiation has been hidden under various fig leaves. In earlier eras, inequities were justified by positing a God-given hierarchy (gods — kings — lords — land-owners — serfs — women — children — slaves) that kept everyone in a “proper” place under the “protection” of the local patriarch/war-lord.

In our time and democratic culture, these privileges are fostered by a myth of equality-under-the-law that pretends there are no differences. From this denial arises an inability to see the “other,” those different from the reigning norm, or to realize that the world view of the “normal” group is only a partial picture of reality.

Patriarchal norms

In Western civilization, the norm has been established by heterosexual white males. Social conventions and moral principles are predicated on their experience and serve their interests. *Patriarchy* is a convenient term for referring to this system. To the extent that the interests of heterosexual white males actually coincide with those of everyone else, patriarchal social and religious traditions benefit all people; but whenever interests diverge it has been the “others” who suffered while those who matched the norm reinforced their position.

The world view of those in power functions rather like a red filter on a camera lens, which alters the appearance of everything and renders red objects invisible. The racist filter affects the way we perceive the relationships between whites and people of color, and renders invisible the legal and cultural mechanism of domination and the suffering caused by

discriminatory behavior. The patriarchal filter affects the way we experience the power dynamics between men and women, and renders invisible the social and psychological factors that perpetuate the subordination of women.

Today, race and gender criteria are officially eliminated from the Episcopal Church. The white male monopoly has been cracked open, slowly diversifying the nature and allegiances of those exercising spiritual leadership and institutional power, undermining the power of patriarchy. The old filters have been damaged. Our perceptions are changing — strange things we never saw before appear, and familiar things look different. It is disorienting, often frightening.

‘Traditionalist’ defenses

As this process of change continues, self-styled “traditionalists” — such as the Prayer Book Society, the Episcopal Synod of America, Episcopalians United, and in more moderate sectors, the Irenaeus Fellowship of bishops — struggle to protect what remains of the old order. At present these efforts include actions to reverse civil rights gains, opposition to affirmative action programs and inclusive language, and an almost frenzied cam-

paign to eliminate homosexuals from the church’s ordained leadership — at least those gay men and lesbians not vowed to celibacy.

With inflammatory rhetoric or cool reason, the church is responding to the erosion of the patriarchal filter, grappling with what Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning has called “that great divide of consciousness that is the hallmark of our time.” This divide affects whether we believe that the historical pattern of male dominance is, or is not, part of God’s will.

From these conflicts flow the current controversies. Since the early 1960s, the “traditionalist” agenda in the Episcopal Church has consistently linked “liberal” politics with what is usually described as a breakdown of respect for the authority of Scripture and religious tradition. “Liberal” is usually a euphemism for advocacy of civil rights and racial justice, the ordination of women, and a non-punitive approach to divorce, abortion, and homosexuality. In making these connections, traditionalists echo the agenda of the Religious Right elsewhere in the nation.

‘Biblical family’ at risk

The “traditionalist” argument, even in moderate and conciliatory form, seeks to



prop up the crumbling foundations of patriarchy. We can see this in a statement Bishop Frey circulated to the Irenaeus Fellowship of bishops inviting support for a canon requiring clergy to abstain from sex outside marriage. The canon is said to address the breakdown of heterosexual marriage, described as the foundation of society because of its child-rearing function. Says Frey:

This foundation stone can be undermined, from the inside by infidelity, by abuse, or by neglect; or from the outside by the sanctioning of false alternatives, such as same-sex unions. And when that happens, a society is in danger of collapse. Anything that undermines the stability of the biblical family eats away at the roots of the community.

The biblical family has indeed been the foundation of patriarchal structure, the subordination of women in the home establishing the model for relationships throughout society and the church. This model has long observed a double standard regarding marital infidelity, officially forbidding it to everyone, but generally punishing only the women. Think, for example, about the woman “taken in adultery” who was brought before Jesus: Where was the man who must have been with her? Men’s “indiscretions” are tolerated in a society that regards male sexual prowess as evidence of masculinity and self-worth. In practice, the church has tended to agree.

Patriarchy — especially in its middle-class American form — has depended on women to raise the children and maintain the structure of the family both emotionally and sexually. So long as women were bound within the strict limits of traditional marriage and the biblical family, men’s promiscuity was not a threat to society. But access to contraceptives and the so-called sexual revolution of the post-World War II period had the effect of extending to middle-class women the kind of sexual freedom which men have

enjoyed for centuries.

New models needed

In this context, new models for the responsible exercise of that freedom are needed for both men and women. I carry no brief for infidelity or promiscuity, which undermines family however one defines it. But I do find it interesting that the sustained outcries against divorce and promiscuity coincide with the movement of women away from total economic and emotional dependence on men.

Rather than trying to lock everyone back up in a biblical family box (which was usually polygamous and not a particularly safe place for a lot of biblical women and their battered descendants), we need to reconceptualize intimate relationships in truly mutual terms instead of the dominant/subordinate model of traditional heterosexual marriage. We also need to expand our understanding of family beyond the parent(s)-raising-young-children model — in which most of us spend less than half our lives — if we are to create stable communities for us all.

In addition to the internal threat to marriage posed by infidelity, Frey’s argument identifies an external threat of “false alternatives, such as same-sex unions.” It is difficult to see how recognizing committed relationships between homosexual persons would have a negative effect on heterosexual marriages. Heterosexual marriage as an institution might actually be strengthened if same-sex unions were accepted as normal for gay men and lesbians. Lesbian and gay youth would be less likely to seek societal approval by repressing their nature and entering heterosexual marriages, which typically result in immense suffering for both parties, and often end in divorce.

The persistent fear that heterosexual young people might be lured into homosexuality is an odd notion — do we really believe no one would be straight if being gay were okay? In addition, same-sex unions have a potential for developing

models of mutuality in relationship which could be useful for heterosexual couples trying to escape the dominant-male/subordinate-female model of traditional marriage.

The patriarchal model of marriage is crumbling, not heterosexuality itself. The traditional family is increasingly revealed as a dangerous place, physically and psychologically. Often unsafe for women and children, it is also unhealthy for men who find themselves drawn into the oppressive roles of domineering husband or tyrannical father that lie just beneath the surface of our nostalgic images of “family” and *paterfamilias*.

Challenge of Phoenix

None of us, male or female, is well served by the patriarchal form of marriage, just as no one of any color is well-served by the institutionalized racism of our social and religious structures. The challenge before us in Phoenix will be to sift through all the proposals and arguments about race and sex in search of that which promotes the growth and wholeness of all members of the human family, Christ’s body on earth. We must also recognize that all these issues are connected; dealing with them in isolation reinforces the very structures that need to be reformed.

Presiding Bishop Browning has chosen “listening” and “inclusivity” as hallmarks of his administration. A straight white man, he summons the church to hear the voices of the “other,” to discover what true dialogue might be when all members of the community are involved, and to work together to create structures of grace for our common life. This will be tremendously difficult and painful work. We know not where it will lead, nor what the new order might look like to eyes no longer blinded by racism and sexism. But the Gospel invites us — indeed it requires us — to let go of oppressive customs no matter how comfortably familiar, and surely we can trust the God of history to lead us into the future. TW

Short Takes

Sound familiar?

Presbyterians, the staid heirs to four centuries of austere Calvinist morality, are all a-boil over whether to scrap traditional bans on homosexuality and sexual relations outside marriage.

"We are asking the church to rethink a lot of things," said the Rev. John J. Carey, chair of a denominational committee that is recommending the change to the Presbyterian Church, USA.

The committee challenges the traditional Presbyterian view of marriage as the only legitimate setting for sex, speaks favorably of teenage masturbation and petting, and advocates ordination of homosexuals to the ministry.

The proposed changes, to be considered by the denomination's General Assembly at its annual meeting in Baltimore in June, are outlined in a 197-page report prepared by Carey's committee.

Michael D. Schaffer
Philadelphia Inquirer 5/13/91

Quote of note

Some 98% of the adults in this country are hard-working honest Americans. It's the other lousy 2% that get all the publicity. But then — we elected them.

Lily Tomlin

Managed news controls minds

Information has always been a strategic source of power. From time immemorial the Teacher, the Priest, the Censor, and the Spy have helped despots control subject populations. Under the old-fashioned fascist dictatorships, the Party Propagandist replaced the Priest, and the control of minds through managed information became as important as terrorism, torture, and concentration camps.

With the maturing of a modern capitalism, the managing of information has become a fine art and advancing science. Only through managed information can volition itself be captured and, as Rousseau recognized, can minds be so perfectly subjugated as to keep "the appearance of freedom."

Bertram Gross
Friendly Fascism: The New Face of Power in America



Mini Meditation

What if one of you has a hundred sheep but loses one of them? Would you not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost one until you found it? (Luke 15:4)

Jesus is very clear. The shepherd should leave the 99 sheep to fend for themselves and go out in search of the lost one. The story must have soothed Jesus' conscience. As a limited human being he was forced to ignore many individuals in the huge crowds that followed him, healing only here and there when the timing was right or the effect of the miracle would be broad. Jesus consistently left 99 sheep behind in favor of the lost soul. Good news?

Many of us are undoubtedly lost sheep — persons who need, and get, every ounce of help God can dish out in our lifetime. Are you one of them? If so, your problems are solved.

Consider, however, the possibility that you are not. Even if you are hurting or grieving or handicapped, maybe you are not one who God will single out. Maybe God is preoccupied with truly lost sheep, confident that you can cope with your life on your own. Such a possibility seems to reflect most people's experience more accurately than some theory that God helps everybody equally.

Clearly, the psyche of Jesus was profoundly affected by this painful discrepancy. Perhaps telling this parable was a way of clearing his conscience.

Craig Biddle
Bread

Around the home

Men, why aren't you carrying your fair share? According to Arlie Hochschild in *The Second Shift*, the male half of a two career marriage does very little shopping, cleaning and routine child care.

Over a 10-year period, Hochschild surveyed San Francisco couples. Wives working outside the home do 75% of the housework. Only 18% of the husbands share housework equally; 61% of them do virtually no housework.

A *New York Times* survey of 1,500 women and men corroborates these findings. Working women thus have 15 fewer hours of leisure each week. What occupies their husbands during these hours? Sleep, sports on TV, and hobbies.

Initiatives 10/89

Plundering our heritage

This, finally, is the punch line of our 200 years on the great Plains: We trap out the beaver, subtract the Mandan, infect the Blackfeet and the Hidatsa and the Assiniboin; call the land a desert and hurry across it to get to California and Oregon; suck up the buffalo, bones and all; kill off nations of elk, wolves, cranes, prairie chickens and prairie dogs; dig up the gold and rebury it in vaults some place else; ruin the Sioux and Cheyenne and Arapaho and Crow and Koowa and Comanche; kill Crazy Horse, kill Sitting Bull; harvest wave after wave of immigrants' dreams and send the wised-up dreamers on their way; plow the topsoil until it blows to the ocean; ship out the wheat, ship out the cattle; dismiss the small farmers, empty the little towns; drill the oil and natural gas and pipe it away; dry up the rivers and springs, deep-drill for irrigation water as the aquifer retreats.

And in return we condense unimaginable amounts of treasure into weapons buried beneath the land that so much treasure came from — weapons for which our best hope might be that we will someday take them apart and throw them away (or which our next-best hope is that they remain humming away under the prairie, unused forever).

Ian Frazier
Peaceweaver 6/89

THE CONSULTATION gearing up for Phoenix '91

Members of THE CONSULTATION, an umbrella group of Episcopal organizations dealing with justice and peace issues, will be lobbying for a progressive agenda during the 1991 General Convention July 11-20 in Phoenix. According to the Rev. Joseph A. Pelham, convener, at a recent meeting the group adopted two resolutions:

1) That the Consultation go on record expressing its earnest hope that the Presiding Bishop urge every gathering by official and unofficial groups during General Convention make the issue of racism the focus of all special activities.

2) That the Episcopal Church spend the next three triennia addressing institutional racism inside our church and in society in order to become a church of and for all races, and a church without racism, committed to ending racism in the world; and that greater inclusiveness become the Episcopal Church's primary strategy for evangelism.

While member groups will be supporting each others' efforts in general, they will also focus on concerns affecting their constituencies in particular. Following is a roundup by WITNESS editor Mary Lou Suhor of issues around which some of the larger groups will direct their energies.

UBE takes long view of struggle for racial justice in church, state

The Union of Black Episcopalians hopes that resolutions about racial injustice introduced at this Convention will invite people to be part of an ongoing *process*, that they may become effective agents of social change, Judith Conley, president, said. "We have had some 50 Convention resolutions before on racism, with no significant results," she noted, "so we don't see this as *the* Convention to end racism."

UBE will monitor Convention to assess how effective "the overall witness" in Phoenix is going to be in terms of getting the Episcopal Church and society at large to be intentional about addressing racism.

Participating under protest because Arizona rescinded the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, UBE still objects to Phoenix as the Convention site, "but we have been given no alternative, so UBE will be present to assist the Executive Council and the Presiding Bishop to effect change," Conley said. "This could happen if those with power are willing to relinquish it to make things happen, and if deputies introduce

resolutions calling for more than just 'task forces,' " she emphasized.

UBE is not convinced that setting up a Martin Luther King, Jr. scholarship fund for minorities is a substantive response from the church, "and we won't know, until we have seen how it will be administered and implemented. It could merely be a way of satisfying many who will say that racism has been addressed because we have this scholarship fund," Conley said.

The proposed racism audit will be credible only "if the instrument is worthwhile and the data collected in such a way that it engages people to work beyond the audit," Conley said. "How the questions are asked is important; data should address all aspects of racism, and should be geared toward affecting employment and true inclusion, for example."

Re lifestyle, UBE is urging its members at Convention to fast on a daily basis in some way, such as giving up a meal, or wine, or cigarettes, or a bottle of soda and turning the money in to the King Fund. With regard to participation in extracurricular events surrounding Convention, two schools of thought prevailed.

"One was that we should not participate in any activities where meals were involved, and another was that we should



Judith Conley

go to some select events and address the issue of racism. My hope is that people would not eat at these gatherings as a symbol of our displeasure that Arizona was chosen to host the Convention," Conley said.

Because the state refused to endorse the King holiday, the UBE booth will be stark and draped in black, with no other decor or extravagance, she said.

Critical time for Integrity

At its 1976 General Convention, the Episcopal Church passed a resolution calling homosexuals "children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance and pastoral concern and care of the church," and stating that "homosexual persons are entitled to equal protection of the law, with all other citizens."



Kim Byham

"Five conventions later, we would like our church to fulfill its promises," Kim Byham, Integrity representative to The Consultation, said.

"We hope the 'love, acceptance and pastoral concern' will be manifested by removing ordination barriers based solely on sexual orientation; guaranteeing non-discrimination in the life, worship and governance of the church; lesbian/gay representation at the National Church Center and on commissions and committees; developing rites for blessing committed relationships, and developing models and resources for clerical and lay education on issues of human sexuality.

"It is a scandal that for the last 15 years the Commission on Human Affairs and its predecessors have studied lesbian/gay issues without ever having a lesbian or gay member," Byham pointed out. "Somehow, all other mainline denominations managed to find qualified lesbian and gay members for their comparable committees." Integrity also hopes that in 1991 the Episcopal Church will indeed "call upon our society to see that equal protection is provided in actuality" by encouraging state and local governments to make child custodial decisions solely on the qualifications of the parents; by encouraging the federal government to disseminate the Department of Health and Human Services report on youth suicide (suppressed because one of its chapters took a non-judgmental position on homosexuality); by calling on all states to repeal discriminatory sex laws, particularly consensual sodomy laws, used to deny lesbians and gays basic protections; by calling on the federal government to cease discriminating

against lesbians and gays in military service; and by calling for an amendment to the federal civil rights act to include "sexual orientation" among the protected classes.

Bishop William Frey's canon proposing that "all clergy of this church . . . shall be under the obligation to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony" ignores the fact that Holy Matrimony is not an option for lesbians and gay men, Byham said. "Integrity will need the help of everyone in the church who recognizes that wolves often hide in sheep's clothing, and that denying equal justice for lesbians and gay men will merely be the first step in the right wing's agenda to wrest control in the same way the conservatives gained control of the Southern Baptist Convention."

EPF ponders U.S., global issues

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship will lobby equally hard for justice on both the domestic and global fronts. Capital punishment and the criminal justice system will be the focus in the former, and the Middle East and Central America in the latter, according to Mary Miller, executive director.

Executions across the country have escalated since the death penalty was reinstated, Miller said, and the resolution highlighting the church's opposition to capital punishment appears at General Convention at a time when the White House is inaugurating initiatives to expand the death penalty for various federal crimes.



Mary Miller

The resolution, submitted by the Rev. Joe Morris Doss, includes as backup Presiding Bishop Browning's 1990 statement against capital punishment plus a paper from the Society of Christian Ethics entitled, "Biblical Teaching on Capital Punishment." The paper is part of an *amicus* brief filed in a California case and demonstrates that the Bible *cannot* properly be used to support capital punishment, Miller said. Bishop Browning has also signed on to the brief.

"With regard to international issues, it's hard to say what's top priority," Miller puzzled. "A whole array of resolutions is coming from the Standing Committee on Peace and EPF on Israel/Palestine and the Middle East generally. Clearly the Middle East is as hot and desperate an area as it ever was," she said.

The government is playing on military victory and patriotism instead of dealing with human issues, she said, citing Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf's appearance before Congress and the victory parades scheduled across the country, the largest set

June 10 in New York. "Episcopalians are heavily involved here — from the President to James Baker to the mayor of New York to local levels," Miller said. "The feeling seems to be if only a few hundred U.S. soldiers died, it's OK; but it's not OK." EPF has also initiated a resolution proposing Selective Conscientious Objection as a legitimate exercise of individual conscience and asks that the Episcopal Church allow its members to file as SCOs, and support such legal status.

With regard to Central America, "there is as much unfinished business as finished business in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama," Miller said. "Our Panama resolution explicitly asks for U.S. accountability for the devastating invasion, and seeks reparations to assist in rebuilding.

"We will be supporting many resolutions initiated by the Standing Commission on Peace and Justice, such as ongoing support for sanctions in South Africa and the lifting up of South Africa as a program priority," Miller added.

EPF has also asked its deputies to file resolutions on the lifting of trade and travel embargoes against Cuba and the restoration of diplomatic relations, along with the ending of U.S. propaganda broadcasts; on support for war tax resistance; and on opposing low intensity conflict.

"An awful lot of paper will flow at General Convention," she summed up.

EUC to tackle three areas

Three major concerns of the Episcopal Urban Caucus will be reproductive rights, economic justice and racism, according to EUC convenor Diane Pollard.

Concerning the issue of reproductive rights, EUC is backing a resolution which calls on the church to "express its unequivocal opposition to any legislative, executive, or judicial action on the part of local, state, or national governments which would abridge the right of a woman to reach an informed decision about the termination of pregnancy and which would limit the access of a woman to safe means of acting on her decision." This resolution was submitted to the previous General Convention, but was replaced by compromise legislation. EUC, a member of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, has raised up the issue of choice as one of its priorities.

EUC will also push for General Convention to restore full funding to Jubilee Ministry, a network linking parishes, di-



Diane Pollard

ceses and the national church in a partnership for training, advocacy, and service to the poor and oppressed.

The other economic justice component EUC supports is continued funding for the Community Investment and Economic Justice Plan implemented by the previous Convention, which gives grants to grassroots economic organizations such as community-based re-investment programs and community credit unions.

"We are supporting the efforts being made by this Convention to look at racism in the church," said Pollard. Among the proposed efforts are a racism audit and daily Bible sharing sessions in small groups focusing on the issue of racism. The EUC supports the national church's call for groups to cut back on expenditures for lunches, dinners and displays and to donate the excess money to the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial scholarship for minority students. But, Pollard added, "We will also lobby for the church to take a long-range look at racism, to continue beyond this Convention."

APSO for farmers, eco-watch

All issues affecting environment policies, the small farmer, and small churches will dominate the attention of the Appalachian People's Service Organization, Sandra Elledge, editor of *APSOlution*, said.

"Appalachia has become everybody's dumping ground, for toxic and medical waste, and just plain garbage," Elledge noted.

The small farmer's situation, and especially that of minority farmers, is critical to the point of their disappearance, Elledge pointed out. In 1982 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights predicted that unless the United States changed its agricultural policies, the minority farmer would be extinct by the year 2000. Statistics show that black farmers disappear three times as fast as white farm operators. In Virginia, only 10 of the state's black farmers are under age 25, and only 87 under 35.

Black farm-held acreage declined 87% between 1950 and 1987. "Most recent figures from the Family Farm Bureau show that in 1988, nearly 2,000 small farmers per week left farming," she reported. "The Congressional Budget office said in 1985 that if current U.S. policies vis a vis trade and banking persist, more than 500,000 families may have to leave farming. New farm bill provisions are much the same as the old, except that funding is \$2 billion less. Conse-



Sandra Elledge

quently, 1 million people may leave the rural United States soon because of decline in income and the plight of the farmer.

"Many places have experienced a double whammy because many small factories — where part time farmers worked to supplement their income — are closing as well," Elledge said.

Resolutions dealing with small church ministry and resources for small churches are also high on APSO's advocacy list.

"Over 80% of congregations are small churches and need advocacy; for example, we need a church field office for rural and small church ministries similar to that of the Native Americans in Oklahoma, she said. "The soaring cost of providing health care benefits, too, have closed a number of churches, and need to be addressed," she concluded.

Women's issues occupy Caucus

Lobbying by the Episcopal Women's Caucus will take place around some 14 resolutions embracing three general categories: economic issues, inclusivity, and sexuality, according to Marge Christie, president.

Economic issues. EWC's major concern is the increasing pauperization of women. Studies show that by the year 2000, the poor *will be* women and children, Christie said. The plight of older women occupies Caucus efforts as well, since statistics indicate that they are locked into jobs considered "less valuable" and their pay is going down to the old 52 cents on a dollar. A number of resolutions will address these issues.

The Caucus also supports the National Council of Churches' pay equity policy, and will petition the Church Center and Episcopal dioceses to incorporate into their guidelines a policy of equal pay for equal work. Another will support pensions equal to those of clergy for lay employees in the church who work more than 1,000 hours annually.

Inclusivity: The Caucus will support the supplementary liturgical texts recommended by the Standing Liturgical Commission, which use inclusive language, as well as the SLC recommendation to add to the church calendar Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, two pioneers for the rights of women, who were nurtured by their life in the church. To its coffee mugs and T shirts which read, "A Woman's Place is in the House of Bishops," the Caucus will



Marge Christie

add this year similar items which proclaim, "God is Not a Boy's Name," Christie said.

Sexuality. The Caucus will be "part of a whole bandwagon" of resolutions submitted around sexual exploitation and harassment of women, including sexual abuse by clergy. "Women who consult clergy for counseling are in a vulnerable position, and we are trying to help the church understand the problem so things can begin to be done in dioceses and seminaries to define what is not ever proper conduct for clergy in a power-over situation," Christie said. Between 10 to 16% of clergy across all denominations are guilty of sexual abuse, she noted, and court cases are escalating across the country.

"With regard to abortion, we are expressing unequivocal opposition to any legislation requiring parental notification

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WITNESS staff to boycott convention

THE WITNESS staff will honor the national boycott against Arizona — by groups protesting that state's failure to vote for a paid holiday honoring slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. — by not attending General Convention in Phoenix. Neither will THE WITNESS have a booth in the Convention exhibit hall, Mary Lou Suhor, editor, said.

In addition, the Episcopal Church Publishing Company Awards Dinner, customarily held during General Convention, will be postponed to a future date, possibly during the magazine's 75th anniversary next year.

THE WITNESS supports The Consultation's position that those who are called to lobby or to participate in an official way in the House of Deputies or House of Bishops should attend, albeit under protest, so Convention will not be abandoned to the conservatives. But since the magazine does not play such a role, THE WITNESS has contracted with a "stringer" who will be at Convention to file an analytical commentary for the July-August issue.

In explaining the staff's rationale to boycott, Suhor said that one of the more powerful ways to wield clout in racist or affirmative action issues today is through the economic boycott. "Analogously, we believe that South Africa is changing today because of pressure on two fronts: from within, by a courageous people determined to overthrow the yoke of oppression; and from without, through pressure exerted by international economic sanctions, such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu has urged us to support." (Tutu was originally scheduled to speak at General Convention, but later canceled out "by mutual agreement" with Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning.)

"The Episcopal Church will drop millions of dollars into Arizona by holding its General Convention there. We don't think that state should benefit economically from our presence," Suhor said.

A pre-Convention rundown on the Right:

Who's who among traditionalists

by Susan Erdey

While the progressive wing of the Episcopal Church argued over whether or not it was racist to hold its 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, the conservative organizations were marshalling their considerable forces in preparation for an all-out battle in the Arizona summer heat.

As liberal organizations such as the gay and lesbian group Integrity wonder where they will get the money to attend General Convention, conservative groups appear to be well-funded. Episcopalians United (EU) hopes to spend \$185,000 (they claim a \$900,000 annual budget) on Convention activities. The National Organization of Episcopalians for Life (NOEL), the Episcopal Church's anti-abortion group, plans on spending at least \$15,000.

"Who *are* these people?" moan the progressive groups as yet another slick, direct mail piece arrives from EU. Where did they get their start? Who participates in them? And just what is their agenda for General Convention?

Make no mistake; these are very powerful groups. Although they profess to be outside of the progressive "power center" of "815," the national offices of the Episcopal Church located at 815 Second Avenue in New York City, groups such as the National Organization of Episcopalians for Life (NOEL), Episcopalians United (EU), the Episcopal Committee on Reli-

gion and Freedom (ECRF), and the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA) have more clout from a variety of sources than a casual observer might expect.

Here then, is a brief compilation of several conservative organizations in the Episcopal Church, their missions, and a few of the key players in each group, as gathered through a survey of literature and statements in the public realm. Note the formidable amount of cross-pollination among the various groups.

Episcopal Committee on Religion and Freedom. ECRF is a committee of the Institute of Religion and Democracy (IRD), a right-wing think tank whose self-described mission is to "work to bring balance to [churches'] political witness and prevent them from replacing their spiritual mission with a political agenda." ECRF is planning to field a team of observers and activists at General Convention. IRD board members include Richard John Neuhaus, a theologian who recently converted to Roman Catholicism from the Lutheran Church, and is a contributing editor to William F. Buckley's *National Review*; the Rev. John Rodgers, former dean of the conservative, evangelical Episcopal seminary Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pa.; Dr. Allan Parrent, professor of Christian ethics at Virginia Theological Seminary; the Rev. Rebecca Spanos, treasurer of NOEL; and Michael Novak, another contributing editor to *National Review*.

Episcopal Renewal Ministries. This

charismatic renewal organization's board members include Ted Nelson of EU and NOEL, and John Rodgers of EU, NOEL and IRD.

Episcopal Synod of America (ESA). Its founding synod in Fort Worth in 1989 generated headlines as the group threatened to leave the Episcopal Church, then threatened to stay. ESA rejects "endeavors to adopt inclusive language [and] actions of those in the Episcopal Church who accept fornication, adultery, and homosexual unions as 'alternative Christian life-styles'"; "affirms the sanctity of life, opposing abortion on demand and euthanasia"; affirms "the Scriptural and historic standards of faith and morals for admission to the ordained ministry" and opposes "the breach of 2,000 years of unbroken practices of male priesthood and episcopacy." Member dioceses are San Joaquin, Fort Worth, Quincy, Eau Claire, Fond du Lac and Albany, along with ESA parishes in other dioceses. The Rt. Rev. Clarence Pope, bishop of Fort Worth, is president. Both the current and former presidents of the Prayer Book Society, the Rev. Robert Shackles and the Rev. Jerome Politzer, are ESA members. The ESA has received land in Aiken, S.C. on which to establish a traditionalist seminary. This land appears to be the same site for which the Prayer Book Society had once planned its own seminary, as reported in the PBS newsletter, *Mandate*, in the summer of 1988. Editor of the ESA magazine, *Foundations*, is William Murchison, a syndicated columnist whose home base is

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the conservative *Dallas Morning News*.

Episcopalians United. Also known as Episcopalians United for Revelation, Renewal and Reformation, it is perhaps the best-funded of the Episcopal Church's conservative organizations. EU's stated goal is "renewal" at every level of the church, and members believe that the "modern drift toward the secularization of the faith and practice, doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church is destructive of the institution." EU's secretary is Temperance Parker, evangelism officer and deputy for programs in the Diocese of South Carolina. Board members include the Rt. Rev. Alden Hathaway of Pittsburgh, who is also a trustee of the Trinity School of Ministry; the Rt. Rev. Fitzsimons Allison, retired bishop of South Carolina; the Rt. Rev. John David Schofield of San Joaquin; the Rev. Terry Fullam, former rector of St. Paul's, Darien, Conn. and president of Episcopal Renewal Ministries; and the Rev. John Guest of St. Stephen's, Sewickley, Pa.

National Organization of Episcopalians for Life. NOEL's current president, the Rev. Dr. Robert Munday, professor of systematic theology at Trinity School for Ministry, is canonically resident in the Diocese of Quincy (Illinois), an ESA diocese. The Rev. Neil Lebharr former president,, is also a member of Episcopal Renewal Ministries. The Rev. Ted Nelson, recently retired rector of the charismatic Church of the Resurrection in Dallas, is active in NOEL and also chair of the board of EU. The Rt. Rev. William Stevens, bishop of Fond du Lac (also an ESA diocese), also serves on NOEL's board.

Prayer Book Society. Dedicated to the preservation of the 1928 Prayer Book, the PBS' main objective is "to maintain and be true to the traditional faith and worship of the Episcopal Church." Its directors include Norman Bishop, a nationally known Republican political consultant

who worked with pollster George Gallup who is also an Episcopalian, on a number of recent polls for the Society.

The PBS got into considerable hot water last summer when it filed presentment charges against the Rt. Rev. John Spong of the Diocese of Newark for his ordination of Robert Williams, a decidedly non-celibate gay man, to the priesthood. Signatures from three bishops are required for a valid presentment, but one of the three bishops whose signatures were af-

fixed to the document, Bishop Terence Kelshaw of the Diocese of Rio Grande, had never consented to sign.

According to its new president, the Rev. Robert Shackles, the PBS plans to "make 'morality' the key thrust of our strategy and efforts in Phoenix this July. The perpetual efforts of people such as Bishop John Spong to undercut basic moral standards through efforts to accommodate what he apparently sees as 'the modern morality,' must be confronted



and defeated. We intend to rededicate ourselves to doing just that. The church absolutely must stand for something (in questions of morality)," says Fr. Shackles, "it's a pure question of values."

St. Stephen's Church, Sewickley, Pa. A power parish for the conservatives, this church was instrumental in founding the Trinity School for Ministry. St. Stephen's rector, the Rev. John Guest, also heads up the John Guest Evangelistic Team.

Truro Church, Fairfax, Va. This is the home base of several Episcopal conservative organizations. The parish, one of the largest in the denomination at approximately 1,500 members, is a NOEL stronghold. Truro Church donated property for NOEL House, a home for single mothers. Neil Lebharr, a former president of NOEL, has also been an assistant at Truro. The Rt. Rev. John Howe, bishop of Central Florida and chair of NOEL's board, is a former rector of Truro. Truro is also home to Episcopal Renewal Ministries, headed by the Rev. Charles Irish. The parish's membership includes a member of the IRD staff, Lawrence Adams, an international affairs, defense and education expert who is a former analyst for the minority staff of the U.S. House of Representatives Budget Committee. He is also president of ECRF. The newly appointed rector, the Rev. Martyn Minns, was an associate at St. Paul's, Darien, under Terry Fullam.

Commentary

At first glance, the main topic on the conservative agenda is sex — specifically, whether or not the Episcopal Church should ordain non-celibate lesbians and gay men. (The conservatives seem not to recognize that the church has

been doing so for centuries, the more recent action of the Bishop of Newark notwithstanding.)

EU has sent a lengthy tract, "Should Practicing Homosexual Persons be Ordained in the Episcopal Church Today?" to all members of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops. The author of the report, the Rev. Kendall Harmon, a graduate of Trinity School for Ministry and a priest in the Diocese of South Carolina, also wrote a response to the national church's 1988 curriculum, "Sexuality: A Divine Gift," calling it a "deeply disturbing document." In the current tract he out-

"The unifying element in this tremendous expenditure of time, money and effort . . . is power, control and the fear of losing them — the fear of death, in a sense."

lines the history of the church's attitudes on homosexuality, and claims to refute the findings of two progressive scholars, John Boswell of Yale and William Countryman of Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Considerable space is given to "healing ministries" which purport to cure gay men and lesbians of this "illness"; and the author urges that the possibility of healing should be taken seriously by the Episcopal Church.

Further developments on the sexuality front include a proposed canon governing sexual behavior of clergy, sponsored by the Rt. Rev. William Frey, former bishop of Colorado and newly-appointed dean and president of Trinity School for Ministry.

However, some in the progressive camp of the Episcopal Church believe that the sexuality issue isn't really where the conservative collective heart is. Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, believes that the sex issue is "all scapegoat-

ing." Their real concern is the quest for power, he said.

But power is what the ESA professes *not* to have. The Rev. Jeffrey Steenson, in a report to the April meeting of ESA's Legislative Assembly in Chicago, stated that the "liberal protestants and their co-religionists hold all the significant positions of power." Yet in the same report he opined that "courageous apostolic ministry is not bound by the legalisms of moribund institutions."

Can a moribund institution be powerful? Clearly the ESA is intent upon amassing the power to be independent

should the discussions at General Convention not go as it would like. Bishop Pope, in his opening address to the ESA Legislative Assembly, warned that "we are fast approaching the time when we must stop being concerned and calculating

about bold action . . . We have been artificially trapped within geographical boundaries which for many have become spiritual gas chambers [sic] as the historic faith and practice has gradually been sucked out."

Despite the ESA's earlier threats to stay in the Episcopal Church, steps are being taken to facilitate a breakaway. The Rev. Richard Cantrell, a member of ESA's Task Force on New Parishes, recommended in a report that the Synod "carry out our responsibility and then figure out a way to pay for it." He stated that "we cannot in good conscience wait any longer to begin even if it means breaking canons and acting without permission of local ordinaries." The task force report outlined plans to establish congregations in "large population centers which have no traditionalist parishes," to recruit priests and "consecrate missionary bishops without waiting for canonical authority," to recruit men for the priesthood,

committing themselves to "fill the junior class at Nashotah House next year and each year afterwards." (Nashotah House, which formerly trained men only for the priesthood, just recently proposed policy changes to accept women, a decision prompted by low enrollment, which threatened its future.)

Fundraising will be targeted towards those Episcopalians who "plan to be the founding nucleuses [sic] of the new parishes." It is instructive to note that the task force report states: "As quickly as possible, the ESA will develop an alternative to the Church Pension Fund." Many critics have speculated that the lack of a viable, independent pension fund has been the sole reason the highly-clericalized ESA has stuck around in the Episcopal Church for as long as it has.

Members of groups such as ESA have been very vocal in attacking the membership of gays and lesbians in the wider church. However, indications are that the traditionalist movement is getting nervous about the presence of closeted homosexuals within its own ranks. An unsigned letter from a self-described "celibate homosexual," published in the April issue of *The Christian Challenge* (a magazine which bills itself as "the only worldwide voice of traditional Anglicanism"), states:

There is one big noise in the traditionalist movement about whom I know a lot from a former lover of his. Maybe this clergyman has repented and reformed, but 25 years or so ago he was returning to bed between masses on Sunday to have sex with this man. It seems very odd to me to hear him verbally "gay bash" today as if he had always been Fr. Pure. He's not alone in this.

A sleeper issue at Convention may well be the developing crisis in the environment. Several conservative publications have sounded the alarm about "environmental fanaticism," linking it to New Age spirituality, crystals, peace activism, paganism and radical feminism. A more

subtle link may be at work here, however, as the progressive agenda espoused by environmentalists threatens the exploitative mode of business in this and other industrialized countries. In its latest issue, IRD's magazine, *Religion and Democracy*, announced that a coming issue will focus on the recent World Council of Churches' statement on the environment, as well as the connections between theology and the environmental movement.

Analysis

The unifying element in this tremendous expenditure of time, money, and effort isn't the ordination of women, or of lesbians and gay men, or the blessing of same-sex relationships. It's not orthodoxy or tradition. What is at issue is power, control and the fear of losing them — the fear of death, in a sense. That's why many women and a not-inconsiderable number of gay men oppose the progressive agenda: Those who have gained power by playing the Old Boys' game are frightened by the prospect of a change in the rules. There's a lot of talk — especially in politically oriented traditionalist publications — about liberty. It doesn't seem to be the same kind of liberty that most hold dear. Rather, it is the liberty of the ruling class to do what it wants with others. As Maggie Ross, an Anglican solitary, says in her book, *Pillars of Flame: Priesthood and Spiritual Maturity*:

The churches are afraid of a kenotic God; the consequences of worshipping such a divinity are too dangerous; the possibility of a social order transformed by mercy and reverence for the despised and the holiness of fools is too much to bear.

Perhaps it's time for the church to re-examine the last clause of its baptismal Covenant: the promise to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." And, as the 1928 *Book of Common Prayer* put it, to "renounce . . . the vain pomp and glory of the world." TW

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Homosexuality as vocation

by Sam Portaro

The ordination of Robert Williams by Bishop John Spong of Newark, and the subsequent controversy surrounding the exercise — and excesses — of their respective ministries, have generated much discussion. While it remains to be seen whether this controversy enhances or detracts from ordination issues under consideration by the Episcopal Church, the more important dialogue touched by these events is the one on same-sex unions.

Robert Williams offers “Re-Visioning Christianity for Radical Gay Men and Lesbians” in a recent issue of *Christopher Street*, a widely-circulated gay/lesbian periodical. That an article of four pages is inadequate to the task is not nearly so important or amazing as the feat itself — arousing a serious conversation about Christian faith and discipline among people possessed of a justifiable antipathy toward the Christian religion. Interest in committed fidelity among gay men and lesbian women sufficient to gain Williams a foothold in such a publication may indicate the readiness of some to engage in dialogue with traditions experienced in covenants.

The result is an opportunity to participate in the making of theological tradition not in theory, nor in legal canon, but in

the difficult work of struggle in the midst of hard realities. If anything good is to come of this exercise, however, it may be necessary for all concerned to set aside their pride and illusions of power.

We shall likely need a changed notion of authority as pertains to marriage. We shall need to re-affirm the primacy of conscience in determining individual vocational and ethical discernment. Welcoming conscientious dissent as integral to the process of renewal and reformation will mean inviting the possibility that the process might extend to the renewing and reforming of established foundations. While it is true that the church has a lot of catching up and penance to do, the same may be said of the lesbian and gay community. Everyone has much of value to share if we can

come to some place conducive to the exchange.

It may be helpful to ground sexuality — and committed intimacy, in particular — in vocation. If God calls every Christian into purposeful life, how are the Christian’s sexual relations to be integrated into that vocation? Furthermore, because that vocation is not only a personal matter, but also a social or communal one, how is the Christian to mediate sexual relations between those private and public dimensions?

Christians have largely confined these questions to ordination, and thus to the limited number of those called to Holy Orders. Shifting the focus to the universal vocation — the call to personal relationship, in union with one person or in celibacy — opens the theological task to a broader community. Instead of beginning with the hierarchical and institutional considerations concerning ordination, we begin with the lateral and cultural considerations of the more common vocation to relationship.

At a time when many of the Christian churches struggling with the issue of homosexuality are also examining anew the ministry of every baptized member, this strategic shift moves the sexuality debate off the margins of the churches’ deliberations and into the more central, and fundamental, arena of vocation. Such a discussion embraces what it means to be called of God in the whole of one’s person — including one’s sexual person — in the midst of a community of others.

Having followed the debate within the churches, I believe



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that our failure to arrive at legal or pastoral consensus points to the need for greater examination of sacramental theology and ecclesiology. Society's emerging interest in such matters as same-sex union are evidenced in the wider application of equal opportunity entitlements to include sexual orientation, extending in some cases certain spousal benefits to same-sex partners. Some universities have decided or are now deliberating proposals to open married-student housing to committed couples of the same gender. Such actions seem to indicate a growing public concern for dialogue on how to make and nurture loving relationships. To those within the church who have pioneered same-sex unions as a component of Christian life and vocation, these evidences signal that we may now engage those ready to join us in dialogue after years of painful separation.

In that dialogue we might reconsider some venerable traditional theological mores, chief among them being humility and awe in the presence of mystery. The mystery and power of sexuality are brutalized in attempts to reduce all behavior to a single norm. To see how love between two persons manifests itself and gives itself back to the community is to witness mystery. Respecting the dignity of every human being — a component of our baptismal covenant — includes respecting the exercise of each person's gifts in response to vocation. We Christians might appropriately ask of one another, and of those other than ourselves: How do you perceive God's call in your life, and what graces have you discerned in relation to that call?

These questions move us beyond preoccupation with genital intercourse to a consideration of the *promise*, the covenant, as the only essential to the vocation of marriage. My late grandfather, good immigrant Italian Catholic that he was, maintained throughout his life that the authority of the Pope stopped at his bed-

room door. Such a posture not only delineates the roles of the religious community and personal responsibility in matters of intimacy, but establishes the threshold of mystery.

The church has traditionally taught that in marriage, the individuals making their promises are the celebrants of the sacrament. The rest of the assembly — including the priest — are witnesses. Marriage is not the official sanction of sexual genital expression — a license to have intercourse. That it has become so in the minds of many is a sad travesty of

“Many homosexual Christians, like their heterosexual counterparts, desire to share their commitment with a larger community.”

sacramental evolution.

People have married and given themselves in commitment to one another far longer than sacramental forms have existed. Sacramentalizing such giving is an expression of willingness to share it with the community; it is, if you will, a pooling of grace. Thus the church is beneficiary of the couple's gift of covenant love.

In undertaking such a covenant commitment within the community of the church, a couple is asking the community to share responsibility for the keeping and nurturing of that commitment. While it may be argued in the case of same-sex unions that the church ought not to accept such responsibility, the refusal of this invitation demands serious examination. Those who choose to live out their commitments may need us and the support of our community; but that is only half the story. The other half is that

we need them.

Many homosexual Christians, like their heterosexual counterparts, desire only to share their commitment with a larger community. Nor is the proper question one of why covenant love between persons of the same sex must express itself in genital intimacy. While Christian marital vows do specify monogamy, monogamy literally means only “one marriage,” and thus poses a challenge to our altering the word to mean “*one marriage at a time*.” In modern usage monogamy is redefined as commitment to a single partner.

But fidelity is not limited only to genital exclusivity; it extends to every aspect of the commitment. Nor do the vows specify genital activity as a prerequisite to consummation. The pledging of the vows alone suffices to consummate in the eyes of the church — all else is an expression of that covenant promise. That the private exercise of this commitment may or may not include genital intimacy is of no more concern to the community of the church in the case of homosexual couples than it is in the case of their heterosexual sisters and brothers. The principles that guide the community in one sphere must extend equally to the other sphere.

The community may judge promiscuity, exploitation, abuse, and violence as destructive and unethical violation of the covenant vows. Such violations may challenge the promise of the community to uphold these two persons in their vows. But the community is also invited to consider fidelity, respect, nurture and affection as constructive and ethical expressions of the covenant vows. Such virtues encourage the promise of the community to uphold these two persons in their vows and confirm the promises of the individual to so live within community as to enrich rather than impoverish it.

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Church needs new sexual ethic

Sexuality issues will be major items of controversy at General Convention 1991. For example, clergy sexual abuse will be the target of numerous resolutions calling for the banning of any intimate relationships between clergy and lay people. Also, a resolution proposing a canonical amendment that expects clergy to "abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony" will be introduced. Many see this resolution as an attack on non-celibate gay and lesbian clergy, whose relationships are not sanctioned by the church. The Rev. Carter Heyward, professor of theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., and Dr. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, professor of English at William Paterson College in Wayne, N.J., are lesbian-feminist theologians who have written extensively on sexuality issues. They recently discussed their concerns about the Episcopal Church's punitive view of sexuality and their visions for a new church ethic in an interview with WITNESS managing editor Sue Pierce.

General Convention will consider a number of sexual ethics resolutions. You both told me you have serious questions about the consequences of these resolutions, and the way in which the church deals with sexuality in general. What's behind your concern?

CH: Sexual ethics is very a complicated issue, and what I'm concerned about are the statements drawn up by victims' committees in the various dioceses to support resolutions forbidding any kind of clergy/lay, or clergy/parishoner sexual relationships.

VRM: So they believe the solution to ending abusive relationships is to have none at all?

CH: Yes, and I'm deeply troubled by that because I think it plays right into the homophobia, the erotophobia and the clericalism rampant in the churches. I don't believe for a minute that all clergy/parishoner relationships are sexually abusive, any more than I believe relationships where some power imbalance could conceivably exist, which we all have experienced, are ostensibly abusive.

VRM: Relationships are most abusive when not recognized as power inequities.

Do you both think the church is rushing to deal with the problem without adequate information?

CH: Yes. I think we've got to be able to make a distinction in the church between relationships in which a priest and a layperson are trying very hard to have an equal, just relationship, whatever the imbalance of professional power there may be, and those in which clergy are sexually seducing and manipulating every person who comes into their office. Women are not usually the perpetrators of that kind of abuse — it's not that women have any moral claim to purity, but it usually tends to be heterosexual men who do this to women and children.

VRM: This is another case of jumping from one extreme to the other. We've had this abuse, therefore we'll refuse to allow any intimate relationships at all, and not examine the underlying issues. It sounds grand and moral, and all the complexities involved get swept under the rug.

What do you mean by complexities?

VRM: What Carter was talking about — that there can be humanly decent, loving relationships even when there are apparent power inequities.

CH: Someone said after hearing about these resolutions, "What's going to happen to the bishop's daughter, who's always historically married the young curate?" In a sense, this church has been built on a combination of closeted homosexual clergy and young clergymen who married daughters of prominent parishioners. Not that we would necessarily want to say that it's a great thing, because there's so much of a power imbalance, quite frankly, in heterosexual relationships and in a heterosexist culture. Talk about power imbalance — if you want to get rid of it, get rid of traditional heterosexual relationships.

VRM: Or *be* the bishop's daughter — that equalizes things a bit.

Do you know how many resolutions are being submitted, and has anyone drafted a response to them?

CH: Fourteen or 15 of these sexual ethics resolutions have been submitted to General Convention — it's really alarming. In most cases church women's groups have gotten behind them. This clearly is the best effort people have been able to come up with to try to stop abuse.

A resolution some other women and I wrote that will hopefully get a hearing at



Dr. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott

Convention is an attempt to put the brakes on really restrictive legislation, to ask the Presiding Bishop and the president of the House of Deputies to appoint a joint commission to study the complexities for the next three years and to come up with some ethical proposals out of that study. Presumably then, the power relationships can be looked at and the nuances can surface.

Is it fair to say that traditionally there's been little or no teaching on sexual ethics issues in seminaries?

CH: That's true, but it's very hard to teach sexual ethics in a church as homophobic and sexist as this church of ours. For example, I know of a lesbian priest who is involved in a relationship with a parishioner, and these two people would be very pleased to be open about it, but it's not safe because of her job. One of the criteria that some of these sexual ethics committees are working on for ethical, non-abusive relationships is "no secrecy." But you can't do that in a church that's going to kick you out if you reveal that you are gay.

It's a Catch-22 for lesbian and gay clergy, and that kind of thing can't be dealt with in an upfront way as long as the church resists saying that gays and lesbians can be ordained and gay and lesbian

relationships can be blessed and celebrated. It's frightening that the leaders, even some of the liberal, sensitive ones, don't seem to recognize that.

VRM: As a matter of fact, the church has cut itself off from one of its main resources. If all churches are having to work out the whole issue of human sexuality, they desperately need to get a pleasure-positive, passion-positive, body-positive attitude towards sexuality. And their chief resource would be the lesbians and gay men who have somehow come through this horrible, lion-filled forest and have managed to become healthy and engage in healthy relationships. If you have gotten there, you have really worked through a lot of ethics, without maps, and made your own way through trial and error. You can talk from the gut. This wonderful resource would be available except that they're going to crack you on the head and have a million ways to punish you once you've said who you are.

What do you think of the canonical change put forward by Bishop William Frey proposing a sexual ethic for clergy that allows them to have sexual relations only within "Holy Matrimony"?

CH: What proposals like that have done is taken things like clergy sexual abuse and collapsed it all under that heading, saying one of the reasons clergy ought not to sleep with people they're preaching to or counseling is because that's sex outside of marriage, and, as we all know, the Bible teaches only sex within marriage between a man and a woman with a life-long commitment is permissible.

VRM: I'd like to see where the Bible says that, because I've looked and I haven't found it. There's precious little in the Bible to back that up, but a lot's been said about it.

CH: My reading of the churches across

the board, including the Episcopal Church, is that around sex, gender and power issues are where the reactionary forces are able to coalesce their power. People are just scared to death of strong women, which is what "lesbian" represents, and the pushing of the boundaries of traditional sex roles. All kinds of mischief and evil are getting drawn in under the sex-gender-power fear that is being fed, so there's more racism, anti-semitism, more crass capitalism than ever, yet the issues that draw in the reactionary forces are those about gays and lesbians, and about feminists who want to do away with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost — people who are seen as representing the demise of the "family."

VRM: It's all been said very blatantly: America will never return to its number one position if women don't return to the kitchen.

Do you think this is a backlash from people who believe their days are numbered because the world is changing, whites won't be the majority anymore, and the patriarchal paradigm is failing?

VRM: That's what I call my last gasp theory. It was articulated most perfectly in



The Rev. Carter Heyward

the 17th century, when the concept of the divine right of kings was dying, and those in power tried to bolster it back up. On the other hand, I don't think we should take too much comfort in that. As long as things keep getting worse economically, the scapegoating will accelerate.

CH: What I fear is that the last gasp may be a very long one. I think that advanced capitalism, with all its heterosexism and everything else, will ultimately collapse. We cannot keep living on the basis of the greed and violence we're currently embedded in. One of my most pessimistic scenarios is that this does drag on for another several generations and things will get worse and worse. The last gasp of white sexist, racist patriarchy is going to be a horrendously brutal one for everybody who is not playing by their rules, or does not represent the norm. We will never get to see the full fruits of the seeds that we hope we're planting.

VRM: I think many people are experiencing spiritual awakening and not necessarily in church. This is not a pleasure-hating, but a humanistic, gentle, spiritual awakening and the violence is exacerbated in resistance to this. These are horrendous times, partly because the forces are moving so opposite to each other.

I have a lot of hope, but I don't know how soon things will change. All I know is it's my business to work like crazy for change.

CH: Certainly there is great hope coming from the margins, from the bottom, which is why I'm a liberation theologian. Hope is coming from the Southern Hemisphere, from the poor, from lesbians and gay men, and women of all colors. That's where my hope is, because along with some of those categories I too am marginalized. In other ways, because of my class and race, I'm very much a part of the oppressive forces and I'm trying my best to understand what it means to have that

kind of privilege and use it in just ways.

One of you is a lifelong Episcopalian; the other, an adult convert. How have your very different religious backgrounds influenced your faith and sense of self?

VRM: I came up through Protestant fundamentalism. I became an Episcopalian as an adult, and I was looking forward to a church that had Communion every Sunday, because that was central for the Plymouth Brethren, the church in which I was raised. But I became a feminist shortly after joining and was appalled by the hierarchial elements in the church. I don't think the Episcopal Church is the epitome of perfection, but there isn't an organization in the world that's perfect. At least in the Episcopal Church you can talk about things, and we have a Presiding Bishop who *says*, "There will be no outcasts." You can be a thinking person; you don't have to check your mind at the door.

But my fundamentalist upbringing was very valuable. One thing that you can say for fundamentalists and evangelicals, if they're convinced of something, they'll commit to it. My style is evangelical and I'm passionately committed to what I believe. I'm not sorry I grew up being drilled in the Bible; it's been very useful.

CH: I really hear what you said about your own strengths and integrity coming from your fundamentalist roots, Virginia. I wasn't raised fundamentalist, but I have come to understand that my zeal and personal passion comes from my Southern roots, having learned that from Southern women, white and black. My family was a churchgoing family all my life — I became an Episcopalian at age 2.

The Bible always was part of my family's daily devotions. It's typical of the Episcopal Church that I don't remember a whole lot about the Bible from church school or preaching. But I had an image of Jesus as this wonderful person, and God was this nice old white man in the

sky who looked down and loved everybody.

VRM: I had the image, and it wasn't positive, of this God who was always watching, and would get you if you put your hand in the cookie jar. I asked my mother why she whipped me, and she said, "God says, 'Spare the rod, spoil the child.'" The beatings were a sadistic ritual that was excused by "the Bible."

CH: I did not have any sense of a punitive, harsh God. I don't remember any connection between religion and punishment. Church was a soft place. I had a gentle, caring childhood in the midst of what I came to learn was an abusive society.

Why was it important to both of you to come out as lesbians?

CH: I came out in 1979, thinking I was coming out once and for all, when I intentionally published articles saying I was a lesbian. General Convention in Denver was getting ready to vote on gay and lesbian issues, and it was important to me to be standing there as openly lesbian and not as someone talking about some other people "out there." Also, by then I had come far enough in my academic and priestly work to realize that sexuality is right at the heart of what I believe the Spirit is about in our lives, and as a theologian I wanted to be able to say so, and say how I knew, instead of using a lot of abstract theory.

VRM: My lesbianism was always very much a part of me. I tried to kill myself in my teens because they told me I'd never be healed, that God had no use for people like me. I couldn't stand the thought of living a life that was useless and offensive to God. I tried to be heterosexual. I married myself off. But what I did ultimately realize was that God created me as I was, and that this is where life was meaningful.

CH: Your religious culture was really demanding you to choose. It was not that clearcut and simple a thing for me. A lot of how I view sexuality has to do with my increasing belief that human beings' sexual orientations are really very varied. Some of us know from birth, some have much more ambiguity.

What I want to say "no" to is that there is a bio-genetic factor determining sexuality — there may be, but no one knows. It also may be that the society in which I grew up so oppressed me as a female that by the time I was a young woman, it was apparent that the only way to be myself in the most intimate possible way was with women. And that's maybe what lesbianism means in my life, a social construction. Or it may not mean that. I don't care either way, but one thing I despise is the churches telling us they will allow us in because we can't help ourselves. I want to say, "We don't know whether we can help it or not. The fact of the matter is that we are attempting to live as best we can moral and worthwhile lives — that is what we should be rejoicing about — so come down off your soapboxes, sisters and brothers, and open the door."

VRM: When heterosexuals ask me about the origins of my homosexuality, I say, "You tell me about yours, I'll tell you about mine."

Coming out is a way to strike a blow against heterosexism, which is held in place by silence.

CH: If all the gays and lesbians in the church came out overnight, the silence-breaking would make this a different church.

How much does clergy sexual abuse have to do with clericalism, the idea that clergy are somehow "better" than laypeople?

CH: Part of the rhetoric around clergy sexual abuse is this business of being

clear about the boundaries between a lay person and an ordained person, which is clericalism. I do understand that I have power and that I can abuse it and people with it. However, I have always believed that a priest should be in the business of giving up power by empowering, by helping others to understand that we're all commissioned by the sacred spirit to pastor one another, to be priests together. Anything that increases the gap between clergy and lay people, such as saying that professional competence and personal intimacy are mutually exclusive, that you can't be pastoral to people that you're deeply involved with, concerns me. That has not been my experience as a teacher, nor as a priest. I don't think it's good theology at all.

VRM: Friendship can be a startlingly intimate relationship. I believe clear thinking *requires* emotional involvement.

CH: I agree. The danger with the clergy, and other professions, is that we're becoming too professional, backing off from any kind of intimacy. This is happening among women clergy, and distresses me because we're becoming a bunch of little female patriarchs, and that's much less than we could be doing as priests.

VRM: Those of my students that are my friends, what they give to me is invaluable.

Do you think that the problem of abuse would exist if there wasn't this imbalance of power?

CH: The liberal leadership is not probing more deeply into what clergy abuse is about, because to discover what it's about would be to discover we're living in a house of cards. If we're really going to have non-abusive relationships, we're going to have to rebuild the house and not in a hierarchical mode. Making more rigid

rules may eliminate sexual abuse, but there still will be spiritual or emotional abuse as long as some priest believes he or she is some special image of God.

VRM: The priesthood can be modeled differently. We need a little more wind of the Spirit, some spontaneity.

CH: I believe we can be a sacramentally profound community without the hierarchy.

How would you answer the charge that by saying intimate relationships between clergy and laypeople are OK, you are in effect condoning sexual abuse?

VRM: I can condone friendship because there is an egalitarian quality in a friendship, a non-abusive power relationship which could include a sexual element. I would never condone any kind of distorted, exploitative relationship.

CH: There is a chaos in what we're talking about. I think there is something very sacred in chaos that becomes order. It's a question of hanging loose to allow God's spirit to move among us and teach us. Of course, we have to be rigorous with one another in trying to do the right thing in a community of people. We're certainly not saying anything goes.

VRM: We're calling for quality relationships, a higher ethic, which is more difficult than just being punitive.

CH: People say to me, "If the church doesn't come up with some pretty strict rules, the secular laws will do it for us." My answer is that the church needs to lead the way in examining the deeper issues and creating a more humane society.

VRM: I'd like to see the church let Caesar do Caesar's work, and take a prophetic stand. TW

Edward R. Welles: A man of fierce faith

by Susan E. Pierce

When the Rt. Rev. Edward R. Welles II died of a heart attack April 15 at age 83 in Kansas City, Mo., the Episcopal Church lost another of its great leaders in the struggle for social justice. His memorial service was held April 19 at Grace and Trinity Cathedral in Kansas City, on the very same date and in the very same place he had been made Bishop of West Missouri 41 years before.

Welles, former bishop of West Missouri, was a third-generation cleric. The grandfather he was named after was run out of Vicksburg, Miss. for speaking out against slavery. His father, the Rev. Samuel Welles, was nearly run out of an Oklahoma town for serving the chalice to a black man. Welles himself took unpopular stands for civil rights in Kansas City, Mo., in the 1950s and '60s, and found himself an outcast in his beloved church after he joined two other bishops in 1974 in Philadelphia to ordain 11 women as priests in defiance of an official church ban against such an act.

The day of Welles' funeral was also the same day, noted the Rev. Suzanne Hiatt, that George Carey was installed as the 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury. Hiatt, one of the 11 ordained in 1974 and now professor of pastoral theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., said, "I could just see him, standing there smiling at the fact that the day of his entry into the larger life was the day the new Archbishop was consecrated. Gestures, anniversaries, things like that were so important to him — he was a great symbolist."



The Rt. Rev. Edward R. Welles II
1907-1991

Bishop of West Missouri for 22 years, then assistant bishop in Maine, Welles was a staunch Anglo-Catholic. Though very conservative on many issues, he was admired by those on the other side of the ideological fence.

The Rt. Rev. Robert L. DeWitt, who during his tenure as Bishop of Pennsylvania was often involved in controversy because of his radical stands on issues, was another of the ordaining bishops in Philadelphia. He recalled that though Welles' views were very different from his own, "We had a mutual respect for each other. I didn't write him off as I tended to do with other conservatives in the House of Bishops, because he was as intensely loyal to the church as people are to their favorite sports team. He was a cheerleader at the House of Bishops, and actively enthusiastic for the church."

Welles saw the Philadelphia ordinations as a justice issue, and as Hiatt pointed out, "Once he believed in something, he went with it. He lived out his convictions in a fierce way."

Hiatt recalled that despite the radical nature of what he was doing, Welles remained typically faithful to his conservative principles throughout. "For example," she recalled, "from his years as a bishop, he would not ordain anyone who had been divorced. There were some divorced folks in the group so in the planning we made sure we didn't assign him any. And the 1928 Prayer Book was used at the service mainly at his insistence. Furthermore, the 1928 Prayer Book was was clearer about ordination being the bishop's prerogative."

However, she said, he was conservative but not intolerant. "He was willing to let the others do it their way. They were all strange bedfellows, but for justice issues, they could overcome their differences."

Justice was indeed at the heart of a statement Welles and the other bishops released announcing their intentions to perform the ordinations. Acknowledging the potential for disruption and injury to many in the church, they made clear it was in the end a matter of following a higher mandate:

"We are painfully conscious of the diversity of thinking in our church on this issue and have been deeply sobered by it. . . . However, there is a ruling factor that does require the action on our part . . . This action is intended as an act of obedience to the Spirit . . . an act of solidarity with those in whatever institution, in whatever part of the world, whatever stratum of society, who in their

search for freedom, for liberation, for dignity are moved by that same Spirit to struggle against sin, to proclaim that victory, to attempt to walk in the newness of life."

He also had a very personal investment in the event, because his daughter, the Rev. Katrina Swanson, now rector of St. John's Church in Union City, N. J., was one of the ordinands. However, because of his deep love of the church, the resulting storm of recrimination and censure from other bishops and churchpeople was most difficult for her father, she said.

"It was a sweet and sour situation," Swanson noted. "I don't think he had any regrets over being part of it, but it really hurt to have so many of his friends in the church ditch him.

"The wonderful thing was the new contacts he was able to make when he followed God's call to new frontiers," she said.

DeWitt agreed that the struggle between the potential of hurting his fellow bishops and church and his passion for justice added to the bittersweetness of the moment for Welles. "These irregular ordinations put him in a spot more poignant than most people realized. His conflict over doing it wasn't doctrinal or theological, it was 'But how could I do this to these nice people who are my friends?'"

Swanson said her father never really talked much about how difficult the days after the ordinations were, but in a 1984 issue of the WITNESS commemorating the 10th anniversary of the event, Welles expressed his joy at the progress made and his sorrow for past pain and for important steps not yet taken:

"To my infinite joy, an increasingly large proportion of people in the church accept women priests, and in the House of Bishops, fewer and fewer of my brothers treat me as a leper. For example, 10 years ago, the Bishop of Maine put me under inhibition within weeks of the Philadelphia ordination, so that I was not even

able to baptize a grandchild in the Episcopal Church. I had to do it in a Roman Catholic church. Now he has rescinded the inhibition and I have been serving as assistant bishop in Maine until the coadjutor arrives.

As for what remains to be accomplished, I'm really disappointed that there are no women bishops."

He campaigned tirelessly to get a woman elected to the episcopate. At the 1985 General Convention, Welles wore over his bishop's clericals a T-shirt created by the Episcopal Womens' Caucus bearing the slogan, "A Woman's Place is in the House of Bishops."

When the "Episcopal Visitors" resolution, which allowed parishes and dioceses who could not "in conscience" accept a woman bishop to request an outside male bishop to come in, was debated during the 1988 General Convention in Detroit, Welles was one of 28 bishops protesting the resolution. He lamented on the floor of the House of Bishops that "we have no sister bishops to speak for themselves."

Because he so ardently believed in the right of women to become bishops, and was such a strong proponent of equal rights for all, DeWitt said that Welles was "ecstatic" when Barbara Harris, an African-American woman, was elected suffragan bishop of Massachusetts in 1989, becoming the first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion. Despite increasingly fragile health, Welles made the journey from Kansas City to Massachusetts to celebrate her consecration.

Hiatt recalled his "energetic, ebullient personality that would just fill a room. He really enjoyed being at the center, being a bishop. He saw himself as an Anglo-Catholic, dedicated to preserving the faith. He was a great champion of racial equality, of ecumenism. He had an approach to the episcopacy you don't see anymore — he saw himself not as a CEO, as so many bishops do these days, but as a moral leader. He cared more about principles than public opinion." TW

Vocation . . . Continued from page 19

There is no "right" to ordination or, for that matter, to marriage. The church does not confer "rights," but rather confirms grace. It may be inappropriate of the Christian homosexual to demand of the church the "right" to be married. However, it may be meet, right and even the bounden duty of every Christian who discerns God's call to vocation — including the call to intimate commitment — to offer that gift to God in the community of the baptized.

Christian homosexual women and men do not need the church's permission to solemnize a sacrament of which the partners themselves are the celebrants. Neither can any partners expect the unequivocal or uncritical acceptance of their relationship within the church; membership in the community of the faithful invites continuous confession and repentance and the critical ministration of the whole. Those moved to offer their relationship, even to the pain that inevitably comes of living in community, are making a gift to the church. As such, they contribute to the church's own vocation, challenging the church to discern God's call in their offering. The church's response to the proffered gift reflects not the quality of the giver or the gift, but the grace, or lack thereof, of the church itself — for the church also stands in need of repentance and within God's critical considerations.

Christian homosexuals might then be encouraged to take their place in the church and to offer with perseverance the gift of their love, and their covenant relationships. The church might be encouraged to receive with gratitude that gift, remembering that we are commanded to be thankful for all things, even those gifts we do not understand or do not receive to our perceived comfort or benefit. The resulting dialogue can be our shared offering, humbly surrendered to the judgement of God. TW

WITNESS wins three ACP awards

THE WITNESS magazine scored two firsts and an honorable mention in the prestigious Associated Church Press contest which drew some 800 entries in 1991, the ACP's 75th anniversary year. Awards were presented April 29 at a festive dinner in the Clarion Hotel, St. Louis, during ACP's annual convention.

THE WITNESS won for best editorial, "The price of greed," by Susan E. Pierce, in the September 1990 issue and for best feature, "Crossing the line in Iraq for peace" by the Rev. James Lewis in December. Honorable mention was awarded to Verna J. Dozier's "Saying 'Yes' in a 'No' world," in the May issue.

Of Pierce's editorial, judges wrote, "Tightly reasoned, tightly written. Instead of fighting 'for the right to continue to drown in our own waste,' the editorial reasons, 'this crisis should be a time to look at our consumption habits, heed the warnings, and make significant changes in lifestyle.'" Pierce also served on the ACP Futures Committee panel which tried to second-guess trends in religious publishing for the next decade. This workshop also examined case studies of magazines that had folded over the past years, noting that no publications, prize-winners notwithstanding, "are safe from a budget axe, wielded rather ruthlessly sometimes in the denominations."

Lewis' feature "presented timely information in a personal, readable manner," judges said. "The compelling issues, along with witty and rich language, made this article exceptional. Often, stories that relate incidences while traveling become boring, long explanations of who went where when. The structure of this article is much different. The author sets the scene and then breaks up the piece with

anecdotes from a variety of countries. He never loses sight of the theme and his message. A well crafted, interesting and important piece."

Dozier's article was cited as "a truly inclusive invitation to affirm in-spite-of/ because-of God's possibilities." First place in this category went to *The Christian Century* for Belden C. Lane's "Grace and the Grotesque."

Judges awarded THE WITNESS a 7 on a scale of 1 to 10. General comments included: "Courageous, tough issues. Solid reading. Strong editorials. You expect a lot from your readers, but if your letters to the editor column response is a judge of that, you're doing fine. Good job." . . . "Writing clear, consistent; perhaps could be more concise." . . . Hard hitting coverage in some stories; willing to take a stand."

This year's awards bring the total of firsts captured by THE WITNESS to 13 over the past 14 years, plus six honorable mentions.

The Associated Church Press numbers 204 publications in Canada and the United States in its membership, reporting a combined circulation of 11.5 million. Newly elected officers for the coming term are Tom McGrath, editorial director, Claretian publications, president; Ron Arena, *The American Baptist* magazine, first vice president; Wendy McFadden, *Messenger* magazine, second vice-president; Chris Woehr, News Network International, treasurer. Named to the Board of Directors was James Solheim, Episcopal News Service; Jean Caffey Lyles, *The Lutheran*; Leon Howell, *Christianity and Crisis*; and Ruth Nicastro, *Episcopal News*. Nicastro's periodical was also cited for general excellence this year by the ACP. TW

CONSULTATION . . . *Cont. from p. 13*
and consent if the pregnant woman is underage," she said.

"It is also the view of the Caucus that if women had access to means of decent, reliable birth control, abortions would be far less an option. The Caucus is therefore calling for the use of medicaid funds for NORPLANT, a medical birth

control procedure, that those in need may have access to it."

The Caucus will present a briefing for women deputies and delegates about the issues it is supporting, legislative strategy, and candidates it will back on July 14 at a brunch at the Hyatt-Regency from noon to 2 p.m.

Minority groups to present progressive agenda

Consultation members representing minorities will be active around a whole panoply of issues at General Convention.

Native Americans will be witnessing to how racism uniquely affects them in the United States, according to Kesley Edmo, Consultation representative. Especially offensive is the forthcoming quinquennial celebrations around the "discovery" of America by Columbus, after which the Indian nations were either wiped out or dispossessed. Carol Hampton, field officer for the Episcopal Church Office for Indian Ministries put it, "genocide is not something to celebrate," but rather a year for repentance and healing. "What we'd like to honor is 500 years of survival," Hampton said.

For Native Americans, racism also translates into how treaty rights are violated and how religious freedom is curtailed, said Owanah Anderson, Native American officer at the Episcopal Church Center. Also, Native Americans are concerned about their visibility, meaning participation in the life and decision-making of the Episcopal Church. Budget crunches will be shrinking funding for the new Episcopal Council of

Native Ministries (ECIM) which gives financial support to dioceses with major Indian missions and ministries, she said.

The Rev. Floyd "Butch" Naters-Gamarra, convener of the Coalition of Hispanic Episcopalians (CHE), says Hispanics are joining the growing protest about massive festivities planned throughout the hemisphere to "celebrate" the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the New World. CHE is involved in educational efforts and alternative celebrations which will lift up the culture and heritage of the peoples oppressed during that era, "one of the most destructive periods in history," Naters-Gamarra said.

CHE is also protesting wherever English is being adopted as the official language on state documents as discriminatory against Spanish-speaking and other minorities. Finally, CHE is backing a resolution concerning violence in the cities against people of color, and will vote in solidarity with resolutions submitted by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and the Peace and Justice Commission.

Asiameica Ministries Advocates will focus on Convention legislation highlighting the growing problem of prostitution and abuse of Philippine women, closely related to the presence of U.S. military bases, according to the Rev. James Kodera. In addition, a resolution has been submitted protesting compulsory fingerprinting of Koreans in Japan. An Asiameica Ministries Advocates member, the Rev. Benjamin Pao, is running for Executive Council. **TW**

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Daughters of Jerusalem

(Luke 23:28-30)

Weep,
for our sisters and brothers,
slain in El Salvador,
shot down in Montreal,
ourselves.

Light candles,
pound crosses into the ground,
wound the earth
with our pain.

She opens,
takes it into herself
as she will at our own dying.

Clasp hands,
sing, invoke
rivers of peace in the desert,
circles of peace for the world,
answers on the wind.

In the cold our breath
hangs incense-heavy.

If then we should turn,
see the pain in each other's eyes,
clear as the moon
sliding from behind the clouds,
and fall on the earth,
rub dead leaves in our hair,
howl?

They would not return.

. . . If we had not borne,
or given suck . . .

O daughters of Jerusalem
weep
that the time not come
when we ask the mountains
to fall on us,
the hills to cover us
so we see no more.

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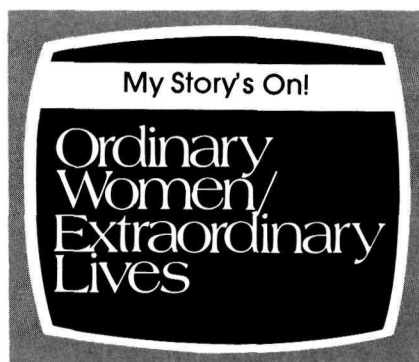
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Continued from front cover

This special Convention issue will tune you in to important themes — the traditionalist agenda, Bishop William Frey's resolution, the sexuality report of the church's Standing Commission on Human Affairs — and show how injustices and the various "isms" are connected.

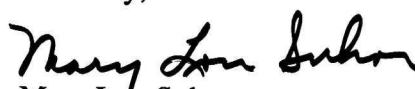
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Mary Lou Suhor
Editor

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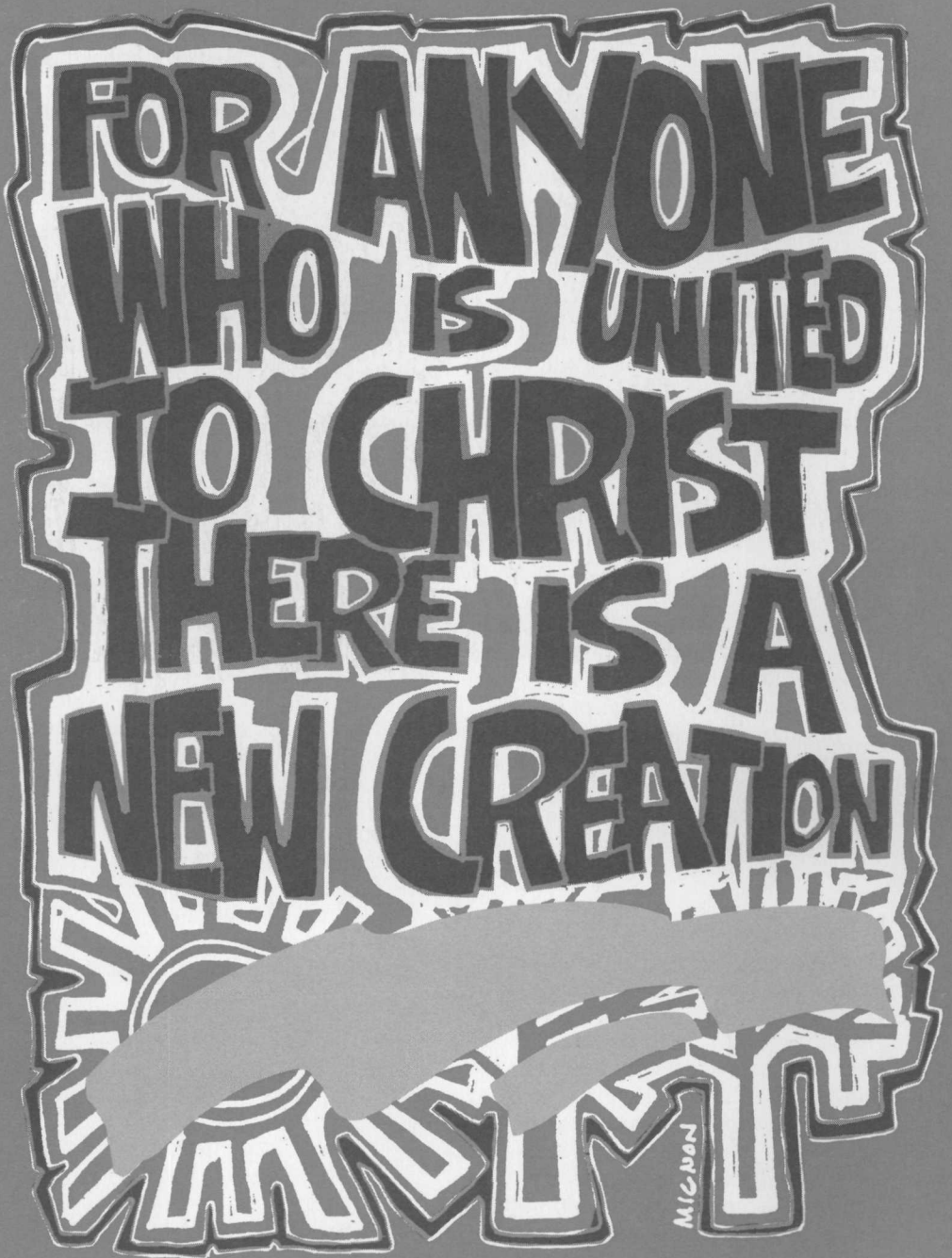


**Family of 1990s:
Challenge to church**
Penny Long Marler

The sexuality of Jesus
Malcom Boyd

**General Convention
roundup**
Susan Erdey

Adieu to Ambler
Mary Lou Suhor



Letters

Abbie Jane revisited

Thanks for Susan E. Pierce's May tribute to the creativity of Abbie Jane Wells and her "ministry of letters." The image of a lone Christian woman at her kitchen table, night after night, reaching out to touch someone (and succeeding) is glorious, and poignant. Wonderful to see it as her spiritual commission!

The only other lobbyist-via-copy I know is Mary Eunice Oliver from San Diego: being on her mailing list is tuning in to a modern-day female St. Paul. Do you suppose this is a peculiarly womanly way of witnessing in the late 20th century? Wonder if there are other such "mothers of us all" we don't know about.

Joanna B. Gillespie
Episcopal Women's History Project
New York, N.Y.

Lauds 'people' testimony

This greeting comes to tell you that I'm greatly appreciating my subscription to THE WITNESS and the book, *My Story's On: Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives*, based on your principle of people speaking for themselves. Mary Lou Suhor's April article on Agnes Bauerlein — "Herstory from Persian Gulf war" was especially appreciated. Thank you and keep on!

Donna Allen, Founding Editor
Media Report to Women
Washington, D.C

Yes to WITNESS boycott

Every time I am sure that the Episcopal Church has lost its mind entirely, THE WITNESS takes a position which convinces me justice is to be found somewhere in our assemblage. I refer to the decision by THE WITNESS staff to honor the national boycott against Arizona. As a resident of a neighboring state, I have had ample opportunity to observe the cruel, reactionary politics visited by that state's politicians upon

blacks, Chicanos (especially the UFW) and women. It's no use saying, as some church people have: "We belong there as an example." Thoreau was nearer the mark when he said to Emerson, "When the government is corrupt, good people belong in jail."

They certainly don't belong in Phoenix.

Leonora Holder
Long Beach, Cal.

Women at Nashotah

I am distressed by the "takeover" of Nashotah House by the ESA, especially by the appointment of persons to the Board of Trustees who have an ecclesiastical/ideological obsession which does not issue from living at the House or from daily worship there for three years.

However, I would like to point out an inaccuracy in Susan Erdey's article on the "traditionalists" in your June issue. In a parenthetical comment, she states, "Nashotah House, which formerly trained men only for the priesthood, just recently proposed policy changes to accept women, a decision prompted by low enrollment, which threatened its future."

As a matter of fact, there were women enrolled when I matriculated in 1981, and there had been for some time. A telephone call to the administration of Nashotah House revealed that the first woman M.Div. student was admitted in 1967, and women have been admitted into the M.Div. and other degree programs since that time.

Nashotah House has troubles enough of

its own without a further disservice done to it by careless misstatement of the facts.

The Rev. Charles Williams
Denton, Tex.

(The parenthetical material was not Erdey's, but was added by THE WITNESS and should have carried an editor's note. We acknowledge the error. Incidentally, the Board of Trustees of Nashotah House passed a resolution May 24 of this year that the seminary "will provide theological education for men and women that will train them for vocations to which they believe themselves to be called; and that until such time as catholic Christendom decides the issue of female ordination, only ordained men will function sacerdotally at Nashotah House." Four faculty members resigned following the Board action, protesting its "continued diminution and demeaning of women" and "ideologizing of theology.") — Ed.)

Not IRD, but 'traditional'

Susan Erdey's WITNESS article listed me as a Board member of IRD and as one planning to be part of its "team" at General Convention. A little research would have revealed that neither claim is correct, though I am on the Board of the Episcopal Committee on Religion and Freedom (ECRF). The article also seeks to make a distinction between "progressive" and "conservative" groups in the church, without indicating what it means by those elusive and overused terms. The agendas of the groups described in the article vary widely and are far from monolithic. As for the term "traditionalist" in the title, if it means what Gabriel Facre recently described as the strong movement in seminaries to recover the classic Christian faith and a clear Christian identity, as opposed to accommodating Christian values to contemporary society, then I at least am happy to be so identified.

Finally, the article's attempt to portray

Credit

THE WITNESS wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Virginia Breeze of Anchorage, Alaska, to our recent tribute to Abbie Jane Wells in the May issue. — Ed.

the several so-called "conservative" groups as "well-funded" and "powerful" remind me of similar unfounded claims about the "powerful church lobby" which I often heard from the other ideological extreme when I represented the National Council of Churches in Washington for five years. As a member of the Standing Commission on Peace for nine years, I am very aware of the unhealthy polarization on a number of issues within the church. Unfortunately, I find that quite often THE WITNESS contributes to that polarization through the ideologically narrow perspective, the not infrequent self-righteous tone, and the sometimes paranoid flavor of many of its articles. Such articles seem at times more interested in demonizing opponents than engaging in reasoned moral discourse rooted in Christian tradition. I hope and believe you can do better.

Allan M. Parrent
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Protestant Episcopal Theological
Seminary in Virginia

Albany not ESA diocese

Life is tough enough. Please correct the statement in Susan Erdey's article in the June issue that Albany is a member diocese of the Episcopal Synod of America. It is not.

The Rev. Andrew C. Hamersley
Albany, N.Y.

Ditto San Joaquin

I enjoyed the various articles in the pre-Convention issue of THE WITNESS and find myself in sympathy with many of the views expressed. But please let it be known that the *Diocese* of San Joaquin is not a member of ESA. While the bishop, the archdeacon, some clergy and one parish have stated their participation in ESA, the Diocese has not, and will not, if some of us can prevent it.

It does a disservice to those of us who hold different views from ESA to have it

assumed that as goes the bishop so goes the diocese.

The Rev. Edgar G. Parrott
Turlock, Cal.

Erdey responds

I do not refer to Allan Parrent as "planning to be part of [IRD's] 'team' at General Convention."

However, the sentence, "IRD board members include Richard John Neuhaus . . . Dr. Allan Parrent . . ." etc. was in error in my final version of the article. My editing mistake. But, for Dr. Parrent to draw such a clear distinction between his involvement in ECRF and IRD is perplexing. The masthead of *Anglican Opinion*, ECRF's magazine, clearly states that ECRF is a "committee of the Institute of Religion and Democracy," and the return address links them "ECRF/IRD."

As to Dr. Parrent's comments regarding the distinctions between "progressives" and "conservatives," the "unhealthy polarization on a number of issues within the church" and of THE WITNESS' contribution to that polarization: Surely the progressive movement in the church is as guilty of "taking sides" as the conservative camp. But readers will have to judge whether THE WITNESS, which openly purports to be an advocacy journal for progressive issues, sins in that area.

I apologize for the error regarding the Dioceses of Albany and San Joaquin's official membership in the ESA. I was working from apparently outdated information. Although, I would point out there can be a fine line between what the bishop of a diocese says and does, and how goes the diocese. If a bishop and a number of the bishop's staff are officially members of the ESA, and the bishop refuses to ordain women, for example, it may be difficult to counteract the impression that the diocese as a whole is of like mind.

Happily, some dioceses whose leader-

ship has supported the ESA seem to be disassociating themselves from their leaders. In the Diocese of Fort Worth, whose bishop, the Rt. Rev. Clarence Pope, is leader of the ESA, All Saints' Cathedral has essentially resigned its status as cathedral of the diocese in protest of Bishop Pope's position. In addition, sources in Fort Worth say that members of the diocese are calling Bishop Pope to accountability regarding how much time he actually spends on diocesan business, and how much time is spent conducting ESA business.

Susan Erdey
Cambridge, Mass.

Lacks largest minority

As a long-time subscriber to THE WITNESS, I commend you and the staff for the excellent June cover that asked whether the Episcopal Church welcomed people of color, gays and lesbians, ordained women, poor people and native Americans. However, as a person with epilepsy who has worked with people with other disabilities, I was disappointed that the cover did not also include people with disabilities. Unfortunately, there is overwhelming evidence that this largest minority group is practically ignored by the church.

Moreover, included among the 43 million Americans with disabilities are people of color, gays and lesbians, ordained women, poor people and Native Americans. Since so many of our churches are inaccessible, I think a more accurate description is that the Episcopal Church welcomes only able-bodied people who are able to negotiate steps or stairs.

At General Convention, a resolution will be introduced expressing support for the recently-enacted Americans with Disabilities Act and stating that the Episcopal Church will voluntarily comply

Continued on page 27

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On becoming blind

by Sam Day

Since its rebirth in 1974, THE WITNESS has had the guidance and wise counsel of Sam Day, noted journalist, author and peace activist. Day, co-director of Nukewatch, a nuclear disarmament organization, has been jailed many times for non-violent civil disobedience. He is now adjusting to blindness and a new life-style, as the article below, reprinted with permission from Isthmus (6/24/91) reveals. We ask WITNESS readers to keep him in their thoughts and prayers as he begins this new life journey.

Some time ago I began a sudden and unexpected journey into blindness. It began in a Rock County Jail cell in Janesville, where I was completing a four-month term for unlawfully demonstrating against the Persian Gulf War.

On the morning of May 10, three days before my scheduled release, I awoke to discover that my eyes were playing tricks on me. The letters and words on the page in the book in front of me were jumping up and down and moving from side to side. I found I could read only with difficulty. So I put the book away and gave my eyes a rest. Three days later, on my first day of freedom, I made an appointment with my ophthalmologist. On the way over to his office, I told my companion, who was driving, after she had paused for a stop, "You can go forward now, it's only a flashing red light."

Turning to me, she said, "Sam, that light's not flashing — it's a steady red."

Three days later, there came another chilling step in my journey into darkness.

Emerging from my dentist's office, I discovered that I could not see the cars hurtling by on the busy nearby boulevard. Taking my life in my hands, I felt my way across the street to the bus stop. My world was becoming a pea soup fog.

The end of the first step of my journey came on the last day of May, when my eye doctor sat me down and gave me the results of a long series of tests. The verdict was that I had suffered the second in a series of strokes that, in two years, had killed the optic nerve in both eyes, leaving me blind.

As I sat there in the doctor's office, absorbing the impact of the news, I became aware that his hand was outstretched. We shook hands. That was it.

Sometimes I think about the things that I will never see again: a sunset, the ocean surf, the marble steps of the State Capitol, the faces of the people I know and love. I think of the faces of my grandchildren, which will be forever frozen in childhood in my mind. I think of the face of a grandchild still unborn, whose appearance I shall never know. I can feel the grief and sorrow immortalized in the poem of John Milton: *When I consider how my light is spent/Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide/And that one talent which is death to hide/Lodged with me useless . . .*

But my thoughts these days go not so much to sorrow and despair as to the strangeness and wonder of the new world I have entered.

I think of blindness — strangely — as a potentially empowering experience. This journey into the tunnel of darkness seems to be bringing me closer to people. Things that I used to do myself are now necessarily done collaboratively.

No longer having the use of my own eyes, I use the eyes of others, and in the process I become more a part of them.

In the mornings, my oldest son, Philip, reads me the paper for 45 minutes after breakfast. On some afternoons, a next-door neighbor, Jim, drops by to read chapters from a book. My blindness is forging bonds among us.

When I walk to my office in downtown

Madison, clearing a way through traffic with my white magic wand, I enter a new world of collaboration with volunteers, who help me read, write and do my thing.

Their presence gives body and texture to my work. To me, this is a dividend of blindness.

Don't misunderstand me. It's not fun to be blind. There is no joy in losing one's sight. I don't want to sentimentalize the situation. Nevertheless, there are some real compensations for the loss.

To me, jail and prison have never been a hellish world of despair and disempowerment. As one who has gone to jail for reasons of political conscience, I have found it a good place to be. I have looked upon jail as a liberating experience and as a source of strength and insights into the human condition.

Blindness, like jail, can open the door to self-discovery.

The common denominator here is that we are the makers of our own prisons. Whether the prison is the concrete jungle Rock County Jail or the pea soup fog that has descended on my world, it is we who are the makers. And we who imprison ourselves.

For me, jail was a place of freedom and independence during the Persian Gulf War. I felt liberated in the Rock County Jail. I did not feel confined, did not feel myself to be a prisoner.

Perhaps it is the same way now with this new form of incarceration. I'm nouveau blind. Perhaps I'm seeing it through rose-colored glasses. But I'm looking forward to the trip. **TV**

Churches must 'make family' in '90s

by Penny Long Marler

Nostalgia is a hot topic in churches today. Some time ago, I sat in the congregation of a large, suburban Southern Baptist church while a new staff position was being discussed. About half-way through, a prominent professor of Christian Education at a local seminary stood up and said, "We need a strong youth Sunday School program — after all, it is the strong Sunday School program of the '50s that made this church what it is today."

Six months ago, I was interviewing members at one of the largest United Church of Christ congregations in Massachusetts. A good cross-section of members, old and young, expressed the conviction that a chief problem in their plateaued congregation was a "poor youth program." They are convinced that a young, energetic youth minister is the answer to growth concerns.

Family portraits: Past and present

In an address to a major denominational mission board last year, Lyle Schaller, author and leading authority on church growth and planning, stated, "There seems to be a growing amount of evidence that this year is 1991. If that's true, we've got problems. If it were 1951, we might know what to do." Nostalgia is not an altogether bad thing; neither is an exciting youth pro-

gram. But in our hurry to bless the past, the church is in danger of becoming myopically mired in it and increasingly irrelevant.

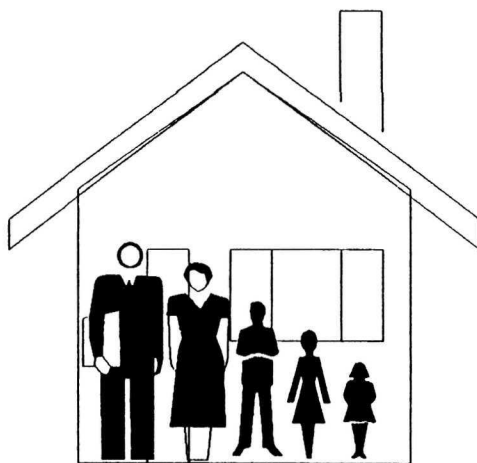
Recent demographic data illustrates the dramatic changes that have occurred in American society since the pew-packed fifties. Such changes underline the problems that beset the church today, and open up new opportunities for truly responsive ministry. The proper focus for '50s nostalgia is not "how good it was" but "how good we were." For the most part, the churches responded creatively to changing social realities and social needs.

The '50s church catered to growing numbers of young families with children. The "market" — as it were — was driven by a large group of consumers with similar family characteristics. If church leaders, editors, writers and educators are to be as responsive today, the task is not to recap-

ture the family of the past but to rediscover the family of the present and redefine the task of ministry in *this new context*.

Fifties' families were well-scrubbed, orderly, and predictable. There was a working dad, a homemaker mom, a tall, earnest (if sometimes rebellious) teenage son, a moody and obedient middle daughter, and a capricious and spoiled youngest girl. They may have had an aunt and uncle who were childless (but they were trying) and probably had a grandmother and grandfather who lived nearby. Most likely, however, they all had (or knew) a few older widowed women — either their grandmothers or church members.

Most of the kids went to church with friends who also attended their school. In fact, church, school, and family were the major socializing agencies of the '50s. In the family, children developed a sense of "we-ness." There were family suppers,



The family of the '50s

Dr. Penny Long Marler is director of the Parish Profile Inventory Service, Center for Social and Religious Research at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. This article is adapted from an address she gave at the recent Associated Church Press annual meeting in St. Louis, Mo. This address has also appeared in the *Military Chaplain's Review*.

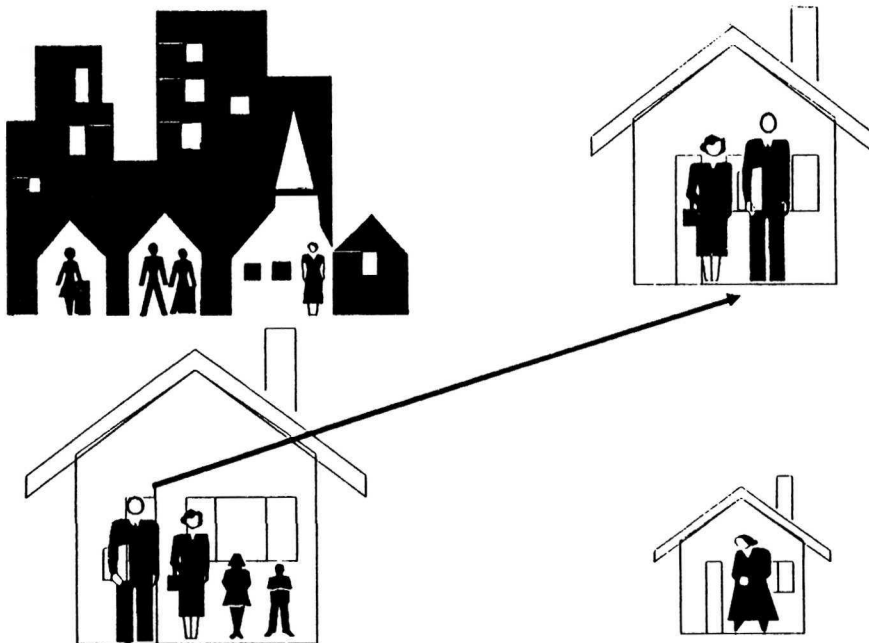
family vacations, family outings, and family reunions. At school with their peers, children sharpened their sense of autonomy and identity. Finally, taking its cue from age-graded education, the church also reinforced “me-ness” through adult and children’s Sunday school, youth programs, children and youth choirs. The church was the “family place” because we were all under one roof — but for the most part, the family “split up” the minute they entered the doors.

The '90s family looks very different: Roseanne Barr is no Donna Reed; and, as far as the atypical family goes, “My Three Sons” can’t touch “My Two Dads.” The single, career mom of “Who’s the Boss?” has little in common with the quietly wise and stable Robert Young of “Father Knows Best.” The raucous, irreverent — and laughingly tolerated — Bart Simpson makes “the Beave” look angelic and highly domesticated. The Golden Girls’ vivacious and unusual household makes '50s T.V. seniors seem dependent, at worse, cranky and eccentric, at best. Further, while the *Cosby Show* may fit the demographic picture of the '50s family — many children, wise and witty parents (in their first marriages) — the picture is different because mom is a career woman, a lawyer, no less.

Media-stereotypes of the family have changed markedly. And while media images are not the only measuring sticks, they are important ones. Cultural images both form and are informed by social reality.

The '90s portrait of the family is really a composite of many family-types. Indeed, there is no demographic norm. There is still the traditional family — but it is smaller. In addition, Mom and Dad probably both work. And, the chances that Mom and/or Dad will separate or divorce at some point have drastically increased.

The children are involved in a variety of school-related and other extra-curricular activities — and so are their parents. If they go to church, their attendance is most



The family of the '90s

likely sporadic. For example, children may alternate weekends with a divorced parent. Or, working parents skip Sundays because they need the “family time” to go on promised outings with their children — or, they simply decide to “sleep in.”

Another typical family pattern is the married couple with no children. This family type — DINKS: double income, no kids — includes empty nesters and younger to middle-aged working couples. All these married couples may choose church — but the competition is stiff: leisure pursuits and work get in the way.

Single-parent families are also a growing family type. Most single-parent families are headed by women; some are divorced, others never married. Many work long hours for less-than-adequate pay (certainly less than most of their male counterparts), and others receive government assistance in order to feed, clothe, and care for their children. Church may be an option for some single moms — but many find it difficult to get the kids up and ready early for another day. In addition, adult

education classes and fellowship groups at churches are often programmed around the interests and needs of couples. A single parent may feel like a “fifth-wheel.”

Finally, in addition to parents and children, married couples, and single parents are increasing numbers of “nonfamily” households. They include persons who live alone (elderly and widowed persons or working singles) and a vast array of unrelated persons who live together (young professionals, retirees, etc.). The lifestyles of persons in these nontraditional families vary widely — and we don’t know much about their attendance and participation patterns.

There is little doubt that the traditional family has become fragmented. The individual is increasingly isolated in modern society. Intimacy and connectedness are found in new contexts if they are found at all. The increasingly fragile web of family life raises new questions about the sources of healthful relationships.

Where do young children get to know older persons who pass along a sense of

history, who serve as models of aging, coping, and surviving? Where do young professionals mingle with and learn from middle-aged persons who are not their bosses? Where do teenagers without fathers find older male friends or guides? Where does the dual career family — badly in need of time together — find that refreshing space, that oasis? Do these stretched and stressed persons find intimacy and necessary cross-generational involvement at the church? Or, is the church still following a program that banks on the personal networks of support and nurture once found in nuclear families? Unfortunately, while the church claims that it is a family place, it is rarely the place for the family (traditional or not) to be together.

The traditional family is no longer the sociological norm in this country. The alternate families have become *the* family of today.

The changing family structure

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, at the close of the '50s almost half of all households consisted of married couples with children. By 1990, a little over a quarter of the households were made up of two parents and their children — a 20% decline in 30 years.

The proportion of U.S. households that consist of married couples only, however, has remained virtually stable. So, where has the difference been made up? In two areas: the rise of "other family households" which include single-parent families, and the increase in nonfamily households.

While single-parent households have increased their share of the overall household structure portrait by 4% — the nonfamily category has increased by 15% overall. In fact, in 1990 there were about 27.3 million nonfamily households — almost 3 of every 10.

The largest category of nonfamily households are persons living alone. This type has nearly doubled since 1960. Those living alone include two major subgroups:

never-married young adults (18-24) and widowed, elderly women (65+).

The remaining category, "other nonfamily households," has more than doubled since 1960. The pattern includes families like the "Golden Girls" — which is a nonfamily household with a family subgroup.

In summary, by 1990 no category of household structure dominates — and the nonfamily category represents about 30% of the whole. The normative '50s family is no more: the family today is pluriform.

Not only have the proportions of family and nonfamily household changed — but

*"The '90s family
looks very different:
Rosanne Barr is no
Donna Reed . . ."*

the size of these units has changed. Interestingly, not only has the proportion of traditional families decreased, but they have also become smaller.

Fewer children per family, more single-parent families, and larger numbers of people living alone contribute to the decline in household size.

So, families and households are both getting smaller. Concurrently, natural webs of intimate social relationships are limited. With the breakdown of the extended family, cross-generational relationships are also less available. And, even in more traditional families, other demographic factors are at work which further disrupt and fragment family life.

Fewer mothers stay at home to "raise the kids." Primarily driven by a stagnant economy, the proportion of married women with children in the labor force (full and part-time) has increased dramati-

cally. Since 1960, the number of working moms with preschool children has doubled; the number of working moms with children 6 to 17 is about one and a half times larger.

More working moms mean additional income for the family and less parental time with the children.

In a recent study published in *Social Forces*, Steven L. Nock and Paul Kingston found — quite as expected — that parents in dual-earner families spent markedly less time with their children. Comparing the longest work day and Sundays, the authors discovered that working dads triple and working moms double their time involvement with their children on Sundays. Perhaps even more telling is the differential between single-earner parents and dual-earner parents in time spent with children "having fun" on Sundays. Dads in dual earner families spent 30% more time on Sundays "having fun" with their preschoolers than their single-earner counterparts. Moms in dual earner families spent 50% more time on Sundays "having fun" with their preschoolers than their single-earner counterparts.

Other disruption factors for the modern family are separation, divorce, and remarriage. According to Suzanne Bianchi in the *Population Bulletin*: "Between 1950 and 1981, the number of divorces increased from 385,000 to 1.2 million annually and the divorce rate more than doubled. Since 1981, the number of divorces and the divorce rate have leveled but remain high."

Another trend that has changed the configuration of American family life is a marked increase in the number of children born to unmarried mothers. In 1960, one in 20 births was to an unmarried mother; in 1987, the statistic was one in four.

Between 1960 and 1990, the percentage of children living with one parent — usually the mother — increased from 9 to 22%. The percentage living with their father increased from 1 to 3%; and 3 to 4% lived with another relative.

Family disruption has become the norm rather than the exception.

What is the future of the family on the U.S. demographic horizon? There is little reason to believe that a return to a traditional family-centered culture is likely, at least not for the *next* 30 years. The aging of the baby boom — as well as their pluriform family structures — will continue to make an impact. Even the current “boomlet” is not expected to be strong or lasting enough to change the trend toward aging in this country.

Interestingly, by 2020 demographers project that the proportion of the American population under age 18 (children and youth) and 65 and over (older adults) will be approximately the same: 20%. What does this trend suggest? Bottomline, it is likely that the nonfamily household will increase — this is, those who live alone or who share living space with persons other than kin or spouses. It also means that at least 30% of our entire population (children and the elderly) will be dependent on the production capacity of the remainder of us.

The coming strains on our overall economy will certainly not encourage larger families or stay-at-home parents. While this trend hardly portends the demise of the family, it does signal the end of *one* normative type of family.

How can these remarkable changes in American family life be summarized? First, the sociological family portrait is increasingly plural. These families include: married couples with children, married couples without children, single-parents, persons living alone, and persons living together without blood or marriage ties. No one constellation dominates American households.

Second, all families and households are becoming smaller. Third, families of all types are experiencing increasing disruption through separation, divorce, remarriage, and the pressures of dual careers. The web of social life that is the family is more fragile. Yet, despite this fragmenta-

tion, the importance of family life and parental involvement for the health and well-being of children and youth — indeed, of everyone — remains.

Implications for the church

The intent in presenting this data is twofold: one, to raise awareness about the changes that have occurred in the structure of American family life over the last 30 years and two, to stir a healthy suspicion in the minds of church people about the kind of programming churches and denominations promote.

Has the church adjusted to these changes in family structure? If so, are current efforts sufficient to reach, touch, and teach the pluriform American family of the 21st century? If not, the religious establishment sorely needs to get on board or else greet a new century approximately 50 years behind.

As a sociologist and a churchwoman, I would like to suggest three major implications for the church. First, the church must redefine the notion of family. The normative, '50s pattern of family is only applicable to a quarter of all American households. This means more than adding a few specialty programs for singles, the elderly, or single-parents. It means changing the whole picture.

If the family is reconceived (literally) as pluriform, then the church may be the place where family is made. The '50s programming goal of serving the family is turned upside-down. Instead of serving the family, the church must be in the business of “making family.”

To fill the gaps in their shrinking social web, unchurched persons in nontraditional families do tend to “reach out” to the church. I am suggesting that the church *may be* a place where people “make family,” although traditionally (and programmatically) it is not. Programming directions that are responsive to the dilemma of the fragmented family must target the gaps in these fragile webs of social life and find creative ways of filling these gaps,

strengthening these relational webs.

In fact, many of the fragments naturally go together. A widowed woman with no family nearby may provide needed richness and generational depth to a family with no living grandparent or no grandparent in town. A single male might be the perfect “big brother” for a fatherless child. A group of empty-nesters with grandchildren faraway might reap mutual benefit from a year-long project with a preschool class. Or, dual-earner couples might blossom in a church school class with their younger children — not as teachers, but as co-learners. Or, a congregation might institute new rituals to mark significant life transitions other than birth, marriage, and confirmation.

What about rituals to mark entry into a new job or career? to mark retirement? or widowhood (something beside a funeral for the spouse)?

Again, I am suggesting a church-wide change in approach — not just a few, experimental classes or activities. Obviously, every congregation is unique; depending upon its context, a congregation may have a larger concentration of one family type. I am not suggesting that a congregation in a traditional-family, suburban enclave cease to program for the traditional family. What I am suggesting is that congregations be aware that that type of family is no longer the norm — and to rethink who they are, what they are doing, and who they are trying to reach.

So, first, the church must redefine the family. Second, the church must discover new and creative ways to “make family.” Third, the church must cease debating about whether or not people will come back to church when they have children. In fact, most research does show that some people *do* come back when they have children — and to our credit, they may come back because we have much to offer parents and their children. This data indicates that the proportion of American house-

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False hopes for Salvadoran election

by Josie Beecher

I really had no idea what my father was talking about when he called me recently here in El Salvador and said, "We sure are pleased with the good news coming from there." He's not a soccer fan so I doubted that he was referring to the Salvadoran victory over a Washington, D.C. team. Then I talked with another friend who had worked here for years and she said she had heard the government-FMLN negotiations were going very well.

My growing sense of incredulity and dismay was capped when I read an Episcopal News Service release in which the Rev. Robert Brooks, head of the Episcopal Church's Washington office, was reported as saying "All indications are that the election has advanced the peace process," and that in a meeting with Salvadoran President Alfredo Cristiani "[he] said that they are very close to a political settlement."

I am afraid that all this optimism fills a need in the consciences and political priorities of Americans but is a long way from the current reality in El Salvador.

The spring elections which Brooks officially observed were certainly significant in the participation of leftist political parties and their constituents, but calling them "free and fair" is wishful thinking.

During the election campaign the opposition parties were prevented from holding rallies by the military, who tore down stages, occupied public plazas in which rallies were to be held, confiscated or cut off power to sound equipment, and

often turned back candidates at military checkpoints, not allowing them to campaign in certain parts of the country. The Democratic Convergence coalition headquarters was broken into in two cities. In addition to this harassment, a UDN (Nationalist Democratic Union) candidate and his wife were shot and killed two blocks from the U.S. Embassy in an area strictly controlled by U.S. and Salvadoran security forces.

The United Nations sent no election observers, acknowledging that the peace process was not advanced enough to provide conditions for free and fair elections, nor could the security of the U.N. observers be guaranteed.

The Organization of American States (OAS) did play a significant and conscientious role, sending approximately 200 observers several weeks in advance of the election date. I accompanied a caravan of buses from Chalatenango province which was bringing people to a Democratic Convergence rally at the close of the campaign. At each turnoff for the towns from which buses were coming there were OAS observers in identifying T-shirts waiting to escort the buses. Although army tanks met the buses coming out of the communities and followed them for a short stretch, the buses were allowed to pass the checkpoints that are usually so difficult and dangerous.

The voting was conducted without violent incidents for the most part. Accusations of fraud arose when a large quantity of ballots were found in a ravine after the election, all marked for the Democratic Convergence, and there were complaints of right-wing ARENA poll-watchers voting more than once. But the main flaw was that thousands of voters who had registered or had repeatedly attempted to

register to vote were not allowed to do so — most because their names did not appear on the master lists at each polling place, even though they had the required voter registration card in hand. The military had surrounded communities known to sympathize with the opposition and threatened them or their families with death if they voted. In one town the people were told that if they went to the provincial capital to vote the army would kill any child or old person left in the town. The FMLN for its part encouraged people to vote and declared a unilateral truce for Saturday, Sunday and Monday, but did not allow polling stations (with the army to guard them) to be set up in territory under its control.

Official election results were not released until two weeks after the elections. The final count fell one seat short of giving the leftist Democratic Convergence a seat in the Central Electoral Council which oversees voter registration lists, inscriptions of parties and candidates, and electoral procedures in general.

All in all, this dubious and stumbling effort at an election did have the effect of putting about four significant national opposition leaders in the Legislative Assembly of 84 members, where it remains to be seen what role they will be able to play.

Significant steps towards peace are being made, not in the voting booth (or rather at the open voting table) but at the negotiation table, where the government and the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) are meeting for lengthy talks with the active mediation of the U.N. Secretary General's personal representative, Alvaro deSoto. These talks have been taking place for almost a year and a half and have resulted in only

Josie Beecher lives in San Salvador, El Salvador, and works for the Christian Committee for the Displaced of El Salvador (CRIPDES), an ecumenical organization that assists refugees fleeing the civil war in the countryside.

two signed agreements.

One was the agreement on human rights signed in Costa Rica by both parties a year ago, agreeing to respect internationally recognized human rights, particularly the rights of the civilian population in conflict zones and to the rights of returned refugees. A mechanism was established for verification of compliance with this agreement by a mission of the United Nations. I have been documenting human rights violations since the date of those accords and can provide voluminous evidence that violations have continued unabated, with army and security force massacres, assassination and torture and a resurgence of Death Squad activity. The FMLN, while generally not violating human rights, including those of prisoners, in territory under its control or during its normal military operations, recently has caused several civilian deaths and injuries near military installations which it has attacked in the city.

"The Crusade for Peace and Work" (a group which has no office and no public existence) has stated that the U.N. veri-

cation mission is unconstitutional. Another group took out an anonymous ad in the obituary section of the paper saying that this space was reserved for any legislative deputies who voted in favor of the constitutional reforms agreed on in the negotiations. The constitutional reform package was agreed upon by the two sides about 48 hours before the old Legislative Assembly term ended.

The as yet unratified reforms concern the judicial system, the electoral system and the "security forces" — all of which are areas in which deep discussion and reflection must take place. But the reforms agreed to by the government and the FMLN and passed by the out-going assembly are just Band-Aid solutions or stepping stones to larger issues.

The most significant agreement reached was to create a Commission of Truth, consisting of three appointees of the U.N. Secretary General. The purpose of this commission is to investigate and bring to judgement those responsible for the most significant massacres and assassinations that have taken place through-

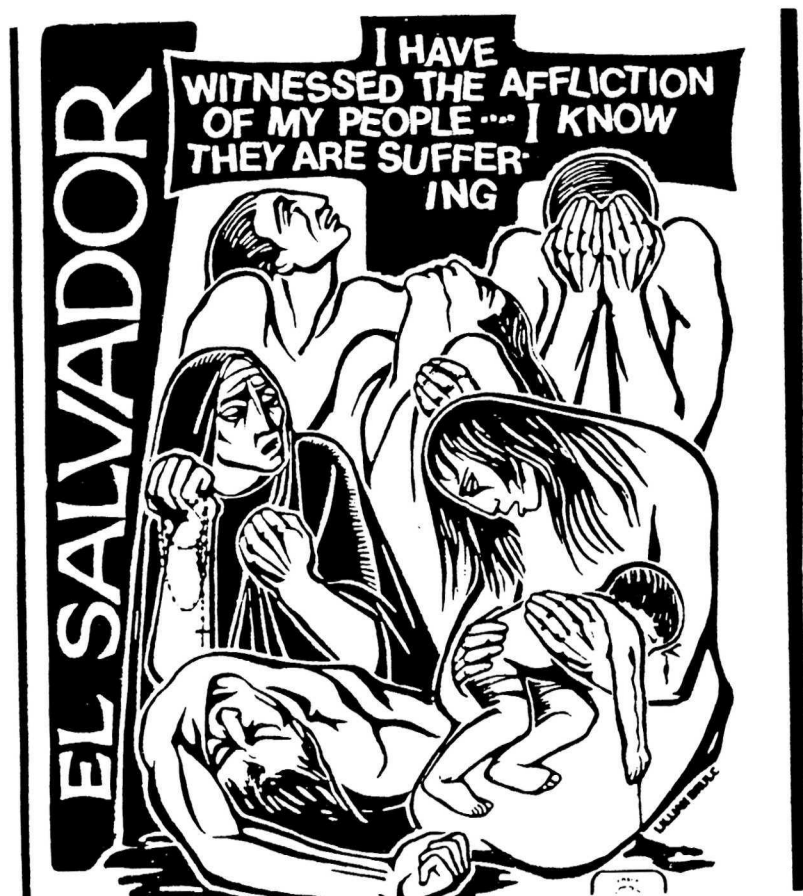
out the course of this long war. Unfortunately, after signing the agreement in Mexico, the government now says that it wants to put two military officers on this commission.

So, serious negotiations are taking place, but the air is thick with threats of violence rather than promises of peace.

The people, however, have an immense sense of optimism about what the U.N. verification mission, ONUSAL, can do, and a determined faith that even if these talks take five years a just peace will be negotiated. In spite of Death Squad threats against national and international non-governmental organizations, the popular organizations are talking about a "new economic order" and dedicating much of their energy to the solutions necessary to bring about the social changes for which they have struggled during these 12 years of civil war.

It is far too soon for the U.S. churches to congratulate themselves as Brooks did for having "tipped the balance for a peaceful settlement to the civil war." That balance ultimately will be tipped by the blood and sweat of the Salvadoran people. Democracy cannot be built from paper ballots but must be built on the foundations of freedom, equality, and respect for human rights.

What the U.S. church community can pride itself on is its constant accompaniment of the Salvadoran people as they have suffered during these years of civil war — from the church workers waiting on the Honduran side of the border to succor refugees fleeing the early massacres, to the accompaniment by church groups of these same people as they dared to return home in the midst of the conflict of the late '80s; for their willingness to witness for truth and justice at the risk of jail in the sanctuary movement and in front of the U.S. military and governmental institutions which have fueled this war; and for their constant material support of the people trying to build new life in this country. TW



Mary Lou Suhor: Past, present, future

by Peg Ferry, Harry Strharsky, and Bob DeWitt

The following piece is a tribute to retiring editor Mary Lou Suhor that scheming friends, fans and staff managed to sneak past her into the magazine. It had to be a surprise, because had she known, she would not have permitted this story to appear.

However, Robert L. DeWitt, WITNESS editor from 1974-81, Harry Strharsky, a computer consultant in California, and Margaret Ferry, a health care specialist and educator in Florida, presuming on their decades-long association with Mary Lou, decided to write a story revealing that the same energy, talent and commitment that transformed THE WITNESS from a modest "movement"-type publication into a nationally-recognized, award-winning journal, has also been lavished on her friendships. It's all here for inquiring minds — her fierce dedication to social justice, her devotion to the craft of journalism, and her love of flying and terrifying amusement park rides.

Before anyone at THE WITNESS knew Mary Lou Suhor, she worked in both Washington, D.C., and New York City. Harry Strharsky, a close friend and colleague from those days, describes his family's association with Mary Lou:

Throughout the 20 years we've grown closer together, though often miles apart, Mary Lou has always been a venturesome family member, a steadfast friend, a staunch and dedicated ally.

Our sons have asked, "Mary Lou is part of our family, isn't she?" And of course, the answer is yes. "Well, she's a sister for Mother and me — not the way your aunts are our sisters — but family, nonetheless." "Yes," they reply, "we know. She writes for birthdays, she sends treasures. We write to her. Sometimes we visit each other. It's like friends, only different." They have it right about Mary Lou — friend, yet family.

Anyone who knows Mary Lou knows she has always provided opportunities for those around her to get involved with something to which she was already com-

mitted. In Washington, D.C., it was the U.S. Catholic Conference Division for Latin America. Then it was the Cuba Resource Center in New York, an interdenominational program which sponsored ecumenical trips to Cuba.

"Let's plan this next trip," she would say. "There's a trip to Cuba for community organizers and church people that I wish you'd consider" . . . "We need some serious letter writing to Congress" . . . "I need someone to make a presentation on women in Cuba" . . .

These requests were always presented without pressure, but with much urgency and concern. How could one not participate? In each successive venture to which she became committed in the '70s, the '80s and into the '90s, Mary Lou invited others to step forward to join her.

Next it was the Episcopal Church Publishing Company (ECPC). Who but Mary Lou, after working in the nation's capital, and in its largest metropolis, would venture to Ambler, Pa. with only a Volkswagen and a suitcase full of energy and commitment, to accept the challenge of THE WITNESS?

The move was initiated by Ben

Bagdikian, then managing editor of the *Washington Post*. He knew this persistent, persuasive woman. He also knew THE WITNESS and its search for a managing editor. Editor Bob DeWitt was not on the ropes, exactly. He had assembled a competent staff to revive the magazine after it had lain fallow following the death of Bill Spofford, his renowned predecessor. The journal was again being written, printed and mailed out.

As the presses continued to roll, however, it was evident that something was amiss. Needed was a professionally trained and experienced journalist — just what Bagdikian had recommended in the person of Mary Lou Suhor.

After meeting her in 1976, the Search Committee wasted little time. It was a hasty decision, but proved a good match. Her Roman Catholic background had nurtured in her a deep faith which committed her to the religious dimension in the social witness of the church.

Mary Lou had long since come to terms with the hierarchic structure of her own church. This did little, of course, to put her at ease when she discovered the Board she had come to work for con-



WITNESS editor Mary Lou Suhor and managing editor Sue Pierce (left) outside the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia, after helping Barbara Harris deal with the media blitz on the day following her historic election as the first Anglican woman bishop.

sisted of six Episcopal bishops and Dr. Joseph Fletcher! But the anglicanization of Mary Lou Suhor soon resulted in easy first name relationships, and in her counting among her close friends a goodly number of women priests.

As Managing Editor, it also fell to Mary Lou to manage the editor. And this she did nicely, gently encouraging him to do things for THE WITNESS more in line with his experience and capabilities. Together, however, they made the tough decisions — such as whether to run an article by William Stringfellow calling for the resignation of the Presiding Bishop in 1980. (They ran it.)

Together, also, they goaded people into involvement. “We’d like to do a study guide for the Christian community, sponsored by ECPC,” they said. And thus was born *Struggling with the System*, a study/action guide more familiarly known as “that green book,” and so referred to by Ronald Reagan when he condemned it on his radio broadcast.

This may have been the advertisement which exhausted the supply of “that green book” and brought about another

venture. More people were organized into an Inter-religious Task Force for Social Analysis to produce *Must We Choose Sides?* and *Which Side Are You On?* — Christian commitment for the ’80s. Then later, a feminist publication, *My Story’s On: Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives* was published, put together by a women’s collective.

So Suhor and DeWitt made a good team, and under Mary Lou’s management the magazine has become a formidable factor in the life of the Episcopal Church and beyond. And of course it has received more than its share of journalistic awards. When DeWitt retired the Board quickly appointed Mary Lou editor.

This transformation of title only enhanced her persuasive ways. Countless WITNESS contributors over the past decade continued to respond to the call, “Couldn’t you just write a short piece for us about . . . ?” Whether Latin America, U.S. policy, racism, women’s issues, prison life, gay and lesbian rights, war — Mary Lou led the way to progressive Christian action and reflection. And her vehicle was THE WITNESS. From a moribund church journal with only a noble past, Mary Lou has created a vibrant and influential church journal with a great future. People in the Episcopal Church, and beyond, are greatly in her debt.

But who is this competent editor when not on duty in the Ambler office, talking with bishops or other potentates, taking notes and photos at interviews and meetings in the United States, the Soviet Union, Central America, Cuba or Europe? Snippets of Mary Lou’s more personal life are revealing. Did you know that some 50 years ago a little girl in New Orleans was an organizer of the Justice Society of America, headquarters of which was located under the front porch of her home?

A few years later that same girl, now a teenager, and her father went to claim the Spanish language contest scholarship she

had won to Loyola University. They learned this scholarship could not be awarded to a female. Of course such rejection did not stop Mary Lou from working her way through the University. It was after graduation she experienced raw racism: BB guns and “22” caliber rifles in the hands of racists were fired at the interracial children’s play group with which she was working. Bigotry and advocacy were early realities in Mary Lou’s life.

That play group, however, was also indicative of her on-going delight in children. Did you know that this editor worked in the Ambler office with a not always silent baby who accompanied a co-worker, along with all the “fixins” a baby travels with? Out of that association grew her yearly presence at a family Memorial Day picnic where Mary Lou has been playing with that child and her friends for 12 years while the other grown-ups play catch-up on family news.

It should come as no surprise that a venturesome, adult woman with the expectant zest for life of a happy two-year old dotes on the arcade games at the yearly hospital fair. Nor that she plays with her customary persistence until she wins — and gives her trophies — dolls, teddy bears, goldfish — to admiring children.

Then she gets to the real business of the fair, the spinning, whirling, scary, speedy, death-defying rides! It’s probably tame entertainment for a woman who pilots a plane, and realized a long-time dream when she completed a parachute jump in 1987. Even the price of a broken back didn’t spoil the joy and wonder of that achievement.

And now we see her off to New Orleans, her suitcase again full of energy and commitment, and bid her Godspeed. The Suhors, and all of Louisiana, are lucky to have Mary Lou coming home. The family ring has come full circle — another venture begins. We will see you there, Mary Lou. We’ll always know that your friends are welcome.

TW

The sexuality of Jesus

by Malcolm Boyd

Jesus appears to us as a singularly androgynous man. He was sensitive, vulnerable, knew how to receive as well as give to another, and was relaxed about his body. Jesus was not afraid of intimacy, shared his feelings, and empathized with those of others. Since he embodied unconditional love in a universal sense, his sexuality surely embraced both women and men. He exalts the spiritual dimension inherent in a truly liberated expression of sexuality.

The doctrine of the Incarnation, basic to the Christian faith, refers to the embodiment of God in the human being of Jesus Christ. To be human is to be sexual. Sexuality is a part of God's creation and is healthy, vital and good. Since the church claims Jesus was fully human as well as the Son of God, I believe he was a fully sexual human being. However, his sexuality is a subject swept under the rug by an ecclesiastically dominated and rigidly controlled society. People were condemned for even thinking of Jesus as caring about or having sex.

We have no documentation of his personal life pertaining to sex. He lived much of his adult life in the company of men; his relations with women were frank, open, startlingly honest. The musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* went so far as to imply Jesus had a relationship with Mary Magdalene.

Commenting on this, the Rev. James Conn, former mayor of the city of Santa Monica and pastor of the Methodist

Church in Ocean Park, Calif., says, "I've always assumed Jesus' relationship with Mary Magdalene was hands-on stuff. And I have always been intrigued by the closeness between Jesus and his beloved disciple, John. John was apparently young and strong and handsome. What does it all mean? Hard to know. The dribbles of evidence certainly seem provocative. Except no one talks about it very much because the subject is so taboo in the church."

Precisely. The church's fence-sitting about sexuality in general, and Jesus' sexuality in particular, has caused untold suffering for countless people. Ironically, the patriarchal religious system adopted the very legalisms condemned by Jesus. So an abyss has been created between the human body and spirit.

I found a glaring example of this in a personal story told me by a heterosexual man who said, "When I have sex with my wife, God turns his back." I find this an outrageous thing to say about sex, God, the wife in the story, and the utterly confused man. Clearly, much remedial work needs to be done by the church in the area of human sexuality.

And, in order to recognize Jesus' reality we need to prove the question of his own sexuality. The Rev. Nancy Wilson, pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church in Los Angeles, says: "Presuming (since there is no evidence to the contrary) that Jesus was not sexually dysfunctional, normal human sexual arousal was a part of his reality. Did Jesus long to know the special appreciation of another's smell, taste and touch? Did he know the feeling of passionate abandon where the difference between bodies/selves joyously blurs? Did he know the God-created capacity for deep, cleansing sexual pleasure, healing and renewal? Did Jesus know the tender vulnerability of

naked sexual giving and receiving? And if he did not, how can Jesus, as the Risen Christ, be with me in my own sexuality?"

The Rev. Robert Kettelhack, a gay priest, taught theology for nine years and was later on the staff of St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church in Hollywood, Calif. before dying of AIDS in 1989. He said, "For modern and post-modern people, we must insist on the presence of sexuality in the archetypal Person who is Christ. It's very likely that Jesus had homosexual urges and orientation. I don't find that at all a problem. I remember when Bishop John Robinson, author of *Honest to God*, asked the question, 'Did Jesus have an erection?' It upset some people so much. But sexuality is part of the Incarnation, a big part.

"If you page through the Gospels and see the difference between Jesus and the Pharisees, you'll notice that Jesus paints in very broad strokes the necessity of love. The irony he was working with was his almost violent offensive against almost any kind of hypocrisy, his impatience with religious rules and statutes. This is very comforting to a gay person. Jesus introduces the primacy of love, the primacy of justice, into the midst of all ethical problems. This is essential for gay people looking for the ultimate criterion of Christian life."

Bill Johnson, sexologist and United Church of Christ minister who was the first openly gay person ordained to the Christian ministry by a mainline denomination in modern times, says that he always assumed Jesus freely expressed himself sexually with both men and women.

"As the gynandrous personification of Spirit in human flesh, Jesus was the paradigm of male/female Godliness fully experiencing life on this physical plane," ex-

The Rev. Malcolm Boyd is author of *Take Off the Masks and Gay Priest: An Inner Journey*. A writer/priest-in-residence at St. Augustine by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, Santa Monica, he serves as chaplain of the AIDS Commission of the Diocese of Los Angeles and co-chair of the Gay/Lesbian Task Force of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

plains Johnson. "If Jesus was bisexual, the men and women who intimately shared his earthly sojourn could well have been a significant lesbian/gay/bisexual community. Indeed, if modern priestly and religious communities have historically descended from such a community of early Christians, we gain some insight into the rabid homophobia that characterizes those communities today. Such a descendancy may be one of the great 'secrets' of Christianity."

Many lesbians and gay men share an experience of rejection by churches. But the other side of the coin is their own dismissal of a lukewarm "churchianity" too timid about sexuality to offer intelligent and needed theological/pastoral guidelines about it.

James B. Nelson, professor of Christian ethics at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in Minnesota, affirms that "for the most part, the church has presented Jesus as sexless." He continues: "If we are not really sure about the full humanity of the One whom we call Truly Human, we can only be confused about what authentic humanity might mean for us."

"If we try to take Jesus with utter seriousness and yet uneasily retreat from

thoughts of his sexuality, or even recoil with repugnance, it is also likely that we shall either deny much of our own sexuality or else find considerable difficulty integrating our Christological beliefs into the reality of our lives as body-selves."

Former Jesuit John McNeill, author of the classic, *The Church and the Homosexual*, points out: "Jesus was a sexual being; he underwent circumcision. If Jesus accepted and rejoiced in an embodied, sexual existence, then we should be able to accept and rejoice in our sexual bodies."

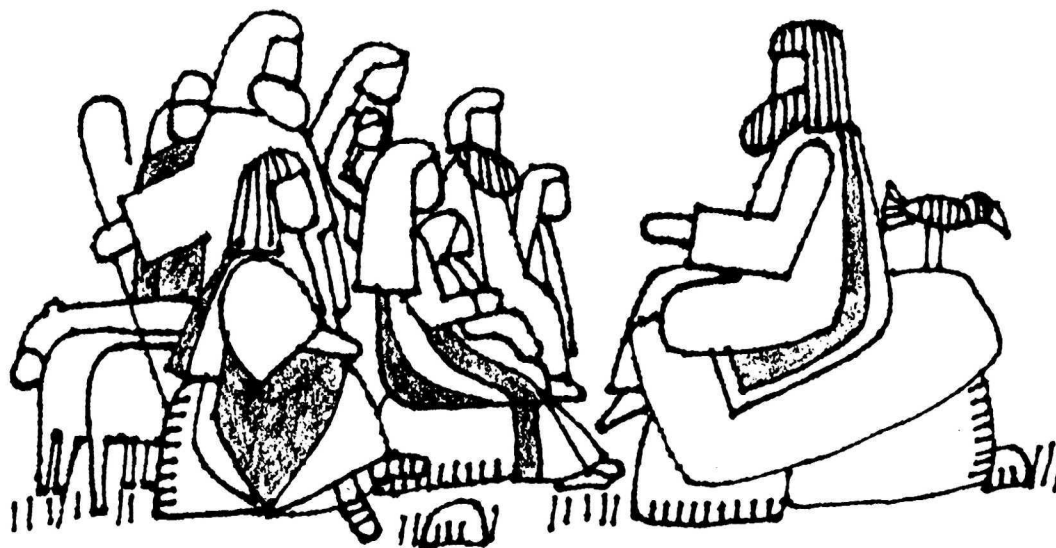
If Jesus lived today, he would certainly be accused of being gay, according to the Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. "He never married. John the Beloved lay on his breast at the Last Supper. Jesus was betrayed by a kiss from another man. The only time Scripture points out that Jesus had physical bodily contacts with another human being was with other men. The sole deviation was with a woman prostitute who came into a room where he was eating, washed his feet with her tears, and dried them with her hair."

Chris Glaser, Presbyterian author of *Uncommon Calling: A Gay Man's Struggle to*

Serve the Church, attributes to Jesus qualities that he associates with being gay: "Sensitivity, affection, sensuality, humor and vision." To Glaser, Jesus' affectionate nature was revealed in his love for Lazarus as well as for his people "whom He wishes to embrace as a hen gathers her brood." Glaser sums up: "To me, it doesn't matter whether Jesus was gay. What matters is to believe, as I do, that he understands me as a gay man and accepts me as his own."

In this era of AIDS, an increasing number of gay men and lesbians seek spiritual answers to questions about life's meaning. One burning question for gay people is how to integrate one's sexuality and spirituality. The Rev. Sharon L. Robinson, dean of Los Angeles' Samaritan College, says: "I never knew how to separate my spirituality from my sexuality. Sleeping with a man was not a good or natural thing for me, and made me feel dirty; sleeping with a woman was both natural and fulfilling."

"I've never had a problem being loved by God as a lesbian. It's unthinkable to me that Jesus could be uncomfortable with my lesbianism. Above all others, he understands fully that being lesbian or gay isn't simply a matter of genital behavior, but is



in fact a whole way of being.”

Was Jesus gay?

“Jesus was certainly not homosexual — that cold, unfeeling fabricated word,” Robinson continues. “Yet he was certainly gay in the sense of the psyche. This seems clear in his actions and the way he lived. Jesus was just as queer in his time as we are in ours. What a gift!”

The church seeks to evangelize post-modern urban culture, yet more often than not refuses to bless lesbian and gay unions, ordain gay people, or even acknowledge sexuality as a God-given part of a loving relationship between people of the same

gender. The church is shooting itself in the foot because, on the one hand, it manifestly wants growth while, on the other hand, it denies loving acceptance to a major and creative segment of the population.

The ecclesiastical structure has long had closeted homosexuals in the ranks of its priests and ministers, including its prelates. But closet doors are opening because the tension inherent in trying to live a double life is crippling and self-destructive. Even more to the point, the closet door has become an image of duplicity when it conceals truth. More and more people cry out for honesty, openness and a

shared pilgrimage toward God in the light of mutual confession and renewal.

The church blatantly lied when it ghettoized lesbians and gay men by denying their equality in the sight of God. It is an act of heresy to consign gay people to the strait-jacket of enforced celibacy; it is a denial of God’s act of creation in which our common humanity includes our sexuality.

As an inquisitorial persecutor the church contradicts its own mandate to exemplify God’s love in the world. Jesus Christ’s own humanity and sexuality is a role model for gay men and lesbians that repudiates the church’s sin of lovelessness. **TW**

Family . . . Continued from page 9

holds that are expected to “come back” is shrinking and will continue to shrink.

Has the church really offered very much for nontraditional families? Or have religious leaders assumed that they were inconsequential, too hard to reach, or that they were coming back eventually anyway? Perhaps Americans continue to claim high rates of affiliation — despite consistent declines in denominational tallies — because of the strong baseline faith that our good youth programs promoted in the ’50s and ’60s. But, the churches have not consistently kept (or held) many of these persons because they have not offered them very much.

At the end of a discussion with a Doctor of Ministry class concerning the above data, one student commented, “Well, it seems to me the real question is whether the traditional concept of the family is the

ideal.” That is a very appropriate question — and a place to conclude.

In a review of New Testament teaching in the book, *The Church’s Ministry with Families*, David Garland states that Jesus’ words about the family are part and parcel of his understanding of the “coming crisis of God’s reign which would turn ordinary life on its head.” In that “revolutionary context,” the family no longer provides “true security and absolute trust.” Garland concludes that while Jesus did not hold a subversive view of the family, he did maintain that in the Kingdom of God the ties of blood and marriage alone were not enough. The ultimate source of intimate parenting, *Abba* relationships, are to be found in God. The will of God, Garland observes, can be done within and without the structure of the biological family.

In the Christian tradition, the church is a family whose ties transcend those of blood and marriage. The biblical concept of church as family is especially germane in the modern American context. When ties of blood and marriage are fragmenting and changing, people are searching for other bases of intimate relating and sacrificial commitment. The church, I believe, can offer a new kind of family where blood, marriage and even ethnicities are blessed, shared *and* transcended.

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MOVING?

Keep **THE WITNESS** coming by sending a corrected mailing label from a recent issue to: **THE WITNESS**, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit MI 48226-1868. Please send it at least six weeks before you move.

WITNESS wins again

Following on the heels of its success at the Associated Church Press awards, **THE WITNESS** walked away with three firsts and two awards of merit during the Episcopal Communicators annual Polly Bond Awards dinner in May in New York City. The Episcopal organization celebrated its 20th anniversary this year.

One "first" included the coveted General Excellence award presented to **THE WITNESS** for the fourth year in a row. The three judges commented: "Professional, attractive and powerful — wow!" . . . "Hard to improve upon — congratulations!" . . . "In a tough, competitive group, this is still a winner."

In this category, **THE WITNESS** tied with *Cathedral Age*, publication of the Washington National Cathedral. The

team of Sister Helen David Brancato, artist, and designer Beth Seka of TSI Visuals created the April 1990 cover which won **THE WITNESS** another award of excellence. The cover art illustrated a quote by Jesuit peace activist Dan Berrigan.

The judges remarked on the high contrast pink, gray and black cover: "Symbolic use of light and dark fits the theme. Good art; excellent use of design elements."

Also in the April 1990 issue, a news story by Jan Nunley, "On the night she was betrayed," about the racism and fear following the Carol Stuart murder case in Boston, won first prize. Judges said the article was "was well-written, logical, flowed well."

A photo by Shonna Valeska featuring

Mario DiBlasio in the November issue won an award of merit for single photo, and the July/August issue on sexual abuse, "Breaking Silence," took the award of merit for in-depth coverage of a current issue.

Over the past 14 years, **THE WITNESS** has won a total of 49 prizes in competitions sponsored by the Associated Church Press and Episcopal Communicators. Since 1984, the magazine has captured 47 consecutive awards — 28 firsts and 19 honorable mentions — for an average of almost seven per year, in categories reflective of cover to cover acclaim. Of the 28 firsts, 12 were awarded by ACP and 16 by Episcopal Communicators; of the honorable mentions, seven came from ACP and 12 from Communicators. TW



Polly Bond General Excellence award-winning editors include **THE WITNESS** for the fourth year in a row: (front row, from left) Canon Leonard Freeman, former editor, *Cathedral Age* (tied in magazine category); Marcy Darin, *Journal of Women's Ministries*; David Lovett, *Ascension Banner*; Mary Lee Simpson, *Southwestern Episcopalian*; (back row, from left) Jay Cormier, *Episcopal Times*; Ruth Nicastro, *Episcopal News*; Susan Pierce, managing editor, **THE WITNESS**; and Kay Collier-Slone, *The Advocate*.

Adieu to Ambler: A 17-year tapestry of advocacy

by Mary Lou Suhor

Removing personal effects from an office preparatory to a move can prove to be a wrenching moment in one's life. And especially when the transition ends a rich, 17-year segment of history — such as the retirement of the Ambler office of THE WITNESS as it moves to Detroit.

No Ambler staff members are able to move with the magazine. Therefore, this July-August issue, the last to be produced in Pennsylvania, was assembled while we threaded our way through boxes of materials to be transported to new headquarters, old papers to be trashed, and documents to be turned over to historians.

Closing an operation would be far easier for one more ruthless about throwing things away; but this editor constantly experienced “stops and starts of the mind,” as T. S. Eliot put it. Our offices are haunted by ghosts from WITNESSES past, loving memories, old photos and correspondence, and numerous files from our corporate entity, the Episcopal Church Publishing Company (ECPC).

From a top shelf I gingerly finger a bound, yellowing volume of the first issues of THE WITNESS published by Bishop Irving Peake Johnson in 1917, sent to us by former Presiding Bishop John Hines, our beloved chair of the '74 ECPC Board . . . and next to it is a copy of our study/action guide *Struggling with the System* which was used and underlined by Pauli Murray, noted author, co-founder of NOW, and first black woman priest — passed on to us after her death by the Episcopal Women's Caucus. Now I find a letter from Pauli to me from seven years ago; it ends, “Ain't being a Christian hard work these days? More

power to you.”

On my wall is the late Sister Corita Kent's artwork for a 1981 WITNESS cover, with her invoice and signature . . . and here is a book personally autographed by Archbishop Tutu, praising the ministry of THE WITNESS staff . . .

Through misty eyes I read over old correspondence, revealing letters from those no longer with us. Theologian Bill Stringfellow confides, prior to ECPC's honoring him at its General Convention Awards dinner in 1982: “I have had a retinal hemorrhage which has seriously impaired my vision. There has been surgery twice and may be more. Meanwhile I am apt to be clumsy and have asked a friend to accompany me to New Orleans. See you (figuratively speaking) soon.”

A note from former ECPC treasurer Robert S. Potter congratulates us for the awards we won in 1985: “It is always nice to have the ego itched, particularly when compensation isn't the full reward. Best regards, Bob” . . . Extraordinary artist Rini Templeton, whose work championed struggles of Mexican Americans and Central American liberation movements, drops a line from Mexico thanking us for a check: “I am always glad to see my drawings used well, as you always do”. . . a June, 1990 note from Bishop Edward Welles carries the blessed assurance that I am still remembered by name on his daily prayer list; ECPC award honoree Jean Dementi, the Episcopal priest who shook hands with Pope John Paul in Alaska and courageously slipped him a note saying: “Your Holiness, we women priests bring a new dimension of wholeness to Our Lord's ministry,” writes me saying that it is 23 below zero in Alaska; she is

dying of cancer at the time, but her notepaper says: “Every night I turn my worries over to God; God is going to be up anyway” . . . and I constantly come across old minutes from staff meetings in the handwriting of the late Bonnie Pierce-Spady, who wore several hats here and whom all of us remember for her cheery presence.

What to do with the banners from peace and justice marches we've participated in and covered for THE WITNESS, and buttons we've worn and hats proclaiming pro-choice, and the poster in our workroom announcing, *The truth will set you free, but first it will make you miserable*, willed to us by former secretary Kay Atwater?

Have mercy, we have accumulated mountainous and formidable memorabilia lo these many years since 1974 when Bishop Bob DeWitt revived THE WITNESS following the death of the irrepressible Bill Spofford!

DeWitt's first WITNESS

Here's a copy of DeWitt's first issue, announcing the “irregular” ordination of the first women priests — the Philadelphia 11 — whom he had consecrated, along with Bishops Dan Corrigan and Welles, in defiance of a church ban. DeWitt's first secretary, the remarkable Lisa Whelan, organized an office from scratch, setting up files and rolodex cards, handling correspondence, and in general staying apace, and sometimes ahead of, DeWitt.

A study in kinetic energy, (he always bounded up steps two at a time) DeWitt used the Ambler office as a launching pad, setting up a national publishing operation as well as a Church and Society

Network of Episcopalians coast to coast, both endeavors devoted to bringing about systemic change for justice and peace. Assisting him was the Rev. Hugh White, who maintained an ECPC office in Detroit. DeWitt, White, and Roy Larson, then religion editor of the *Chicago Sun Times*, handled WITNESS editorial functions and made decisions as a "troika." A Philadelphia advertising agency completed layout, printing and mailing functions.

My job when I came on in 1976 was to produce the magazine inhouse, through the stages of layout and camera ready copy.

To my chagrin, I soon learned that

new gleam in Bob DeWitt's eye meant that he was planning a book to be used by the Church and Society network and others throughout the country — a study guide to analyze social issues — and it was to be out in four months, for General Convention!

My nerves still jangle when I think of how that would conflict with WITNESS deadlines. I sent an SOS to my friend Harry Strharsky in Washington, D.C. to coordinate the publication of what was to become *Struggling with the System*. Building on this success, Harry ended up organizing the Interreligious Task Force for Social Action, which produced two more ECPC study volumes: Christian

Commitment for the '80s: *Must We Choose Sides*, and *Which Side Are We On*. The books remaining in my office are collector's items. Some 25,000 copies of the three study guides were printed, and all sold out — an enviable record for a fledgling publishing company.

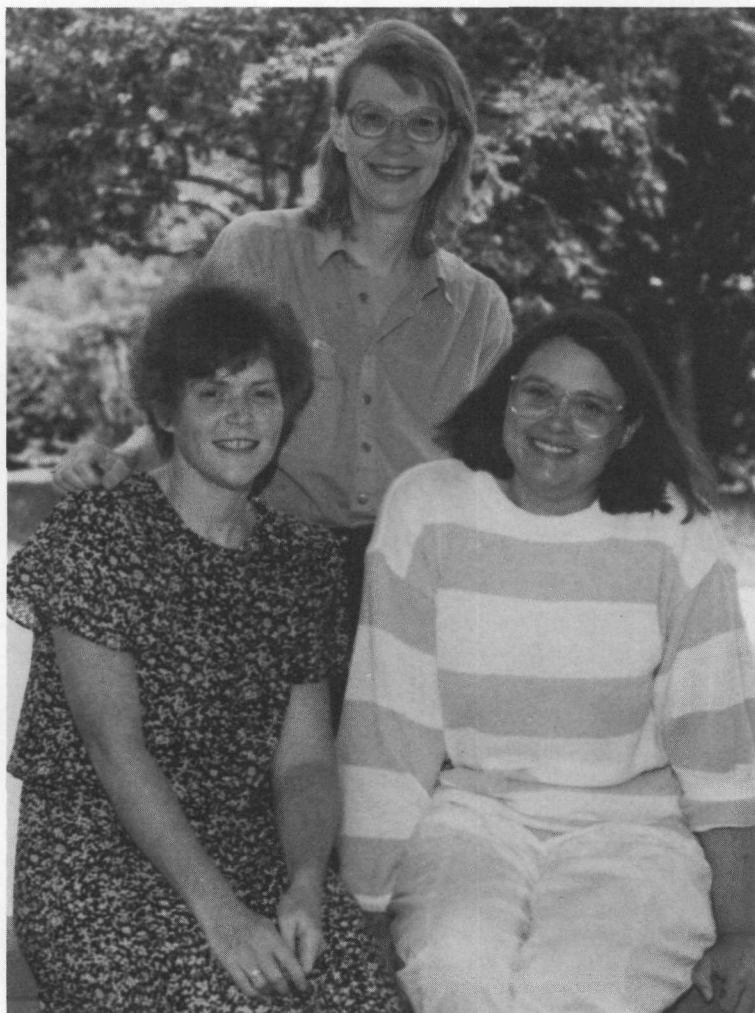
Given the simultaneous "happenings" in the late '70s of the production of the study guides and THE WITNESS magazine, and the urban bishops hearings on the crisis of the cities, for which White and DeWitt were seconded in key roles, I remember us being involved in endless meetings across the country. My own apartment seemed destined to be carpeted with wall-to-wall paper, various book chapters in inchoate stages stretching from bedroom to living room.

Vital to the promotion of the study guides was senior WITNESS staffer Susan Small, who has been with ECPC for 16 years.

From a modest apprenticeship as mailer and clerk (accomplished during her first pregnancy), Susan has gone on to become layout artist, bookkeeper, editorial assistant — absorbing jobs as other staff left over the years. Only a woman of her remarkable good nature, talent and flexibility could have carried the shifting workload, raised a family, and managed a small farm after hours with her husband Ray. (Their first goat was named Mary Lou after me.)

The Smalls also raised Araucana chickens which lay colored eggs. We have often laughed about the day Lisa Whelan tried to transcribe a tape dictated by DeWitt "on the road," as she struggled to hear his words over the sounds of a crowing rooster and cackling chickens. He was trucking a gift of Araucanas from the Smalls to his home in Isle au Haut, Maine.

Here's another treasure. A photo and story naming the Rev. Richard Gillett to the executive staff in 1980, to be an ECPC presence on the West Coast. His



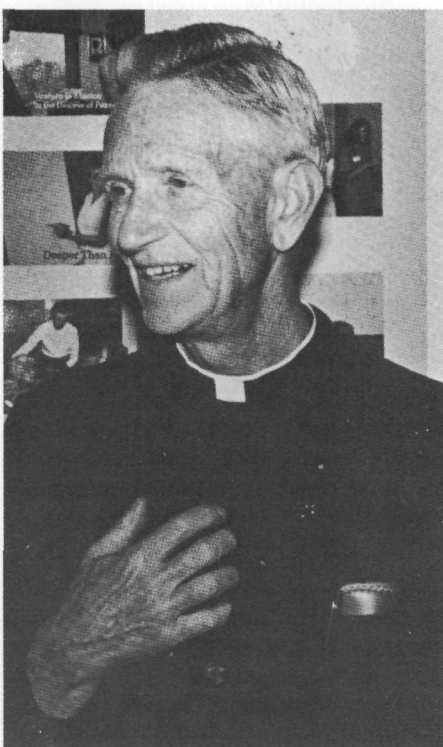
WITNESS staffers, Ambler office, from left, Susan Pierce, managing editor; Susan Small, editorial assistant, and Lynne Hoekman, promotion manager. (Michael Heayn photo.)

Los Angeles office became a beehive of activity around economic justice issues, minority rights, and site of publication of the Church and Society Newsletter. Cleaning a nearby closet, I find pillows and blankets used by Gillett and White when they slept overnight on canvas cots in the Ambler office when here for staff meetings. Our WITNESS lifestyle certainly did not rival that of the rich and the famous.

Wow, here's a file marked Grand Jury. During the late '70s and early '80s, ECPC became heavily involved in confronting Grand Jury abuse. The magazine took up the cause in 1977. DeWitt wrote an editorial alerting Episcopalians to the fact that Maria Cueto, who directed the Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, and her secretary Raisa Nemikin, had been subpoenaed to testify before a Federal Grand Jury investigating the FALN, an alleged Puerto Rican terrorist group. Also at issue, DeWitt's editorial said, was a November, 1976 after-hours visit by the FBI to the Episcopal Church Center in New York, with the permission of the administration, for an office and file search.

The Church and Society Network joined the National Council of Churches in defending the women and in protest of such "covert activity" with its dire consequences to minority groups and constitutional rights. I relive countless trips to New York to cover meetings and court appearances . . . Cueto and Nemikin were to serve 10 months in jail as prisoners of conscience for refusing to testify before the Grand Jury.

A second incarnation of that Grand Jury caught in its net not only Cueto again, but also then-ECPC Board member Steven Guerra, who, with Cueto and other Hispanics, served another round of jail sentences for refusing to testify. THE WITNESS covered both events, and was visited by the FBI after I interviewed Maria and Raisa in jail. Bob Pot-



Robert L. DeWitt

ter served as amicus for ECPC during the trials, and Dick Gillett, a founder of the Puerto Rican Industrial Mission during his service there, wrote copiously about the issues involved, a major piece appearing in the *Christian Century* in 1984. Maria Cueto currently works with Gillett in Hispanic ministry in Immanuel parish, El Monte, Cal., a post he accepted after the ECPC Board phased out the Los Angeles office.

Next I find photos of Padre Miguel D'Escoto and our ecumenical group which joined his 1985 fast for peace in Nicaragua when he was Sandinista foreign minister. These others I took upon returning to Nicaragua with a delegation to bury the ashes of one of the fast participants, noted peace activist Sister Marge Tuite. And there's the orphanage she befriended in Yali near the border, which we had to cross five military checkpoints to reach.

Hey, here are my press credentials for the 1983 World Council of Churches

sixth assembly in Vancouver — gee, I look far less gray there; I discover old copy from an award winning issue of THE WITNESS on "God and Mother Russia" following a memorable trip I made with the National Council of Churches to the Soviet Union. And these old manuscripts are from the feminist study guide, *My Story's On: Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Lives*. Our plucky women's collective, spurred on by editor Paula Ross, was enabled in putting the book together by an ECPC grant, and the book still sells.

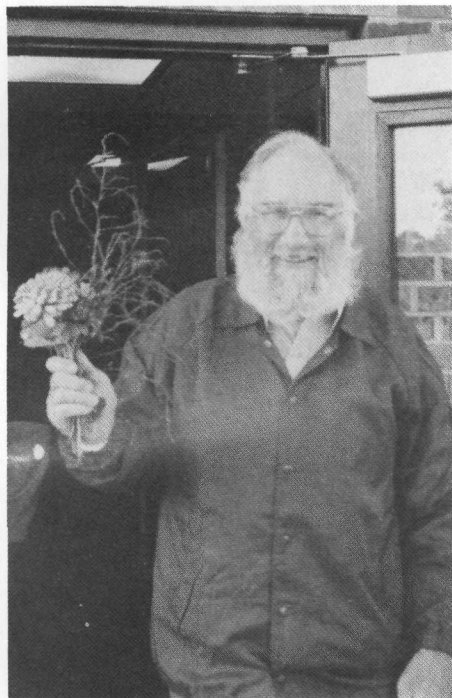
Now emerges a file of ECPC minutes revealing how the Board sought a full-time executive director to supervise the many activities which it had undertaken and to raise the visibility of ECPC. That task fell to the Rev. Barbara C. Harris. While her accomplishments were many, it was her leaving that was most spectacular. She skyrocketed to fame when elected first woman bishop of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion Sept. 24, 1988, turning the Ambler office into a veritable mission control station. Our telephones rang continuously with calls from across the nation and internationally until she left for her Diocese of Massachusetts. How's *that* for raising visibility!

Fortunately, Susan Pierce was on the job. Bearing the journalistic legacy of her mother, Jan Pierce, beloved managing editor of *The Episcopalian* until her death in 1988, Susan swung into action. My friend Jan had introduced me to her creative young daughter when we were producing THE WITNESS marking the 10th anniversary of the first Episcopal women priests, "Daughters of Prophecy" (the title was Susan's).

Susan had joined the team to write for that issue, and signed up fulltime as assistant editor shortly after producing the monthly series commemorating the 70th anniversary of THE WITNESS in 1987. Her stories about national and international events have added sparkle to our

pages and to our promotion efforts throughout the years. What better assistant to handle the press about Barbara's election — and to help coordinate the special April issue about her consecration. Susan has served as managing editor of THE WITNESS for more than a year now.

I walk about the office to take a breather . . . A whole panoply of family members beam down at me from photos on a pegboard on my wall — parents, siblings, nieces and nephews — a merry company who gladdened my heart during tense deadlines. Next to them is Sam Day, friend, confidante and consultant to THE WITNESS since its revival. Bob DeWitt sent Sam, then managing editor of *The Progressive*, to interview me in New York for the managing editorship of THE WITNESS. We met in a bar in Penn Station. As the second drink came and went, Ambler (where?) looked better and better to me and I suspect my quali-



Sam Day emerging from prison after serving time for civil disobedience. (Photo courtesy Nukewatch.)

fications also grew in Sam's estimation.

Sam, a noted peace activist (see page 5) set up a promotion schedule for THE WITNESS. With the competent assistance of promotion manager Ann Hunter for 11 years, and her successor, Lynne Hoekman, for the last two and a half, he doubled the WITNESS subscription rolls to 6,000 in spite of a 3-year fixed, no-growth budget period mandated by the Board along the way to cut expenses. Lynne has streamlined customer service by bringing our lists inhouse and taking on more fulfillment duties. (And has kept the office in flowers because her husband George has a fondness for remembering her on special occasions.)

Befriending progressives

My word, here is a whole file cabinet around the history of The Consultation, the umbrella group of progressive forces in the Episcopal Church working at peace and justice issues. Historically, THE WITNESS has always been associated with progressive groups — the Church League for Industrial Democracy (CLID) in the Spofford era, the Church and Society network in DeWitt's day, and The Consultation in ours. Early files read simply "constituency development", when the latter group operated without an official name.

In those days ECPC brought together representatives of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, the Union of Black Episcopalians, the Episcopal Women's Caucus, Integrity, Appalachian People's Service Organization and the Urban Bishops Coalition to strategize around common goals. The group matured and grew in number under the tenure of ECPC executive director Barbara Harris. Members have been key companions in our advocacy efforts, and I will sorely miss these tender comrades.

In this journey through the past, I am especially reminded of my debt to our contributing editors over the years, as well as longtime friend and artist Beth

Seka, who produced such striking covers and who, along with staff, made me look good. And Bob Eckersley, our CPA, who has been aboard since the Spofford days, will long be remembered for his help in critical times.

Since Bob DeWitt left Ambler, I have kept a bare crucifix that was formerly in his office. I should say, rather, it is a simple wooden cross without a corpus — and is before me now. It reminds me that we supply the bodies for our own crosses which we must bear as we work at our respective trades.

Managing editor Susan Pierce and I especially cherish two items in our offices which we will be taking away with us. Sue's is a framed montage from her mother's former office — a cartoon of Jan deluged by paperwork, trying to meet a deadline. It commemorated her "tencentennial" as Pennsylvania diocesan editor. When Sue joined our staff we ran a photo of both Pierces saying, "Like mother, like daughter." This daughter has truly been a faithful clone of her mother.

As I retire to New Orleans to spend quality time with my parents, Marie, 92, and Anthony, 90 (who just celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary) I return with the desk pen they gave me when I became editor. It says simply *Mary Lou*, 4/1/81, and marks the peak of a checkered journalistic career which they have followed with love and prayers. Neither could I have pursued it without your, support, dear WITNESS readers. I only hope new editor Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann and her staff enjoy the same backing.

Finally, it is time to say adieu and thank God for all that you have meant to me — WITNESS people, past and present; readers, family. The Spirit will help us, as we leave Ambler, to discern the next steps in life's great adventure. Meanwhile, put that good old New Orleans coffee on, Mom and Dad. I'm comin' home. TW

Lots of heat, not much light

By Susan Erdey

It was supposed to be a convention to end racism. But the 1991 Episcopal Church General Convention came instead to be known as “the 70th Genital Convention.” And it wasn’t just the 100 degrees-plus July temperatures in Phoenix that were getting folks hot and bothered.

If the state of the recently-completed 10-day Convention is an indication of the state of the Episcopal Church, then this church has sex on the brain.

It is also a church which is slowly discovering that it cannot legislate its way out of differences of opinion. Nearly 600 resolutions were submitted to the 1100 bishops and deputies for consideration, on topics ranging from abortion to economic sanctions to whom to include in the calendar of saints. And when the final session ended, a lot of paperwork had never even reached the floor of either the House of Deputies or the House of Bishops — it simply went into that Twilight Zone known as the three years between conventions, or as the legislative traffic cop, the Dispatch of Business, put it, “referred to the appropriate interim bodies for consideration.”

Sexuality debate dominated

But the one issue that didn’t get shunted off into limbo was sexuality. Specifically, homosexuality. Both houses spent an unbelievable amount of time trying to discern whether or not gay men and lesbians are qualified to be ordained, or whether their committed, long-term monogamous

relationships are worthy to be blessed. And while many people came to Phoenix determined to have a definitive answer to take home with them, by mid-Convention it seemed that compromise was good enough for most.

Typical of that movement toward compromise was a resolution initiated by Bishop David Johnson of Massachusetts. Prior to arriving in Phoenix, Johnson had circulated a proposal to a number of bishops, suggesting that all resolutions dealing with sexuality be taken off the agenda and that the House of Bishops spend the next three years preparing a pastoral statement about the church’s teaching on sexuality. It took several rounds through committee and several amendments by both houses before a final version was struck, which states in part:

The teaching of the Episcopal Church is that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the life-long, monogamous union of husband and wife . . . that this Church [resolves to] continue to work to reconcile the discontinuity between this teaching and the experience of many members of this body . . . this General Convention confesses our failure to lead and resolve this discontinuity through legislative efforts . . .

and goes on to commission bishops and dioceses to “deepen their understanding of these complex issues” and to develop a Pastoral Teaching before the 1994 General Convention. That’s the Episcopal way — when in doubt, drop back and study the problem some more.

Not all resolutions regarding sexuality were brought under the umbrella of

Johnson’s resolution. One notable exception, the proposed canonical change submitted by Bishop William Frey, called for all clergy to abstain from genital sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony. After considerable and heated debate, the resolution was defeated in both houses. Another resolution, acknowledging that no one has a right to ordination, but guaranteeing equal access to the ordination process for all baptized members of the church, passed the House of Deputies by a fair margin, but got shot down in the House of Bishops on the last legislative day. Although the resolution’s intent was to guard against discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender, and disability as well as sexuality, the bishops couldn’t seem to see past the sexuality issue, fearing that such a broad-stroke resolution would be a back door for getting gays and lesbians into the ordination process.

The dispute over gays and lesbians had an impact in other ways. Early on in the Convention, John Spong and John MacNaughton, Bishops of Newark and West Texas respectively, nearly reenacted “the shoot-out at the O.K. Corral,” as Connecticut Bishop Arthur Walmsley described it. Spong decried the “incredible lack of understanding by people who are blinded by homophobia.” MacNaughton responded by asking if the definition of being homophobic “was disagreeing with the Bishop of Newark?” The House of Bishops became a tense place indeed, until Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning announced that the bishops would spend the better part of the next day behind closed doors in executive session — no visitors, no press allowed. Clearly, the

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fragile balance and trust of the House of Bishops was in jeopardy.

The bishops emerged from their executive session looking somewhat more at ease and ready to move on — until Spong stood up and announced that during the break between the session and the resumption of business, a “top leader” of the conservative group Episcopalians United had related to him much of what he had said during the closed-door meeting. Once again, the trust and collegiality of the house was on the line.

Collegiality remained the watchword of the bishops for the rest of the Convention, invoked in almost every instance of potential division. When a resolution was put forth to censure Ronald Haines, Bishop of Washington, D.C., and Walter Righter, Assistant Bishop of Newark, for their recent ordinations of a lesbian and a gay man, a substitute resolution softened the censure issue to one of breaking collegiality. Even so, the attempt to censure eventually failed.

Racism took back seat

But wasn't the whole point of meeting in Arizona — despite protests that the church should boycott the state which refused to pass a holiday honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. — to make a powerful witness against racism? Where was the anti-racism agenda during all this preoccupation with sex?

In the back of the bus, that's where. African-American deputies and bishops lodged their disapproval at the first legislative day, when Deputy Antoinette Daniels of New Jersey and Bishop Walter Dennis of New York stood up in their respective houses during roll call to announce that they and many others were “present under protest” at the Phoenix Convention. Soon strips of purple ribbon showed up on lapels and nametags, symbols of solidarity with those who felt the decision to keep the Convention in Arizona was inappropriate. Ironically, when the Frey canon on sexuality was defeated

Alfred Yazzie, Sr., right, a Navajo from Ft. Defiance, Ariz., consecrated the worship space at the opening Eucharist of General Convention, assisted by Bishop Steven Plummer of Navajo-land. (Photo by Greta Hols.)



in the House of Deputies, conservative deputies, led by Pittsburgh's John Rodgers, stated that because of the house's non-affirmation of traditional biblical sexual morality, they would remain at Convention “under protest,” and suddenly strips of black ribbon were sported around the halls.

The entire Convention gathering took part in a “racial audit,” designed to discover the varying attitudes espoused by Episcopalians regarding race. The audit was conducted by an outside consulting firm, with results to be presented at an evening open hearing. The hearing's time and place had been published and sent to every bishop and deputy several months before, but on the day, deputies suddenly realized that the hearing would conflict with provincial dinners. Instead of simply rearranging their busy social calendars, deputies spent over an hour — abridging time set aside for debate on resolutions — trying to get Convention organizers to reschedule the audit report to a morning legislative session so their dinners wouldn't be cut short. The motion to change the schedule failed, but only by one vote.

Results of the racial audit, finally revealed at the regularly scheduled time (although videotaped for later viewing by those who couldn't get done with dinner

in time), provided few surprises. Respondents were divided by ethnicity and, in the case of blacks and whites, also divided by gender. To the statement, “I believe that cultural diversity is secondary to the Gospel message and that there are many more important issues to be addressed,” a majority of Native Americans agreed, while Asians, Hispanics, blacks, and whites disagreed, although by widely varying margins.

Sixty-two percent of black females, 72% of black males, and 59% of Native Americans agreed with the statement, “I find that white people in the Episcopal Church are distant, and that they feel superior to others,” while 37% of Asians and 33% of Hispanics agreed. Only 35% of white females and 28% of white males agreed. To the statement, “Adequate attention is paid to the problem of racism in the Episcopal Church,” 61% of Hispanics agreed, but Asians (26%), Native Americans (45%), black females (8%), black males (14%), white females (31%), and white males (29%), were far less convinced.

A full report of the audit will be prepared and made available for distribution and study. In addition, a resolution encouraging all dioceses to conduct their own racial audits was approved.

Judy Conley, president of the Union of

Black Episcopalians, said that although she felt that discussions around racism at the Convention, especially during daily Bible sharing, were healthy and good, "I don't have a great deal of hope that it's going to be brought back home." Conley did find a ray of hope in the racial audit, because "it is the first time that we've had actual raw data to support the fact that racism does exist in this institution."

Part of the plan for a scaled-down, simplified convention, initiated in response to the storm of protest when the church chose not to honor the boycott, included a request that exhibitors cut back on their space and that organizations either eliminate or simplify special dinners. There was little evidence in the exhibit hall of compliance, especially among the three most visible conservative organizations, the Prayer Book Society, the Episcopal Synod of America, and Episcopalians United. These groups held prime real estate in the center of the hall, with high-tech electronic equipment and opulent furniture. The Episcopal Church Publishing Company canceled its traditional awards dinner, and THE WITNESS withdrew its booth. And the Episcopal Divinity School was the only one of the 11 Episcopal seminaries that voted to stay away from Phoenix.

Delegates' response to the church's call to contribute financially to combat racism was lackluster. Despite widespread publicity that collections from daily worship services would be credited to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy fund, which provides scholarships for minority students, contributions remained low. One diligent deputy calculated that the average donation was approximately 30¢ per person per day — quite skimpy compared to the cost of meals being consumed at nearby restaurants.

Native American presence

One reason cited for keeping the Convention in Arizona was out of respect for Native American members of the Church

of Navajoland. Native Americans played an important role in the liturgical life of this Convention from beginning to end. At the opening Eucharist, Alfred Yazzie, a Navajo singer from Ft. Defiance, Arizona, performed a Navajo consecration ritual, the Blessing Way, which set aside the altar as sacred space.

Later in the Convention, Native Americans presented a prayer service, blending aspects of the many tribal traditions from which they came. The worship space smelled of burning sage, not incense, as the congregation entered. Bags of earth from the various tribal lands were brought and mixed on the altar to consecrate it as holy ground. Leaders prayed to Earth Mother and Father Heaven. Church leaders as diverse as Eau Claire's Bishop William Wantland, a Seminole, and Ginny Doctor, an Iroquois from Central New York, gave testimony to the struggles of Native Americans to maintain their own culture despite pressures to adopt Anglo ways and beliefs. "We have survived genocide, manifest destiny, and John Wayne," quipped Robert Two Bulls, a Lakota Sioux.

Exercise of Native American spirituality has come under fire recently from the Supreme Court, which ruled that Native Americans could not use peyote, a natural hallucinogenic drug derived from cactus, in their rituals. The Convention voted to support efforts to protect the right of religious freedom in the Native American Church.

But as meaningful as the Native American spirituality was for many Convention-goers, others saw it as a sort of environmentalist end-run on traditionalist theology. Several conservative groups denounced the rituals — and much of the debate on environmental issues — as "pantheism" and "syncretism". When pressed, few people could define any of these "isms" but most agreed they were the first steps down the slippery slope toward radical feminism and goddess worship.

Concern for the environment did figure into the life of Convention, most notably in the dismay over the amount of paper being processed for all of those resolutions. Archbishop Michael Peers, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada and an outspoken environmentalist, addressed the joint Houses, where he quipped, "I'm a trifle anxious about the forests that have come down in order to provide your points of information."

By the morning of July 17, with four days left to go, the Convention print shop had made 1,119,033 copies. By the last three hours of the closing day, it was out of paper.

Legislative logjam

Unfortunately, the paper shortage left a lot of justice issues in limbo. Because Convention had spent so much time on sexuality, many resolutions on peace, international affairs, AIDS, and sexism were carried over from day to day on the legislative calendar. The last few hours of the final legislative day were conducted a breakneck pace, with barely time to find one resolution in the overstuffed Convention notebook before going on to the next. Even so, important legislation such as a resolution supporting selective conscientious objection got lost in the shuffle of papers — or in this case, the lack of papers.

One issue that did make it through the maze was the supplemental liturgical texts — the inclusive language liturgies — that have been in trial use since the 1988 Convention. To the surprise of many, the resolution to extend their use easily passed both Houses, with Bishops omitting one Eucharistic canon dealing with the feminine imagery of the Wisdom literature, and one doxology which referred to Jesus as "the Eternal Word."

One of most powerful moments in the legislative sessions came as Jonathan Myrick Daniels was considered for addition to the church's liturgical calendar as a martyr. Daniels, a seminarian working

Of mad dogs and Anglicans . . . ?

by Susan Erdey

Ah, yes. General Convention in Phoenix — in July, when the thermometer tops 100 on a daily basis. What was that old saying? “Only mad dogs and Anglicans go out . . .”

No one ever thought it would be dull. And we weren’t disappointed. A few tidbits culled from the exhibit hall, the legislative sessions, the elevators:

Walking the short block from the Sheraton to the Phoenix Civic Center was a lesson for Type A personalities and/or East Coasters who are used to zooming across streets against the light. First of all, almost nobody jaywalks here. And secondly, the heat slows you right down. You don’t go anywhere fast.

Weirdest sensation: Knowing you’re in the middle of a desert, and yet seeing fountains everywhere. The outdoor walkways in the Arizona Center, a nearby shopping and eating area that got lots of Episco-cash, are cooled by a system of jets that spray misted water on you as you walk, dine or shop. This is a city in deep denial of the global environmental crisis.

Most disgusting pamphlet: *F.A.G.*, published by a member of the Church Army and distributed at its booth. The acronym stands for “fornicator, adulterer, glutton” — the three sins the now-saved author allegedly suffered from. The pamphlets were originally placed on all of the tables in the Bible sharing/worship area. Outcry from Integrity and a number of deputies got the pamphlets re-

moved. The pamphlet was reissued under the title, “Forgiven and Freed from Sexual Sin.” Not quite as catchy.

Most ubiquitous symbol: Pink triangle stickers, distributed at the Integrity booth. As in Detroit, it was the sticker to have on your nametag. Best button at Integrity booth — for fellow travelers — a pink triangle that said “I’m straight, but I’m not narrow!”

Most annoying symbol: Blue square stickers, imported from Harvard University, where a conservative group wears them to express anti-gay sentiment.

Best bumper sticker: Worn on her hat by Ann McElroy, of the Diocese of El Camino Real — a lime green beauty reading “I sure miss Bishop Pike.”

Best spontaneous resolution: As the House of Bishops debated whether to urge Nestle’s/Carnation and Bristol-Myers to cease advertising infant formula, Bishop Charles Duvall of Central Gulf Coast spoke against the measure as meddling in companies’ affairs, and that he expected soon Convention would be dealing with resolutions against tobacco, guns and alcohol. Another bishop immediately shouted, “So moved!”

Overheard in the elevator, one jogger to another: “Hey, I found town! It’s about three miles away, but there were real people!” Most Convention-goers were insulated in their nearby hotels and didn’t see much of the area — unless they were staying

at Squaw Peak (fondly known in the press room as Twin Peaks) or The Pointe, which required a 30-minute bus ride each way.

Strangest leap of logic: The hymn, “The King of Love My Shepherd Is,” was scheduled for one of the morning eucharists, but one verse was omitted. Bishop Edward MacBurney of the Diocese of Quincy accused Integrity of engineering the deletion of the verse that begins, “Perverse and foolish oft I strayed.” Integrity demanded an apology, but apparently never got one.

Second strangest leap of logic: Some conservatives were accusing Integrity of orchestrating the General Convention to be in Phoenix at the same time as the convention of the Metropolitan Community Church, a denomination which reaches out especially to lesbians and gays.

People unclear on the concept: Exhibitors were asked to scale back their booths in the exhibit hall as a sign of the “austerity” being practiced by this General Convention. The Prayer Book Society, the Episcopal Synod of America, and Episcopalians United held the central booths in the hall, complete with plush lounge furniture. The Prayer Book Society also had a TV newsroom set up as their booth, with six color video monitors and a roving camera crew. A reporter asked a representative of PBS how their booth fit into the rubrics of “scaling back.” The representative replied, “Well, we used 3/4-inch plywood instead of one-inch.”

in the Civil Rights movement, was killed in 1965 in Hayneville, Ala., by a white deputy sheriff. Although the resolution came at the end of a long and often frustrating day, deputies from all across the country rose to speak eloquently in support of the proposal. Deputies voted unanimously for the proposal, which had been passed by the bishops earlier.

Women's issues

Women scored a major victory in the election by acclamation of Pamela Chinnis as the first woman president of the House of Deputies. Chinnis was a delegate to Triennial, the meeting of the Episcopal Church Women which is held at the same time and place as Convention, in 1967 when the first woman was seated on the floor of the House of Deputies. At a post-election press conference, Chinnis said, "It never entered my mind that I would one day stand on that podium as president." Asked how she felt about the recent ordination of a lesbian at Washington's Church of the Epiphany, Chinnis replied, "It was at my parish — that's all I need to say!" Chinnis is senior warden there.

A motion to repeal the controversial "episcopal visitors" resolution passed in 1988, which gives the option of asking for a visiting male bishop when members of a diocese cannot "in conscience" accept a woman bishop, met with defeat. Although the church has had three years since the consecration of Bishop Barbara Harris to get used to the idea of a woman bishop, apparently neither bishops nor deputies were willing to give in just yet.

In other legislation affecting women, Convention:

- affirmed the need for Medicaid funding for Norplant birth control devices;
- called for a celebration of the ordination of women to all holy orders of the church during the 1994 General Convention, the 20th anniversary of women's ordination to the priesthood;
- urged Nestle's/Carnation and Bristol-

Meyers to cease advertising infant formula products in developing countries;

- called on dioceses to report on their progress in complying with the 1985 General Convention resolution on maternal/parental leave policies;
- recognized the "seriousness of the crisis of the increasing pauperization of women and children", and called on "parishes and dioceses to support ministries designed to provide opportunities for movement out of poverty and to assist those still in poverty";
- supported policy of equal pay for work of equal value, or pay equity.

A resolution opposing governmental restrictions on abortion information was adopted by both houses on the final day of Convention.

A resolution opposing laws requiring parental notification for minors seeking abortions was hotly debated in both Houses. The Episcopal News Service reported that although a deputy from the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast objected to the resolution on the ground that parents have a right to know what their children are doing, other deputies pointed out that a growing number of minors seeking abortions are pregnant by family members or are in abusive family situations. The Houses eventually concurred in opposing the restrictive laws.

Center held

Although progressives may not exactly be jumping for joy over the way this Convention shaped up, they are probably heaving a sigh of relief that the most repressive legislation didn't pass and that, as many deputies commented, "the center held." As the last legislative day wound down, however, at least one traditionalist group expressed its dismay over the lack of conservative victories. The Episcopal Synod of America issued a statement which reads in part,

"There are now two religions in the Episcopal Church. We worship two Gods . . . One religion serves the God

whose self-revelation is preserved in Scripture and reliably passed on in the tradition of the church. The other serves the desires and beliefs of this age as interpreted by the consciences of individuals . . ."

The statement calls the "faithful people of the Episcopal Church" to support "both existing and new congregations founded on biblical principles in those diocese where the diocesan structures and the bishop are openly hostile to orthodox Christianity." A full plan of action for what seems to be the ESA's first step towards breakaway will be revealed at the group's November meeting.

Looking ahead

So now that the jet lag is wearing off, many questions remain.

How can the sheer volume of resolutions be reduced? After setting what must be an all-time record for numbers submitted, this process needs to be reviewed carefully. And does any one pay attention to these resolutions? Ultimately, canon law is the only thing that can be enforced in this church. So why does General Convention pass so many resolutions?

An oft-heard comment from bishops and deputies alike was, "We did the Anglican thing — we muddled through." Does the Anglican penchant for compromise, for the *via media*, mean that this is a wishy-washy church? Or are we just careful and deliberate?

Is the passage of the resolution calling for three more years of dialogue about sexuality just another way of postponing the inevitable? Or does the church need the time to allow people to "grieve" the loss of their prejudices and misconceptions. How long, many wonder, can the church afford to delay justice for gays and lesbians?

If people thought it was hot in Phoenix, just watch the next three years. There'll be plenty of heat on issues to come. And in Indianapolis, next Convention site, it may not be so easy to compromise. **TW**

Continued from page 3

with its provisions. But even if this resolution passes, the bitter fact remains that a large majority of our churches are either architecturally or attitudinally inaccessible to people with disabilities. Only after the necessary changes have been made can such individuals really feel they are welcome in the Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Charles H. Swinehart, Jr.
Epilepsy Support Services
Brighton, Mich.

Will fight WITNESS

Since I became an alternate delegate to General Convention, I have been getting some truly unusual mail, but last weekend I got my copy of your publication. It was a revelation.

We live in relative isolation here, although I try to keep up with what is going on by reading. I had heard that there were organizations like yours "out there" but until I read your magazine I had really no idea of how real they were, and the evil they were trying to promote.

I won't bore you with theological arguments. You've heard them before and you have your responses down. The drill is redundant.

I will tell you, though, that I take seriously the baptismal charge that a Christian should not be ashamed "to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil." I intend to fight all that you propose.

Douglas Buchanan
Bishop, Cal.

Strange positions

It is difficult for me to understand the Episcopal Synod of America's position that a candidate for the priesthood must have a penis. Equally puzzling to me was that not too many years ago, I have been told on good authority, at least one of our Episcopal religious orders for women required a physical examination to determine for sure that the postulant was, in fact, a virgin.

One might wonder whether the virgin nun and the penis-carrying priest can pray

better, understand God and the sacraments better, and represent the love and caring of Jesus Christ any better than all the other human beings of this world. I think the church should stop looking at vaginas and penises and start thinking about the real image of God. I'll probably be strung up if this is printed, but one of the joys of being in one's 70s is that it doesn't even matter.

Ann R. Wood
Spokane, Wash.

From 97-year-old reader

I have just read the May issue of THE WITNESS and wish to have it sent to three of my relatives. I found it made me *think*, and more. I married an Episcopalian Oct. 1, 1913. I'm a Presbyterian but we had an Episcopal service. My Dan died in 1979, aged 91. I'm now 97 and, glad to say, have good eyes, good mind and am thankful for having had a wonderful long life.

Lily M. Gurnee
Granada Hills, Calif.

Parents speak out

We are the parents of a gay daughter and active in our P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Chapter. Both of us also happen to be Episcopalians. The gay/lesbian issue at General Convention in Phoenix is of great importance and concern to us.

Our gay daughter and her friend have been shunned in an Episcopal church where they were living. Many of our gay children remain closeted, living a lie, because of the lack of affirmation for them anywhere.

We believe that our gay children and friends are born gay — they don't have a choice about their sexuality. The only choice the gay and heterosexual communities have in common is whether or not to act on their sexuality. It was not a painless road traveled by our daughter, her friend and ourselves when we became aware of our daughter being gay, but with God's help we have come to understand and love her on a much deeper level than before.

Our churches, schools, parents and society teach us that homosexuality is

wrong. Somehow, with God's help, our hope is that all can overcome their pelvic mentality. We are thankful that the Episcopal Church has begun some dialogue on this very important issue.

Kenneth and Kathleen Tschabrun
Holdrege, Neb.

Adieu to staff

Thank you for the June pre-General Convention issue. It should have been mandatory reading for every deputy, lay and ordained — and the bishops!

Now, how to respond adequately to the move to Detroit. How to say "thank you and goodbye" to Mary Lou Suhor, Susan Pierce, Susan Small, and Lynne Hoekman who have been there for me on the other end of a long distance telephone line.

I have had a special relationship with THE WITNESS as both an author and a reader. You have nurtured me — editing my written words (painful as that may be), and helping me to know more about topics and places to which I might not otherwise have been exposed, and certainly not in the same way with your focus and perspective.

I used the word "friends" above, and that is what we have been although we have never met in the traditional sense. But we know each other, and we have worked together, and we have learned together. And each of us whose work has appeared in the magazine, and who have laughed and cried and been taught lessons we have needed to learn by other writers whose experiences we have shared, is indebted to you and your hard work and caring and professionalism. It showed through in every issue.

The future is always a challenge. I know that each of you who have guided THE WITNESS these past years will meet that personal challenge as you move forward to your next adventure. I hope that the folks who take on the task of following in your footsteps will show the same energy and concern as you have as they strive to maintain the level of this truly excellent journal.

Beatrice Pasternak
St. Louis, Mo.

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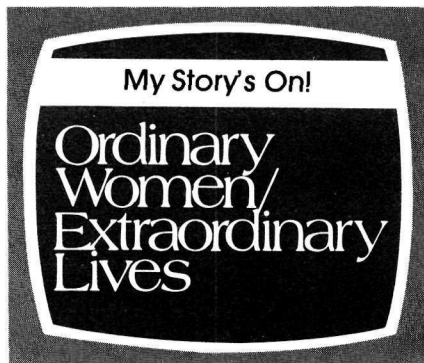
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THE WITNESS

CONFESSION



FACING
THE
DEMONS
WITHIN
AND THE
DARKNESS
OF THE
HISTORICAL
MOMENT.

*First Detroit issue!
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reviews

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Readers criticize moving *The Witness*

I GET *THE WITNESS* courtesy of friends since my income barely covers groceries and rent. But a comment:

I was appalled to read the names of the committee of the Board who decided to move the mag to Detroit, ending faithful employment of Philly staff. The Board Committee was ALL MEN. The Staff affected were ALL WOMEN!! Known as liberals in the Church these men (appointed by a faithful liberal MAN) fell into the trap of male chauvinism and patriarchal control, failed to involve the staff or the former editor in the process, and defended themselves claiming "irrevocable"!!!! If it were not such a valuable journal, I'd cancel in protest. I am appalled, and would like to read an acknowledgment by THOSE MEN of their blindness to the issues they promote in this mag.

Volume 74, Number 6, June 1991, is the most valuable single contribution to the Church as it prepares for "Phoenix." Thanks and Congratulations.

Everett Waldo
San Diego, CA

BELIEVING FIRMLY that injustice must be denounced, even, and perhaps especially, when it occurs within an organization which itself usually struggles against injustices, I am writing to express how disappointed and outraged I am at the precipitous and unfair move of *The Witness*

to Detroit and the consequent unemployment of four staff members. Though I have become well aware over the

years that no organization, no matter how altruistic in intent, ever lives up to its ideals, I had not thought that *The Witness* could ever act in such an irresponsible and destructive manner.

It seems to be no coincidence that all

four of the staff persons affected adversely by this move are women, while all four of the persons making the decision are men. You have apparently acquiesced, if not actively supported, this decision, which gives me no hope for the continuation of the prophetic voice which I have come to count on from *The Witness* on matters of gender equity.

Today I received a letter from you asking for an additional contribution. My first reaction was, "Not on your life." My second reaction was to dump the whole mailing into the trash. I will not at this time cancel my subscription, but will take a wait-and-see attitude. I strongly urge you to find some way quickly to repair the severe damage that your decision has caused, first as to the lives of the women affected, and second as to the trust of your readers.

Marian L. Shatto
Lititz, PA

THIS IS IN RESPONSE to your recent request for a contribution and in lieu of my usual gift.

I was quite appalled by your decision to uproot your organization and strand your loyal staff in your move to Detroit. I am unable to understand any benefit to come from the move, other than the convenience of the new editor.

Surely if you can afford to absorb the costs of the move, including recruiting and training new staff, the loss of my small contribution will not be noticed. I do wish you well in spite of your apparent bad judgment. The voice of *The Witness* is too important not to be heard.

Richard E. Bunyan
Alexandria, VA

I WAS MOST DISTRESSED to read of the manipulatory closing of *The Witness's* Ambler office, done without the knowledge or participation of long-term staff. I am certain that Mary Lou Suhor told the story not only accurately but gently in your June issue. Though the process may

have been masterminded and driven by the board, surely it did not occur without your knowledge and complicity.

Your treatment of people who have given so much to produce *The Witness* and to keep its practices true to its teaching is a most inauspicious beginning to your tenure. Not trust, openness and participation but back-room deals with other people's lives -- indeed true to industry's worst plant-closing practices. It does not move me to contribute.

V. Powell Woodward
Cambridge, MA

MY REASON for writing you is twofold. First, your father and I were friends for many years; second, I worked in Ambler for *The Witness* for two years or so just after its rebirth.

I must be honest with you. I feel very badly that the board acted without much communicating with the staff in any significant detail. The move to Detroit I feel is a very bad mistake. Detroit isn't exactly in the mainstream as is the Philadelphia area between New York and Washington.

While you yourself will receive all the good wishes of people like myself, you will be operating under quite a handicap with this unfortunate and perhaps ruthless action behind your election and removal to Detroit.

I do wish you well and will look forward to the first issue under your management.

E. Lawrence Carter
Sierra Madre, CA

ON THE OCCASION of Mary Lou Suhor's retirement, may I express my deep appreciation for all she has given us, the Episcopal Church and beyond, in her prophetic, visionary role as *Witness* editor. She and her staff have been channels of God's grace lighting our way into a more inclusive, just and peaceful future. Thank you, dear sister in Christ!

May Mary Lou's mantle, with double her spirit, pass to Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann. She'll need it!

Mary Eunice Oliver
La Jolla, CA

THE WITNESS

Letters

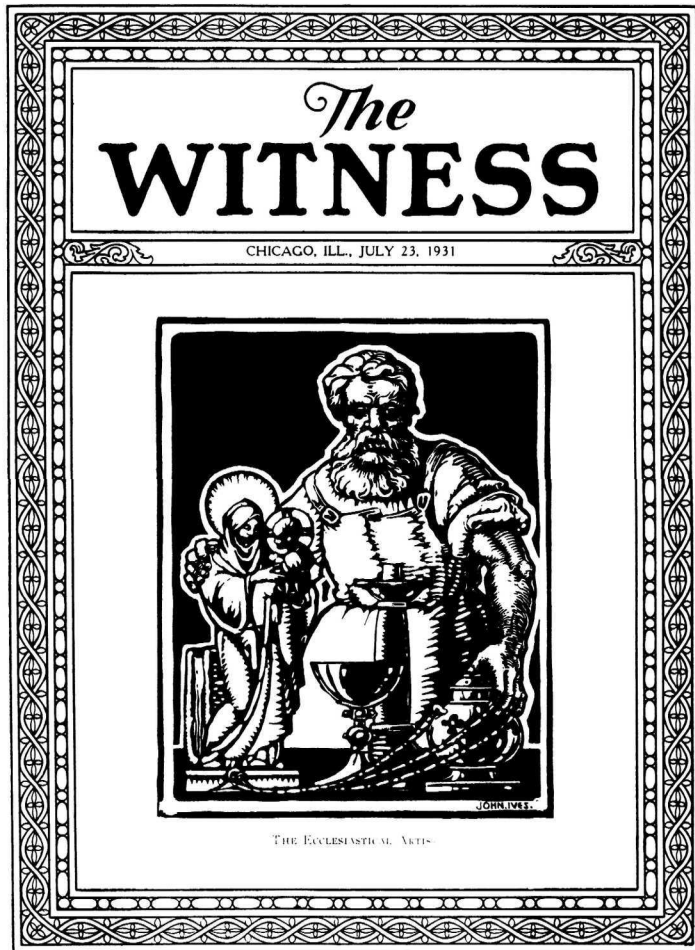
ECPC responds

We have received a number of inquiries concerning the board's decision to move our office to Detroit. These warrant our providing additional information, as follows. The board had been contemplating a move to another location for about a year and a half prior to its final decision -- this was connected to the recognized need to find a new editor/publisher and the conviction of some board members that the magazine belonged in an inner-city location. The impact of the move upon the incumbent staff was carefully considered by the board, and the staff were given one-half year's advance notice, offered full moving expenses, plus three month's extra salary as a positive encouragement to move with the magazine; if the staff chose not to move they would receive two month's severance pay.

The ultimate hiring of a Detroit-based editor/publisher led to the Detroit move. Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann indicated a willingness to consider moving to Ambler, PA. However, the full ECPC board, which includes women, people of color, clergy and lay members voted without dissent to move to Detroit.

There were two chief reasons for making the Detroit decision: 1) The symbol of locating our office at the hub of the rust belt, in the heart of an impoverished, racially-mixed city. This would add authenticity to our endeavor and enable us to capitalize upon the Christian base community already rooted there, of which our new editor, her clergy-husband and their two children are members. 2) A projected reduction in our publishing costs, and the prospect of finally ending a many-years-long erosion of the magazine's endowment. The board carefully weighed the alternatives in making a tough decision it feels holds real promise for the magazine's future.

William W. Rankin
Board Chairperson



THERE WAS A TIME when I was delighted to find *The Witness* in my mail! I felt it was a strong addition to the Church -- especially against Racism -- and with emphasis upon sharing the love of God with each other.

When Bishop Barbara Harris became a featured writer, I read *her* articles before anything else.

But the June issue really sickened me. God had vanished. Of course I know He is still there and stronger than those who seek to corrupt His teachings, but my grief is *real* about the Church magazine I formerly admired so much.

Please do remember that you have older readers -- like me -- who are disappointed and looking for your former great spiritual uplift, as well as those whose lives are in a mess in which they seem to rejoice.

Doris L. Boyd
Beverly, MA

I AM A ROMAN CATHOLIC reader of *The Witness* and agree with the editorial stance except on the issue of abortion -- to which I am opposed except for the life of the mother. In the Roman Church I am a

member of Women's Ordination Conference, CORPUS, Dignity, and Priests for Equality. It must not be assumed that all who support a progressive agenda are pro-choice. Abortion has more and more become another form of contraception with terrible consequences for "babies-in-process" and adoption agencies that have tens of thousands of unmet applications and the buying of babies from poor Mexican women for resale in the United States.

Prayer and best wishes as you begin the editorship.

William G. Poole
Lexington, KY

THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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THE WITNESS

CONFESSION

FACING THE DEMONS WITHIN AND THE DARKNESS OF THE HISTORICAL MOMENT.

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Cover credit: Sr. Helen David; design, Beth Seka/TSI.
It is the policy of **The Witness** to use inclusive language whenever possible.

Confessing sin, confessing faith

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

I have always been drawn to apocalyptic literature. My heart rises to promises that *God will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood*

... And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Act 2: 19-21

For someone of my temperament it is a relief that my will may be trounced, bent, forced, subjugated. And in that process, the responsibility that I seem to incrementally assume for the world itself can slide from me -- leaving me no longer larger than life, humbled. I have John Donne's poem *Batter my heart, three person'd God* taped to my office wall.

There is in the act of confession, I believe, a heart-stopping, quickened vulnerability -- a sense that once begun, you cannot turn back and a sobering certainty that you will arrive in a quiet and humbled posture, relieved of the weight of the persona you draw around you and inflate.

It is a relief to offer your sin back to God and neighbor -- you understand

that you are not elect, not a visible saint. Merely human. Merely loved in your humanity by a strong and forceful God who calls forth the storm and the stillness. To be right-ordered. To respond to the calling of one's name. To understand who is God (and who is



credit: Sr. Helen David

not). To be a creature of God. To give thanks.

There is, I believe, a similar and related experience in defining your allegiance -- in confessing your faith, in uttering the name of Jesus in an arena where Caesar appears to rule.

There is the same searing vulnera-

bility. The same feeling that you cannot turn back. The same quickened sense of name and call and identity. There is a deafening realization that you are *not* Caesar -- and those pieces of yourself that have given dominion to the powers of the age are exposed and chastened. In the remains, you find simply yourself -- neither hero, nor warrior. Simply an element of the Word, a part of the creation that like the rocks and trees must cry out the dominion and sovereignty of God.

I was challenged several times on proposing a magazine issue on confession of sin and confession of faith -- they were, I was told, separate theological concepts.

I brooded on this. At a minimum, I felt it would be good to hold the two together, side by side. Instinctually, I felt a link. And a necessity for all of us to experience both.

I was familiar with the concept of *projection*: Our own torments and unconscious needs can splash across the universe driving us to obsessive and compulsive relationships with people and things.

I searched for a word that could represent the reverse -- the tendency to see evil and threat in the world and to *introject* those, painting them as per-

sonal phobias and sins.

Both tendencies are apparent in our culture.

We give Saddam Hussein the names we might better call ourselves -- greedy, arrogant, brutal. We transfer our own loneliness and uncertainty into a yellow ribbon conformity that

promises hell fire out of sight and a pretense of solidarity and goodness closer to home.

Similarly, there are real dangers on the loose -- but the confusion over whether we will have a future, whether we will let other nations starve, whether our cities are already outside the scope of repair, can all be *introjected* into pious concerns about whether we've been mean-spirited to

and social calamities can be ignored; We can stay home and needlepoint the Golden Rule.

Closer to home for many of us, I would guess, is the *introjection* of real world evils into a driven discipline of eating yogurt and jogging. We feel something evil lurking and we too respond by trying to perfect ourselves.

In reverse, we may *project* our own fears and needs into the world in a

way that seems to give us license to do *battle*. Instead of decimating Iraq, we may join social crusades with an almost unthinking anger.

It's for this reason that most nonviolent action groups ask participants to name their fears and bad motivations for high-risk political action in order to help foreclose the possibility that a marital dispute or de-

sire for public recognition might compel one into political protest.

Confession of sin and confession of faith offer us an opportunity to "face the demons within and the darkness of the historical moment," to surrender delusions, to move into right order and proportion with God and creation.

During restless nights, I have wondered about the changes. The initiative to move the magazine to Detroit was mine. The momentum was the ECPC Board's. I am trusting the Board's stewardship and my own sense that the voice of *The Witness* will be strengthened by moving away from the coasts.

I was surprised to learn that *The Witness* originated in the Midwest. A province meeting resulted in a conviction that a different kind of Episcopal journal was needed. From its incep-

Ched Myers (from whom I lifted the preceding quote) writes about this in this issue. While he never uses the world confession, it is precisely the topic he is addressing.

At its best, the Church offers us a forum where we can speak clearly who we are and be claimed (if humbled) by God. It also corporately calls us to question and declare where our heart and allegiances are, which master we serve.

I learned toward the end of preparing this issue that there was a direct link between confession of sin and confession of faith in the Early Church.

During times of persecution, the early Church concluded that testifying faith in Christ, in a situation of risk, cleansed you of your sins. What's more, those who survived persecution were invited to hear confessions and to participate in rites of reconciliation -- at least until a turf struggle between the ordained and the martyrs ended in Cyprian's edict for the ordained.

The connection, I think, is that both forms of confession have everything to do with recognizing that you are not God. The very act smacks of mortality. To confess one's sins or to confront the powers and call the name of Jesus is to surrender and to know yourself again as free, as who you were uttered to be. TW

tion, the magazine has had an awareness of the spiritual journeys of wage earners. There was something unpretentious and gritty about the early *Witness*.

I look forward to readers' responses to the changes at the magazine. If something is omitted, please don't assume that the omission reflects an editorial decision. It may well be an oversight. Please feel free, at any, time to write or call.

--J.W.K.

Batter my heart, three personed God; for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me and bend
Your force to break, blow, burn and make me new.
I like an usurped town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but Oh, to no end;
Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captived and proves weak or untrue.

Yet dearly I love you and would be loved fain,
But am betrothed unto your enemy:
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I
Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

-- John Donne

our parents or scrupulously honest with our employer. Feeling the desperate waves of impending disaster, we can interpret them as something within ourselves, something that will go away if only we can learn to be kind. The Church has all too often loaned its voice to this approach. The national

The Witness is changing. It's in Detroit. It has a new staff. New sections have been added.

I know the excitement and challenge I feel setting out to edit *The Witness* comes in large part from its history and the award-winning work of the people who have preceded me.

I am grateful to Mary Lou Suhor and to Susan Pierce for their vision and to all the Ambler staff for their work, their tenacity and their spirit. *The Witness* will miss these women.

Witness Poetry Editor

Gloria House, also known by her African name, Aneb Kgositsile, is a poet and essayist who has been active for many years in the African-American liberation movement. She won the Levi Strauss Scholarship and earned bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of California, Berkeley, in French and Comparative Literature, respectively. She took her doctorate in American Culture and History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her research focuses on the cultures of Third World communities in the United States.

House taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and San Francisco State College, and also worked as a *Detroit Free Press* editor before joining the faculty at Wayne State University, where she is associate professor of humanities.

Her work has appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, including *City Arts Quarterly*, *Solid Ground*, *Moving to Antarctica*, *Green River Review*, *The Black Arts Anthology*, and *The Black Aesthetic*. Broadside Press published her first collection of poems, *Blood River*, in 1983, and released her second volume, *Rainrituals*, in 1990.

At Wayne State University, House has pioneered projects in Third World and Women's Studies, developed a humanities curriculum for a prison degree program, and created an educational television series which has been purchased and used by 12 U.S. universities and community colleges.

Since 1965, when she worked as a field secretary for the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee in Alabama, House has been committed to the African-American freedom struggle. She continues to work with human rights organizations in the

Detroit area in solidarity with Third World liberation movements. She has traveled widely in Africa, Europe, Central America, and the Caribbean.

She has a son, Uri Stuart House, 24.



Gloria House

O Children of no childhood,
claiming freedom over fear,
carrying your fallen
on rivers of trotting and chants....
(for Nelson and Winnie Mandela;
Hana Khadafy and the children
on frontlines everywhere)

Caskets are floating
on rivers of children;
caskets are bobbing
on waves of children,
caskets of children carried
by children
on rivers
of trotting and chants.

Their fists reach high
like oars on the rivers,
and their voices soar
as from one great heart,
Mandela! Mandela!
They drape their buddies
in black, green, gold,
make every funeral
a fighter's call,
Amandla! Amandla!

The river runs
through occupied Palestine,
where teenagers' rocks
meet Israeli tanks.
There the children's shoulders
hoist their martyrs' coffins,
coffins of children
carried by children,
in fighters' ranks,
trotting and chanting
with fists high like hope.

Though they hobble on crutches,
they've put horror behind.
Uprooted and hungry, they hang on
from Angola to L.A.,
from Guatemala to the Nicaraguan hills.
Child contras abroad,
our cocaine kids at home -- with
buckets of bucks and dollar-sign-souls,
kill their cousins and die
for gangsters in government places.

O Children of no childhood
murdered as a policy of state,
we bury your slender coffins in lakes of tears,
but our fists pound the air like oaths.

South Africa Poem by Gloria House

Poetry

Resisting civil religion

From Pax Romana to the New World Order

An interview with Dorothee Sölle

Q: *There are Christians in the United States who feel that this is a pivotal moment in our history. Do you believe this is an exceptional time?*

A: The thing which concerns me most is the fact that we're now living in a one-world culture -- the capitalist culture. Nation number one is the United States. That's the essential part of this new world order.

This means that there is not an alternative any longer. With the breakdown in state socialism in eastern Europe, a whole dimension of another idea about life has collapsed. That is what frightens me most.

If you think about the substance of this new world order, the human being is seen as the *homo economicus* -- the economic agent whose interest is in making money and that is it. That's the basic definition. It's not one of a relational being who fulfills her or his need through interrelatedness as the Jews and the Christians have taught us to think.

Capitalist culture sees the meaning of life as production or consumption. All the other -- being the dreaming animal or being creative without any idea of selling, anything you do without a purpose -- is obsolete now. This form of world-wide capitalism doesn't

need other forms of life. That has terrible consequences for the third world with all the different cultures that people still have there.

In the third world, the poor are not simply capitalists that didn't make it. That is the idea that the World Bank has about them -- but the truth is that people in old cultures have very different values. In Peru and Bolivia, they value shared life. In those communities, communal leaders are respected not because of their income but because of their involvement in the liberating process. It's a very different

form of evaluation. The cash value is not the only value in the world.

Q: *What must Christians in the U.S. do?*

A: I loved what the Churches did during the Gulf War in the U.S. Both Catholics and the National Council of Churches protested the war in a clear manner -- much better than some of the Church groups here in Europe. I thought it was powerful. At the same time I was aware how much the Churches have lost power and influence and presence among the people.

The prevailing religion of George Bush and Saddam Hussein is the same. They both kneel down before a powerful, male violence -- being Number One -- which they claim is God. The innermost heart of patriarchy is the lust for power. The greatest value is power, not love. Love is a Christian



credit: Robert McGovern

Dorothee Sölle is a German theologian, peace activist and visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary.

Robert McGovern's work is featured frequently in *The Witness* and in other religious social concerns books and periodicals. He teaches at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

protest against obsession with power, and this culture is obsessed with power. I think that the Churches have to prepare themselves for a new role of resistance.

cause he declared that there was only an Aryan Christ.

Today we are sliding into a system which claims to be democratic. The government will tell us, we are not

means. But with the [absence of coverage of casualties] the soldiers were loved and honored by everyone. No one was able to criticize the soldiers for what they did -- which was to murder.

It's a *kairos* when you have to stand up and clarify this. There is now a cheap reconciliation between Church and State -- the Churches are not persecuted, they are respected and honored but only when they play the game of the victors, when they don't resist organized murder as war.

The prevailing religion of George Bush and Saddam Hussein is the same. They both kneel down before a powerful, male violence -- which they claim is God. Love is a Christian protest against obsession with power, and this culture is obsessed with power.

Q: What kind of resistance are we looking toward?

A: The Christian Church inside of the *Pax Romana* -- inside of a whole economic/political/social system which was based on militarism -- distinguished itself through lifestyle: not going to the theater when Christians were being devoured; not being amused by those public games which were the cultural expression of the power cult. That already took quite a bit of courage. People were expected to show at public events like the crucifixion. When the women went to weep at the tomb of Jesus it was an act of resistance.

The Christians were different, not believing in violence and not believing in money. These two values were the ones that Christians refused to adore. Instead they embraced the poor, the old, the weak, the handicapped.

Q: Is this a *status confessionis*, a moment in which the very meaning of the Gospel may be betrayed and lost, if the Church does not act?

A: I would say so, yes. *Status confessionis* was sort of renewed in 1933 and 1934, against a clear-cut tyranny (which was National Socialism) and a clear-cut tyrant. Hitler made it easier to understand that he was wrong be-

against the Church and religious freedom. There is a liberal sense; the Romans called it "licensed religion." They were pretty tolerant, the Romans -- they were not dumb. You could talk about Christ or Krishna or whatever. But as soon as this transcended the realm of religious freedom into the real world of business, of hunger, of disease, then the problems started.

But the economic world order we support is an order which is concerned with the wealth and well-being of one-third of the human family, and soon three-quarters of the human family will be condemned to die. And there is no political will to change that. When-

Q: Are there lessons we can take from the German Confessing Church?

A: Women and men in the Confessing Church gave their lives to the process of protecting victims of the system -- Jewish people. Today it is undocumented foreigners. Sanctuary and refugee problems will be one of the worst things in Europe. Will we build a fortress or will we have the *European house* -- a place with many doors and windows where other people could get in? We will have millions of refugees from other continents who just want to survive. What will happen to them? How do we as the Church deal with those questions?

I think that the Churches have to prepare themselves for a new role of resistance. There is now a cheap reconciliation between Church and State -- the Churches are not persecuted, they are respected and honored but only when they play the game of the victors, when they don't resist organized murder as war.

ever a problem comes up it is solved by war.

The media suffocates any form of resistance. The whole difference between the Vietnam War and this war came home to me. People who see the blood and destruction know what war

What we learn from the Confessing Church is to speak to power, to clarify what we mean by human rights. To discover Christ daily again and again in the poorest who are amongst us, live with us, die with us. This is the legacy of the Confessing Church. **TV**

Free by grace

experiences of confession

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Personal confession, for many of us, elicits images of Roman Catholic choir boys and school girls

forced to practice an overly scrupulous faith.

But, I would wager, on the heels of that image is an inarticulate longing to confess our hearts and hear the words of absolution.

It's not easy to practice confession in the Episcopal Church. We can't presume that Friday afternoon the confessional box will be staffed. There has not been, until 1979, a formula for the recitation of sins. Few priests seem at ease with the rite and many seminarians are not trained in it.

Many of us are suspicious of a tradition that can be and has been abused. We worry that confession may be a self-preoccupation. We struggle even to define sin. And we meet a seeming void in the institutional structure. There almost seems to be a tacit preference in the Church for people to work things out in therapy and accept

the general absolution during the eucharist as sufficient.

Yet, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a father of the Confessing Church in Germany

who was executed by the Third Reich, urges Christians to confess their sins concretely, saying that this frees people from bondage and initiates discipleship.

Bonhoeffer writes:

Those who are alone with their sins are utterly alone.

It may be that Christians, notwithstanding corporate worship, common prayer,

and all their fellowship in service, may still be left to their loneliness.

In confession the break-through to community takes place. Sin demands to have persons by themselves . . . Since the confession of sin is made in the presence of a Christian brother or sister, the last stronghold of self-justification is abandoned.

As the first disciples left all and followed when Jesus called, so in confession the Christian gives up all and follows. Confession is discipleship.

In an effort to begin a conversation about confession, I asked several Episcopalians to recount their experiences of confession and reconciliation.



credit: Jenorah Patterson

Obsession With a Married Man

When her colleague's son died, Catherine Wilson [name changed] felt an urge to reopen an affair with him. Wilson had ended the relationship three years earlier after starting therapy. At that time, she concluded that the relationship was stealing her life. Her schedule had to wrap around his; he had obligations to his wife and child.

She finally broke the relationship, because it did not constitute "choosing life." Subsequently, she joined an Episcopal church, discovered an active faith life within herself and became a member of the vestry.

But the death of her former lover's child roused a confusion of feelings and a compelling desire to resume sleeping with her colleague.

"I was feeling in a state of turmoil, a state of compulsion. I felt sympathy. I felt mortal. I had this sense that if you don't trust in the future -- and loss of a child is a form of loss of future -- it's pointless to worry about your behavior on any given day."

Wilson went to her therapist and found it helpful but nondirective. She was thrown back on her own resources.

"I read my Bible and various prayers which were helpful but only temporarily. They didn't take away the feeling of dread, the feeling that I didn't have any power to say no which was terrifying because I thought I was over that kind of craziness. I couldn't sleep well. I was feeling close to tears most of the time. In tears a fair amount of the time."

Finally, Wilson made an appointment with her parish priest. Despite her friendship with him, she says she worried that he would be judgmental. She was afraid of being rejected or punished like a child. She arrived late

Jenorah Patterson, 34, is a Philadelphia artist who is legally blind.

for her appointment.

During their conversation, Wilson was relieved by two things. First, her confessor was unafraid to name her compulsion, even when she couldn't. Secondly, he was not rigid. He gave her permission to think through all options, acknowledging that "there would be pain in either choice."

He drew a parallel between her obsession and his experience quitting cigarettes. But maybe most importantly, Wilson says he *was* directive, but not in a morally high-handed way.

"He said, 'I'm not telling you anything that you don't already know,' which was true. 'I could put it in moral terms, but it's more heart break for you and I don't want to see you have more heart break. I wish for you someone who could be committed to you just as I would wish for anyone in my family.'"

Knowing that he would pray for her, she left.

"I felt like I was restored to myself. I felt like, in fact, I do have power to

choose and in a strange way I felt that even if I chose to sin again -- to put it in that term -- I could still come back. But I don't think I would choose that. I had the sense that the compassion and the love were there anytime I sought it. I felt that if I didn't have the power I could still come back. It took away the sense of powerlessness and the sense that I was lost."

Making Amends

Carter Heyward, a *Witness* contributing editor and one of the first women ordained in the Episcopal Church, says her understanding of confession has changed over time. When she was a teenager in North Carolina, she believed she had a



Carter Heyward: Making amends.

religious vocation and went to mass daily. "I asked the Episcopal priest if I could make my confession. I would guess he had never participated in sacramental confession. He had a makeshift arrangement at the altar. I would go once a month and rattle off what I considered in those days to be sins -- not doing what my parents had told me, telling a lie, having sexual feelings."

Since then, Heyward said, "What I have found very helpful in the 12-Step process, as a recovering alcoholic, is the business of making amends.

The experience that it is amongst friends that we experience the inpouring of the grace of God when sharing our vulnerability and looking at ways that our lives have been duplicitous or somehow fragmented."

Asked for specifics, Heyward described a relationship with a student at the Episcopal Divinity School that had gone awry.

"It was one of those relationships where everything that got said seemed to up the ante of the pain."

Finally, Heyward says she went to her student and said "If I am wounding you (and I am capable of this), I do not to mean to be. And if I have hurt you, I hope you will forgive me."

Subsequently, they had to work through the student's distrust of the confession. (It was the first time someone in authority had apologized to her.) But, with the help of a mediator who happened to be a priest, they were able to finish their academic work together.

"The most salient dimension of that for me was that even if I haven't

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's perspective

The pious fellowship permits no one to be a sinner.

Why is it that it is often easier for us to confess our sins to God than to a brother or sister? God is holy and sinless. But brothers and sisters are sinful as we are. We must ask ourselves whether we have not often been deceiving ourselves with our confession of sin to God, whether we have not rather been confessing our sins to ourselves and also granting ourselves absolution. Self-forgiveness can never lead to a breach with sin; this can be accomplished only by the judging and pardoning Word of God itself.

To whom shall we make confession?

Anybody who has once been horrified by the dreadfulness of his or her

own sin that nailed Jesus to the Cross will no longer be horrified by even the rankest sins of a brother or sister. Only the brother or sister under the Cross can hear a confession . . . In the presence of a psychiatrist I can only be a sick person; in the presence of a Christian brother or sister I can dare to be a sinner.

What brought upon Jesus the accusation of blasphemy, namely, that he forgave sinners, is what now takes place in the Christian community in the power of the presence of Jesus Christ. One forgives the other in the name of the triune God. And there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over the sinner who repents.

[Excerpted from Chapter 5 of *Life Together*, Harper and Row, 1954.]

meant to do something wrong, it may be that it has come out that way.”

Making amends with people she has known in the past has been particularly important to Heyward.

“Alcoholism was a way to be out of control of what I was doing relationally, so to keep going back to some of those relationships is to recognize that people are very important to me.”

Heyward added that there is a flip side to confession.

“I have been in a couple of relationships where I have been deeply wounded and there has been no recognition on the part of the other person that anything was wrong. I have wrestled with how you forgive in that situation. What I have come to is that the readiness to forgive those who wound us is all we can do and that readiness is itself a release. In no way does it wipe away memory but it takes away resentment.”

The readiness of many in the Black Church and the Church in Latin America to forgive their oppressors is striking to Heyward, particularly in their willingness to break the cycle of violence.

“We really do take on the sins of the world and sufferings of others which in turn makes me realize how much we have to repent for. I may not have voted for George Bush and I may despise the Gulf War, but I am not above that war.” Heyward added that when she needs to confess something that “doesn’t involve people, like harming the earth, I incorporate into corporate prayer.”

“I don’t think the dominant powers that we live among know much about

this. We live in an ethic of violence and muscle flexing. The Churches have one primary mission: to help people embody an ethic of compassion and forgiveness with justice and to help them believe that we are created in the image of a good and creative God.”

Facing Fear

Jim Lewis, a *Witness* contributing editor who is probably best known to readers for his decisive political action, says the primary thing he has to confess is his own “all-encompassing fear.”

Lewis says he spent his ninth year confined to bed, listening to his own heart.



Jim Lewis: Confessing an “all-encompassing fear.”

credit: ENS

“I had rheumatic fever. I was isolated. The fears were awful. The doctor made me very much aware of my own heart. I listened to my heartbeat and thought this is something that could stop.”

Lewis’ sense of his own mortality merged with a sense of isolation. He felt abandoned by the friends with whom he had played sports.

In his tenth year, Lewis opted to change schools, because he felt

changed and isolated, afraid to be perceived as odd.

To enter Baltimore’s Episcopal boys’ school, he had to take an entry exam.

“I was very fearful that I wouldn’t be able to take that test. I ran out of the room in tears. A teacher came out and put his arm around me and took me back into the room. He gave me absolution.”

In adulthood the fear that he would be isolated or mocked continued. With it grew a distrust of community. “I had a fear of being part of a community or of being left behind.”

So it was unsettling to Lewis on several counts when he felt a call to the priesthood.

“I looked at the priests I had known in my life. I saw the collar, the separation from people, the loneliness of that.”

Lewis says he fled to the Marines for three years before deciding to consent to ordination. “Fear surrounding a deep sense of awe took me into the Church.

“I look self-possessed, but the fear is there in stepping out front or taking a spot in the back row of the church. There’s always a sort of fundamental fear there.

“Part of the absolution is coming to understand that that fear is a lack of faith which, at the same time, is moving you into action. Without it, there’s no sense of making a commitment. It’s almost like a conversion experience. Awe and fear come together. I think the spirit moves us in directions where we come up against something in ourselves.”

TV

Restored to community:

A short history of sacramental confession

From its early days, the Church has been faced with the problem of sin, not only in the world beyond it, but within the Body itself.

In the first three centuries of Christianity, conversions were dramatic, often involving major life changes and heroic risks, according to Roman Catholic theologian Monika Hellwig.

Baptism was the great rite of repentance, welcoming new converts into a community whose values stood in stark contrast to those of the surrounding culture. It was understood that ongoing conversion and reconciliation were mediated through the life of the community and the celebration of the Eucharist.

But the early Church was also faced with the question of how to reconcile members who might seriously betray the community and its way of life. The custom arose of readmitting such persons to the Church through a formal process of public repentance, which included fasting, the wearing of special penitential garb, and kneeling before the congregation to ask for prayer.

A general consensus developed that confession of Christ under persecution was sufficient to restore a sinner to the Church without the need for any formal ritual, and some claimed that the confession of the martyrs also restored others.

Since penance came to include severe, life-long restrictions -- such as

the prohibition of marriage, or permanent abstinence for those already married -- its use was reserved for the gravest of offenses, and often postponed until death seemed imminent.

By the fifth century, public penance was rare. At the same time, however, a form of private confession arose among the monks in Egypt. The confessor's role was to help discern the movement of the Spirit, and to discern remedies for areas of life where healing was needed. Often a fast was prescribed, which the confessor would undertake along with the penitent.

Gradually, confession as a means of spiritual growth was encouraged for all Christians, not only monks, and not only in extreme situations. Fasts were usually assigned, but almsgiving to the poor, the ransom of captives, or donations to the Church were sometimes substituted.

Penitentials, or manuals listing sins and appropriate penances, had become popular throughout Europe by the seventh century, furthering the spread of private confession but also giving rise to abuses and controversy.

"So heavy was the emphasis on measurement and on comparative severity of penances that the issue had in practice become one of punishment and expiation rather than one of implementing or realizing the turning back to God in the transformation of external dimensions of life expressing the inner conversion of heart," Hellwig writes.

The acceptance of money in place of fasting was abused by corrupt churchmen and the system tilted in favor of the rich. Also, the role of the Church -- and particularly ordained

clergy -- in dispensing absolution, had come to be regarded as essential.

Objection to these developments came to a head in the Reformation.

In his recent book *Confidentiality and Clergy*, William Rankin writes that the English reformers sided with the Protestants in rejecting the obligation of private confession to priests:

"Accepting that forgiveness of sins was accomplished by God once and for all in Christ, the English Reformers established general confession in public worship... Anglicans were chiefly to live their lives based on a lively faith in God, who nurtures and liberates, rather than on the private confession to a priest and the slavishness either to priest or to the scrupulosity that might imply."

Yet, Anglicanism has also preserved the tradition of individual confession, said Louis Weil, professor of Liturgies at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. It is not regarded as vital for salvation, but it has been lifted up by Anglican theologians as an aid to growth in holiness.

The inclusion of a full rite for individual confession in the 1979 Prayerbook of the Episcopal Church "shows there had been a significant growth of the practice in general Episcopal use," Weil said. "There are a number of Episcopalians for whom it is part of an ongoing spiritual commitment."

Weil stressed the importance of acknowledging a variety of valid approaches to reconciliation, including individual confession. "Private confession potentially offers a deeper focus on what is going on in our lives," Weil said. "It is potentially a greater challenge to honesty, and opens the door to a deeper maturity of insight." It also offers "the wisdom and counsel of a trusted listener, who can then assure me in spoken word that God's love is greater than my sin -- which all of us need to hear."

TV

This report was prepared by **Marianne Arbogast**. Material from Monika Hellwig is found in her book, *Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion*, Michael Glazier, Inc., 1984.



credit: Dierdre Luzwick

Unmasking our pain

Therapeutic politics: A way to confront collective violence
by Ched Myers

"Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that has silenced him; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes withered; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they were not strong enough."

Mark 9:16

What if they held a war and everybody came? This, it seems, is what we have just witnessed. Those who tried to raise their voices against Desert Storm were officially *silenced*, and the rest were officially *silent*, successfully manipulated yet again by opportunistic politicians. Silent in the face of the most horrific unleashing of aerial bombing in history. Silent still.

We have seen in Desert Storm the genius of the system in bold relief. Minority dissent is tolerated, marginalized or squashed, depending on the necessities of the political moment. But the system is *predicated* upon a "silent majority."

In our efforts to stop the Gulf War, we learned, like the disciples in Mark, that we are not strong enough. The discipline is to learn why.

"How long has he been this way?" asks Jesus. The demon-possessed boy's father replies: "Since childhood" (9:21). Ancient wisdom indeed! It is rearticulated in the modern psycho-therapeutic axiom that the seeds of adult pathologies are sown in early childhood trauma. And it may hold a key to our efforts to get at why

Ched Myers is West Coast program director for the AFSC and author of a commentary on Mark, *Binding the Strong Man*. This article was excerpted from *Who Will Roll This Stone Away? Discipleship Queries for North American Christians*, Orbis Press, 1992.

Dierdre Luzwick is a Wisconsin graphics artist specializing in charcoal drawings. Her book *Endangered Species* is to be released by Harper & Row this year.

we have been unable to cast out our national demons that again rampaged across the earth in Desert Storm.

Alice Miller, a Swiss psychotherapist and philosopher, sees the roots of human violence in what she calls the "silent drama" of the child. Children, she argues, are utterly dependent

If the roots of the individual's complicity in the cycle of violence lie in childhood trauma, could it not follow that the seeds of our destructive national/cultural character lie deep in the shadow side of our collective story?

on adult love and acceptance, and therefore unable to consciously process anger resulting from experiences of hurt or domination. Their sole means of survival is to internalize their sense of betrayal while rationalizing or idealizing the adult's "good intentions." The child must eventually repress the trauma, even to the point of forgetting altogether (that is, banishing it to the realm of the unconscious). It is only later, as an adult, that the true emotions associated with the trauma are discharged, but then indirectly, because of the "unconscious imperative" to "split off the disquieting parts of the inner self and project them onto an available object."

While this drama is most clearly played out in the family, Miller reminds us that its impact is socio-political as well. When the unconscious store of pain and anger is *introjected* its cost is intrapsychic, manifested through *depression* and various forms

of despair. When it is *projected*, the cost is social, taking the form of *oppression*, the reproduction of the trauma in the public theater. If the target in the former case is the self, in the latter it is inevitably other vulnerable persons or groups. In the family this means the next generation of children. In the context of society, it usually means projection of anger/vengeance upon those already oppressed or disenfranchised. What else can explain our uncanny, vicious national habit of "blaming the victims" for social violence, regardless of whether it is rape, poverty or insurrection?

But let us take Miller's model of the "vicious circle of contempt" one step further. If the roots of the *individual's* complicity in the cycle lie in childhood trauma, could it not follow that the seeds of our destructive national/cultural character lie deep in the shadow side of our *collective* story? *Imagine* for a moment the psychic health of a people who pass on, from generation to generation, a mystified heritage such as the one communicated in our American history books! Here the incalculable traumas of conquest and dis-possession, enslavement and genocide, economic exploitation and objectification, militarism and ecocide, *are all repressed*, masked instead by grandiose founding myths and idealized portraits of our "fathers."

Historical honesty, if we in the dominant culture had the courage to practice it, would compel us to admit that our "prosperity" and privilege are predicated upon a legacy characterized as much by racism and greed as by liberty and democracy. But of course we do *not* face the shadow side of our own story, because we are shame-bound. So we unconsciously harbor its suppressed traumas, and pass on its myths (thinking them essentially benign). So we consolidate and extend our national pathologies,

finding new victims to blame and new enemies toward whom we may split off our insecure rage.

This collective psychic substructure functions to create and maintain the mutually reinforcing family and social patterns of domination intergenerationally. It is, I believe, as much responsible for keeping the dominant culture silenced and domesticated as is any superstructure of law, state or military. It helps explain why North Americans *essentially police themselves*, why social contradictions are so ignored, and why the process of social change is so difficult here.

"It is part of the tragic nature of the repetition-compulsion that someone who hopes eventually to find a better world than the one he or she experienced as a child in fact keeps creating instead the same undesired state of affairs," writes Miller. This simply restates Freud's dictum that "What is unconscious is bound to be reproduced." We are facing in this country much more than bad politics. The pathology is deep, structural, and we must face it squarely.

As activists we have exhausted ourselves trying to *conscientize* and *organize* people politically. Why do we have so little success in this country? I suspect it is in part because our standard means of educating and exhorting have no power to transform silenced, shamed people. *Paternalism* (doing it *for* the masses, as in *vanguard*) prevents people from becoming their own cultural, social, political and economic subjects, and only reinforces the silence and powerlessness. *Prophecy* (*Just do it!*, the politics of moral imperative) by itself will not suffice since as Miller warns, "what is unconscious cannot be abolished by proclamation or prohibition".

Nor will *political education* alone: "Since one's use and abuse of power over others usually have the function

of holding one's own feelings of helplessness in check -- which means the exercise of power is often unconsciously motivated -- rational arguments can do nothing to impede this process."

We must unsilence the past, and understand that the ideology of "progress" has been a mask for the deadly ambitions of European expansionism for two centuries.

What is needed is a way of political organizing that enables people to identify and struggle through the social lattice of dysfunction (family/group/institution/class/race/gender/nation). Do we have the compassion, as feminist therapy puts it, to "listen the silenced into speech"? Can we redefine solidarity as *radical empathy*? Do we have the courage or the discipline to engage ourselves and each other in that long process of *dis-illusionment* that is at once personal and political?

If the Church wished to stand in true empathy/solidarity with its people but preserve its own discourse, it seems to me, we should have more firmly and publicly invited the American people to prayer. But by prayer, as I have contended above, I mean that long and difficult task of *dis-illusionment*, the only process whereby the silenced can find their true voice.

Repentance is at the heart of Jesus' Gospel, but sadly its potency has been lost in the labyrinth of American pietism and shame culture, where it has come to mean *feeling bad*. Perhaps however we may find a modern paraphrase in the popular wisdom of Twelve Step practice. Here the first step toward recovery, as essential as it is uncomfortable, is to acknowledge

both that I am part of the problem, and in my *illusioned* state impotent to resolve it. Beginning with my own pain ensures that I am the *subject* of the struggle for liberation -- an essential component of transformative politics. At the same time, the therapeutic notion of recovery recognizes better than privatized religion did that the problem is the complicity of persons in a *system* of addiction, and that only with the support of a community of *resistance* (in this case, the Twelve-Step group) can behavior begin to change and remain changed.

But for *therapeutic politics* repentance and resistance mean something more: the dysfunctional social system cannot be reformed, and must be confronted at its roots. In this sense it is apocalyptic, in that it recognizes fundamental contradictions in the dominant order and settles only for the revolutionary transformation. To make sense of this we can use the example of an alcoholic breaking with a dysfunctional family system in order to draw political analogies.

When the alcoholic *repents* s/he calls the whole family system into question, especially its myths, secrets, and other addictions. Those who hold power or prestige in the family are invariably the ones who, while perhaps glad that the alcoholic is on the wagon, refuse to acknowledge their complicity, or fundamental structural problems in the family system. This *conservatism* is often legitimized by the myth that *we are a good family*. The flip side of this is of course the fear of public acknowledgement of family problems; grandiosity and depression conspire fiercely against liberation and the shame system. The process of recovery is thus a long and often frustrating process of standing one's own ground and refusing to cooperate with old family patterns (*resistance*) while at the same time inviting other family

members to *dis-illusionment*, so that the system may be changed through cooperative recovery.

Similarly, in the North American context we must face the truth of our "society of origin." This is difficult because ours is such a highly mystified culture. For example, those in power (the true *conservatives*, regardless of political party) trade heavily in mythological stock concerning our collective nobility. These myths fuse the essential goodness (and innocence!) of our civilization with the divine imperative of *progress*, from the Puritan's *city on a hill* to *Manifest Destiny*, from the *Monroe Doctrine* to Reagan's *America is back and walking tall*. Movements of social reform are sooner or later embraced and coopted in the name of progress and *working within the system to make the system work*. But any dissenting movement that goes further, advocating that we *dis-illusion* ourselves of these myths, much less suggesting that there are fundamental problems with the system, is immediately and necessarily marginalized.

This is, however, *exactly* what we must do. Our process will involve helping each other look deeply and critically at our roots as a dominant civilization. We must *unsilence* the past, and understand that the ideology of *progress* has been a mask for the deadly ambitions of European expansionism for two centuries. And we must mourn *the sins of our fathers*, not because we can change their behavior, but because we cannot change our own if we continue to carry the suppressed trauma in our bones. We must give each other permission to acknowledge that we have become deeply dysfunctional as a society, that we are at a spiritual and historical dead-end. And then we must help each other *turn away* (the meaning of *metanoia*, the Greek word for *repentance*) toward a new social vision.

TW

Sanctions on Iraq condemned

Economic sanctions against Iraq must be lifted immediately to avert widespread catastrophe, according to three international relief organizations.

"All but the wealthiest and most powerful of Iraq's 18 million people are certain to experience new epidemics of disease, other fatal health problems, and increasingly severe malnutrition culminating in a major famine," they warned in a late-July Interagency Statement.

The American Friends Service Committee, Quaker Peace and Service (London), and Mennonite Central Committee staff in Baghdad said that countries holding Iraqi assets should unfreeze them, and that Iraq should be allowed to export oil in order to buy essential goods, food and medicine.

*American Friends Service
Committee News Release 7/91*

U.N. Protests Palestinian Deportations

The United Nations Security Council has unanimously called on Israel to stop deporting Palestinians from the occupied territories, and "to insure the safe and immediate return of all those deported." The resolution, issued in response to the deportation of four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip in May, cited the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which makes it illegal to deport inhabitants of territories occupied by another country. Israel contends that the convention refers only to mass deportations.

Fellowship 7-8/91

Subtle Censorship

"Every year, there are dozens of important stories that the mass media ignore. These would expose shady conduct by high officials, by the military, by the C.I.A., by the press itself. They uncover hidden dangers and warn of crises to come. Knowing about these stories could change our lives or maybe even save them.

"There are many reasons for this neglect. Editors think some issues are just too dull to sustain public interest or will offend the high and mighty or require too much money, time and space to explain.

"A subtle form of censorship takes over when significant stories are buried or ignored by the mainstream press."

**Bill Moyers
Convergence, The Christic
Institute, Summer 91**

Anheuser-Bush Boycott

The Dolphin Project and Sea Shepherd Conservation Project have called for a boycott of Anheuser-Bush products, according to *Animal's Agenda*. Anheuser-Bush owns Sea World, where another orca whale died of unknown causes last Fall. This is the 14th orca whale to die since 1965. Sea World has "petting pools" for dolphins, exposing them to human germs and high levels of chlorine. Think what it would be like to live in a highly chlorinated pool all your days and you can understand the irritation to skin, eyes, and breathing passages caused to the dolphins. Until the "petting pools" stop, consider joining the boycott of Anheuser-Bush.

Creation Spirituality 3-4/91

Twelve Indian chiefs signed an agreement with Ontario Premier Bob Rae that recognizes the rights of native Canadians to self-government. Under the accord, the first of its kind, all negotiations between Ontario and the province's Indians will be conducted on a government-to-government basis.

--Detroit Free Press, 8/7/91

shoot takes



credit: Northwest Passage

1992 *Kairos* U.S.A.

A call for
action

"Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, 'The kairos is fulfilled, the realm of God has come near; Repent and believe in the good news.' " (Mark 1:14-15)

What is the time? Where is the place?

Something is happening. The Spirit is on the move. A decisive moment in a crucial place has arrived. And we are struggling to act in concert with it. Here and now.

We believe we are living in what the New Testament writers call a *kairos*, a time when the Spirit of God shatters religious complicity with injustice. A *kairos* is a moment of truth, a time for decision, a crisis of judgment and grace; it is a God-given opportunity for conversion and hope.

A *kairos* has come in this place, now called North America, now called United States, but a place more ancient with history and peoples: shores, mountains, plains, deserts, and forests long ago named sacred.

We see the geography of this moment exposed for us in high-relief by the forthcoming anniversary (the 500 year *quincentenary*) of Columbus' voyage to the Americas. That voyage marked the beginning of a new world order of European domination built on Native American resources, the violation of the land, and slave labor.

We understand the official celebration of the quincentenary (and its commercial variants) as an imperial liturgy not only retelling lies of the past, but building a consensus for more of the same: a two-tiered system of global and domestic economic apartheid.

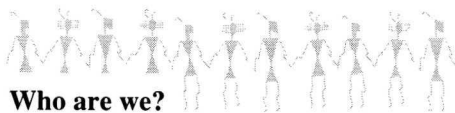
This is the time and place for resistance and hopeful action. We are called to join Native Americans, African Americans, and so many others who have for 500 years refused to cooperate with oppression.

It is the time and place for repentance and conversion. The Church *ecumenically* has been complicit in this history. Not merely silent before violence and injustice, it has been an active participant, often mistaking cultural imperialism for evangelization. Frankly, our Churches in the United States have succumbed to national

Our Churches in the United States have succumbed to national myths and idols which compromise the very meaning of the Gospel before the world. We are now called by our love for the Church to confront it with its own good news.

myths and idols which compromise the very meaning of the Gospel before the world.

We are now called by our love for the Church to confront it with its own good news. Building on the spirit of 500 years of resistance we also say a clear Yes to new priorities and new ways of being Church as we prepare to enter the 21st century.



Who are we?

We are local groups, organizations, and churches yearning to become a faith-based partnership movement, one which acts for deep and real social transformation in this moment of our common history.

We take heart, indeed we see it as a confirmation of the Spirit, that many groups and communities in the United States are recognizing this moment independently and in conversation. Energetic organizing is happening within Native American, Latino, Chicano, and African American communities in response to the quincentenary. Small groups spring up to study Scripture

and the various Third World "*kairos* documents." Christian peacemakers re-examine their work. Theologians are calling for reflection and action.

Congregations completely re-evaluate their ministries in the light of economic justice. Denominations resolve to consider the meaning of 1492 and their own role in the subjugation

and destruction of whole cultures and peoples.

To embrace and nourish these many uprisings of the Spirit, we call ourselves "1992/*Kairos* USA" and issue this call.

Kairos, as we are using it, is an openly Christian term and we anticipate being expressly Christian in our theological reflection. We know that to address the Churches in the United States (both Protestant and Catholic) about idolatry, about confusion, about captivity to the faith of imperial culture, we need to speak freely from within the very Gospel we claim to announce.

We are, however, excluding no one from our efforts. Indeed we welcome challenges and input from people of many faith perspectives as we find the language and spiritual power to discover in this place, at this moment, the way toward justice and peace for humans and for the planet of which we're part.



What are we committed to?

Our commitment is to the work of

repentance, conversion, and concrete actions. U.S. Christians stand in need of confession for corporate sins continuing unabated now 500 years. The soul of America yearns for redress, reparation, and reconciliation with Native Americans, African Americans, and other ethnic peoples.

True repentance, we understand, is far more than feeling sorry, more than acts of public apology. Repentance is change. It will surely require a complete transformation of the dominating culture, beginning with ourselves in the Church. It goes without saying, that it is the Eurocentric white community in our movement which bears special responsibility for this particular work of transformation.

Concretely, we have committed ourselves to work toward a common movement through several goals in the short term: 1) Develop and distribute educational materials on the truth of 1492; 2) Develop liturgical materials and actions; 3) Encourage intercession and political solidarity now for the initiatives of Native, African American, and racial-ethnic communities; 4) Plan culminating events, both local and national, for October 1992; 5) Facilitate a theological process which might result in a USA *Kairos* document.

Toward these goals we are calling for the identification and formation of small, faith-based, grass roots communities to discern the signs of the *kairos*, and to undertake the work of action and reflection.

Join us. Let us intercede, in heart and deed, for one another and for this process of movement building.

This call was prepared by Kairos USA, a group which includes the National Council of Churches. For further information write to: 1992 Kairos USA, Sandy Toineeta, 475 Riverside Drive, N.Y., N.Y. 10115-0050. TW

Christian art: Concern for the world

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

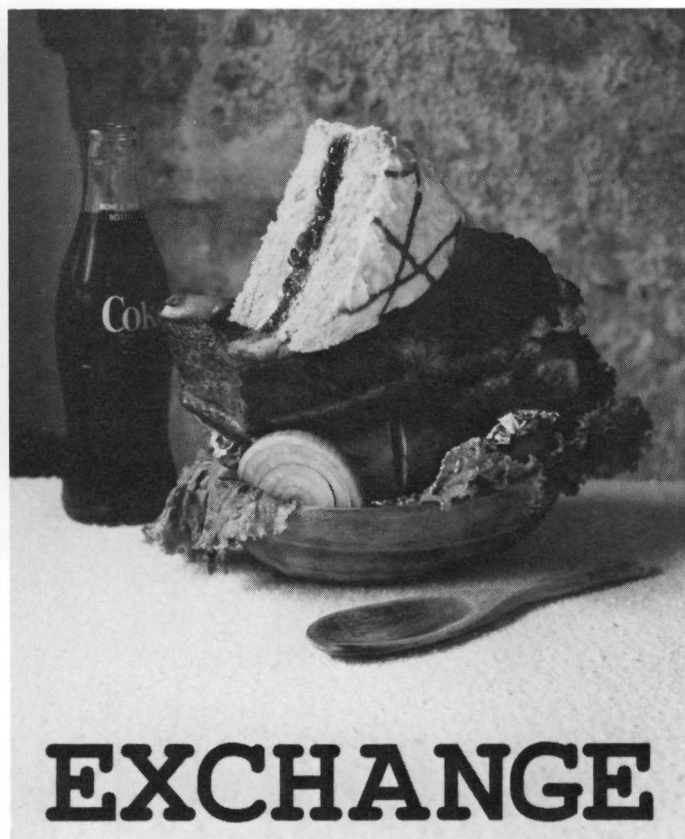
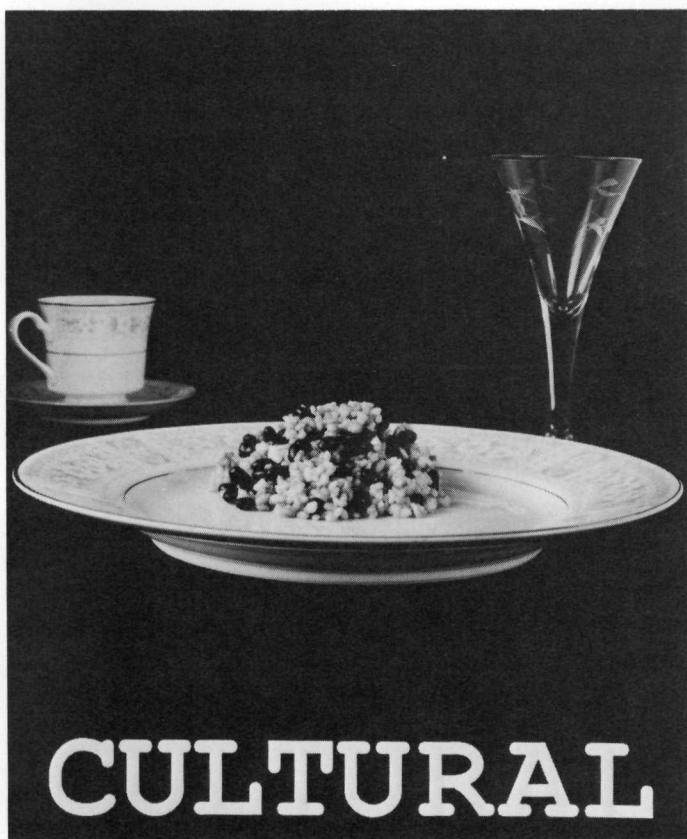
During the Middle Ages, when Christianity exerted great influence throughout Europe as a political, social and economic system as well as a religion, almost all art was *Christian art*. Using themes derived from the Bible and the history of the Church, artists decorated cathedrals, helped to instruct a nonliterate populace, affirmed clerical and royal hierarchies, and even occasionally made critical comments -- through symbolic and indirect means --

about contemporary life.

In today's secular society, however, where Christianity is usually seen as a matter of private spirituality, *Christian art* has come to be regarded solely as an adjunct to religious practice, seen most commonly in the form of scriptural illustrations, liturgically related images and objects, and perhaps as aids to prayer or meditation. There are many with this kind of artistic vision working in the service of the Church, and their work is important. Much of

it has been reproduced and discussed in a variety of religious publications.

But, there is a great deal of other art being made today that does not look like *Christian art*, yet does, we believe, fit within the larger context of Christianity that could be called the *Church in the world*. Some of this work is being produced by artists who, like ourselves, are motivated by a faith-based perspective, but who believe that such art need not look *religious* in order to deal with Gospel imperatives. Much of the other work we consider Christian in spirit, however, is being produced by artists who have no affiliation with any organized religion, some of whom, at times, might even express outright hostility towards the institutional Church. Nevertheless, their artwork embraces issues of human compassion, social justice and



credit: Blaise Tobia

peace in a way that is fully compatible with our day-to-day struggle to live out our lives as Christians.

We intend to use these pages over the next months to present the work of a wide range of artists whose efforts, in our estimation, have an importance beyond the domains of the fashionable, the tasteful, even the esthetic... We also believe their efforts to have a special resonance for Christians conscious of social-justice issues, even though the work might not be specifically Christian in subject or approach. We hope you will agree. We look forward to your comments, criticisms and suggestions.

V.M. & B.T.

Virginia Maksymowicz and Blaise Tobia are visual artists, Roman Catholics, social activists and a married couple. They each earned a BA in Fine Arts from Brooklyn College, C.U.N.Y., and an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of California, San Diego. Maksymowicz has taught at Oberlin College, Wayne State University and the Minneapolis College of Art and Design; she is presently a visiting assisting professor at Franklin & Marshall College in Pennsylvania. Tobia taught at Wayne State University and at U.C. San Diego, and is now an associate professor at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Maksymowicz also spent three years as the director of a SoHo gallery. They both worked as editors of *Art & Artists* magazine, and their writings about art have appeared in publications ranging from *The Other Side*, *Sojourners*, and *The National Catholic Reporter* to art magazines like *The New Art Examiner*, *Artpapers*, *Afterimage* and *High Performance*. Their artworks have been shown across the country in galleries and museums, storefront windows, union halls and city buses.

Individually and collaboratively,



credit: Virginia Maksymowicz

Tobia and Maksymowicz try to integrate their esthetics, social/political and religious concerns into their art. Tobia's *Cultural Exchange* uses advertisement-like images to underscore the hollowness of foreign policies that

favor the exchange of *culture* with the third world but do little to rectify the vast imbalance between first- and third-world economies. Maksymowicz's *The South African People Shall Rise*, shown here in detail, was origi-



Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz



nally made for an exhibit organized by the artists' group Art Against Apartheid. It combines figures reminiscent of the body print on the Shroud of Turin with quotes from the South African Freedom Charter, and a variation on an old religious maxim (*The Blood of Martyrs/The Seed of Faith*). **TW**

Telling the truth about our lives

by Melanie Morrison

For too many years, I tried to live out my ministry in the Church without acknowledging my identity as a lesbian. Until the duplicity grew so thick it threatened to choke me. Until I realized that I had lost my voice and was in danger of losing any sense of integrity.

Now that I am out of the Church's closet, I find myself tempted to hide in a new one. As I become more involved in working with other lesbians to advocate change, I am hesitant to acknowledge my identity as a Christian. Many lesbians that I respect have left the Church, having experienced double jeopardy at the hands of an institution that has often proclaimed bad news rather than good for women in general and lesbian women in particular.

I find that my ordination can be an initial barrier as these women meet me and I am frequently asked how I can possibly remain identified with Christianity. Being a minority within a minority has pushed me to articulate why Christianity continues to engage me. I share many of the questions my post-christian lesbian sisters raise about the Christian tradition, and ask myself,

Melanie Morrison is an ordained United Church of Christ minister, serving as co-pastor of Phoenix Community Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She is also co-director of Leaven, Inc., in Lansing, Michigan, which offers resources, workshops, and retreats in the areas of spiritual development, feminism, and sexual justice.

"What is it in this tradition that is liberating and life-giving for me and what can I not find elsewhere, outside the Church?"

The first thing I name out loud when pressed to "give account for the hope that is within me" is confession. If I were no longer part of a worshipping community, I would miss many aspects of worship, but I would miss most the invitation to confession and the announcement of forgiveness. Nowhere else am I weekly confronted with this discipline of honestly acknowledging individual and collective complicity in the sin I daily encounter. Nowhere else am I confronted with the promise that I am free, and the reminder that I am obliged, to begin anew.

If I were no longer part of a worshipping community, I would miss most the invitation to confession and the announcement of forgiveness.

The liturgical practice of confession is different from the personal discipline of being scrupulous and honest with oneself. Confession in the midst of a community opens doors into

myself that self-denial had kept locked. When I hear another person put words to her confession, it can startle me into new, initially painful, self-revelation. As Adrienne Rich says, *When someone tells me a piece of the truth which has been withheld from me, and which I needed in order to see my life more clearly, it may bring acute pain, but it can also flood me with a cold, sea-sharp wash of relief.* ("Women and Honor: Some Notes on Lying")

The congregation I serve is three years old. We formed out of the conviction that a church was needed in southwest Michigan that would be truly welcoming and liberating for all people, including lesbians and gay men. We chose the name Phoenix as a symbol of our belief that resurrection

is possible out of the ashes of fear, self-hatred, and oppression. The prayer of confession and the words of assurance are listed in our bulletin under the heading "Telling The Truth About Our Lives."

When I say that I have not found any other place or context where I am called to tell the truth about my life and to hear the promise of forgiveness, I mean that I have not found any other place or

context outside the Church where *both* things are set before me simultane-



credit: Nicole Drovín, Gloria Mark

ously. And one without the other can become either oppressive or trivial. Confession without the promise of forgiveness cannot long be borne. Forgiveness without the discipline of confession is cheap grace.

In the lesbian community (sometimes more thoroughly than in the Church), I have encountered people who are willing to be very confessional, although they might not call it that. I have found women who are willing to examine the ways that they (we) participate in maintaining racism, ableism, classism, and other systemic forms of oppression. I have witnessed honest dialogue and painstaking efforts to eliminate these systemic sins in the lesbian community. When we fail, however, as we inevitably do, and we are brought face to face with the fact that we have once again been guilty of perpetuating racism, for example, I have longed for us to be able to speak a word of forgiveness aloud. Without forgiveness, the weight of complicity can drive us into despair or self-righteousness ("I am more politically correct than thou").

On the other hand, there are places or contexts where I have heard forgiveness proclaimed in a way that bypasses the hard work of truth-telling. There is, for example, a misuse of some contemporary therapeutic concepts that would have us believe that all shame is dysfunctional. The capacity to feel shame for behavior that has been harmful is, I believe, a sign of our humanity. The poet Julia de Burgos wrote,

That my grandfather was a slave is my grief;

had he been a master that would have been my shame.

During the Gulf War, I needed a community of people with whom I could confess my shame as an American citizen. I needed a community of people with whom I could be truthful

about the fact that there were bodies, not only buildings, being ripped apart. I needed a community of people with whom I could weep. I needed a confessing community.

That need is ongoing because, as Adrienne Rich says, *Truthfulness, honor, is not something which springs ablaze of itself; it has to be created between people*. Adrienne Rich was not writing about liturgical confession when she wrote these words about truthfulness, but they bespeak what I experience when, as a congregation, we are invited to tell the truth about our lives. Rich is not romantic about

the process of truth-telling. She names it "delicate, often terrifying" to the persons involved. Yet she affirms the process of truth-telling for the same reasons I affirm that I need a confessing and forgiving community, when she says,

It is important to do this because it breaks down human self-delusion and isolation.

It is important to do this because in so doing we do justice to our own complexity.

It is important to do this because we can count on so few people to go that hard way with us. **TW**

The Detroit Witness staff:

Marietta Jaeger is responsible for circulation and for promotion. Jaeger comes to *The Witness* from the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, where she served as interim director.



Jaeger also has a ministry of reconciliation based on her experience of God's faithfulness when her seven-year-old daughter was kidnapped from a Montana campsite and killed 18 years ago. Jaeger is author of *The Lost Child* and recently travelled to South Korea and Japan on an Amnesty International speaking tour opposing the death penalty.

Marianne Arbogast works mornings at the Catholic Worker soup kitchen. She edits the Detroit Worker paper, *On The Edge*. She is the part-time, assistant editor of *The Witness*.



She comes to *The Witness* from *The Record* where she and I worked together to produce the Diocese of Michigan's newspaper.

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is a United Methodist pastor and author of *Seasons of Faith and Conscience*, Orbis, 1991. He is a contributing editor for *Sojourners*, my husband and the new (unpaid) book review editor for *The Witness*.

Maria Catalfo does the computer keylining for *The Witness* on a part-time basis. She is active in Irish Solidarity work. She is co-author of *How to Do Leaflets, Newsletters & Newspapers*.

The Witness' list of contributing editors has expanded. **Coleman McGehee**, eighth bishop of Michigan and long-time member of the ECPC board, has agreed to serve. McGehee is on the boards of Bread for the World, the ACLU and the Poverty and Social Reform Institute. **Walter Wink** is the author of a ground-breaking trilogy of books on the principalities and powers. Wink teaches at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York.

Germany's confession

by Victoria J. Barnett

In Germany, perspectives on the Confessing Church -- that group of German Protestants who fought to keep their Church independent of Nazism during the Third Reich -- have been revised several times since 1945. In the years immediately following the fall of Nazi Germany, the Confessing Church was viewed as the one stronghold of morality, decency and courage in a nation demonically devoid of all three. Many Allied denazification courts recognized it as a resistance group, and the early memoirs of the "*Kirchenkampf*" (the Church struggle) were heroic accounts of the battle against Nazism. Throughout the world, the Confessing Church story became identified particularly with the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the theologian executed for his role in the plot to kill Hitler. Survivors like Pastor Martin Niemöller, who spent six years in concentration camps, embodied a living political Christian witness.

Perhaps it was necessary for a while to stress the heroism of the Confessing Church. Otherwise, the challenge that Nazi history and the Holocaust addressed to Christianity could not have been addressed at all. But, with the passage of time and as more facts have

come to light, a more differentiated portrait of the Confessing Church has developed. Not coincidentally, this has occurred simultaneously with a deeper examination of the Nazi era as a whole. In Germany, city archives have been scoured, oral histories collected, and the role of German institutions in the Third Reich examined openly and critically. These investigations reveal the troubled ambivalence, tragic compromise and fatal caution that characterized most of those Germans who

tried to oppose Nazism.

This was true in the Confessing Church as well. It is generally acknowledged, for example, that most Protestant pastors, including those who joined the Confessing Church, were deeply nationalistic, and that most either welcomed Hitler's rise to power or viewed it as the lesser of several evils. Most, too, were anti-Semitic, offering little support for Protestants affected by the Nazi racial laws and virtually no help at all for Jews caught in Nazism's web. Such sentiments paralyzed the Protestant Church. Even within the Confessing Church, the clear-sighted decisiveness of Dietrich Bonhoeffer remained a lonely exception.

It has taken years for such aspects to be addressed openly. The most



credit: Robert McGovern

THE WITNESS

Victoria J. Barnett grew up in the Episcopal Church, and has an M.Div. from Union Theological Seminary in New York. She has lived in Germany since 1979. Barnett has authored a book on the Confessing Church, based on oral histories, which will be published by Oxford University Press in the spring of 1992.

complete work on the Confessing Church's failure to oppose Nazi persecution of the Jews, Wolfgang Gerlach's *Als die Zeugen schwiegen*, written in the early 1970s, was not published until 1988. After all, it is painful to admit that there are few heroes, and that even they have flawed records, and to recognize that even compromises made in good faith may prove to be fatal moral errors. To be reminded of this while we seek to define our own political witness is to be reminded both of our own fallibility and history's treachery. Neither are comforting notions.

But our deeper understanding of the Confessing Church does not necessarily challenge what it, at its best, tried to do. In fact, it gives us deeper insights into the Christian struggle to define its witness in the world. The radical potential of the Confessing Church, as stated in the 1934 Barmen Confession, committed Christians to place obedience to God above obedience to a state's demands. This radical vision, though not always fulfilled, moved some Christians to resist Nazism in ways they might not have oth-

erwise. After 1945, it continued to move many of them to confront, with genuine remorse and guilt, the enormity of what had happened to them, their Church and their country.

What do we make, then, of this troubling history? How does the Confessing Church help us to understand our own Christian witness? What *is* a confessing Church? What is it called to be? What can Christians around the world, including the United States, learn from the German Confessing Church's experience?

One of the most succinct, thoughtful responses to these questions came from Hans Iwand, a Confessing Church theologian. During the Third Reich, Iwand declared that "a confessing Church is always in the opposition, in every system, under every government, against every party." To some, Iwand's remark repeats the injunction to be in the world, but not of it. For others, these words are problematic precisely because they seem to stress the *otherworldliness* of faith. The conclusion that many drew from the Church's experience under Nazism

is that a Church must politically commit itself, not just against something, but for something. From this perspective, solidarity with the victims of evil means not just opposing the oppressors, but working together with those seeking to overcome systemic evil. After all, was not one of the Confessing Church's problems during the Nazi era its naive, futile attempt to remain *apolitical* in a system that defined everything and everyone politically?

But Iwand's remarks are worth pondering, particularly in light of the recent developments in the socialist world. What he was saying is that a confessing Church, whatever short-term alliances it makes, is called, ultimately, to witness in the world to that which is not yet fulfilled in the world. It is a call to discipleship that, in every system, makes Christianity a radical possibility and gives Christians the status (*confessionis*!) of outsiders. There is no system in which injustice is not present, in which people do not suffer, in which there is not much for us to do. Iwand does not call us to be *apolitical*, but to be ever critical of our own compromises and alliances. **TW**

Confessing in Japan

George Gish, a missionary to Japan, recently made these comments to the United Methodist Detroit Annual Conference:

"In 1967, the Church in Japan issued a confession of its responsibility during the Second World War, saying it had not been a watchman. They asked for forgiveness, first from Christians in Asia, and then Christian brothers and sisters around the world, as well as their own fellow nationals in Japan; to forgive the Church for having become so much a part of that period of Japanese nationalism as a national Church.



credit: Watanabe Sadao

"I have learned a lot from being with this small minority of Christians in Japan -- less than one percent of the population. In the recent change of emperors, the Church has been at the forefront of saying the nation must never come under dominance of a nationalistic religion.

"As I come back to the United States at this particular moment, my heart is very heavy. I would hope and pray that in our enthusiasm as Americans, we don't get carried away, that we realize we are Christians first, and Christ is at the center of everything we do. And with this, I think we can join with Christians around the world, and rejoice in what that Pentecost experience means for us."

Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989) paperback 175 pages.

The project, begun in the time of Constantine, to enable Christians to share power without being a problem for the powerful, had reached its most impressive fruition. If Caesar can get Christians there to swallow the "Ultimate Solution," and Christians here to embrace the bomb, there is no limit to what we will not do for the modern world. Alas, in leaning over to speak to the modern world, we had fallen in. We had lost the theological resources to resist, lost the resources even to see that there was something worth resisting. (p. 27)

On the lips of neo-conservative theologians the cry, "Let the Church be the Church" has been employed in an assault on the left-leaning political agenda they cannot abide. In the pages of *Resident Aliens*, however, a similar appeal is for the Church to be the revolutionary, countercultural commu-

selling its seductive presumptions to the Church. It is the time, they argue, for us to reclaim our confessional identity.

Willimon and Hauerwas are not identifying a particular confessional moment in our common history (except insofar as they celebrate an historical demise of American christendom which reinstates the minority,

Resident Aliens is an unapologetically Christocentric work. The gospel, they say, is not a set of ideas or principles, but an ethic, a vision of reality, summed up and embodied "in a Jew from Nazareth." The Church is about discipleship, about the willingness to die in the adventure of following Jesus. Moreover, the ethics of Jesus are invariably communal, odd, and incarnational.

alien status of the Christian community). Admittedly, their book only just predates the recent wave of nationalist hysteria. They hadn't yet seen Generals Powell and Schwartzkof mount the pulpit at St. John the Divine, nor tickertape military triumphs, nor crosses tied with yellow ribbons. Still this book may serve as a popular and quite readable contribution to the current discussion of whether this is a decisive *kairos/confessional* moment for the Church.

Resident Aliens is an unapologetically Christocentric work. The gospel, they say, is not a set of ideas or principles, but an ethic, a vision of reality, summed up and embodied "in a Jew from Nazareth." The Church is about discipleship, about the willingness to die in the adventure of following Jesus. Moreover, the ethics of Jesus are invariably communal, odd, and incarnational. Biblical ethics are only possible in community, and invariably learned from the lives and witness of the local communion of saints. The

Sermon on the Mount, for example, rendered all but irrelevant by the Niebuhrian realists, is urged as neither a foreign policy agenda nor a program for individual piety nor an impossible messianic ethic accessible only for the divine Lord, but an honest ethic for a revolutionary discipleship community.

This book is made for study and discussion in the local congregation. It will practically gather them of its own accord. The gifts of lay people are expressly honored and examples abound garnered from Sunday School and confirmation classes, board meetings, anniversary reunion sermons and the like. The signs of the times may be read on the marquis of a small town movie house. On the other hand these same examples sneak up on a reader with substantial critiques of first world economic materialism, the technical reductionism of seminary training, or spiritual bankruptcy of much Christian social activism.

As a theological polemic it is somewhat scattershot, but then the design is essentially to provoke discussion. Its major weakness is an apparent naivete about the militancy of the principalities and powers. *Resident Aliens* concludes rightly with an appeal to Ephesians 6. The image of combat with the powers is fitting and to the point, yet one is left with the impression that these powers are little more than the paganism of an unbelieving culture. In fact, the planet and her peoples are being consumed by aggressive and predatory forces. A new world order is being imposed. The issue is not merely *de facto* atheism, but blasphemy. The struggle, as they say, is life and death, but perhaps more than our friends know or tell.

Nevertheless, this book yearns in its heart for an American confessing Church. Faithful and discerning, it may be the very book to start a confessional movement rolling in the local church.

TW

book review

by
Bill Wylie-Kellermann

nity which is its birthright, one unabashedly at odds with the assumptions of prevailing culture.

This collaboration between an ethicist and a preacher contends that in the apologetic effort to translate the gospel into modern categories (be they psychological, philosophical, political) the Church, and specifically some bigtime European-American theologians, have built a bridge in which the traffic has been predominantly one way: the world setting the agenda and

Pastor outrages Nazis *and* Confessing Church

By Victoria J. Barnett

Like other public officials in Nazi Germany, Protestant pastors, religion teachers and other Church officials were required to swear a loyalty oath. While most Protestants were willing to affirm their national loyalty, the wording of the Nazi oath ("I will be loyal and obedient to the Führer of the German Reich and nation, Adolf Hitler...") made clear that the oath was more than a declaration of patriotic feeling.

Particularly in the Confessing Church, the question of whether Christians could take such an oath was controversial. A pastor's refusal to swear it, of course, meant additional pressure from Nazi officials and the Gestapo. During the 1930s, hundreds of Confessing Church pastors had been harassed, interrogated or arrested. As such pressures on the Churches increased, Church leaders began to choose their battles -- and they decided to avoid an outright confrontation with the state over the loyalty oath. They reasoned that since (as the Barmen Declaration had stated) the Christian faith implicitly put obedience to God above the demands of earthly rulers, Christians remained by definition loyal, above all, to God, whether they took a national oath or not. In 1938, the Prussian Confessing Church Synod decided that those pastors who still had reservations could append a statement giving their own interpretation when they took the oath. Under these conditions, most Confessing Church pastors took the oath.

One who did not was Ilse Härter, a

member of the first generation of German women to take the Church's theological exams and seek ordination. Like most of these women, Härter became active in the Confessing Church.



Ilse Härter

The women were needed, particularly after war began in 1939, when most male Confessing pastors became soldiers and were sent to the front.

In 1941, Härter was sent to a non-Confessing parish in Berlin-Wannsee. The Berlin Confessing Church wanted her to establish and serve a group of Confessing Christians within that parish. Härter began her daily rounds, giving religion classes to children and visiting parish members. After three months, the parish presbytery and the Berlin Consistory (the official Church government, not the Confessing Church) summoned her. She was told to show her Aryan pass (the Nazi proof of "racial purity") and take the loyalty oath. Härter refused.

The Berlin Confessing Church, concerned that they would lose their foothold in Wannsee, desperately wanted Härter to keep her position there. They

tried to convince her to take the oath, using the 1938 Prussian Synod's solution by attaching her own qualifications to it. Härter still refused. "I told them it didn't matter how *we* saw it, but how the Nazis saw it," she says today.

The Consistory forced her to leave Wannsee five months after beginning her work.

Härter says it was not initially clear to members of the Confessing Church that "a theological decision has political consequences."

"Within the Confessing Church, it was fine, when one was arrested for *Church* reasons!" Härter explained. "But it was somehow suspicious, when one was arrested for *political* reasons. There was the debate, for example, about Bonhoeffer's arrest. The question arose: should he be on the Fürbittenliste (the list of those imprisoned or arrested, read aloud in Confessing parishes every Sunday)? Today, one is dumbfounded that such a thing was debated at all.

"We haven't finished discussing this entire question, up to today. For

*Witnesses,
the quick and the dead*

me, it is utterly clear. During the course of the Third Reich, I grasped it more and more . . . it became ever clearer that theological decisions have political consequences. For me, today, that is irrefutable. Whoever in the Church maintains that one can't speak out politically has, through silence, practically made a political decision. With that, s/he lets the political situation of the status quo remain as it is -- and doesn't figure that the Christian Church must stand for change, when it is called to."

TW



Detroit Youth, oil on linen by Lin Baum.

photo: Thomas Sutton

Lin Baum is a Detroit artist who has focussed her work on the world's children who are in distress.

Why Detroit?

*The decision to move **The Witness** to Detroit was controversial. See the Letters section in this issue for details. See the October issue for more about Detroit!*



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THE WITNESS

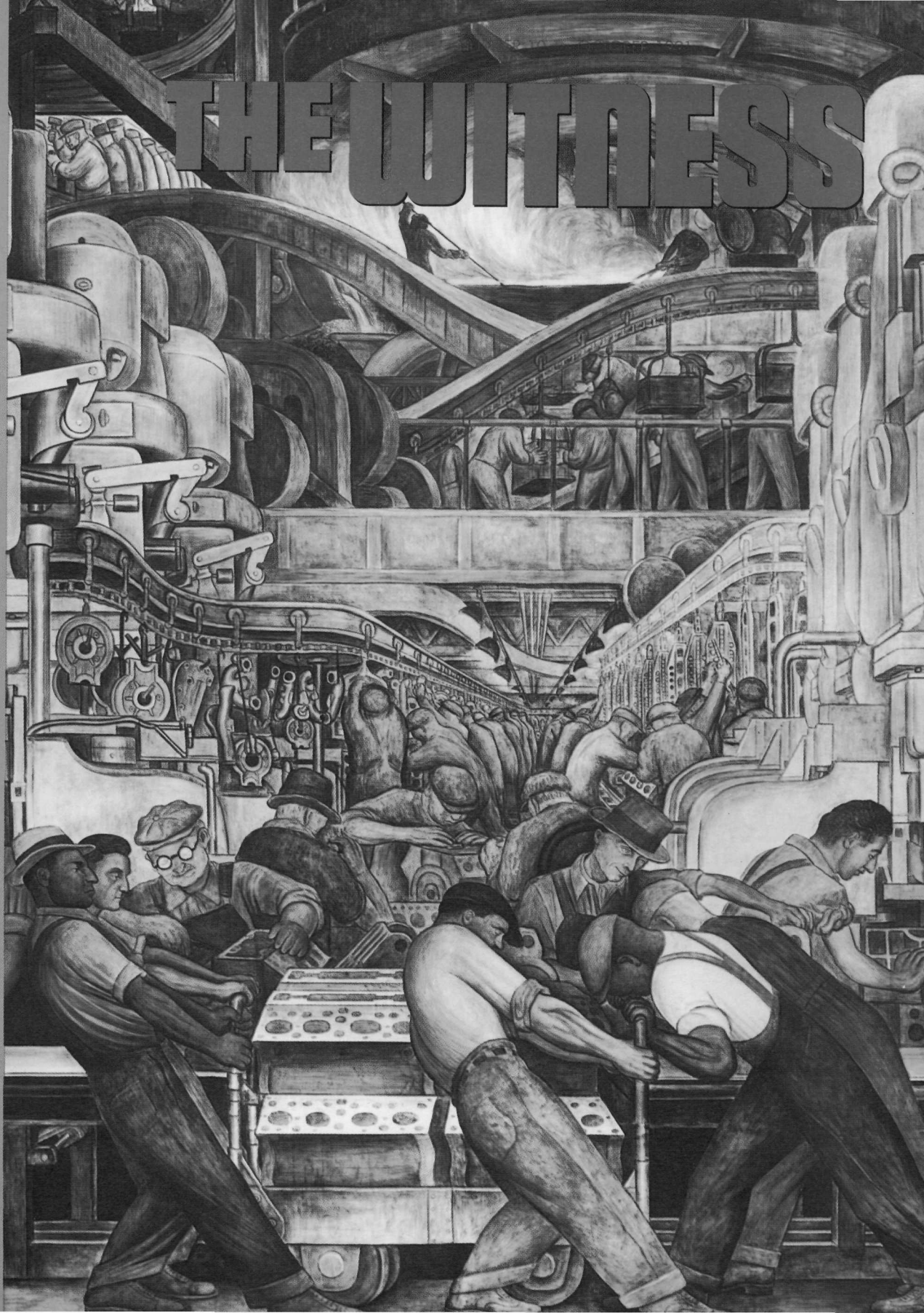
The Church questioned its urban mission during the machine age. Now it faces the challenge of preaching good news as capital flees, the infrastructure deteriorates and people suffer.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Challenging
Death

A Mother's
Love

New
Construction



In Praise of *The Witness*

SOMETIME DURING the last few years of my active episcopate I discovered *The Witness*.

I've been glad ever since.

I'm especially glad since reading the last issue from Ambler (July/August). Many things provoke that gladness.

First -- I served on the Executive Council for six years and became a friend and admirer of Jan Pierce. It was nice to see how much Sue "favors" her in her person as well as in her sense of justice.

Second -- the Marler article about the family could, as the author suggests become a guide for planning for each parish and diocese in the church. Powerful stuff there!

Third -- the General Convention Round-up is better than anything I've seen and certainly reflects what I was sensing and seeing. I thought you were a mite too gentle with the Bishops. We were so narcissistic we almost forgot our purpose for being in Phoenix. We need to be glad about being Anglican instead of trying to compromise all the time with those in the Church for whom

being Anglican is much less important than being politically triumphant.

I could write more -- it was a damned good issue!

My best to all who are staying in Ambler -- my best to those in Detroit -- keep it up.

Walter C. Righter
Bishop of Iowa, Retired

I WAS DISAPPOINTED with the tone of Susan Erdey's report on General Convention (in the July/August issue), "Lots of Heat, Not Much Light." The impression given is that because much of the Convention focused on Homosexuality it was trivial. The Episcopal Church spent a number of conventions over the centuries dealing with Black issues when those issues arose due to the changing relationship between the Races. A number of conventions were needed to

work through the question of the Ordination of Women. In both cases the time was properly spent.

So too, was this Convention properly spent. Even if the only conclusion was that some decision has got to be made. Indeed, it is feasible that the next three years may provide a breakthrough.

Ms. Erdey fails to appreciate a possible connectedness between Racism, Sexism and Heterosexism. To me, all three are merely facets of the same "Sexual Dysfunction." We are not a more important issue; we are just the easiest issue to defeat. The Gay issue would never have gotten to the table had not the issues of Racism and Sexism preceded it.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, Michigan

SUSAN ERDEY'S '91 General Convention report (*Witness*, July/August) questioned lack of a powerful anti-racism witness as had been expected. Some may agree with her evaluation but I do not. As one having spent my life's ministry in the struggle for justice transforming racism/sexism, I was awed and filled with hope. It was electrifying to have heard the beloved voice of Martin Luther King, Jr. booming over the church gathered for the opening service. The racial audit and the resolution naming our "institutional racism inside our church and in society" and seeking to "become a church without racism committed to end racism in the world" were signs of grace of a church being transformed. Far more important than the amount of the offering was the launching of The Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy fund, to which the whole Convention could contribute at the daily morning Eucharist. It has BEGUN, and will grow and will make a difference in the lives of the students this fund benefits. I contribute joyfully!

The 70th General Convention found new, creative ways to act the church into a new way of thinking in greater appreciation of the richness of our racial diversity to celebrate. Our morning Eucharists were led by the full range of colors in God's beautiful family... women and men... using several languages. It was living out our inclusiveness called into being by The Lord and stressed by our Presiding Bishops.

Adding to the church calendar with a unanimous vote in both Houses, the name of Jonathan Daniels, an Episcopal Seminarian killed in a 1965 Civil Rights struggle in Alabama; marked how far the church has come on issues of racism. Twenty-five years ago, the Bishops of NH and Alabama would not have been united, yet in Phoenix '91, they co-sponsored this resolution from the states where Jonathan was born and died.

This is not the 60s. We have made some progress. For 1991, General Convention faithfully addressed who we are as a multi-racial church. I rejoice!

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, California

Issues of Age and Gender

IN HER ARTICLE in the June issue, Pam Darling addressed "Sexism, Racism and Phoenix." However, one "ism" that she did not address is "age-ism." I was one of four aspirants in the Diocese of Washington to be rejected because we were deemed "too old." The age range of the four was 48-54. The rationale was that there has been an influx of second-career people into the seminaries in the past ten years or so, and now the Church is "stuck" with an aging clergy which is putting an added burden on the Pension Fund. We were also told that the Church needs "fresh, young leaders." One member of the Screening Committee told me that at my age, I should want to "just kick back and enjoy life; leave the hard work to the youngsters." Another member, a man in his mid-seventies, asked what I thought I had to offer the Church at my age.

It's a good thing that George Bush decided to be President of the United States. He's too old to be a priest in the Episcopal Church.

Beverly Bradley Aiuto
Silver Spring, Maryland

I WAS STRUCK BY some significant parallels in Pamela Darling's article: "Sexism, Racism and Phoenix" (June 1991) and thoughts by Robert Bly in his newest book: *Iron John: A Book About Men*.

Robert Bly also illustrates the effects of patriarchal structures in society but specifi-

THE WITNESS

Letters

cally addresses how men perpetuate the wound passed on by generations of absent, withdrawn fathers. Men react by ascending into powerful positions or descending into victimized positions which require women to be either oppressed or care-givers for men.

We men carry a valuable wound which can be experienced as a punishment or a gift. The men I know who have valued the wound see themselves as fallible humans in search of intimacy with self, others and God. There is no room for sexism, racism, homophobia in a man's search for positive male identity.

I applaud Bishop Browning's efforts to be inclusive and I challenge all men in the Church to examine our wounds and work together to destroy the oppressive systems in the Church and society. I refuse to pay the price for privilege and power any longer.

Jake Czarnik-Neimeyer
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Clergy Sex-Exploitation

There can be no authentic and meaningful consent between a parishioner seeking pastoral care and his/her clergyperson; one cannot be pastor and lover at the same time.

Often, clergy refuse to accept the power of their role in the life of one who is seeking pastoral care.

There is a great need to teach clergy how to:

1. recognize their needs for intimacy
2. get those needs met appropriately in ways that avoid dual relationships with those entrusted to their care.

Susan Moss
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Secrecy and Power

AT NEARLY 70 and "semi-retired" I've begun cutting down on subscriptions and such. *Witness* is one I had decided I'd cut - not because it isn't good or I'm angry with it. It just seemed time, that's all.

But in your June issue I find you've touched on the *power* issue that I have long believed was at the bottom of so much of the reactionary agenda and you have dared to wonder about the closet homosexuals who

many suspect are a part of that movement. I have been convinced since 1977 that that combination (and who has lacked power more in the Church than closet-gays?) was fueling the destructive energy that in my view drives so much of that movement.

Thank you for your important ministry.

Anne W. Baker
Carrizo Springs, Texas

A Voice for Monogamy

DONNA SCHAPER'S "The blessings of sexuality" (in the May issue) is the most uncharitable, narrow-minded, and generally offensive essay I have noticed in your magazine. As a deeply committed Christian feminist, an Episcopalian with evangelical roots, I am insulted by Schaper's disparagement of those whose experiences and beliefs might differ from her own.

First, many women and some men do *not* want "inconsequential or recreational sex rather than consequential or procreational sex." The dichotomy is a false one. There are many psychological and spiritual consequences attached to any expression of sexual intimacy.

Secondly, Schaper implies throughout that normal enjoyable safe sex means with whomever consents to it whenever one feels like it. Those who disagree are accused of "hatred of the body" and "abnormal repression." She apparently does not realize that many people, including thoughtful non-Christians, enjoy sexuality only in faithful committed relationships.

Third, Schaper maintains that normal young people are sexually active from around 12 onwards. Exceptions are labeled as upwardly mobile girls who are damaged by their abnormal delay and end up having difficulty in enjoying sex or giving and receiving physical pleasure. I find this insulting, considering that I have been in love with the same person for 23 years without finding my sexual life hampered by the lack of previous promiscuous experience.

Fourth, Schaper attributes abortion and unwanted pregnancies to repressive behavior or hesitancy about using birth control. It would seem obvious that abortion is caused by unwanted pregnancies and unwanted

pregnancies are caused by sexual activity -- frequently by irresponsible sexual activity. One would like to think a Congregational minister would tolerate abstinence as a fool-proof and safe method of preventing abortions and unwanted pregnancies instead of condemning it as abnormal repression. To be sure, given the present state of society, birth control is better than complete irresponsibility on the part of those who engage in sexual acts without concern for intangible consequences.

As a feminist, I would prefer to see men become more unselfish in their sexual attitudes and behavior rather than see women free to be as selfish as many men have been. As a Christian feminist, I am disappointed that publications such as yours give so little attention to the struggles faced by the majority of women whose problems do not make sensational headlines. A very disproportionate amount of space is given to the subject of homosexuality, for example, and very little to the subject of how to maintain a good marriage and meet the volunteer demands of the church while seeking to develop one's talents and career. It is [very difficult] for a married woman to closet realities such as lack of sleep for 11 straight months with an infant, or the large piles of laundry generated by a family.

I have never been convinced by arguments that homosexual behavior is appropriate for Christians, nor am I comfortable with the ordination of homosexual persons to the ministry. However, I would prefer the ordination -- and the writing -- of Virginia Mollenkott, a lesbian with a genuine concern for the problems of women different from herself and a serious respect for the Bible, than that of Donna Schaper who seems to have no such concern or respect. I wonder whether the change of location and staff will add any breadth to the subject matter covered by *The Witness*. The Episcopal Church needs a good dose of evangelical concern for Scripture and spirituality blended with its own strong tradition of ritual and symbolism and tolerance. As indicated in the recent interview with Virginia Mollenkott, much of her thinking has reflected that blend.

Anne Ramirez
Springfield, PA

THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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THE WITNESS

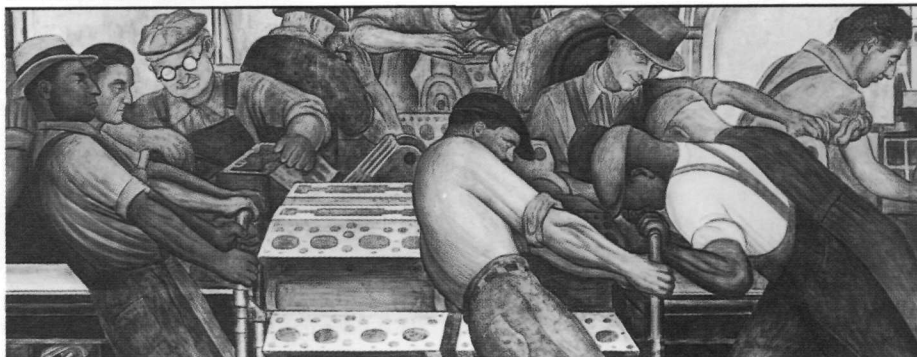


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Cover credit: Diego Rivera, courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Arts; Barbara Barefield, design. It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

Meeting the Challenge

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

A number of friends have noted that there is a point on the freeway, about 45 minutes outside Detroit, where you begin to wonder whether your house is intact. You see broken glass and a ravaged house. Or worse, the charred skeleton of what was your home. One

more of the gaping, mournful giants that dot every Detroit neighborhood.

Bill and I brought the girls home from a vacation in the northern Upper Peninsula recently. We had slept to the sound of the waves of Lake Michigan and the kids had moved and had their being in a shelter of sand.

Close to home, in the dark, a city ambulance sped by. It braked outside our local party store and the crew joined the police and t.v. newsmen. Without stopping, and with only our imaginations informing us about what was going on inside, we circled around the block to our home -- still standing, intact, but seemingly foreign.

We searched our hearts, as we always do, for that Dulce Domum voice that Kenneth Graham describes in *The Wind and The Willows*. We longed for that wafting, almost physical, call of home as we pulled sleeping children from the car and wondered when the random gun shots, the robberies, the Crack-addicted madness might come too close for sanity -- one block being closer than we liked.

One month before Bill and I were married in 1984, we discovered

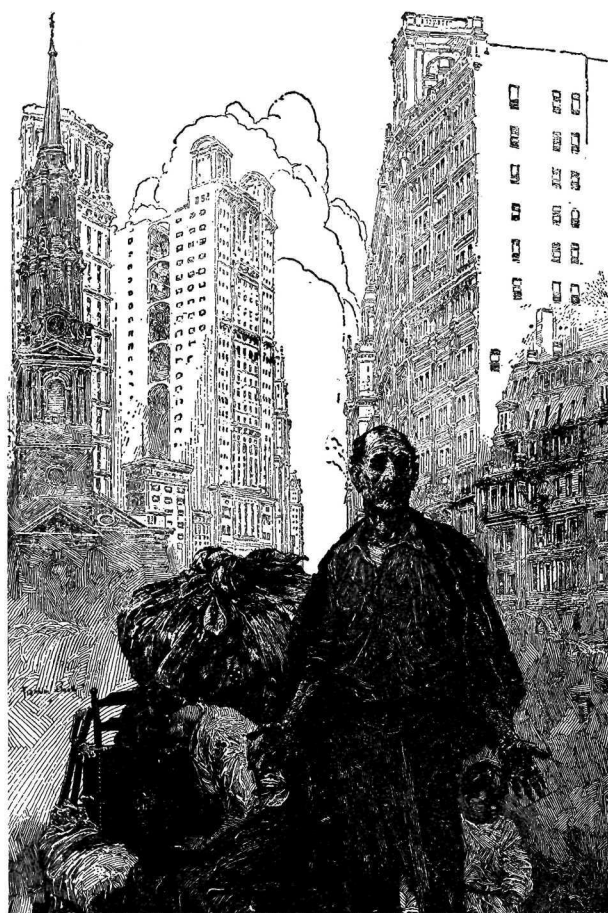
that we were related, both coming, at least in part, from Scotch Irish farmers in southwest Pennsylvania. So, it surprised us doubly that we each chose independently to locate in Detroit, in the same neighborhood, for the same reasons.

I first arrived in Detroit in 1980, fresh out of graduate school in New York City. I worked as a staff writer for the Associated Press and hated it, but I fell in love with Detroit.

It's a one-industry town, which gives it a raw clarity. People here have known whether they are management or labor. They have a sense of what that means. They have stories to tell about the flying squadrons that founded the United Auto Workers and who lived in friends' garages to avoid company killers.

They knew that the city's streetcar lines were torn up to create a market for the automobile -- and while they understood the often brutal mechanics of the exchange of labor and materials for capital, they also had a love affair with the automobile. It still astounds me when a friend casually points out a car on the freeway and says, "That's a 1956 Chevy -- no, no it's a 1957." Say what?

There's a lack of pretension about this town. It has been driven by a desire for money and opportunity, a desire unobscured by the genteel glove (woven at elite private schools) that veils the fist in establishment circles. There is a way that the straightforward ambitions and language of Detroit's residents has anchored the American Dream. From Ford's \$5-day-wage until recently, immigrants from the Black south, from Appalachia, from eastern Europe and from the Arab nations exchanged their lives for homes and possessions, for educations for their children. Yet, Detroit's auto workers never confused their employers with a fairy godmother; they had an astute appreciation of who did and who did not give a damn about them and managed to



This drawing was published in *The Witness* in 1931 in an issue headlined: *The Machine Age, Can the Church Meet the Challenge?* The drawing of a homeless family in the center-city is as powerful an indictment of the post-industrial age now as it was of the machine age then.

credit: Franklin Booth

forge a labor movement out of that insight. And they paid a price.

The same savvy and realism launched the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. Many of the people whose names we remember from that struggle live in Michigan: Rosa Parks, the survivors of Viola Liuzzo, Walter Bergman (who has been wheelchair bound since then) and others.

In the years following World War II there were cycles of depression when the auto industry would slump, but there was always a recovery.

So in the early 1980s, there was a profound confusion and deathly despair when it came clear that the auto industry was not going to rebound, at least not in a way that would employ U.S. workers. [See page 12.]

At that time, *Business Week* counselled corporate managers that the middle class was going to have to pay for the redevelopment of America's corporate infrastructure and this would require the "most massive selling job in history."

The selling job kicked into overdrive and union workers found themselves depicted as greedy and over-consuming, as jeopardizing American industry. Concessions became prevalent. Union leaders formed partnerships with the corporations.

Coleman Young, who was elected Detroit's first Black mayor and who integrated the previously brutal police department, climbed in bed with the corporate planners. If he had a choice, he never said so.

The people of Detroit waited. They had trusted the labor and civil rights movements. They waited for good leadership. Meanwhile, they received emergency food packages from Germany and they watched the city's infrastructure deteriorate.

Whole city neighborhoods were condemned to accommodate corporate developers like GM and Chrysler, but the new, improved plants (which had been

given every available tax abatement) were highly automated and down-scaled and retained only a fraction of the employees projected. (See page 27.) And city residents waited.

Apparently following the wave of corporate closings, the Churches seemed to follow suit. The Roman Catholic hierarchy closed 45 neighborhood churches in the late 1980s. The United Methodists moved their conference headquarters from downtown Detroit to the suburbs. And residents waited.

*As is true in Guatemala,
South Africa, in all places of
crisis around the world, we
begin to see the faces of
people who can teach us the
things that make for peace.*

Detroiters saw Crack move through the city, binding their children in addictions that far-surpassed the erratic, bloody compulsions of some of their parents. And they watched children kill one another for prestige sneakers and jackets.

Finally, in 1985, the power of the spell that seemed to hold the Motor City deadlocked in despair, began to wane. The mothers of children murdered in Detroit and the mothers of the children who did the killing joined hands (see page 10). Others began marching against Crack (see page 26). Still others began imagining what the city might look like if we surrendered our addiction to corporate domination (see page 22).

And residents suddenly found a voice. They shouted down several of the mayor's megadevelopment plans. They vetoed casino gambling. They now talk about preserving Detroit's housing stock, re-designing systems of education and support for youth, and supporting small

businesses that can feed neighborhoods.

These dreams are not unique to Detroit. What may be unique is that Detroit has no alternative. Unlike New York and Washington D.C., it does not have to be preserved because it is an international hub. Unlike Minneapolis and Houston, it does not have a diversified economic base. Detroit, in recent years, has become a throw away city. One to which no one wants to come. It is surrounded by phenomenal wealth in its suburbs but the city itself is falling apart.

If it survives, it will do so because Motor City residents learn to rely on their own skills, imagination and appreciation of community. These things offer its only hope.

Some are suggesting that Detroit should use its vacant land to become an agrarian center, exporting fruit and vegetables. Even contaminated soil could still produce ornamental trees.

Fifty years ago, the Church was struggling to determine how it might be relevant in the machine age. In the 1960s, the Detroit Industrial Mission attempted to carry the Gospel into auto plants. These evangelists met with labor and management and at least opened the doors to conversation.

The Church faces a new challenge now.

What the Church does with this fact, how people of faith view Detroit and what they do with the resources at hand, has everything to do, as Manning Marable suggests (page 16), with the state of our souls.

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. "If only you knew the things that make for peace."

And, as is true in Guatemala, South Africa, in all places of crisis around the world, we begin to see the faces of people whose whole confidence is in the Gospel. The faces of people who can teach us the things that make for peace. We see the tension of the crucifixion reenacted and we hold our breaths. **TW**

THE WITNESS

The Diego Rivera Mural, Detroit Institute of Arts, 1953-1959

by Christina Pacosz

for Wladek

Light pours from an abundant source above me. I breathe carefully in a vast room, each wall a gigantic picture. I get a stiff neck staring up at the Christ child with (you tell me) Hoover's face. This Jesus is squat and ugly. You laugh your bitter laugh.

Our faces turn up, plants desperate for light. Father and daughter, we speak in whispers. Our voices move away from us, ripples on the surface of this immense cathedral of light.

You dressed the dandy in your youth. Mother starched your white shirts and brushed your single dark suit spotless. You polished your Cancellation shoes and combed your black hair. Mother smiled at you, you looked so good.

Giants with wise oval eyes guard this room. They stare into the light from under straight dark hair and stand on thighs the girth of old-grown cedar, skin the color of madrone. Beneath wide and solid feet gems gleam purple and red amid the black flag of earth.

I wear a dress of navy taffeta that rustles like water over stones in a shallow creek. I walk to the fountain, the focus of limitless light and kneel on the marble rim, burdened by so much light pushing on me, insistent as a tide. You hand me pennies to drop in the fountain like prayers. How you stare at me! Who can tell what the future will bring?

You tell me Rivera was a communist who loved all the poor people of the world, especially the people of Mexico. Your words catch on hooks lodged in the soft flesh of your throat, and you gulp air like a fish wrenched from water.

I watch light descend with such surety and imagine swimming out to meet it. You would be so small and far away then.

We wade into that light often. Your shoes clicking on tile, we talk behind our hands, or not at all. My fingers long to make the sign of the cross, but there is no fount filled with holy water blessed by the parish priest. Only a fountain of infinite light.

I can't remember when you tell me what your father told you: Diego sat sketching the deafening factory in a pool of quiet, drawing men standing to attention at minute tasks. Grandfather was in Diego's direct line of vision and grateful for an indelible, uncheatable immortality.

You never said Rivera was married to an artist. You probably didn't know. Decades later I discover her: Frida Kahlo. She was a wife and desperate to be a mother. Henry Ford didn't commission her to paint the workers on his assembly line.



She painted herself, brown ochre, like the giants in her husband's mural, with a monkey at her shoulder, yellow ribbon tied in its fur, matching the one wrapped in her hair. She didn't have a chance to paint your father stooped over his work.

One dark night, the Detroit streets deep in sharp, cold rain, your father stepped off a curb, into a fast car, and died on the pavement he'd been promised was gold.

We visit your mother in her flat near Michigan Avenue. She steams kielbasa, fries pierogi in pale yellow butter and sets out rye bread for us. You are faithful and attentive, a good son, and loyal too.

She cooks. Her husband perpetually glares into a room filled with cascading light he will never see.

Standing up to Death

by John Meyer

The Street is a dense confusion of sights and sounds and lurking death. To be on the Street, to be poor at all, means to be relatively unprotected from death. In the Mainstream, things are organized to keep death back. Death has to wait in line. Not so on the Street: death is free to rage like a storm. The death rate on the Street is already high and getting higher. We are now beginning to hear the phrase *endangered species* applied to young Black males in the central city.

On one of the "live" corners of Detroit, across from Tiger Stadium, at the west edge of the downtown, St. Peter's Church stands tall against the night. On the same corner, as baseball fans hurry from their cars towards the glare of the stadium lights, street people, at a slower pace, with no special place to go, hunt for returnable bottles and cans.

St. Peter's clings to a precarious life, hunting for money and members, parking cars for baseball fans, and trying to adapt itself to the state of mind known as the Street. It has itself become a "Street Church."

The Street is more than a metaphor for poverty. The Street is an emerging separate culture, one of growing size, with identifiable values of its own in sharp contrast to those of the Mainstream. I am intrigued by the view that the Street is the very shadow of the mainstream society of jobs and families and faith in the future: a sinister Dionysian underworld that attracts, repels and mocks the straight world.

There are no visible boundaries to mark where the Street begins and ends,

but people usually know where they are in relation to it. Mainstream people often choose to stay away from the Street, or hurry through it if necessary. On the other hand, a number of mainstream people say goodbye to their jobs and families each year and enter the Street by way of drugs, alcohol and crime -- or by way of depression, family upheaval. Far fewer people from the Street cross over into the Mainstream.

We have come to see our life and ministry as a contest of will with Death. It is what gives focus to all that we do: the soup kitchen, the program for girls, the worship, or the repairs on the boiler.

Low income, welfare dependency, joblessness, the normal benchmarks of poverty, are frequently found on the Street; but we may question whether poverty and the Street are indeed the same thing. Not everyone on the Street is poor in these terms.

It was in trying to understand the self-destructive behavior of young people in our neighborhood that we began to look beyond economic deprivation as the prime motivator. Why were so many risking their lives on prostitution, drugs and crime? There were many answers, but one began to arrest our attention: sexual child abuse.

For me it goes back to a time when we noticed a 12-year-old Southern White girl in the neighborhood "doing tricks," almost daily, with a man in his

fifties, dressed in a three-piece suit and driving a sedan. It was, of course, shocking that so young a girl was into prostitution. It was even more shocking that the mother was promoting and encouraging her daughter's behavior.

I recall on one occasion observing the man in the suit drive up and honk his horn. This time, as the 12-year-old was not at home, the mother and two younger siblings came out the front door to greet him and invite him into the house; and in he went as though he were a visiting uncle. There is nothing more to report. My imagination tells me they had an adult conversation over coffee. It is the confusion of it all that left me in a lasting turmoil. Where were the boundaries? What were families for if they did not protect their young from this kind of exploitation?

I began to think troubled thoughts about the whole neighborhood. It seemed that child abuse, in varying degrees, was happening in almost every household. From this I drew a connection to the increasing number of younger women "working" Michigan Avenue and Fort Street. I would now say, based partly on what others are saying, that sexual child abuse is integral to the culture of the Street. (It also happens in the Mainstream but is not integral to it.)

I also saw that we were confronting something more than a series of problems to be solved. We were inside an enveloping mystery -- like the night itself, something all around us but nothing to grab hold of. Indeed, like someone in a horror movie, I began to shiver at the night air. The neighborhood, no longer merely a place of deprived circumstances, became for me the sinister underworld of the Street. I even imagined St. Peter's in flames for daring to think about "doing something." Only gradually did I step out of my fear and name the darkness.

Death is a sign, a countersign to

THE WITNESS

John Meyer is rector of St. Peter's, Detroit.

Life. Here we are thinking sacramentally and Biblically, even mythologically. In Biblical terms, Death is both a *power* and an *enemy*. Death, given the chance, would capture and rule the moral high ground and become the truth about life, the controlling metaphor.

Sexual child abuse, which functions as a rite of initiation into the Street, is a baptism unto Death. It claims to tell you who you are -- that "You are a child of confusion!" "You have no future!" "Your mother is the Night!" -- but never calls you by name. The average child or adult in our neighborhood must survive a blizzard of such signs. It is on this level that the Church is called to respond.

We have come to see our life and ministry as a contest of will with Death. It is what gives focus to all that we do, whether the soup kitchen in our basement, the program for girls, the worship of the congregation, or the repairs on the boiler. It is important to know that our main thrust is on the level of signs.

First, the most basic sign: St. Peter's perseveres on its corner despite the fact that it is itself an endangered species and careens on the edge of viability. But the important thing is the promise, that the "powers of Death will not prevail against the Church." Staying put on our corner, and not fleeing, is the precondition of the promise.

Second, we do a lot of baptizing. Baptism is a powerful sign in itself -- the sign of victory of Life over Death -- but must be seen then in competition with other signs, the countersigns of Death, which it is intended to trump. It is remarkable that so many from our girls' program, on their own initiative, request baptism for themselves or for their babies.

Third, following on the above, we try to be unambiguous about the value

October 1991



John the Baptist

credit: Dierdre Luzwick

of life. "Despite the stained sheets that you may die on, no matter what you did or didn't do, your life was not a mistake: it was worth living. The meaning of life flows from the resurrection of Jesus and not from achieving something in the Mainstream." It is easy to let the fog of confusion settle in and obscure this.

Fourth, we have developed, in conjunction with others, ministries that are street-related. We have already mentioned the soup kitchen. More recently

we have undertaken a shelter and related programming directed towards girls and young women on the Street (*St. Peter's Inn* and *Alternatives for Girls*).

Thus "standing up to Death" means that when we intervene on behalf of a girl, we are not merely rendering a service, but engaging in struggle with Death. We are choosing Life. The same could be said for the soup kitchen as it ladles out soup or for the congregation as it prays and sings.

TW

SOSAD

Save Our Sons And Daughters

by Mary West

On the wall of Vera Rucker's office hangs a framed arrangement of wallet-sized photographs. From a distance, it looks like the class picture from a high school yearbook. But these faces -- some smiling, others solemn -- were not brought together by school spirit. They are boys and girls who died of gunshot wounds.

Vera Rucker is chairperson of Save Our Sons and Daughters (SOSAD). Founded by Clementine Barfield in January, 1987, SOSAD brings together families and friends of some of the 1,500-plus children aged 16 and younger shot in Detroit since 1986. One hundred ninety-five of these died, including Vera Rucker's daughter, Melody.

Dressed in a baseball cap and softball team tee shirt, Vera Rucker describes Melody as an active and outgoing child. She ran track, played basketball and volleyball, acted in school plays and served on the youth task force of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan. Melody "had her little tempers," her mother recalls, but would quickly "make up for it, writing little notes, making phone calls." She could get "mouthy" with her two broth-

Mary West is an emergency care nurse at Detroit Receiving, a founder of the Catholic Worker house in Detroit and a member of the Detroit Pastoral Alliance.

Herb Gunn is editor of *The Record* of the Diocese of Michigan.

ers, pestering and arguing. Her mother says she planned to be a lawyer.

On the night of August 19, 1986, Melody went to a friend's house for a back-to-school party. Some young men crashed the party and were forced to leave, then returned with guns and fired into a group of teenagers. Three of the teenagers died.

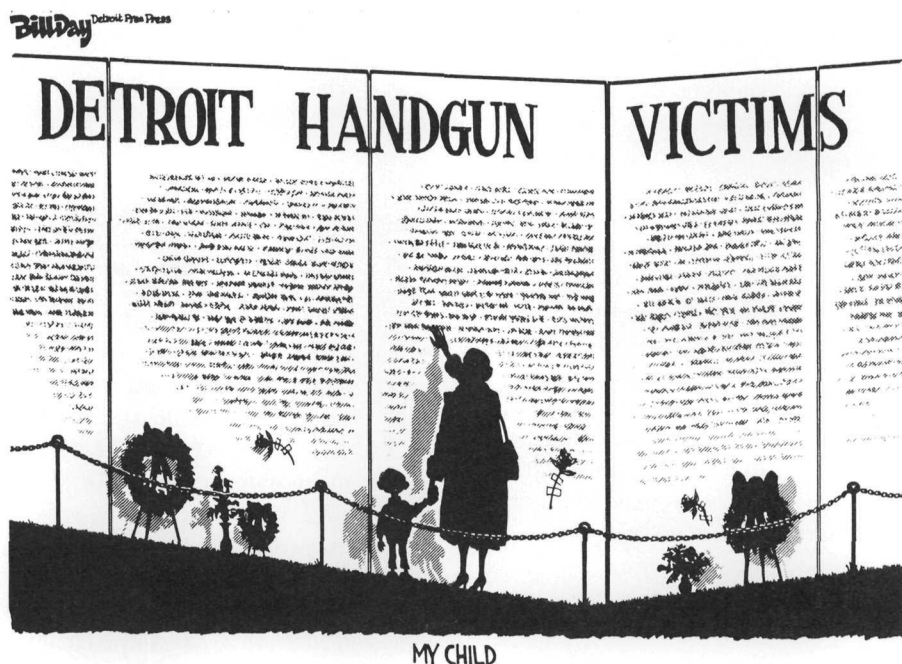
The hours Vera Rucker spent at the emergency room became "the longest wait of my life." The doctor came out to



Melody Rucker, an Episcopal teen, was killed by random gunfire.

report on Melody's condition. Rucker remembers her sister and cousin running past her, crying. Then Rucker was allowed to view the body of her lively, expressive child. "One side of her face was destroyed. She looked like a monster."

Rucker describes her grief as a feeling that "a part of my heart was cut away." People expressed their sympathy in many comforting ways. But to those



credit: Bill Day, the Detroit Free Press

who said to her, "I know how you feel," Rucker responded that they could not know how she felt if they had not lost a child to violence. "I said, 'I hope you never know how it is I feel.'"

Soon after, Rucker began to hear and read about Clementine Barfield, another mother in Detroit whose son had been shot and killed. "Mrs. Barfield shed some tears and then set out to do something." Rucker's belief that they - the police, city officials -- should take action against street violence was challenged. "I realized that I was part of the 'they.'" When Clementine Barfield was the guest on a radio talk show, Vera Rucker called in. From that connection, along with contacts made with other grieving mothers, a movement of relatives and friends of slain children began to take shape.

At first, they simply met in one another's homes "to just embrace and talk and share." SOSAD now organizes many programs against violence and in support of families and communities. A monthly newsletter is published. Marches are organized for Pentecost and Father's Day. Prayer services are held to memorialize the children. Conflict resolution workshops and leadership training are offered to groups of young people. Family support groups, a male grief support group, adult and children's grief counseling groups meet on a regular basis.

Vera Rucker compares violence to "a sore steadily growing over time." Although she does not expect it to be resolved overnight, she remains hopeful about SOSAD's original goal of preventing the spread of violence. "If I could say or do anything to help one person not to go through what I've gone through," then the effort has been worthwhile.

Occasionally what she goes through is anger. "I think God understands when we ask 'Why me?'" Rucker has not seen the young man convicted of her daughter's murder since he was sentenced to



Vera Rucker, Melody's mother, takes to the streets opposing handguns and preaching reconciliation.

credit: Herb Gunn

prison, but she has stayed in touch with his mother and grandmother. When asked what she would say to him now, five years after her daughter's death, she says, "I would tell him that I don't hate him; that I hope he gets his life together."

Vera Rucker is leery of Christians who offer the ritual kiss of peace, then divide into cliques or recede into passivity once Sunday services are over. She has begun to explore the Scriptures at her parish's Wednesday evening Bible study and is finding themes about

struggle and unity. "I used to be afraid of the Bible. Now I'm beginning to look at Scripture differently." In the first class, Rucker's Bible study group discussed the book of Joshua, and the gathering of 12 stones from the dry bed of the Jordan River, one stone for each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Through SOSAD, Vera Rucker's work is a kind of gathering of the city's lost tribes: victims and victimizers, blacks and whites, the wealthy and the poor, all those blessed faces at last together in a portrait of the living.

TW

The Unions: from Motown to Mexico

by Jane Slaughter

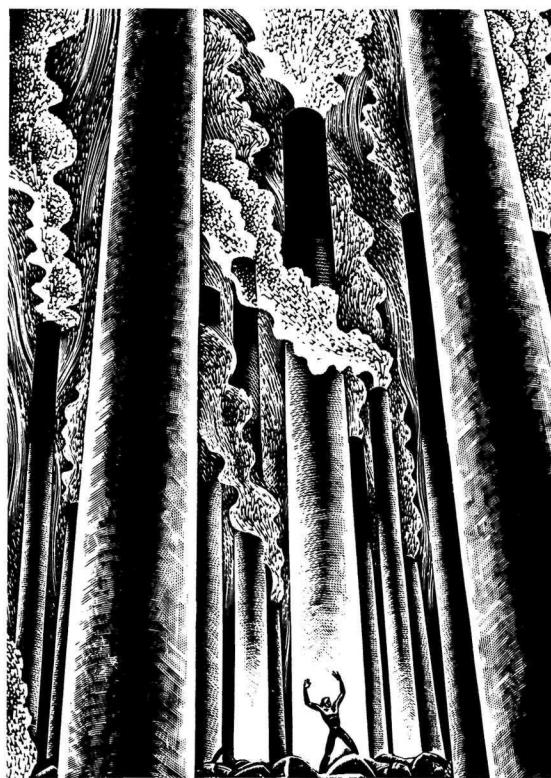
Fifteen years ago, Black Detroiters, fathers and mothers, made a good living working in the plants and believed that their children could do the same. It was hard work but it was good money for those without formal skills or a lot of education. Today, no east side Chrysler worker believes that his son will follow him into the factory; he only hopes that his plant -- now moved to the suburbs -- and he himself can hang on until retirement. No Detroit teenager believes there is a decent job waiting for him; the result is the despair which engulfs blocks and neighborhoods.

Like refugees from some natural disaster, Detroiters have watched in disbelief as their lives have been turned upside down. Since the 1950s Detroit has lost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Many auto jobs have been eliminated permanently. Others have been exported.

In the 1980s Detroit auto workers were known for their intolerance of foreigners when the question was jobs. As Japanese imports took a larger and larger share of the market, anti-Japanese sentiment ran high. The International UAW would not allow Japanese cars in its parking lot. Some local unions distributed bumperstickers with such sentiments as "Remember Pearl Harbor!" and "Park your car in Tokyo." The ugliness

Jane Slaughter is author of *Choosing Sides: Unions and the Team Concept* and an editor of *Labor Notes*.

reached a peak in 1982 with the death of Vincent Chin, who was Chinese-American. Yelling, "Because of you, we're out of work," a Chrysler foreman beat Chin to death with a baseball bat outside a Highland Park bar.



credit: Lynd Ward

Now, after a decade of line speedups and job loss in the U.S., some American auto workers are looking for partners instead of scapegoats. Members of the New Directions union movement brought a Mexican auto worker to Detroit last year.

Marco Antonio Jimenez, who lives

in Mexico City, spoke before 1,200 of his fellow auto workers in Detroit. Jimenez, along with 11 other union leaders, was fired from Ford's Cuautitlan plant in June 1989 when the company tried to cut short a workers' movement against wage cuts and speedup. Apparently feeling that the \$50 per week Cuautitlan workers earn building Cougars and Thunderbirds is too much, Ford is out to bust their union.

Jimenez received two standing ovations during his short speech, which was translated from Spanish. He was greeted as a brother by the crowd of United Auto Workers members.

Today U.S. auto workers are suffering because multinational corporations can pay workers in Mexico's older plants (like the one where Jimenez worked) \$10 a day; the mostly teenage women in the newer *maquiladora* parts plants near the border are paid \$4 to \$7. There are over half a million *maquiladora* workers. A new plant opens every day, and their numbers are expected to double by 1995.

Despite the Mexican government's prosperity propaganda, Mexico has been subjected to an austerity program during the last decade which has driven wages down in preparation for the pending Free Trade Agreement with the U.S.

Between 1982 and 1987, 700,000 jobs were lost. Of those, 200,000 were lost when the government privatized or liquidated state enterprises in preparation for the open market. In 1981, 240,000 higher-paying jobs in the traditional auto industry -- producing for domestic consumption -- were eliminated. Another 130,000 were eliminated in 1986, while employment of auto *maquiladoras*, which produce only for export, grew from none in 1980 to 125,000 today. Jimenez

THE WITNESS

is part of a democratic movement in the Ford workers' union which is battling the government-dominated Mexican Workers Confederation (CTM). New Directions members too feel that their union in the U.S. is often more attentive to management's needs than to their own. Their movement was founded to fight both for union democracy and against what they see as an anti-worker corporate agenda.

They are the ones who organized Jimenez's tour of auto plants in five U.S. cities; who held a small demonstration outside Ford headquarters to protest the murder of Cuautitlan worker Cleto Nigno by CTM thugs; who gathered signatures on petitions against the Free Trade Agreement; who traveled to Mexico to meet with their counterparts firsthand.

They include Ron Maxwell, a rank and filer at Ford's Utica Trim plant outside Detroit, who has already seen 70 door panel jobs from his shop disappear to Mexico. Maxwell, who was born in Tennessee and raised in the Motor City, says, "They're pitting auto worker against auto worker, instead of putting the blame where it really belongs, on the corporations. If we don't get people involved in what's going on we're not going to be strong as a union."

Even if union leaders in the U.S. were willing to wage an all-out fight -- which they are not -- capital is likely to win this round. Those who care about Detroit can only hope that out of the solidarity activity that is beginning with the tiny steps described above, a movement can grow which will eventually be strong enough to take on all the forces which are contributing to Detroit's misery.

Ron Maxwell and the New Directions activists he works with are taking the long view. They know their only hope for a long-term solution is to support Latin American workers and Asian workers in their fight for a living wage. It is on this openness and this understanding that the future of Detroit auto workers depends.

TW

Military Pollution

The world's armed forces are the single largest polluter on earth, and the U.S. military annually produces more toxins than the top five chemical companies combined, according to a new report by World Priorities, a nonprofit research group in Washington, D.C. The report, "World Military and Social Expenditures, 1991," also contends that four out of five cancers are linked directly or indirectly to environmental causes, that pesticides are causing one million serious human poisonings a year, and that one-fifth of humanity lives in areas where the air is unfit to breathe.

For the cost of a nuclear-armed submarine (\$2 billion) a worldwide citizens' program could begin to reforest the earth, the report maintains, and for \$5 billion a year -- the cost of six Stealth bombers -- a significant reduction in global air pollution could be achieved.

The Human Quest 9-10/91

Bishops Criticize Drug War

Bolivia's Roman Catholic bishops criticized the joint U.S.-Bolivian anti-drug strategy in a May statement which attacked corruption in the government and private sector and emphasized the church's preferential option for the poor.

The U.S. congress has approved sending military advisors to Bolivia to work with the country's armed forces in the war on drugs.

Outside intervention and the use of force should be avoided, the bishops said.

They defended coca growing and the traditional use of the plant by campesinos, but also proposed substituting equally profitable crops for coca.

At present, they said, poor growers "can barely survive on what little land they have," while "those who obtain huge profits from this underground economy enjoy impunity and protection offered to them by the powerful and influential."

One World 8-9/91

Flowers for the Soviets

The American Friends Service Committee

sent a bouquet of roses to the Soviet Embassy in Washington applauding the successful nonviolent opposition to the August Soviet military coup. The accompanying message saluted the Soviet people, saying that "What they have achieved through nonviolent resistance inspires us all and increases hopes for peace throughout the world."

In a public statement, the AFSC called for "new defense-cutting initiatives in both the United States and the Soviet Union," and urged the United States and other western governments to allow the Soviet people to determine their relationship to central state authority, "bearing in mind the importance of respecting and guaranteeing the rights of minorities."

AFSC News Release, 8/91

What's Missing for U.S. Families

"It may be hard to understand what's missing in U.S. family policy unless you know what's taken for granted almost everywhere

else in the industrialized world.

Writing in *Mothering* (Spring 1991), Amy Kaplan presents a detailed study of direct family benefits in five countries -- Hungary, France, Germany, Sweden, and the United States. Four of the five countries offer a paid leave for between three and nine months, at the birth of a child at between 90 and 100 percent of salary, plus the option of additional leave with less pay. Four of the five nations studied also have policies that provide tax incentives like family allowances, childcare allowances, income replacement while caring for a sick child, and universal income-support programs. It's no surprise that the United States is the one that has none of these family supports."

Monika Bauerlein in *Utne Reader*, 9-10/91

Short takes

Detroit has always been for me a state of mind, a mixture of hope and lost opportunities, of dirt and despair, of shiny new automobiles and unimaginably long unemployment lines. As a boy, I regularly visited the city. My favorite aunt and a large, extended family lived in the suburban community of Inkster. When summer rolled around, we trekked north to the mecca of Motown.

Hundreds of thousands of African-American families from Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi had flooded into the city during the 1940s and 1950s, searching to escape rigid racial segregation and the penury of sharecropping. Detroit seemed an ideal place for black opportunities. There was by the end of World War II a small but growing black entrepreneurial and professional class. Black enterprises such as Barry Gordy's Motown were influential. By the sixties, it was no longer unusual to see African-Americans in some positions of importance in the school system, government

and in smaller numbers, inside white businesses.

But a rigid system of racial apartheid and police violence permeated the entire community. At the city's northern boundary, Eight Mile Road represented a racial version of the Berlin Wall. White realtors in the suburbs, as a rule, refused to sell homes to blacks, regardless of their income, education or credit. The city's police force was brutal in its harassment and victimization of black citizens.

In the automobile plants, the system of racial exploitation for blacks was commonly called "niggermentation." At Dodge Main plant, for example, 99 percent of the general foremen were white, 100 percent of the plant superintendents were white, and 90 percent of all skilled tradesmen and apprentices were white. Blacks received the worst jobs at the lowest levels of pay; my cousins and their friends were always assigned to the very worst and dirtiest jobs -- in the engine assembly area, the body shop and the foundry. It was unusual to find a black autoworker with more than 15 years of experience who had not already suffered some crippling accident, such as the loss of a finger or an eye.

The urban uprising of 1967 pushed thousands of middle-income whites out of the city, fearful of their lives and property. Large corporations began a pattern of "milking" their industries inside the city limits, reallocating their profits from local consumers to new firms based in the all-white suburbs or in the sunbelt. Economic decay overtook Detroit by the 1970s. Schools declined as the tax base

fell. A drop in jobs meant that low-income people turned to illegal drugs, prostitution and other forms of illegal activity. The city's core became unlivable for the black middle class, and many moved to the suburbs in the 1970s and 1980s.

Other people of color began to move into the city. African-Americans had never really found. The largest group were Syrians, and later the Palestinians, Iraqis and Saudis. By 1990, nearly 200,000 Arab-Americans lived in Detroit, despite many common economic and political interests. They avoided meetings or cultural events because they fear being targeted for jobs, because the corporations have relocated their operations.

The challenge of rebuilding and resurrecting Detroit is a national policy of urban reconstruction for the 21st century. It is a challenge of this crucial city, attacking and uprooting widespread

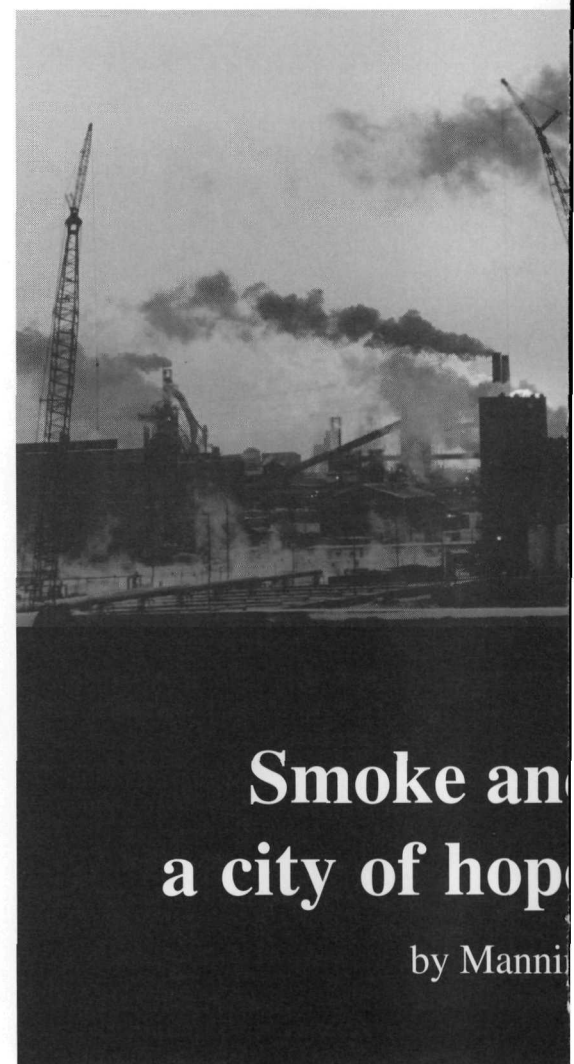


Detroit auto worker and his daughter

credit: Jim West

Manning Marable is a professor of history and political science at the University of Colorado, an author, a serialized columnist and contributing editor to *The Witness*.

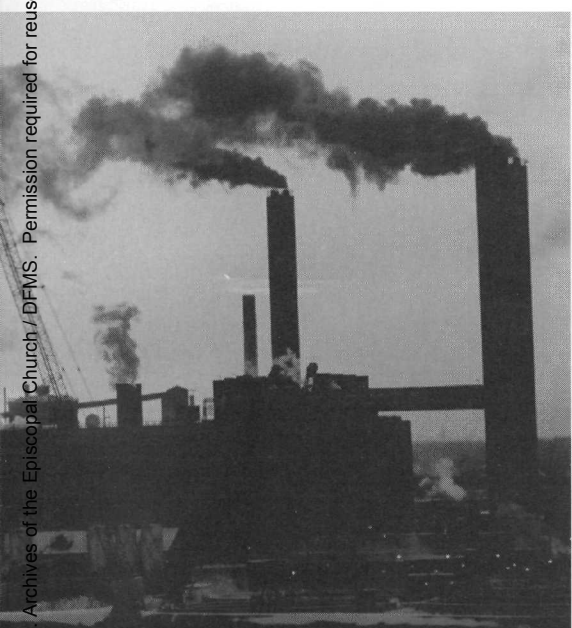
Jim West is a freelance photographer and an editor of *Labor Notes*.



had to rely on the underground economy of hustling, activity, simply to survive. Rapidly, Detroit's central which began to relocate to neighborhoods adjacent

searching for the same opportunities which African-consisted of Arab-Americans. First the Lebanese and established an economic and cultural infrastructure. in the greater Detroit-Dearborn area. Unfortunately, relderly are afraid to go out at night to attend civic mugged and robbed; the poor have ceased to look for offices beyond the reach of public transportation.

oi it seems to me, should be the cornerstone of a new, enury. Because if we could turn around the problems ea poverty, generating new jobs and new hopes, we



d Mirrors: e and illusion

ng Marable

might be able to see progress in every other city.

Part of this strategy must be economic. Religious groups and foundations could help finance community-controlled corporations, which provide investment capital, technical advice and business expertise to community cooperatives and minority small entrepreneurs. We need to restructure welfare programs to reward, rather than punish, unmarried women with children with initiative to go back to school and obtain job skills. We must employ federal government resources to expand and to strengthen the so-called safety net, providing a decent living wage to

those who cannot work, and an expanded housing program to address the problems of the homeless.

Part of the solution must also be educational. For decades, many black educators have argued that the violence and socially-destructive behavior which one witnesses in our inner-cities demands a new approach toward the education of young people. The chaos outside the boundaries of our schools, the drugs and crime, destroy the self-esteem and constructive social values which help to give any community a sense of itself. Young black males, especially in single, female-headed households, lack black male adult role models in their lives.

Clifford Watson, an elementary school principal in Detroit, has advanced a proposal which attempts to address these problems. The original plan envisioned the creation of three grade schools, in-



The Detroit auto show

credit: Jim West

volving a total of 560 inner-city youths. The schools' proposed names -- Malcolm X Academy, Marcus Garvey Academy, and Paul Robeson Academy -- were designed to reinforce a sense of "Afrocentrism" -- racial pride, historical and cultural consciousness within African and African-American traditions. Special Saturday classes and tutorials were planned in specific areas, such as mathematics and the sciences. Anchoring this program would be the presence of articulate and culturally-aware black male educators, serving as mentors, instructors and disciplinarians. In the proposal, the Robeson Academy was to be all-male, with the other schools making this transition over a period of time. Last February, the Detroit School Board reviewed the controversial proposal, and approved it by a vote of 10 to one.

Opposition surfaced from several

quarters. The American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women Legal Defense Fund went to Federal district court this August to successfully block the implementation of the plan, fundamentally on the grounds that it discriminated against black female students. The Michigan branch of the ACLU's executive director, Howard Simon, argued "These schools may open up a whole new world for these boys. That world should be open to girls too."

Watson countered in television interviews that the particular manifestations of this urban crisis were particularly devastating to young black males, who comprise the overwhelming majority of those engaged in criminal activity and violence in the city, and 90 percent of all

students expelled from the school system. Black feminists and others aligned with NOW's Legal Defense Fund and the ACLU were characterized as "Uncle Toms" or the active agents of white supremacy.

Where some Afrocentric educators such as Watson err is their argument that a system of instruction which specifically excludes black females will contribute constructively to an environment in which young black males can be saved. A coeducational setting could accomplish even more,

all things being equal. Young black males could be challenged to interact with their sisters not from the basis of male chauvinism but with respect. They could

begin to acquire the values essential in a responsible approach to social relations, including sexuality and child raising. By dividing their project on the basis of sex, they indirectly contribute to the tensions and contradictions

If we could turn around the problems of this crucial city, attacking and uprooting widespread poverty, generating new jobs and new hopes, we might be able to see progress in every other city.

--Manning Marable

which already fuel problems between black males and females -- which is directly against the interests of the African-American community as a whole.

The struggle to save Detroit, and other cities like it, cannot be viewed in narrow, political, economic or educational terms. The larger question we must confront is our attitude toward human beings of different ethnic identities, cultures, religions, and lifestyles than ourselves. Is there a moral and ethical responsibility which links those living in the comfortable confines of the suburbs with families struggling to survive the rats, roaches and crackdealers on their local street corners? Is it sufficient for churches to donate canned goods for Christmas, or to invite a black choir to Sunday morning services? One cannot embrace the pain of the poor from a distance; one cannot understand the outrage of young black and Latino teenagers who desperately are searching for work and self-respect, just by voting for liberals at election time. Detroit is a symbol for the vast class and racial chasm which cuts across our country. Our ability to remove the barriers of inequality which still plague millions of poor, unemployed and minority people is simultaneously a test of our political resolve and spirituality.

TW

Detroit has the largest Arab population outside of the Middle East. More than 200,000 people, speaking 52 different dialects, emigrated to Detroit.

The first to arrive were Christians from Lebanon and Syria who assimilated quickly, and opening markets. Later arrivals, largely Muslim, found work in the Ford Rouge plant.

"There was a unity here," explained Ishmael Ahmed, director of the Arab-American Community Center for Economic and Social Services. "Everybody needed work and everybody did not know the language."

The desire to assimilate into U.S. culture was brought up short during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Ahmed said.

In the 1970s, Arab workers learned that the UAW was buying Israeli government bonds. Twenty caucuses were organized and Chrysler's Dodge Main plant was shut down when workers marched on then UAW president Leonard Woodcock. They secured promises that all bonds would be sold. Ahmed noted that ironically Chrysler had hired so many Arabs at Dodge Main to dilute the radical influence of the Black Revo-



A children's art show at the Arab Center this summer was aborted when someone set fire to the building after killing a center employee.

credit: Laura McGuire, Dearborn Times Herald

lutionary Union Movement.

"People came here very suspicious about the United States and with a certain self-respect," Ahmed said. "The civil rights movement for the Chicanos and Blacks had a direct effect. People started thinking we have a right to preserve our culture."

During the Gulf War, the Arab community was conflicted about the war, concerned for family members abroad and worried about persecution by U.S. "super patriots."

J.W.-K.



Curtistine Hooper is baptized in the Detroit River.

credit: Liz Rogers

'Rain your spirit in my heart'

by Ruth Seymour

From beside the old piano at the front of the sanctuary, Catrina Ganey scanned faces in the pews. Nine residents from neighborhood half-way houses, five black professionals and seven young, white Birkenstockers.

Up into the gothic rafters climbed

Ganey's voice, a strong gospel praise backed by guitar, a simple song that both the half-way house adults and other worshippers joined confidently and hungrily.

The church's acoustics sent back a sound that was gentle, welcoming, full.

"Thank you Jesus, praise you Lord

Jesus," Ganey sighed into the microphone at song's end, unleashing a rustle of similar praises through the flock.

Need. Response. Power. Another Sunday service at Church of the Messiah in Detroit. Somehow, fewer and fewer members are achieving more and more. One wonders what on earth could

make this small Christian community lose steam.

Not the disbanding of dozens of shared households after a decade's effort.

Not this decade's membership decline from 100 active parishioners to 25. (Sunday services now draw 90 people - ten years ago the congregation was twice that size.)

Not the death by stabbing of a young parishioner during her afternoon nap in the church's rehabilitated apartments.

Certainly not car thefts and petty vandalisms.

In a neighborhood sickened by decades of joblessness, narcotics, violence and unrecycled lives, about 25 Messiah members like Ganey are still hanging on.

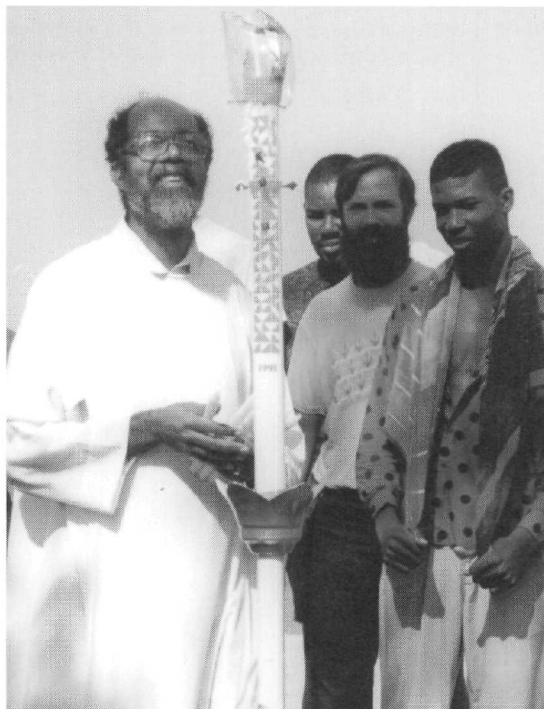
And they are producing:

*** \$4 million in neighborhood housing development in the last five years.** With public, private and congregational dollars, the church has refurbished more than 145 living units, including four apartment buildings, trained residents in cooperative management and turned over the first building to cooperative resident control.

Ground is to be broken this winter for 12 town houses, the first new housing to rise in this neighborhood for years.

*** Improved math and reading scores among neighborhood children.** Before- and after-tests showed an average increase of about two grade levels in academic skills for students attending the church's after-school

study halls. The church also sponsors evening youth groups, Girl Scouts and a summer work program. "Without Messiah, I might be selling drugs, I might be doing anything," says 19-year-old Manuel Rios, an easy-smiling young man with hair greased back into a duck tail.



Ron Spann, rector of Messiah, raises the paschal candle.
credit: Liz Rogers

*** Annual delivery of 80,000 pounds (100 bags per week) of fresh fruits, staples, meats and vegetables to senior citizens.** Church members also paved a corner lot for a basketball court and host early Sunday coffee hours to help mentally impaired congregants preview the upcoming service.

The Messiah crew aren't saints, really. They are just normal people, with other jobs. All 25 of them. And they say their numbers are starting to grow again. That maybe, by now, they're reaching 30.

"I think that is what makes Messiah so special," says Gwendolyn McNeal,

41, whom the rector calls "Superwoman -- secretary for United Way by day and phenomenal grass roots organizer" by night.

"You have a few people doing significant things, really making a difference," McNeal says.

Ganey, for one, is a hospital chaplain and college drama instructor. When she first visited Church of the Messiah during a nasty rainstorm three years ago, she stood on the porch dripping and wondering whether to walk inside. Half of the congregants (then, as today) were from nearby adult foster care homes. Some were dishevelled, disoriented and smelled funny.

"I thought, 'Oh, my gosh what *is* this place,'" she recalls. "It looked weird. I had never been in a place where people dressed like *that* sat by people, quote, unquote, *looking good*. I was also struck by the interracialness of it.

"But I felt something drawing me in. I felt: This is what the Kingdom of God is going to look like."

* * *

November 1971: Just 15 months out of seminary (Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge) Ron Spann became rector to the disappearing Church of the Messiah on the near east-side of Detroit.

A few white elderly parishioners had been struggling for years to keep their doors open, without a pastor, and in a racially turned-over neighborhood.

Span was in his late 20s, politicized, single and fresh from a charismatic conversion. His goal: Build a Detroit arrangement similar to the burgeoning charismatic Redeemer community of 400 adults and children in urban Houston.

Build he did. From an Episcopalian and decidedly charismatic base, the Messiah community mushroomed in shared households, community economics and cooperative government

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Ruth Seymour is director of the Journalism Institute for Minorities at Wayne State University.

Liz Rogers, an artist, lived in the Messiah community for two years and recently moved to study sculpting at the New York Academy of Fine Arts.

peaked in 1980, there were 95-100 adults sharing homes within four blocks of the church.

Spann is black; most of his community converts were "white, young, college-educated liberals wanting to be a part of a church doing something in the community," says Messiah member Liz Rogers.

Members contributed their entire incomes to a common purse, which paid rent and food and individual allowances of up to \$10 per month. Some maintained jobs to finance the church's efforts; others contributed skills to neighborhood needs. The church founded a day care center and school, as well as a painting and plastering company that employed neighborhood residents and a housing development corporation.

"Rather than living in the world and going to church we were living in church and going out into the world," Spann says. "We were asking a lot of ourselves, sometimes unwisely."

And yet even this inflow of hope could not turn back the creeping urban tide of poverty, desperation and crime. And, as with other communitarian efforts around the country and world during the 1980s, Spann said, internal energy and commitment began to flag.

"People married, had kids, and with these tender babies, they wanted to get out of the neighborhood. They said, 'Oh my God, my child could get killed,'" Rogers explained.

Still, no one was prepared for the murder.

Michelle Rougeau, Spann recalls, was a neurosurgical nurse, "an off-the-scale extrovert. A lively, attractive, warm person -- kids just flocked around her -- from a big French Catholic family."

After 10 years in Messiah's common households, Rougeau moved into the St. Paul Manor, an apartment building which the church had restored. One morning, she took neighborhood children to a

prayer service at the gates of a local defense contractor. That afternoon, she took a nap at home. "A child of one of the church members walked in, since Michelle never locked her door, and found the body," Spann said.

The entire Messiah community reeled. "I had never suffered such a loss," Spann says. "And if there was any way we had repressed our anxieties about the violence that stalks this neighborhood, you could not repress it then."

The hemorrhaging of membership out



Some of the newly baptised: Kaellen Weld-Wallis, Justin and Daniel Cannon.

credit: Liz Rogers

of the church community continued.

But even in the midst of that decline, even as good-bye parties became more the norm than baptisms, a new center of gravity began to emerge. Black membership from the neighborhood began to climb.

Donald Softley, 42-year-old director of East Side Initiative, a community agency serving 40,000 residents, is one of those who has joined Messiah in the last few years. Today he is board president of the Church of the Messiah Housing Corporation.

"Messiah had this reputation in the community for being a caring active church in terms of helping people satisfy human needs," he said. "I was looking

for a church that was committed beyond itself."

Spann, too, had been rethinking his church's vision.

He spent a year on sabbatical among fellow black theologians in Atlanta. And he thought often of his 1984 trip to Nicaragua. There, he recalled, he had seen "people enjoying what I had seen black people enjoying during the late '60s and '70s in this country -- some sense of destiny," he said.

"I had heard 16-year-old kids who could quote Che Guevara. I realized that was not true for 16-year-old kids around the neighborhood of Messiah. And so we began taking the youth ministry in new directions."

Church study halls began promoting individual tutoring after school. Evening youth groups discussed raw neighborhood problems as well as generating championship interchurch sports teams.

Spann began more energetically infusing Gospel and black culture into church services, while provoking members, black and white, to examine the role race was playing in their own congregation.

"It would seem," says Spann, "that if there is enough power to get Jesus out of the dead, it must be peanuts to break down divisions between men and women, black and white, right?"

After Rougeau's murder, one Detroit newspaper columnist likened Messiah's membership to a bunch "of Lutheran seminary volunteers in Tanzania," Spann recalled. The analogy infuriated church members at the time.

Today, interracial trust and teamwork is a dominant trait of the Messiah community. But occasional cultural discom-

forts still confound the core group. The congregation has even broken at times into a "pepper" group and a "salt" group to talk things through.

For one thing, some members say, there has been an irritatingly subtle presumption in and around Messiah that middle-class whites who live in the neighborhood are somehow more heroic than blacks.

"We have fears for our children, too," spurts McNeal. There is anger in her smooth voice. "Because some of us are black it does not make it any easier."

"You can pray together and live together and all the things human beings do with each other," Softley says, "but the fact that you are of different races will always be there."

Ultimately, however, when the faces of Messiah turn outward, the cry of social needs drowns out inner frictions. The chemistry of Messiah, from the start, has depended on the inner turning out. It is the spilling of one community's

good into another.

"For everyone involved, that struggle creates a kind of togetherness that transcends race," Softley says.

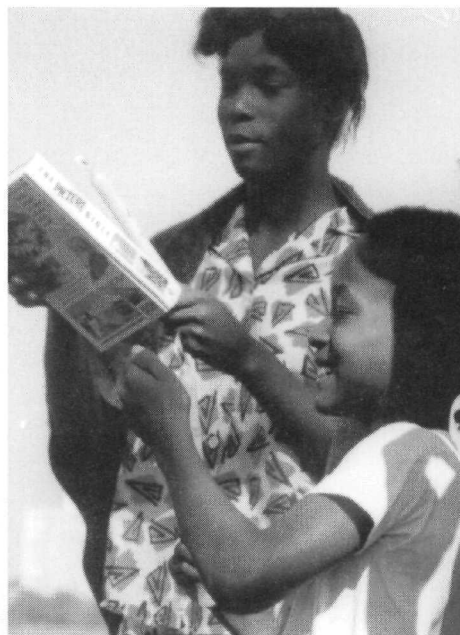
* * *

The Detroit river is navy blue in the morning; seaweeds frame the shore like braids of hair.

The Church of the Messiah has gathered on an island between Canada and Detroit to baptize new members.

A female priest, Susan Boch, speaks: "This is our family, gathered at its heart."

And again: "Gaze into the candle's



Curtistine and Curtis Hooper hold symbols of their new life in Christ: a candle and a Bible.

credit: Liz Rogers

flame and see our deliverance. This is a story of how God's hope and joy for us are stronger than anything in our lives."

The man in his low-slung black knit cap looks up and almost reveals his eyes. A woman in the front row lights the last half of a cigarette.

Across a grass aisle, on blankets and sheets, ten children await ritual -- fresh, self-conscious, excited.

Godparents-to-be

grab smaller hands as 60 people trudge across warm morning sand, the church body briefly swollen with visiting families and friends and two dogs on leashes.

As its children wade waist-high into the river to be drenched under a crockery pitcher, the church sings and claps: "*Rain your spirit down in my heart, rain, Master Jesus, rain...*" Emergent, dripping, the children are one-by-one swallowed into church family.

Each child holds up a flickering candle to symbolize a new undying life in Christ. Predictably, strong gusts of wind toss away some of the little flames. Predictably, Messiah's children defy the wind; they turn readily to each other's flames to keep all candles glowing.

TW

City Nights

by Naomi Long Madgett

My windows and doors are barred
against the intrusion of thieves.
The neighbors' dogs howl in pain
at the screech of sirens.
There is nothing you can tell me
about the city
I do not know.

On the front porch it is cool and quiet
after the high pitched panic passes.
The windows across the street gleam
in the dark.

There is a faint suggestion of moon-shadow
above the golden street light.
The grandchildren are asleep upstairs
and we are happy for their presence.

The conversation comes around to Grampa Henry
thrown into the Detroit River by an Indian woman
seeking to save him from the sinking ship.
(Or was he the one who was the African prince
employed to oversee the chained slave-cargo,
preventing their rebellion, and for reward set free?)
The family will never settle it; somebody lost
the history they had so carefully preserved.

Insurance rates are soaring.
It is not safe to walk the streets at night.
The news reports keep telling us the things
they need to say: The case
is hopeless.

But the front porch is cool and quiet.
The neighbors are dark and warm.
The grandchildren are upstairs dreaming
and we are happy for their presence.

(Excerpts and Entrances, Lotus Press, Detroit)

Swords into Plowshares, Tanks into Artworks

by Blaise Tobia & Virginia Maksymowicz

Detroit is one of only three cities in the nation featuring a gallery dedicated fully to showing art concerned peace and justice issues (the others are Chicago and Albuquerque). Swords into Plowshares Peace Center and Gallery is situated downtown, next to the Detroit Council On the Arts, and draws a diverse audience of people in the arts, church people, politically active people and just plain people off the street.

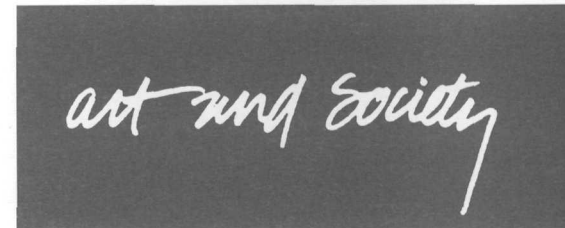
"Why the arts and peace?," wrote Jim Bristah, the gallery's founder and director, in an article for *The Other Side* magazine. "The arts reach into our feelings, into the deeper levels of our being... The arts are universal, the needed per-

spective if there is to be peace. Art can play the role of conscience and, like the prophets, break open realities that a society ignores, is unaware of, or has become insensitive to."

A retired Methodist minister, Bristah came up with the idea of using an empty storefront owned by Central United Methodist Church to create a space where visual artists, poets, musicians, nonartists and even children could gather to envision a more peaceful world. In 1985, Swords into Plowshares opened with an exhibit of 75 panels (all made in Michigan) of the Pentagon Peace Ribbon. Since then Bristah, his wife Jo, and a hard-working committee of volunteers have presented the work of artists from around the world. The gallery has been

so successful, and its staff so ready for the challenge, that it has recently moved into a larger space on the same block.

The currently exhibiting artists are noted political cartoonist Bill Day (*Detroit Free Press*) and Detroit mixed-media artist Eric Mesko. Their show,

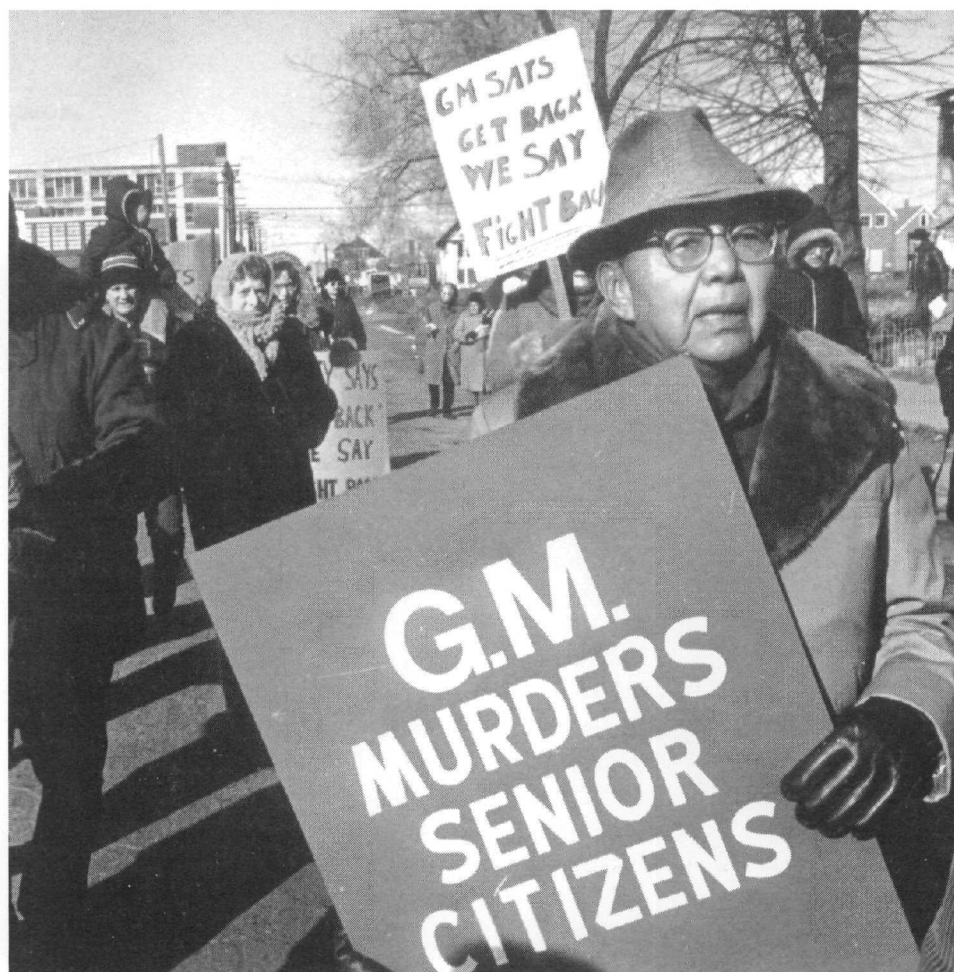


called "Art Wrought From Operation Desert Storm," juxtaposes 36 original cartoons by Day and an ambitious installation by Mesko that includes military weapons, videos, drawings and paintings. (The accompanying photograph shows just a small section of the installation, including part of a wall-size bank of television sets and a nearly life-size tank.)

For information call 313/965-54422.



credits: Eric Mesko, artist; Marilyn Zimmerman, photographer



credit: David C. Turnley

Making over Motown

by James Boggs

James Boggs worked on the Chrysler assembly line for 28 years and was active in the labor and black movements. He is the author of *American Revolution: Pages from a Black Worker's Notebook* and *Racism and the Class Struggle*. Boggs now participates in Detroiters' Uniting, a group projecting ideas for the future of Detroit.

David Turnley is an award-winning *Detroit Free Press* photographer stationed in Paris. His Poletown photography appeared in *Poletown: Community Betrayed* by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, University of Illinois Press, 1989.

Eleven years ago, in the summer of 1980, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young and General Motors Chairman Thomas Murphy announced that a new \$500 million Cadillac plant would be built in the center of Detroit, in the Hamtramck neighborhood known as Poletown. In order to build this "state of the art" factory (which would replace two older GM plants employing 15,000), 4200 residents would have to be displaced, and 1500 homes, 144

businesses and 16 churches bulldozed. The City of Detroit would also have to give GM a 12-year, 50 per cent property tax abatement and spend nearly \$300 million to clear the land and provide the plant with water, highways, sewage removal, etc. But, said the mayor, the deal was worth it because the Poletown plant would provide 6000 jobs ("It was a cheap price to pay for progress"); and besides, if the city did not comply with GM's demands before the 10-month deadline, it would go elsewhere.

At the time the project was opposed by what appeared to be only a small minority, primarily the people in the threatened community. At a series of public hearings, attended by thousands, residents spoke tearfully of how they had grown up and raised their families in this community, walked to school along its streets, been confirmed and married in its churches; and asked why residents were not allowed to vote on issues so critical to their lives. Against these ordinary working people were arrayed not only GM and the city administration but also the UAW, the majority of the City Council, and the Catholic Archdiocese (nearly half the Poletown residents were Catholic).

At first many of the Poletown homeowners could not believe that the city or state could condemn their property so callously. They had faith that if they spoke up and protested, the city and GM would relent and find some other site or reconfigure the plant so it could coexist with the neighborhood. But each week it became clearer that their protests were falling on deaf ears and that the city was going to use the right of eminent domain to take their property.

Meanwhile, the administration was resorting to all kinds of tricks to put pressure on homeowners and small businesses in the community to move. City services began to decline; garbage was

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collected infrequently or not at all; city lights would go off, encouraging vandalism and arson. Unemployed “demonstrators” were paid to march through the community shouting, “We want jobs.” Step by step the administration did its best to tear the community apart physically and morally. The end came in the middle of the night of July 14, 1981 when 60 police officers wrecked the Immaculate Conception Church, the headquarters of community resistance, arresting protesters who had been maintaining a vigil against the threatening demolition.

Looking back, the Poletown controversy can be seen as the beginning of a life and death struggle between politicians who still have the illusion that our cities can be saved by the same multinational corporations which have abandoned them, and a growing grassroots movement based on a human-scale vision of the city as a joining together of local communities, stores, schools and churches. The Poletown struggle inspired the formation of community groups and coalitions to resist corporate blackmail and to demand the allocation of federal and city funds to neighborhood development. In 1988 this grassroots movement achieved its first major success when Detroit voters rejected “Casino Gambling” despite the mayor’s promises that it would bring 50,000 jobs to the city. This April 23 an overwhelming majority voted No on Proposal A which would have sanctioned the rezoning of the riverfront Ford Auditorium site (meaning that the public auditorium would be destroyed) for private development.

At the same time, grassroots groups are coming together to begin rebuilding our communities. Some people are cleaning up their blocks and planting trees and gardens. Others are organizing marches and vigils to rid their neighborhoods of crime and drugs. Still others are taking over and rehabbing old and abandoned



In 1980, the city of Detroit condemned Poletown, an integrated, low-income neighborhood, to accommodate construction of a new General Motors’ Cadillac plant.

credit: David C. Turnley

houses, thus restoring to the tax rolls hundreds of properties that would otherwise have to be demolished with taxpayer monies. [Detroit has boasted the largest number of owner-occupied homes in the nation; now, it bulldozes 6,000 homes a year.]

The central question is “What is the purpose of a city?” Up to now, because

Looking back, the Poletown controversy can be seen as the beginning of a life and death struggle between politicians who still have the illusion that our cities can be saved by the same multinational corporations which have abandoned them, and a growing grassroots movement based on a human-scale vision of the city.

it has been our historical experience for the last 75 years, most Americans have thought of the city as a place to which you go for a job working for some big corporation after you have been driven off the land by mechanization. But now we know that the large industrial corporations are not going to provide those jobs for us.

What, then, is going to happen to the one million people still living in Detroit, half of them on some form of public assistance? We can’t go back to the farms. There are no new industries coming here to employ us. Therefore, if we are thinking about a future for Detroiters, if we are going to create hope especially for our young people, we must break with most of the ideas about cities that we have accepted in the past.

We have to stop seeing the city as just a place to which you come to make a living. Instead we must start seeing it as the place where our humanity is enriched because we have the opportunity to work and live in harmony with people of many different ethnic and social backgrounds. We have to see that our capital is in

people and not see people as existing to make capital for production or dependent on capital to live.

The foundation of our city has to be people living in communities who realize that their human identity is based on love and respect for one another and between different generations, and who have also learned from experience that they can no longer leave the decisions about their lives to the market place, to corporations or to politicians, regardless of ethnic background. We have to see ourselves as responsible for our city and for each other, and raise our children to place more value on social ties than on material

wealth. We have to see ourselves as agents of change and producers rather than as consumers or clients for services.

We have to get rid of the myth that there is something sacred about large-scale production for the national and international market. Actually, our experiences over the last 75 years have demonstrated that large-scale production, because it is based on a huge separation between production and consumption, makes both producers and consumers into faceless masses who are alienated from one another and at the mercy of market forces and the mass media. Instead we have to begin to create small enterprises which produce food, goods and services for the local market. Instead of destroying the skills of workers, which is what large-scale industry does, these small enterprises will combine craftsmanship, or the preservation and enhancement of human skills, with

the new technologies which make possible flexible production and constant readjustment to serve the needs of local consumers.

We need a view of our city which

purchase freshly-baked bread and food shops where working people can purchase whole meals to take home to eat together, instead of living off McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken.

We also need a fundamental change in our concept of schools. What kids learn in school today has little or no relationship to their communities. While they are growing up, they are like parasites doing no socially useful work. Then when they become teenagers we blame them because they have no

sense of social responsibility. We have to create schools in which young people acquire a sense of their own value be-

cause they naturally and normally do meaningful work for the community. Our goal should be to make Detroit the first city in the nation to use our schools to serve the community rather than as places where young people are upgraded to leave the community.

young people are upgraded to leave the community.

We can't keep running from city to city. But if we put down our roots where we are living, and put our hearts, imaginations, minds and hands to work, we can empower ourselves and our children and build our cities into places that we are proud to call our own. **TW**

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This lawn mower repair shop, owned by Ben and Ethel Feagan, was one of the 144 Poletown businesses destroyed in 1981.

credit: David C. Turnley

takes into consideration both the natural resources of our area and the existing skills of Detroiters. For example, Michigan has abundant sand. This can be used to produce glass for storm windows which will help us save energy, solar panels to harness the heat of the sun, greenhouses to grow vegetables all year round.

We need to be creating all kinds of locally-owned and operated stores in our communities so that our young people can see stores not just as places where you spend money to buy what you want, but where local people are working to meet the needs of the community. In every neighborhood there should be bakeries where families can

Our goal should be to make Detroit the first city in the nation to use our schools to serve the community rather than as places where young people are upgraded to leave the community.

In Its own drowsy, slowed concept of time the Sun Spirit coursed Its way across the extremes again, left to right, east to west. Outside in the silent approach of dusk, the dew-damp crystal specks in the concrete of the sidewalk and the street began to reflect rippling, broken beams of street light to rival the dance rhythms of wind-chased shadows across the abandoned field. The deserted lot once filled with parked automobiles, and the adjoining desolate steel factory, had become historical illusions -- passing echoes of the voices of working people from a time when the factory had provided a living for hundreds of families. The weeded-over parking lot was being reclaimed by the weary, calculated movements of nature and by the power of the passing footsteps of Chief Pontiac and his warriors who once camped near the creek that was near the factory. Santos remembered that there was a stone monument close to the old iron crossing bridge that marked the precise location where Chief Pontiac had held his War Council prior to the attack on old Fort Detroit. The monument had been buried years before by the careless dumping of gravel and stone.

When Santos first returned to the small working-class town where he had grown up he left the streets of Detroit with great expectations. It was an opportunity for him to start his life over and to get away from the urbanized chaos of crime and drugs. The factories in Detroit were being closed, one by one. Many of his friends lost their jobs and soon after gave up looking for work that would pay enough to provide for their families.

Santos moved what little furniture,

Jose L. Garza is a Native American-Chicano who moved from Detroit to Ecorse in an effort to deepen his Native spirituality. He now lives in rural Pennsylvania. This article is excerpted from a longer essay.

books and plants he owned into a small house with a large back yard. He had always wanted a large green open space and with the first signs of warm weather he planted a garden to grow the vegetables he would use for survival. The garden was dug, with apologies to Mother Earth, in a great circle. An altar to prompt the blessings of the earth was erected at the center of the back yard



using found objects: feather gifts from the winged creatures, soil gathered from distant places, special stones borrowed from places of power and solitude, hard seeds like that of the horse chestnut tree that had survived the cold and damp of winter. The altar formed a circle around a young tree and with the passing days of summer heat it became a medicine wheel. Slowly Santos began to regain his balance and power.

As summer neared its end the people living in the neighborhood could no longer accept the strange ways of their new neighbor. They could not tolerate that he seldom cut the grass. He owned no television or automobile and little else of material wealth, and yet appeared to be content. Fear begot anger, and anger

begot vigilante "justice."

Santos watched the wild birds and four-legged creatures take their share of the sunflower seed harvest. He conversed with the plants and reminded them at harvest time that he too would become the food for future generations of plants. In return the sunflowers extended themselves thirteen feet into the sky and the Indian corn grew to a height of nine feet.

It was the summer of liberation, but now the time was drawing near. The court had instructed the landlord that Santos had 30 days to vacate the house.

Santos walked matter-of-factly to the open window.

"Ayyyyyiiiieeee...!" he shouted with a force that originated from the unity of fire and water.

The war whoop scattered the silent atoms of the ascending night air. Snow geese in their full autumn flight were proud and envious of the force that it contained. Within the call survived the knowledge of the tradition of the ancient ones.

"Ayyyyyiiiieeee...!"

The reserved people of the crowded suburb did not understand the intrusion of the strange sound. It sent electrifying chills down their spines and recalled for some the days of the covered wagons forming a circle for protection. The sound sliced the thin air so neatly that there was no evidence of its passing. It drew its strength from the molten core of the planet as well as from the jet stream of a high-flying hunter eagle.

The war whoop could not be bought or sold. It could not be mass produced, injected or rejected, copied or taxed. In its simplest essence it was untamed and yet a willing servant to the slightest well-placed cross breeze. With each use it was the Good Medicine that replenished Itself.

It was Indian pride in its raw form, and it had survived.

TW

Using Talents

by Grace Lee Boggs

The Living City by Roberta Brandes Gratz, Simon & Schuster, paper \$10.95.

The Living Economy: A New Economics in the Making, edited by Paul Ekins, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

From her experience as an urban activist and a *New York Post* reporter for 15 years, Roberta Gratz is convinced that the genuine rebirth of cities is coming *not* from developers and urban planners but from neighborhood people who are fighting to preserve and improve what already exists. The key, she says, is a "percolating-up" process rather than a "trickle-down" strategy. Wholesale new developments like "Urban Renewal" and GM's Poletown destroy the streets, pedestrians and human relationships that have devel-

vacant and abandoned apartment houses on Kelly Street were scheduled for demolition by the city. Four years later residents had restored them at a total cost of \$540,000 (including job training for 40 workers and apartment rehabilitation at \$26,000 per unit). Banana Kelly has since become the catalyst for neighborhood revitalization both locally and nationally. Its slogan is "Urban pioneers! Don't move, improve!"



Habitat for Humanity workers, like many others, work to renovate Detroit homes.

credit: Jim West

Today in "Rust Belt" cities the rehabilitation of abandoned houses by grassroots individuals and organizations is beginning to assume the dimensions of a movement. Most of these "urban pioneers" are motivated not by the "bottom line" but by a whole range of human needs, including the need for affordable housing, self-reliance and the pride that comes from home ownership and rebuilding a community. A "New Economics" is in the making.

This New Economics is explored in *The Living Economy*, a collection of papers written for TOES (The Other Economic Summit), organized as an alternative to the annual Economic Summits of the Western industrialized powers and Japan.

Basic to the "New Economics" is a reconceptualization of human needs, our relationship to the environment, and the nature of work.

1) Conventional Economics views human needs chiefly in material terms. "New Economics" sees human needs as both material and non-material, i.e. for expression, creativity, equality, community and participation.

2) Conventional Economics assumes that growth is good and more is better. It is as if economists had never heard of cancer. "New Economics" is rooted in the recognition that "human life and economic activity are an interdependent part of the wide ecological processes that sustain life on earth."

3) Conventional Economics views work in narrowly economic terms, i.e. as labor. For the capitalist labor is a cost of production, like land and capital. Therefore it is paid as little as possible and marginalized or eliminated in order to increase profits. At the other pole workers and their supporters see labor as the source of all wealth and value, and therefore entitled to a greater share of and control over surplus value. For nearly 200 years these concepts of work and labor have together provided the theoretical framework for the class struggle.

In recent years, as automation and the export of jobs overseas have eroded the role and power of labor in the industrialized countries, the concept of work as labor has become increasingly less helpful as a theoretical tool for progressive struggle. Hence the search for a more human-centered concept of work. In the words of E. F. Schumacher, the purpose of work is: "First, to provide necessary goods and services. Second, to enable every one of us to use and thereby perfect our gifts like good stewards. Third, to do so in service to and in cooperation with others, so as to liberate ourselves from our inborn egocentricity."

TW

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book review

oped organically over the years. Grassroots struggles, on the other hand, not only renew physical structures. They build people and community.

One of the most inspiring examples of urban rebirth by this process is Banana Kelly, a crescent-shaped block in the South Bronx. In 1977 the three

Grace Boggs is a long-time community activist who has lived (with her husband, James Boggs) in the same Detroit house for nearly 30 years. Boggs is a coordinator of WE PROS; editor of the SOSAD newsletter; and active in a People's Festival celebrating grassroots efforts to turn Detroit around.

Living beyond fear

by Mary West

Dorothy Garner says that there is a lot of her father in her, who was a "rebel" and a "sensitive, wise man." He encouraged her to read everything, including the United Mineworkers' Journal, and told her to be careful which road she chose to walk down. *But it was not for her father's memory that she decided to confront the drug traffic on her block.*

As a working mother, she took a number of civil service tests before being hired as a corrections officer. Her first job was at the Detroit House of Corrections (Dehoco). For the past five years, she has helped run a half-way house for prisoners in southwest Detroit. She says that her job has taught her how to control her temper and how to make decisions quickly. When she is on the street, she is often recognized by former inmates. "They yell, 'Hey, Mama G!' if they're doing okay and scatter if they're up to something." *But it was not because of her job that she began to march against crack houses.*

She raised two daughters and one son alone, and has a grandson, age nine, who when there's a problem at school prefers that his grandmother, rather than his mother, accompany him. "He says, 'Grandma knows how to negotiate.'" *But it is not for her grandson that she gives talks, speeches and interviews about her anti-drug crusade.*

It began on a Sunday evening in 1988. After many calls to the police, there was a drug bust at a crack house on the street in northwest Detroit where Garner lives. One of her neighbors, Mary Ryan, stepped outside her front door and called out "Thank you, Jesus!"

The next morning, an emergency medical service team arrived at Mary

Ryan's house, saying that someone had dialed 911 and reported that she had been shot. Later that day, the "dead wagon" (the van from the Wayne County Coroner's Office) pulled up, reportedly to pick up Ryan's body. Still later, a fire truck arrived. Garner remembers saying, "There's no fire now, but there's sure going to be one soon."



Dorothy Garner

credit: Jim West

Garner began walking the streets around her neighborhood. "I guess I was preaching and teaching. I decided I wasn't going to live in fear." The walks were accompanied by singing, praying and chanting. With the advice and encouragement of two local Baptist pastors, Garner organized a small group that met every Saturday night to plan the marches. The participants were mostly older people who, like Garner, had lived in the neighborhood 20 years or more.

The weekly marches are now sponsored by the organization Garner founded called WE PROS, *We the People Reclaiming Our Streets*. At a typical march, people gather, don bright orange vests, pray in a circle then set out, escorted by a Detroit Police squad car. Someone

carries a bullhorn to help lead the songs and chants. Another beats a drum. Another distributes flyers. It is a kind of visible, audible presence that has people staring, applauding or looking away; the kind that whips guard dogs into a frenzy.

Garner tells of death threats against her, delivered by a gang member who identified himself as "Peace." Her response is this: "If I die, let the Clark Gas Station's tow truck put my casket on two wheels and take it up and down the street. They can only take my life. My spirit stays here and from my spirit others will rise."

After three years of marching in the street and working with police, drug dealers continue, reaching deeper into the community, recruiting children. "A drug pusher once told me, 'I boss this block,'" Garner said.

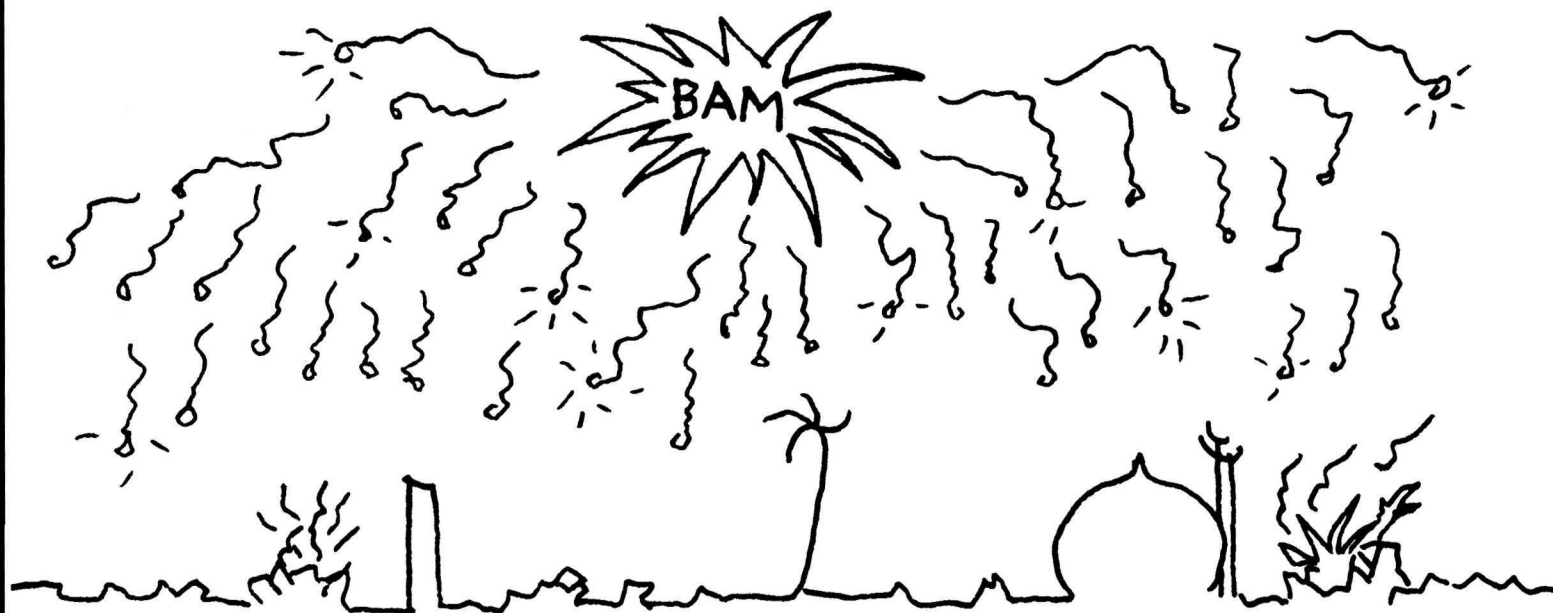
To continue her campaign against drugs, Garner relies on her faith, nurtured since childhood. Every morning she prays for God to take care of her. Psalm 91 is her favorite; her Bible at home is always open to it. She also takes a little time to enjoy herself. "When I get despondent, I go to the nursery," to look at plants and flowers. The sight of growing things "gives me inspiration."

*Witnesses,
the quick and the dead*

Most of her spare time is spent organizing and helping WE PROS grow. She is particularly proud of starting a male mentoring program. A female mentoring program begins this fall.

"I never think of turning around or backing up," Garner says. "I've never backed off a fight. I've lost many, but I've won some too."

TW



GEORGE BUSH'S THOUSAND POINTS OF LIGHT

credit: Charlotte J. Andrews

The November issue
of The Witness will consider DEFENSE

self-defense

neighborhood defense

civilian-based defense

and then, of course, there's the Department of Defense



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N.E.A.R.

VOLUME 74

NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 1991

THE WITNESS

DEFENSE

A gift we give
one another

First Detroit Issue

THANK YOU for the first issue [September] from Detroit. I found it to be both exciting and refreshing in style and content. As a past board member and Chair, I am proud at the continued good work and high quality of the *Witness*. I was most pleased to see that Aneb Kgositsile [aka Gloria House in the *Witness* at her request] is part of the staff. Aneb is a personal friend and sister in the struggle. We worked very closely together while I was with the Alexander Crummell Center for Worship and Learning. She will add a great deal to expanding the coverage and audience of an already fine magazine.

If I can be of any help, please do not hesitate to call me. May our Lord continue to keep your vision and strength high.

Kwasi A. Thornell
Canon, National Cathedral
Washington, D.C.

I WRITE TO CONGRATULATE you on the September issue: magnificent! The thought

that went into combining reflections on confession of faith and of sin with an exploration of collective culpability for violence was well done, important

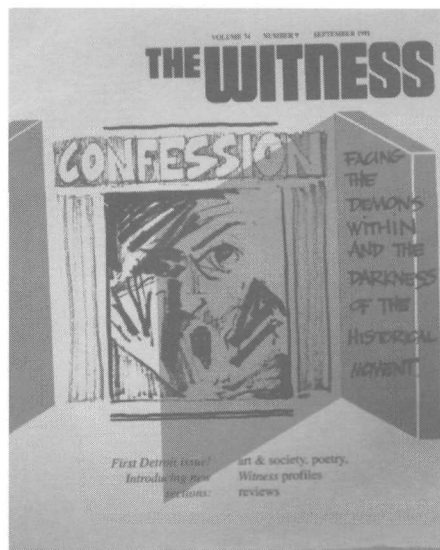
for the Church, and shows great promise for *The Witness* as an important voice in the Church. Glad you're doing it, and glad you're in Detroit. My Sustaining Subscription order is enclosed.

Bill Melnyk
Sewanee, TN

FOR THE FIRST TIME, in a very long time, I have had the chance to read a magazine that touched my soul, one I could walk with when I go alone to the woods to meditate. For the first time, in a long time, I could read a magazine I would like to share with friends. A magazine that indeed strives for a

different world. How fascinating, when some are discouraged, when some have lost faith, you have chosen to invite us, all of us, to confess, as an act of faith. As a poem for the future. As a gift for the children who are enduring the tragedy of these days.

Pio Celestino
Refugio Del Rio Grande
Harlingen, TX



I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT the controversy swirling about the recent move of *The Witness*, but I do know a provincial, ultramontane statement when I hear it. E. Lawrence Carter (Sierra Madre, CA) thinks Detroit is out of the mainstream. Or does he mean out of the Philadelphia mainline?

We Detroiters are quite used to our city being bashed for not being New York City or Toronto and even for being what it is, but I don't think we consider ourselves out of the mainstream. If perceptive, up-to-date publishing cannot occur here in the *out-of-the-mainstream* Midwest, then Carter had better also alert the staffs of *In These Times* (Chicago), *The National Catholic Reporter* (Kansas City), or *The Progressive* (Milwaukee) so that they can relocate to the coast.

Thomas Merton was one of the most incisive and prophetic Christian voices on social justice in this century. He wrote from a cloister and hermitage deep within the blue hills of Kentucky, disproving the notion that

social commentary has to be forged within the Big Apple or the Beltway.

Gordon Judd
Detroit, MI

CONGRATULATIONS on your first issue - it looks fabulous! I'm especially responding to the esthetic impressions -- but also the content remains of high caliber. As a relatively new editor for a paper with a reputation, I salute your bold step in this first issue especially amidst the controversy that has accompanied your start. I'm convinced already that *The Witness* is in excellent hands!

Karen Lindley
The Voice
Newark, NJ

THANK YOU for my issue of *The Witness* and welcome to the great city of Detroit! I am a member of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul and I serve as a trustee of the Founders Society of the Detroit Institute of Arts, as well as various other community organizations.

Welcome to Detroit. We need *The Witness* in our urban setting.

Kenneth M. Davies
Detroit, MI

Questions of Allegiance

BILL WYLIE-KELLERMANN in his [September] review of Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon's book *Resident Aliens* writes that the authors "hadn't seen Generals Powell and Swartzkopf mount the pulpit of St. John the Divine."

I assume he refers to the Requiem for the War Dead held on June 9, which I happened to attend as a curious and perhaps naive priest of the Diocese of New York.

In my opinion, the service was indeed a requiem, not a victory celebration, and it was not at all unfortunate to have General Powell and General Swartzkopf reading what was essentially anti-war poetry.

The contrast with the other events that week in New York City was striking; I think it was remarkable to hear General Swartzkopf

THE WITNESS

Letters

say, in response to the protests, "No one hates war more than I do." At least now we have that on the record.

**J. Douglas Ousley, rector
Church of the Incarnation
New York, NY**

Gay Representation

THE WITNESS MISSED the footnote that the 70th General Convention was the first at which openly gay deputies were seated and at which two publicly came out of the closet [in the July/August issue]. This shifted not only the tone of the debate among the deputies, but also their perception of all the sex talk. More and more realized that the issue is not homosexuality, but heterosexism, and that is a justice issue and not just one of sexual ethics.

When a gay bishop has similar courage, this shift in perception will also take place in the House of Bishops where, without it, the debate was far more acrimonious. But even without this happening, the terms of the dialogue can never be the same again. We might even get an audit of heterosexist attitudes in '94.

**L. Paul Woodrum
Brooklyn, NY**

The Sexuality of Jesus

I AM OFTEN FRUSTRATED BY a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible which reads "on the flat" and ignores the historical context of a text. But the article by Malcolm Boyd, "The Sexuality of Jesus" (July/August 1991), does the same thing in reverse: it begins with contemporary libertarian sexual mores and reads them back into first century Palestine. Little attempt seems to be made to see Jesus the Jew in his own rural Galilean culture.

Though Jesus was sexual like any other human being, the quotes suggesting that he was bisexual and expressed it in sexual relations with both men and women disciples is preposterous -- for a number of reasons.

First, Jewish law clearly forbade sexual relations between men. Any conscientious first-century Jew would not have practiced

same-sex sex, but would have regarded it as a pagan, Gentile practice.

Second, though the Pharisees and other religious leaders sought many ways to discredit Jesus, the gospels give no hint of them using any rumors of sexual scandal to discredit him. Sleeping around, especially with other men, would have alienated him from all classes of his own people and ruined his ministry.

Third, Jesus' call to discipleship was away from the encumbrances of domestic life to an itinerant ministry involving homelessness and poverty. In an age of no birth control, heterosexual sex was associated with marriage and family, since the possibility of pregnancy could not be avoided. For Jesus to have sex with Mary Magdalene or any other woman disciple would have been irresponsible and in complete contradiction to his call away from home and family.

Fourth, the very fact that the women and men disciples traveled in separate groups, and that only men were part of the Twelve is evidence of the propriety expected in that

*I believe gays and lesbians
should be encouraged by
the church, but to do so
with a disregard for careful
hermeneutics will not truly
help anyone. --Reta Finger*

age. Otherwise, women would surely have been part of this inner circle.

By making these observations, I am not implying that Jesus was not sexual, or that he did not break various touching taboos. If it is important to us to have Jesus sexually experienced, it seems more logical to me that he married around the conventional age of 18 and that possibly the death of his wife and/or children was one catalyst propelling him into his itinerant ministry. (Pure speculation, of course, but more consistent with first-century Judaism.)

I believe gays and lesbians should be encouraged and affirmed by the church (though I have yet to be convinced that promiscuity

of any kind is healthy). But to do so with a disregard for careful hermeneutics and historical accuracy will not truly help anyone in the long run. Certainly an article like this will do nothing to break down walls of homophobia and heterosexism among more theologically conservative people.

In general, I have been a fan of *The Witness* for years, especially for the stands it takes on feminism, nonviolence, war tax resistance, and oppression of all kinds. Take care in undergirding these positions with adequate biblical exegesis.

**Reta Finger
Editor, Daughters of Sarah**

SALMAN RUSHDIE WAS MARKED for death for writing his *Satanic Verses*. I'm wondering what should be done with some of the writers of articles in *The Witness*. The July/August issue was almost the last straw!

When my wife read Malcolm Boyd's inferences about Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in his very "sick" article entitled "The Sexuality of Jesus" she deposited your July/August issue in the waste can. I thought that was a sensible act on her part but I went further. I took the waste can full of our trash (and Boyd's) outside and mixed it with our garbage to be burned at the county landfill.

I was tempted to cancel my subscription to *The Witness* today, but decided to wait a bit longer to see whether or not new leadership will reverse the magazine's downward slide toward a well deserved death.

**Charles M. Priebe, Jr.
Mechanic Falls, ME**

THE WITNESS CONTINUES to stimulate and inform me because your writers are open-minded and non-dogmatic.

However your May issue carries an article (Church after Death) by Charles Meyer. In it he lists suggestions for returning to church after a bereavement. In #5 and #6 he says stay or leave a service depending on how you feel. Then he adds, "Either one is fine with God." I wish Charles Meyer would tell me how he knows!

**Joan Brewer
West Lebanon, NH**

THE WITNESS

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THE WITNESS

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Maurice McCrackin
Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Cover credit: Photograph by Jim West;
cover design, Barbara Barefield
It is the policy of *The Witness* to use in-
clusive language whenever possible.

Self-Defense

When the 1980 Republican National Convention nominated Ronald Reagan, I was told by the Associated Press (for whom I worked) to write about the murder of women in the Motor City. After several conversations with city police, I was persuaded that there was no surge of murders. The editor in New York responded, "What can I say? I like murders."

I wrote the story with the obligatory quotes from "women afraid to wait at bus stops," but I also included guidelines from a local self-defense instructor. Predictably, the self-defense options were edited out.

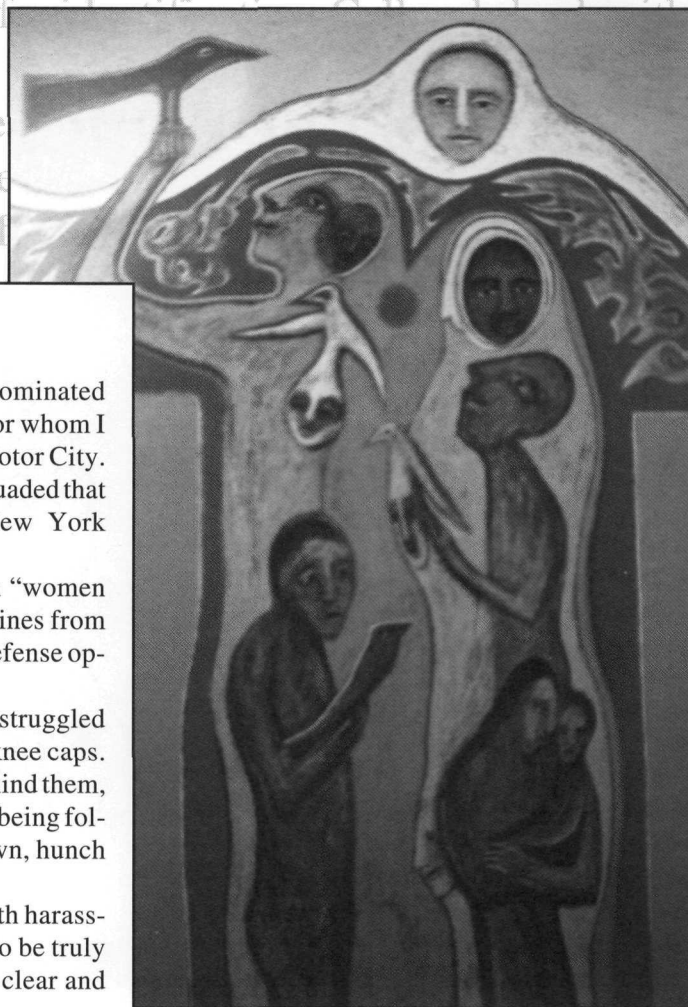
I later took classes with instructor Jaye Spiro, and struggled with whether I was willing to gouge eyes and smash knee caps. I stayed, partly because Spiro told us that men look behind them, assess the situation and act when they believe they are being followed. Women, on the other hand, typically look down, hunch their shoulders and hope nothing happens.

Spiro also said since women are uncomfortable with harassment, they often smile or laugh when saying "No." To be truly heard, she said, they need to learn the freedom to be clear and forceful in their demands.

I believe the word for our culture today must be "Love your enemies." A lot depends on learning that lesson. But for women "love of enemies" has too often translated into a willingness to endure abuse. Since so much of self-defense is learning a different way of thinking, a way that rejects being a victim, I think self-defense is often a necessary first step before a woman can truly learn to love her enemy.

Perhaps the clearest testimony I've heard is from a woman who lived through brutal abuse as a child and suffered debilitating nightmares as an adult. After taking Spiro's class, she found herself turning to face her dream attacker, taking a self-defense stance and fending him off. The dreams stopped. It's her contention that preventing abuse, even through trained physical resistance, *is* non-violent. --J.W.-K.

The self-defense guidelines are excerpted from a list prepared by Jaye Spiro. Artist Betty LaDuke produces multi-cultural images in Ashland, OR



Behind Walls Birds Sing

credit: Betty LaDuke

A Nonviolent Approach to Personal Defense

by Marianne Arbogast

Eight years ago, we were faced with a crisis at the Detroit soup kitchen where I work. The number of guests was increasing daily, straining the 100-person capacity of St. Peter's Episcopal Church basement and exacerbating tensions among people who were already emotionally on edge. The composition of the gathering was also changing: Lining up with the older alcoholics and mentally ill street folk who had long relied on the soup kitchen were the young, jobless residents of some of the toughest areas in the city. Fights broke out regularly; 911 calls for the police or Emergency Medical Service began to seem as routine as placing orders at the food bank.

The violence challenged our commitment and our Catholic Worker philosophy. We agonized over questions of metal detectors and police injunctions. Another soup kitchen, we were told, had been informed that police would not respond to their calls unless they hired an armed security guard.

Stubbornly, we clung to the hope of a nonviolent solution, and struggled our way through, making changes that gradually restored a calmer environment.

The most significant change was the institution of "peacekeepers" whose role is to stay alert and ready to intervene in conflict situations. Three people do this each day; on most days two of the three are members of the Catholic Worker community which manages the kitchen.

We've learned some simple rules: Be assertive and fair. Speak in a calm and



credit: Robert Hodgell

respectful tone of voice. Don't physically touch someone who is angry, unless it is necessary to restrain them from harming another. Leave them space to walk away from an argument.

I learned that being a woman is not the disadvantage it might seem. I am not perceived as a physical or psychological threat, and my presence can give someone an excuse to back down from a fight without losing face. At the same time, I have had to learn to assert my own right to respect and freedom from harassment.

In conflict intervention, we try to follow the principles on which the soup kitchen is founded: Each person matters. Each is equally worthy of our respect. We are connected, one to another, at our core; we cannot harm another without harming ourselves.

I believe this attitude communicates itself to our guests, and is more effective

in minimizing violence than armed security personnel would be.

In her book *Safe Passage on City Streets*, Dorothy Samuel collected stories of people who had encountered threatening persons and emerged unharmed.

She tells of an elderly woman walking home from a night prayer meeting, the closing hymn, "Under His Wings I am Safely Abiding" replaying itself in her mind. When confronted by a gunman demanding money, she blurted out, "You can't hurt me! I am covered with his feathers!" Whether in fear of God or fear of a madwoman, the mugger fled. Either way, Samuel says, "a fearless consciousness disrupted the whole mindset, the entire game plan, of the criminal."

Samuel identified a fearless consciousness and a firmly rooted sense of self as common threads in the experiences of those who were able to de-escalate violence in personal encounters.

Angie O'Gorman teaches that the emotions of surprise, humor, and wonder can disrupt a violent dynamic. Often, as Samuel's stories bear out, the simple refusal to respond to threat with fearful cringing or attempted retaliation is sufficient surprise to short-circuit an attacker's program.

I find tremendous encouragement in these stories, and in the real effectiveness of a nonviolent approach in reducing violence at the soup kitchen. At the heart of my faith is a belief in the power of love -- as the Way, not just the goal. I believe, in the words of poet Ferdinand Lassalle, that the means we choose are "ends in embryo."

Nothing can offer us complete security. The potential for violence still exists at the soup kitchen, on city streets, and in any other place where wounded and alienated people gather. But I am convinced that our best hope against it lies not in preparing to meet it with further violence, but in preparing a watchful and gentle heart. **TW**

THE WITNESS

May Our Right Hands Lose Their Cunning

by Denise Levertov

Smart bombs replace
dumb bombs. "Now we can aim
straight into someone's kitchen."

Hard rice
sprays out of the cooking pot
straight into the delicate jelly of eyes.

Invisible pellets,
pointed blobs of mist,
bite through smooth pale-brown skin
into perfect bodies,
chewing them into bloody mincemeat.
This is smart.

There is
a dumb fellow, a mongoloid,
40 years old, who, being cherished,
learned recently to read and write,
and now has written a poem.

"Summer in the West when
everything is quiet
And clear, with everything
beautiful and green,
With wild flowers of all colors,
and a small water creek,
And a beautiful blue sky. And
the trees," he wrote,
forming the letters carefully, his tongue
protruding, "are very still.
And sometimes a small breeze."

He has been cherished,
slowly learned
what many learn fast, and go on
to other knowledge. He
knows nothing of man's devices,
may die without discovering that
he's dumb, and they
are smart, the killers.

And the uncherished idiots,
tied in cots, smelling
of shit --

exquisite dumbness,
guaranteed not to know,
ever, how smart
a man can be,

homo faber of laser beams, of
quaintly-named, flesh-directed, utterly ingenious
mutilating spit-balls,

yes,
the smartest boys, obedient to all the rules, who
never
aimed any flying objects across the classroom,
now are busy with finely calibrated equipment
fashioning spit-balls with needles in them,
that fly at the speed of light multiplied
around corners and into tunnels to arrive
directly at the dumb perfection of living targets,
icily into warm wholeness to fragment it.



We who
know this
tremble
at our own comprehension.
Are we infected,
viciously, being smart enough
to write down these matters,
scribes of the unspeakable?
We pray to retain
something round, blunt, soft, slow,
dull in us,
not to sharpen, not to be smart.

Denise Levertov: *The Freeing of the Dust*, ©1975, D. Levertov® Reprinted by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.

Neighborhood defense: “It’s Recovery Time!”

by Betsy Schwarzentraub

There is a vital connection between where we place our energy and resources nationally, and where we do *not* place them in our own local neighborhoods. Those ministering across the country live with the resulting threats. Yet some people in the inner cities are finding creative, nonviolent ways to defend against them.

Glide Memorial United Methodist Church stands in the heart of San Francisco’s Tenderloin district, in the midst of massage parlors and rundown hotels. Just three blocks from the business district’s prestigious Union Square and literally across the street from the Hilton, Glide serves the poor and the homeless who walk the streets by day and sleep on the sidewalks at night.

Under the leadership of minister Cecil Williams, who has served the church for 27 years, Glide has developed an array of programs which not only respond to the crises of the moment, but also help build a solid foundation for the future.

Seniors are bussed to the state capital to advocate for legislation affecting them. Youth gather to learn together and meet healthy role models for adulthood. A computer program gives children a taste of high-tech learning. The church works with the North of Market Coalition on concerns ranging from a street clean-up campaign to co-sponsoring a mayoral

candidates forum.

One of Glide’s most remarkable ventures has been to organize outreach

“There’s too much emphasis on incarcerating people, taking people out of the community. We want to keep people in the community. Our sons and daughters need to come home, and we’re coming home to our sons and daughters, wherever you are.”

- Cecil Williams

marches against drugs in the surrounding community. The marches urge residents to take control of their lives and their neighborhood. Over a thousand people at a time, singing hymns and carrying placards with the message “It’s Recovery Time,” have marched into areas such as the Valencia Gardens housing project.

A special plea is issued to drug pushers and users.

“We’re not going there to run folks out,” explained Williams. “There’s too much emphasis on incarcerating people, taking people out of the community. We want to keep people in the community. Our sons and daughters need to come home, and we’re coming home to our sons and daughters, wherever you are.”

Alex Humphrey, a top drug dealer in the projects at the time of a videotaped

march, is one of those who responded to the invitation. Coming out to speak with the marchers, he initially challenged Williams, accusing him of “making a circus out of this.”

When Williams responded with a promise of ongoing programs and support, Humphrey was won over.

“I guess this is what I was looking for for awhile,” Humphrey said. “I guess I was looking for a way out. I was tired of it.”

Soon afterward, Humphrey took the lead in organizing Valencia Gardens residents to paint their buildings.

“There was a good thing happening,” Humphrey said. “After the walls got painted, it wasn’t about the walls any more, it was about the people...People who don’t even talk to each other were lined up smiling, talking to each other. They just wanted to help make something good.”

The marches sponsored by Glide represent the culmination of months of organizing. Church members enlist the support of community groups, tenants’ organizations, substance abuse treatment centers, and other agencies which can provide assistance to community residents.

“What Cecil has been doing is not something geared for the 6 o’clock news,” said San Francisco mayor Art Agnos, who participated in one of the marches. “He is doing the kind of follow-through, day-to-day work that is going to make a difference.”

St. Vincent de Paul Church in Philadelphia is attempting to follow Glide’s lead. The church offers traditional outreach -- a soup kitchen and thrift shop. It offers a literacy program and has rehabilitated neighborhood homes. More recently it has offered a prayerful presence beyond the church walls.

“The worst drug corner in our section of the city is right behind our church,” said Vincentian brother Dick Taylor,

THE WITNESS

Betsy Schwarzentraub is a United Methodist pastor in Davis, CA.

The videos, *It’s Recovery Time* and *Recovery in Tenderloin*, are available through Glide Church, 330 Ellis St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

Parish Services Coordinator at St. Vincent's. "One of our African American members suggested going out and praying on the corner, for the neighborhood, for the dealers, for people who are involved in the drugs, for the neighbors who are fearful because of the drugs."

Simple as it seemed, the vigil was an act of courage for church members who feared a hostile response to their presence.

In a training session beforehand, participants were invited to imagine Jesus coming to the corner, encountering prostitutes, drug runners and addicts. People envisioned "a range of things," Taylor said, including "overturning tables at the temple."

"But more people imagined Jesus reaching out to people, trying to dialogue with them, saying there's a better way."

Fortified by prayer and nonviolence training, church members have ventured out twice a month to form a prayer circle on the threatening streetcorner. They have been joined by neighborhood children and residents of a nearby drug treatment program.

A 10-year-old girl watched them for awhile, then approached them and prayed aloud "that the murders and kidnappings and drugs in the community be stopped," Taylor said. "She had a very clear understanding."

The drugs are still there, but the fear has significantly diminished. And the church has been encouraged by the positive response from neighbors who have emerged from their homes to enlarge the circle of prayer.

Breaking down barriers of fear and isolation is a major goal of the churches' initiatives. Such efforts need not be large-scale.

Mary Lou Kownacki, a Benedictine sister and former Pax Christi coordinator, views walking through her neighborhood as a spiritual discipline and an

Things you can't do alone

YOU CANNOT BE SAFE in your own living room. Safety leads the list of things you cannot accomplish for yourself. Nor can you assure your property values. It takes neighbors to do that. Nor can you solve the problem of poverty or drugs. That takes community organization. Everything important takes partners.

Now it will take more than a few individuals dialing 911 to allow us to be safe. The scale is tipped to the criminal: we all carry more responsibility for each other than is fair. Only because we have spent too much time in our own living rooms appreciating the size of the problem have we even fantasized that the whole problem belongs to us.

The renewal of scale is a fundamental social issue. Because the measure of individual has been given so much weight, and because we have all connected to large, impersonal televised communities more than we have connected to local, personal ones, our genuine powers as people have been wasted.

Neighborhood Watch works to keep people safe. Groups of parents keep teenagers from driving and drinking on prom nights. Congregations establish rules of

behavior for toddlers during their fellowship hours. It is possible to "love your neighbor," if you love your neighbor.

Even self-improvement, that grand ruse, has come to the end of its rope. Many people have found help in local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous. These same people began their help by understanding the matter of scale. *I am not on my own able to kick this habit.*

It is a national crime that so many people have to suffer unnecessary embarrassment at the loss of their jobs during a recession, as though they were personally inferior at the art of the bootstrap. It is a national crime that our local institutions can't provide the community that would keep people filled up sufficiently not to drink while flipping channels.

The places of happiness are church basements, coffee shops, taverns, PTA meetings, back fences, all places that resemble AA. They occupy that place on the scale called community. Community is first local, then national. You have to see people's faces before you can form community.

-- Donna Schaper, pastor of First Congregational Church, Riverhead, NY

act of community-building.

Her inspiration comes from her reading of the prophet Isaiah, who was required to spend three years walking through the neighborhoods of Jerusalem.

"He learned to walk gentle, to treat each person with gentle care," Kownacki says. "He learned that you grow in love when you are able to take on yourself the suffering and hatred of others."

"The art of walking is to discover something about nonviolence. It connects you to people. You get to see your neighborhood, and the deterioration taking place in the inner city. Every step makes you more committed to do something."

Kownacki finds walking an aid to

mindfulness. As she walks, she quietly repeats the mantra "Sanctus."

"Everything is holy," she says. "The crack houses are holy. The people in them are holy. The children are holy. The weeds growing up through the cracks are holy. It reminds me of the sanctity of life."

Walking demands time and patience, like the struggle for justice, Kownacki says. "Change will not come quickly. I'd like to see *one block* before I die that's what community *ought* to be!"

Yet it is our national policies which make community so difficult. "We need to stop spending so much money for the military and start investing it in the neighborhoods," Kownacki says. **TW**

Calling All Brothers by Gloria House

"And the male children were deaf to the pleas of the mothers, and they couldn't see no men nowhere they had to respect..."

Calling all brothers!
Calling all brothers!
Calling you out
from the hushed kingdoms
of corporate comfort;
calling you out
of your Mercedes and
your made-in-America commitment.
Calling you out of your cognac bottles.
Calling all my brothers
to break out of
your laid-off/unemployed blues,
break out of your videohypnosis;
calling all brothers, precious
as you are to your women,
cherished as you are by your sisters,
calling you out of your daze
of disgust with the family who sustains you --
your mothers, your sisters, your own brothers.

Calling you now
to *call off* your
"I ain't got no money, no job, no power"
dead-end trip. We see your anguish and
we understand.

Calling you now -- nevertheless --
to the defense
of *your own life*.
Calling you to defend
your sons and daughters,
calling you to the defense of
humanity.

Dear Brothers, I'm calling you
to rise in the vacuum where
our African fathers used to stand
resolute against American madness.
I'm calling you to
take a position against children
with uzis and no daddies
calling you to show the children
what uzis are for.

Calling you to a Great Reawakening
of African Fatherhood!
Calling you to form the ranks of
your own army --
your own army --
to take the streets from the babies
so they can grow to manhood.
Calling you to dare
the babies to go on dealing drugs over
your dead body!

This is our war,
a war holier than the Eagle
ever called you to fight.
This is our Vietnam, our South Africa
our Grenada, our Nicaragua,
in the streets of Motown, Philly, New York, LA --
on your block in our 'hood.

Calling you to dare
the monster death dealers who hustle the children
to face you down.

Calling all brothers,
crying for brothers,
moanin' for a brother,
dying for a brother.
Ain't no brothers nowhere?
Calling the makers of babies
to become their saviours.

Rainrituals, Broadside Press, Detroit, 1991



credit: Eleanor Mill

The Department of **DEFENSE**

by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer

During the 1980s, elite U.S. economic and military related sectors grew more rich and powerful at the expense of the U.S. people and at the expense of the country as a whole. Therefore, the end of the Cold War should have been greeted with a chorus of alleluias. The Cold War thaw offered hope that something new was possible, not only for people in Eastern Europe but for U.S. and Third World peoples shackled by poverty and economic inequality. Unfortunately powerful groups refused to join the choir. Defense industry journals and analysts warned of dire consequences if the peace dividend became a reality. Within the various branches of the U.S. military a palatable sense of panic set in as the Cold War thaw threatened to undermine huge budgets and the institutional

privileges they afforded. The search for new enemies began immediately.

The May, 1990 issue of the *Marine Corps Gazette* warned that "widely held perceptions" of reduced global conflict made a peace dividend almost inevitable. The head of the Marine Corps, General A.M. Gray, like other U.S. military leaders, highlighted new enemies in the Third World and trumpeted the necessity to hold the line on defense spending. The country couldn't afford a peace dividend if it was to effectively respond to "low-intensity conflicts," fight terrorists, and wage drug wars.

Investigative reporters Andrew and Leslie Cockburn in their book *Dangerous Liaison: The Inside Story Of The U.S.-Israeli Covert Relationship* write how Iraq was chosen as a new enemy months before it invaded Kuwait:

Short-term domestic political considerations aside, there were very important institutional imperatives behind the push toward military confrontation in the Gulf...In April 1990 a seasoned Pentagon official lamented in casual conversation that the atmosphere at his place of employment was dire. "No one knows what to do over here," he sighed. "The [Soviet] threat has melted down on us, and what else do we have? The navy's been going up to the Hill to talk about the

threat of the Indian navy in the Indian Ocean. Some people are talking about the threat of the Colombian drug cartels. But we can't keep a \$300 billion budget afloat on that stuff. There's only one place that will do as a threat: Iraq." Iraq, he explained, was a long way away, which justified the budget for military airlift. It had a large air force, which would keep the United States Air Force happy, and the huge numbers of tanks in Saddam's army were more than enough to satisfy the requirements of the U.S. ground forces.

Imperatives of a National Security State

As the Cold War ended, the U.S. economy was cracking under the weight of growing contradictions between military power and social decay. The United States desperately needed to reorder priorities and to make judicious use of a post Cold War "peace dividend." Instead of beginning a process of domestic economic and social renewal the United States with stunning speed shaped a world order in which new enemies were found, the "peace dividend" evaporated, and the military reasserted its primacy in American life.

The end of the Cold War offered two distinct paths to the future. The U.S.

Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer is author of *War Against the Poor*. Nelson-Pallmeyer, his wife and two children live in the community of St. Martin, Minneapolis. This article is excerpted from *Brave New World Order: Can We Pledge Allegiance?* Orbis Books, January, 1992.

Line artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated from Hartford, CT. Photographer **Mel Rosenthal** lives in NYC and is a contributor to Impact Visuals.

National Security Establishment, with presidential leadership, forsook economic revitalization in favor of militarism. To understand how and why this happened it is necessary to define the basic features of a National Security State. I have identified seven characteristics of a National Security State or National Security State doctrine.

The first characteristic of a National Security State is that the military is the highest authority. In a National Security State the military not only guarantees the security of the state against internal and external enemies, it has enough power to determine the overall direction of the society. In a National Security State the military exerts important influence over political, economic as well as military affairs. A second defining feature of a National Security State is that political democracy and democratic elections are viewed with suspicion, contempt or in terms of political expediency.

National Security States often maintain an appearance of democracy. However, ultimate power rests with the military or within a broader National Security Establishment.

A third characteristic of a National Security State is that the military and related sectors wield substantial political and economic power. They do so in the context of an ideology which stresses that *freedom* and *development* are possible only when capital is concentrated in the hands of elites. Money and wealth-producing resources are generally concentrated within three sectors: the private business sector, the state or state enterprise sector, and within the military itself. In National Security States the military and related sectors directly or indirectly exercise tremendous influence over political and economic affairs. One of the ironies of U.S. policy is that through the economic police functions of the International Monetary Fund the United States encourages concentration



These art works were secretly put on two New York City billboards in February and remained there for four days.

credit: Mel Rosenthal

of capital in the private sector. However, the overall impact of its foreign policy is to insure the predominance of military priorities which leads to the militarization of societies, including our own.

A fourth feature of a National Security State is its obsession with enemies. There are enemies of the state everywhere. Defending against external and/or internal enemies becomes a leading preoccupation of the state, a distorting factor in the economy, and a major source of national identity and purpose.

A fifth ideological foundation of a National Security State is that the enemies of the state are cunning and ruthless. Therefore, any means used to destroy or control these enemies is justified. This feature of a National Security State helps explain why U.S. foreign policies so often clearly violate stated principles and values.

A sixth characteristic of a National Security State is that it restricts public

debate and limits popular participation through secrecy or intimidation. Authentic democracy depends on participation of the people. National Security States limit such participation: They may sow fear and thereby narrow the range of public debate or in other ways restrict and distort information; and, they define policies in secret and implement those policies through covert channels and clandestine activities. The state justifies such actions through rhetorical pleas of "higher purpose" and vague appeals to "national security."

Finally, the Church is expected to mobilize its financial, ideological, and theological resources in service to the National Security State. This helps explain why cultivation of religious legitimacy and/or persecution of progressive Churches is a common feature within many National Security States.

This summary of essential characteristics of a National Security State elicits a range of responses from disbelief to

horror. Some are troubled that U.S. foreign policy has often supported National Security States overseas in the name of promoting *freedom* and *democracy*. Few are willing to entertain what I am suggesting: that the United States is functionally a National Security State that has seriously undermined democracy both within and without.

Ironically, there may be light at the end of a very dark tunnel in places like El Salvador where people recognize the dangers of a National Security State and creatively struggle to wrest power away from the military. The peoples' efforts may succeed in reducing the power of the military and replacing the National Se-

curity State with something new. The prospects for the U.S. people may be bleaker. It seems we have entered the dark tunnel of a National Security State unaware and unconcerned, too busy waving flags to be bothered with the erosion of our democracy.

I believe the Gulf War will one day be

seen as one of history's gravest disasters. The war directly and indirectly killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqis and reinforced the primacy of the U.S. military and related complex in U.S. and foreign affairs. It helped to condemn the U.S. and

Third World poor to places of permanent marginalization while sidetracking us from critical agendas such as overcom-

ing poverty and averting environmental catastrophe. World Watch Institute warns that we have 40 years to establish sustainable societies. U.S. democracy also failed a crucial test. It is now subordinate to the priorities of the National Security State.

While Church leaders expressed significant opposition to the Gulf War it must also be said that the Church failed a critical test. There are frightening parallels between the uncritical patriotism which swept through Nazi Germany and the patriotism that infects many of our Churches. The contradictions in U.S. society are deep and widening. In such a setting meaningful alternatives are possible. The Church will have a meaningful role to play in reshaping national and international priorities to the degree that it is able to proclaim that Jesus is Lord against the claims of competing gods, including the gods of the National Security State. **TW**

It seems we have entered the dark tunnel of a National Security State unaware and unconcerned, too busy waving flags to be bothered with the erosion of our democracy.

The thaw in the Cold War occurred after a decade that had witnessed three unprecedented transfers of wealth: from the Third World poor to the First World rich; from U.S. poor and working class citizens to the upper one to five percent of the U.S. population; and from the United States to Japan and Western Europe. Each wealth transfer challenges U.S. declarations of victory in the Cold War and



each has profound implications for understanding the reasons behind the Gulf War.

In brief, it must suffice to say that the Gulf War, among other things, reflects a U.S. commitment to shape a "new world order" in which existing inequalities within Third World nations and between Third and First World countries will be maintained. More importantly in the context of this article, the end of the Cold War presented the United States with a much needed opportunity for economic revitalization. This opportunity was quickly forsaken.

Two important contradictions accompanied the end of the Cold War. First, poor people within the United States and the country as a whole were getting poorer as the rich within the United States were getting richer. Second, our nation's economic decline was accompanied by and linked to the ascendancy of the United States as the world's unprecedented leader in military power. As the Cold War ended one of four U.S. children was born into poverty, the U.S. ranked 20th in infant mortality, was one of two industrialized countries (South Africa is the other) without a comprehensive national health system, and it ranked first in per capita prison population, military spending, Third World arms sales, reported rapes, and murders. J. N.-P.

In the spiritual renaissance that I believe is coming to birth, it will not be the message of Paul that this time galvanizes hearts, as in the Reformation and the Wesleyan revival, but the human figure of Jesus. And in the teaching of Jesus, the sayings on nonviolence and love of enemies will hold the central place. Not because they are more true than any others, but because they are our best chance of checking humanity's suicidal rush to Armageddon.

I submit that the ultimate religious question today should no longer be the Reformation's question, "How can I find a gracious God?" but rather, "How can I find God in my enemy?" What guilt was for Luther, the enemy has become for us: the goad that can drive us to God. What has formerly

been a purely private affair—justification by faith through grace—has now, in our age, grown to embrace the world.

There is, in fact, no other way to God for our time but through the enemy, for loving the enemy has become the key both to human survival in the nuclear

Walter Wink is a professor at Auburn Theological Seminary, author of a trilogy on the Powers and Principalities and a contributing editor to *The Witness*. This article is excerpted from *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*, to be released by Fortress Press in 1992.

Artist **Sr. Helen David** is an Immaculate Heart of Mary sister. She teaches art at the Southwest Community Center in Philadelphia.

age and to personal transformation. Relaxation of the Cold War has eased, not solved, the nuclear crisis, which now shows signs of proliferation to smaller states not constrained by the danger of total war. Now border disputes and acts of aggression can be settled by nuclear brinksmanship, terrorism, or holocaust. Today, more than ever, we must turn to the God who causes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, or we may have no more sunrises.

Jesus' teachings about nonviolent direct action and loving enemies are also the litmus tests of true Christianity. Just as in the lore of exorcism the Devil cannot bear to utter the name of God, so our false prophets today cannot tolerate mention of the love of enemies. Greg Dixon, a former state chairman and National Secretary for the Moral

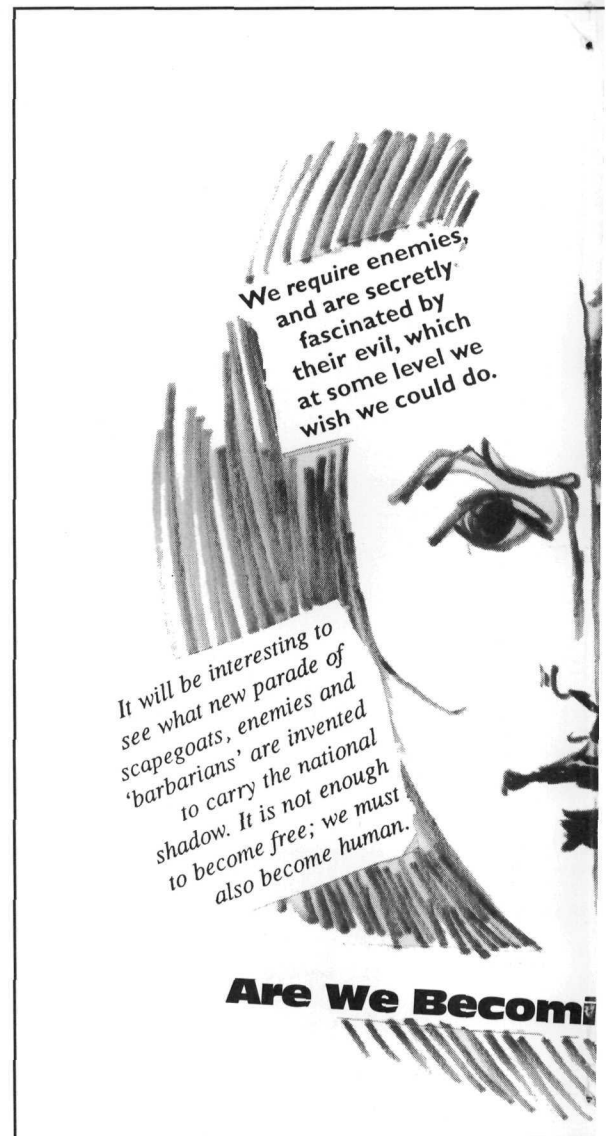
Majority, recently urged his followers to pray for the death of their opponents, claiming, "We're tired of turning the other cheek...good heavens, that's all that we have done." Jerry Falwell and his kind are champions of the warrior mentality and of peace through strength; Jesus' way of creative nonviolence is for them indistinguishable from supine cowardice. As James A. Sanders reminds us, no false prophet can ever conceive of God as God also of the enemy.

Jesus' way of nonviolence and love of enemies has frequently been dismissed as impractical, idealistic, and out of touch with the need of nations and oppressed peoples to defend them-

Jesus' teachings about nonviolent direct action and loving enemies are also the litmus tests of true Christianity. Just as in the lore of exorcism the Devil cannot bear to utter the name of God, so our false prophets today cannot tolerate mention of the love of enemies.

Loving our the litm

By Walter



Walter Wink's exploration of the "Domination System" contends that the dominant myth in our culture is a very demption comes through violence: when the bad guy die, nominator of children's cartoons, adult videos and Ame

enemies:

us test

er Wink

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ng What We Hate?

credit: Sr. Helen David

"is worthy of a more lengthy explanation. In brief, Wink ancient one, articulated in Babylon. It preaches that re- order is created. This myth, he says, is the common de- rican foreign policy.

selves. No such irrelevancy is charged against the myth of redemptive violence, however, despite the fact that it always fails at least half the time. Its exaltation of the salvific powers of killing, and the privileged position it is accorded by intellectuals and politicians alike, to say nothing of theologians, make redemptive violence the preferred myth of Marxists and capitalists, fascists and leftists, atheists and churchmen alike.

Redemptive violence is the prevailing ideology of the Institute of Religion and Democracy and of the World Council of Churches, of *Christianity Today* and *Christianity and Crisis*, of much of liberation theology and much of conservative theology.

Then came 1989, the greatest year of miracles since the Exodus, when 11 nations comprising 1,535,100,000 people, almost 30 percent of all humanity, were touched by nonviolent revolutions that succeeded beyond anyone's wildest dreams in every case but China, and were completely nonviolent in every case but Romania and parts of the southern U.S.S.R. It appeared as if the nonviolent way articulated by Jesus as the heart of the gospel message had finally found an unwitting following, and that the dream of abolishing war, like child sacrifice and exposure, gladiatorial combat, slavery, cannibalism, colonialism and dueling, was finally approaching the first stages of realization.

Jesus was not the first to practice

nonviolence; indeed, he clearly learned it from his own people. But his manner of incarnating nonviolence marked an evolutionary breakthrough in the pattern of domination of the weak by the strong. He offers the weak a way of affirming their essential humanity, not sometime in the far-off future, but here, now, in precisely the situation of oppression itself.

Solidarity in Poland proved that Je-

sus' nonviolent way could be lived even under the circumstances of a communist regime and martial law. People said to one another, in effect, Start doing the things you think should be done, and start being what you think society should become. "Do you believe in freedom of speech? Then speak freely. Do you love the truth? Then tell it. Do you believe in

*We cannot come to terms
with our shadow except
through our enemy, for we
have almost no other ac-
cess to those unacceptable
parts of ourselves that
need redeeming except
through the mirror that
our enemies hold up to us.*

an open society? Then act in the open. Do you believe in a decent and humane society? Then behave decently and humanely." This behavior actually caught on, leading to an "epidemic of freedom in the closed society." By acting "as if" Poland was already a free country, Solidarity created a free country. The "as if" ceased to be pretense and was actuality. Within ten years, Solidarity had taken over the government. This is not only a graphic example of a social revolution becoming a political revolution, but it constitutes, in Schell's words, a new chapter in the history of revolution: a revolution in revolution.

The rationale for Jesus' nonviolence

is neither the short-term effectiveness of nonviolent strategies, nor the long-term self-interest of the species, but rather the very nature of God.

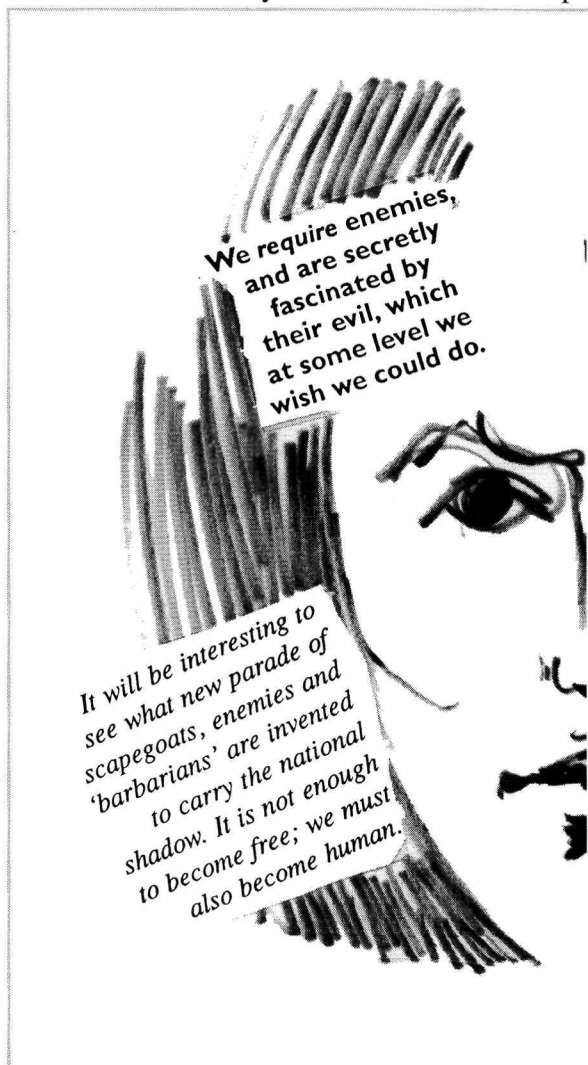
We are to love our enemies, says Jesus, because God does. God makes the “sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous” (Matt. 5:45). We are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us, so that we may be children of this strange Father-Mother, who “is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked” (Luke 6:35).

We *can* love our enemies, because God does. If we wish to correspond to the central reality of the universe, we will behave as God behaves and God embraces all, evenhandedly. This radical vision of God, already perceived by the Hebrew prophets but never popular among the resident Powers, is the basis for true human community.

Our solidarity with our enemies lies not just in our common parentage under God, but also our common evil. God “is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.” We too, like them, live in enmity against what God desires for the world. We would like to identify ourselves as “just” and “good,” but we are a mix of just and unjust, good and evil. If God were not compassionate toward us, we would be lost. And if God is compassionate toward us, with all our unredeemed evil, then God must treat our enemies the same. As we begin to acknowledge our own inner shadow, we become more tolerant of the shadow in others. As we begin to love the enemy within, we develop the compas-

sion we need to love the enemy without.

If, however, we believe that the God who loves us hates those whom we hate, we insert an insidious doubt into our own selves. Unconsciously we know that a deity hostile toward others is po-



tentially hostile to us as well. And we know, better than anyone, that there is plenty of cause for such hostility.

When we project our evil out on others, we establish a symbiotic relationship with them as our enemies. We *require* enemies, and are secretly fascinated by their evil, which at some level we wish we could do. Secretly, worshipers of Order are always votaries of Chaos. Without an enemy, without con-

flict, without some transcendent threat to unify the people, there is no incentive to pay taxes for a standing army. Nothing threatens order so much as peace. Peace, as William Graham Sumner once remarked, is the problem that war is required to solve. It will be interesting, with the ending of the Cold War, to see what new parade of scapegoats, enemies and “barbarians” are invented to carry the national shadow. Saddam Hussein has already performed that role splendidly. Who will be next?

The Enemy As Gift

Once the spell of the perfectionist reading has been exorcised, we begin to see just how far from perfect Jesus assumed we are. “Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye” (Matt. 7:3-5//Luke 6:37-38, 41-42).

This is the earliest known teaching of projection. We have scarcely begun to trace the implications of Jesus’ discovery of projection; his entire understanding of evil is the fruit of it. The “splinter” in the other’s eye is a chip off the same log that is in one’s own eye. We see in the other what we would not see in ourselves.

In workshops on this theme [my wife and I] invite people to name an enemy and list all the things they dislike about that person (or group or movement or nation). Then we ask them to go through that list and ask how many of those characteristics are true also of them (or our group or movement or nation). The common elements identify our projections. These can be taken into our meditation, prayer, and spiritual guidance, to see what they have to teach us

about ourselves.

These “revelations” (and they are precisely that) need to be worked with carefully, because that is the gift our enemy brings us: *to see aspects of ourselves which we cannot discover any other way than through our enemies.* Our friends cannot tell us these things; they are our friends precisely because they are able to overlook or ignore this part of us. The enemy is thus not merely a hurdle to be leaped on the way to God. The enemy *is* the way to God. We cannot come to terms with our shadow except through our enemy, for we have almost no other access to those unacceptable parts of ourselves that need redeeming except through the mirror that our enemies hold up to us. This then is another, more intimate reason for loving our enemies: we are dependent on our enemies for our very individuation. We cannot be whole people without them.

How wonderfully humiliating: we not only may have a role in transforming our enemies, but our enemies can play a role in transforming us.

An understanding of the Powers makes forgiveness of our enemies easier. If our oppressors “know not what they do,” if they, too, are victims of the delusional system, then the real target of our hate and anger can be the System itself rather than those who carry out its bidding. “For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

We *need* our enemies. On purely sociological grounds, churches would be much healthier if they had a stronger sense of their enemies. Enemies define what the church is against. They give it definition and identity.

Loving our enemies has become, in our time, the criterion of true Christian faith. It may seem impossible, yet it

can be done. At no point is the inrush of divine grace so immediately and concretely perceptible as in those moments when we let go our hatred and relax into God’s love. No miracle is so awesome, so necessary, and so fre-



quent.

Ten years after the end of World War II, Hildegard and Jean Goss-Mayr met with a group of Polish Christians in Warsaw. At one point they asked, “Would you be willing to meet with Christians from West Germany? They want to ask forgiveness for what Germany did to Poland during the war and to begin to build a new relationship.”

First there was silence. Then some-

one vehemently spoke up: “Jean and Hildegard, we love you, you are our friends, but what you are asking is impossible. Each stone of Warsaw is soaked in Polish blood! We cannot forgive!” Even after ten years, the war wounds were just too deep.

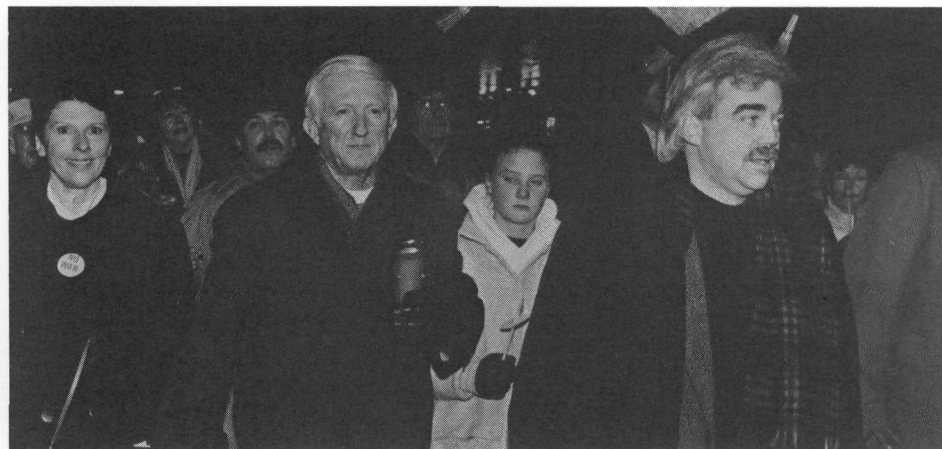
Before the group parted for the evening, the Goss-Mayrs suggested they say the Lord’s Prayer together. All joined in willingly. But at the point of praying “forgive us our sins as we forgive...,” the group suddenly halted their prayer.

Out of the silence, the one who had spoken most vehemently said softly, “I must say yes to you. I could no more pray the Our Father, I could no longer call myself a Christian, if I refuse to forgive. Humanly speaking, I cannot do it, but God will give us his strength!” A year and a half later, the Polish and West German Christians met in Vienna. Friendships made at that meeting continue today.

The command to love our enemies reminds us that our first task toward oppressors is pastoral: to help them recover their humanity. Quite possibly the struggle has also dehumanized the oppressed as well, if they have demonized their enemies. It is not enough to become free; we must also become human. Nonviolence presents a chance for all parties to rise above their present condition and become more of what God created them to be. There is a spirit of generosity which is willing to submit to outrages and injustice, not in a cowardly fear of retaliation, but in order, if possible, to awaken God in the other’s soul.

TW

The PB and the President



Last January, Patty and Edmond Browning and Jim Wallis (right) joined thousands praying at the National Cathedral and vigilling outside the White House. credit: ENS, M. Broffman

One year ago, the U.S. stood poised for war. Troops were deployed. Massive armaments and fire power were strategically placed. Saddam Hussein and George Bush were threatening and demeaning one another.

Edmond Browning, drawing on his

role as primate of the Episcopal Church and thereby pastor to this nation's Episcopal president, attempted to call George Bush away from war.

"It is my personal calling and a function of my office to be a partner with the President," Browning told the House of Bishops in September, 1990.

Asked by The Witness what it means to pastor the president, Edmond Browning said:

It is a privilege and an honor that, by virtue of my office as the presiding bishop and chief pastor of the Episcopal Church, I am pastor to our president. The time I have spent with Mr. Bush has made it clear to me that he is a man of faith and prayer. We have prayed together on occasions and he knows that I hold him in my prayers daily.

In one conversation we noted that we have some different ideas, some different visions of our national life and our responsibilities in this global village. We discussed the fact that this is not likely to change. And we accepted that. Christian life isn't

about agreement, or disagreement. It is about being faithful, struggling to discern.

I have been forceful in presenting my views, and representing those of other Church leaders, when I have spoken or written to the President. I have always felt that he listened, and that he valued the opportunity to do so.

I think pastoring to the President, at some level, is no different than being a pastor to anyone. I have always believed in my ministry that presence is the basic element of being a pastor. Being with someone in a situation, and serving as a reminder of the loving presence of Christ, is sometimes about the best thing you can do.

One month later, Browning challenged Bush's rationale for war.

"For what reason has our nation unleashed the greatest military force since the Vietnam War?" Browning asked. "Have we not sent our young men and women to the Persian Gulf, as our President has said, to 'protect the American way of life'? But what way of life is it that allows the homeless and the unemployed to huddle on our streets and our inner cities to decay?"

In addition to praying for the president and for peace, the Presiding Bishop joined ecumenical leaders visiting Baghdad, Beirut, Jerusalem, Damascus and Amman just weeks before the bombing began.

There were voices within the Episcopal Church that called on Browning to silence himself. Certainly members of the Episcopal wing of the Institute for Religion and Democracy did. But others closer to home advised caution in order to protect his image.

On the night of January 15, the night before the U.S. began the war against Iraq, Browning presided at a prayer service at the National Cathedral and vigilled outside the White House.

The following day, the Presiding Bishop offered to pray with the President. George Bush did not have time. Only later did Browning learn that Bush had turned to Billy Graham to bless the war efforts.

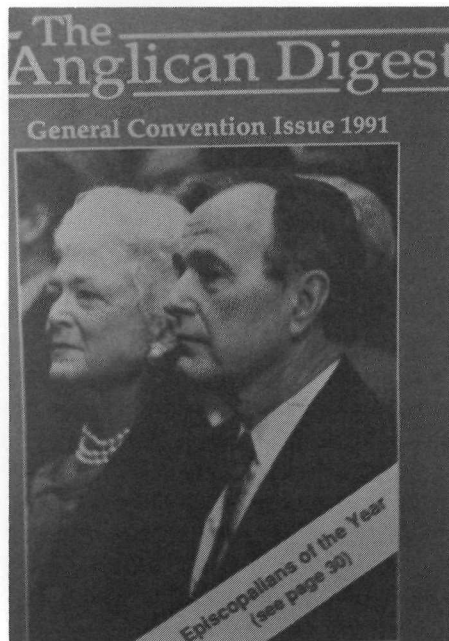
Asked how he survives and where he finds joy, Browning told the Episcopal Communicators last May, "I cry a lot. When I'm really tired, my emotions come up to the top. My wife is the greatest source of grace that I have. Prayer helps immensely."

Now, one year later, we have witnessed the high tech assault that killed thousands of Iraqis but let the U.S. return home feeling barely scathed. We hear the gradual reports that our troops buried Iraqi soldiers alive -- a stark

contrast to the early reports of very little "collateral damage."

"Now, in a post-Gulf-war world, the Church must not grow timid in advocating for God's new order," Browning counselled delegates to General Convention. "Prophets are needed, and God will raise them up, even from among us. These will be prophets who are also evangelists, bold proclaimers of the new life in Christ. Do not shrink from that call when God lays it upon you. It may be a call to resist the spiritually deadly lure of consumerism, which so afflicts our society. The communist regimes of Eastern Europe have fallen, but this is no time for triumphalism in the West. Now is the time for humility. Now is the time for careful stewardship of the precious life on earth that we ourselves embody."

Following the conclusion of the Gulf War, George and Barbara Bush were named "Episcopalians of the Year" by *The Anglican Digest*. The article quoted the president as praying, at St. Martin's, Houston, "We are not an arrogant nation, a gloating nation, for we know, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.'" --J.W-K



November 1991

The Ultimate Game

Stitched, scarred and smiling, Marine Sgt. Richard Smith spent his first full day at home in Maplewood Friday, taking congratulatory phone calls, and relating his strong impressions of war in the desert.

"At camp, in the field, we'd shoot blanks," Smith said. "When we actually started shooting live rounds, and watching people drop, it was like hunting the ultimate game in life.

"I had a good time. It sounds sadistic, but it was the greatest feeling. Everybody'd been waiting, and once it started, we didn't want it to stop."

Anathoth Community Farm News, Summer 91, reprinted from the Minneapolis Star Tribune, 3/91

Selective Empathy

[Accused of being overly sentimental, animal rights activist, Helen Dwyer, says:] Sentimentality is usually understood as an excess of emotional response, and as such it is more often attributed to women than men. I have come to believe that the essence of "sentimentality" is *not* the ability to respond readily to another's pain, but rather, the ability to respond *selectively*.

Selective empathy operates in wartime to make it possible for "us" to kill "them" by declaring that they are really not *like* us; significantly, it often works by identifying "them" with some *animal* (a "vermin" animal, of course, like a cockroach, snake or rat; not a "noble" animal that we might want to identify with). Selective empathy allows some men to separate themselves emotionally from women, again often by identifying them with animals (cow, "meat"). Selective empathy allows people to shoot deer -- but not horses -- with arrows and track them while they bleed to death; to chain and box veal calves -- but not dogs -- for their whole short lives, and then eat them.

It is *less* likely to characterize women than men, and women ought to work to expose it wherever it appears.

Helen Dwyer, *WomenWise*, Fall 91

Originally published in *Feminist Voices*

The Cathedral and the War

"The one bit of hope for the Episcopal Church is that George Bush had to turn to Billy Graham because Bishop Browning wouldn't play the [military cheerleader] role," according to Rosemary Radford Ruether. "Although," she added, "the Cathedral of St. John the Divine allowed itself to be the place that kicked off the Victory Parade."

Dan Berrigan was also upset that the cathedral hosted the June 9 service that preceded the parade. He joined other religious leaders in a "service of atonement" at the cathedral August 4. Organizers of the atonement service described it

as a temple cleansing, "to heal the wounds and undo the damages done to the cathedral when it was desecrated by the militarists." Cathedral officials objected, insisting that the June service was not a victory celebration and that the atonement service was unrelated to the earlier one.

The cathedral staff announced in September that it will not press charges against three members of St. Mary's, Manhattanville, who were arrested for holding a peace vigil that protested the presence of General Norman Schwarzkopf, General Colin Powell, and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney at the invitation-only service.

shoot takes

Sisters of Survival: performing against nuclearism

by Blaise Tobia & Virginia Maksymowicz

The Sisters of Survival is not an order of Catholic nuns," the publicity brochure for this group of performance artists states. But they are indeed a kind of sisterhood; they work collaboratively, share a common world view, and place a strong value on community.

Jerri Allyn, Nancy Angelo, Anne Gauldin, Cheri Gaulke and Sue Maberry make up the Sisters of Survival. They came together a decade ago through the Women's Building in Los Angeles and since then have been active in organizing antinuclear cultural protests around the world.

In May 1982, S.O.S., along with another artist named Marguerite Elliot, staged a public action in front of Los Angeles City Hall and the U.S. Federal Building to dramatize the absurdity of the government's civil defense plan for nuclear war -- which includes the suggestion that digging oneself underneath a car can provide adequate shelter against an atomic bomb. *Shovel Defense*, as the artwork was called, incorporated 50 white shovels planted in a triangular graveyard formation; each shovel also assumed the shape of a cross. Members of S.O.S., arrayed in their trademark colorful habits (symbolizing, in their form, a community of women acting in behalf of a



"At home in the nuclear age?"

credit: Sheila Ruth

higher ideal, and in their rainbow hues, the full spectrum of humanity), appeared among the “gravemarkers” and staged a performance that underscored the futility of trying to survive global annihilation.

As part of U.C.L.A.’s conference called “Artists and War” and at the Long Beach Museum of Art -- S.O.S. presented *At Home in the Nuclear Age?* This performance took place on a city rooftop. Images of atomic blasts taken from government file films and statistics showing how radioactive fallout from the Nevada test site passed over Los Angeles during the 1950s, were projected onto the sides of neighboring buildings. While the audience members were asked whether they had been at home when the fallout occurred, the “nuns,” with face and hands painted to look like skeletons, tried in vain to sweep up a powdery, white, “fallout” dust.

S.O.S. has not confined their activities to the West Coast. They participated in the historic June 12th peace march in New York City and embarked on a tour of Western Europe, visiting sites such as the Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp. The culmination of these events (all grouped under the collective title “End of the Rainbow”) is a travelling exhibit of over 300 antinuclear artworks by artists in North America and Europe.

These committed women continue to speak out, based on what they see as their artistic responsibility (to create images that can bring about societal change) and as sisters in the world community. Their witness against war and violence, though



not specifically religious, uses symbols that can easily be appreciated by those who are dedicated to peacemaking from faith-based perspectives.

In their own unique way, the Sisters of Survival are giving voice and visibility to the cry for peace.

TW

art and society

Civilian-based defense: Nonviolently changing history

by Marianne Arbogast

Just days after the successful popular uprising which defeated the August coup in the Soviet Union, Gene Sharp, author and researcher of nonviolent civilian-based defense initiatives, addressed a conference on “Civilian-Based Defense and People Power” at Holy Redeemer College in Windsor, Ontario. The recent historic drama provided compelling support for Sharp’s conviction that nonviolent citizen campaigns offer a viable and realistic alternative to military means of defending a nation against internal coups or external aggression.

Since the late 1950s, Sharp has labored to document cases of nonviolent resistance around the globe and has argued for a more thorough exploration of their potential. It is only in recent years, however, that he feels he has been taken seriously.

“The idea that a society can be successfully defended by nonviolent non-cooperation and defiance was once considered to be in the realm of kooks and naive romantics,” Sharp acknowledged. In the past decade, however, it has been the subject of serious consideration by public policy makers in a number of countries. Nonviolent direct action by civilians is an accepted component of defense policy in Sweden, Switzerland,

Austria and Yugoslavia, and this past February the government of Lithuania officially declared it to be their primary line of defense in the event of “active occupation” by Soviet forces.

“The improvisational use of nonviolent struggle has been growing in political importance in diverse parts of the world, and has revealed sufficient power to challenge, if not defeat, the existing regimes.” -- Gene Sharp

“The improvisational use of nonviolent struggle has been growing in political importance in diverse parts of the world,” Sharp said, including Poland, Iran, the Philippines, Burma, Madagascar, South Africa, South Korea, and the occupied Palestinian territories. In each of these places, “people have confronted regimes with both the capacity and expertise in inflicting violent repression,” he said, and in each instance, their resistance has “revealed sufficient power to challenge, if not defeat, the existing regimes. Even unsuccessful nonviolent struggle has demonstrated more power than organized violence could possibly produce.”

Given the potency of even spontaneous, hastily organized popular movements -- what Sharp terms “primitive prototypes of what a researched, planned

civilian-based policy can offer” -- why are there not more widespread attempts to harness such energy in national defense planning?

Sharp blames “ghastly distortions” by the media as one factor.

In covering the defeat of the Soviet coup, for instance, the U.S. media asserted that “Yeltsin did it almost singlehandedly,” or that “the coup was ill-planned and doomed from the start,” or that its leaders were not brutal enough in squelching opposition. What was not properly credited, Sharp believes, was the courage of ordinary people in nonviolently confronting soldiers, who lacked the will to kill unarmed protesters, even under orders.

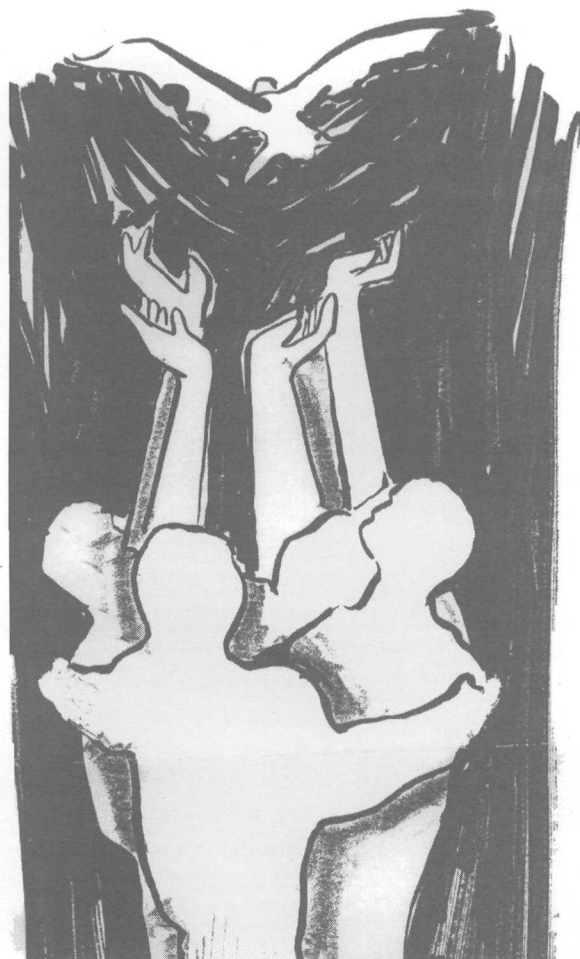
Another factor that “weakens the appeal of nonviolent options” is that they “challenge the assumptions about power and defense made by most governments, military establishments, media representatives and others,” who believe that “violence is still omnipotent if enough of it is used, and that popular movements only win by default.” On the contrary, Sharp believes, “people without guns, with courage and non-military weapons, can at times be more powerful.”

Sharp stressed repeatedly throughout his presentation that nonviolent defense should not be associated with philosophical pacifism or particular ideologies of radical social change. The connection is unnecessary and harmful, he said, and dooms practical nonviolent initiatives to rejection by the mainstream.

“Nonviolence can be accepted by people of widely diverse beliefs and political programs,” Sharp argues.

“For decades we have been willing to risk nuclear war because there was nothing else we could do,” Sharp said. But “people power struggles have demonstrated there *is* something else we could do. We must continue to seek a substitute for the vast destructive potential of the military system -- how to defend without

Gene Sharp is founder of the Albert Einstein Institution, a non-profit organization which supports work on civilian-based defense and related issues. His latest book is *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System*.



credit: Sr. Helen David

destroying that to be defended?"

In a 1980 essay entitled "Making the Abolition of War a Realistic Goal," Sharp describes some of the forms civilian-based defense might take. Journalists and editors could refuse to submit to censorship and continue to publish. The broadcast media could hide transmitters to broadcast free radio programs. Police could refuse to arrest resisters. Civil servants could defy orders and maintain normal government functioning. Judges could declare the invader's government illegal, and continue to operate by pre-invasion laws, even if this meant closing the courts. Teachers could refuse to present propaganda, closing the schools if necessary and holding private classes in homes. Others could refuse to recognize the invader's organizations and en-

gage in strikes and boycotts.

Nonviolent defense options can be advanced through several avenues, Sharp said. In countries with a strong military, such as the U.S., civilian-based defense can be introduced as a component of predominantly military systems. "They did not abandon bows and arrows one day and then look for an alternative," Sharp says. "The military system will be abandoned only to the degree people see a superior means by which to defend against dangers."

A civilian-based defense policy could play a larger immediate role in small countries with few other alternatives, Sharp said, listing Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Costa Rica and Iceland.

It also has potential as a carefully-focused plan of defense against coups, which constitute "a widespread problem in most parts of the world, and the way most dictatorships come into existence."

Another possibility envisioned by Sharp is the development of civilian-based defense treaty organizations. Participating nations could provide a threatened country access to printing and broadcast facilities or medical supplies, or impose economic sanctions on an aggressor.

Finally, nonviolent struggle for national liberation from dictatorships is a "highly important companion" to civilian-based defense, Sharp said. Both can be aided by research into the weaknesses of dictatorships and by the preparation and dissemination of simplified literature on nonviolent resistance.

Sharp responded with characteristic pragmatism to questioners who chal-

lenged the relevance of nonviolent defense to struggles against economic injustice, or for nations with firmly-entrenched dictatorships.

It is not a panacea, he stressed; it will not solve all the world's ills. It "demands severe sacrifices -- as war has always done." It addresses one issue: "How defend the relative freedom you have against external and internal threats?"

But Sharp is firm in his conviction that the world has reached "a new point of history" which can lead to peace.

"Effective steps can actually be taken to move the world toward a drastic reduction, if not the elimination, of major violence and war," Sharp declared. "The struggles of many brave people, most of whose names will never be known, have led to the recognition of the potential of civilian-based defense by hard-headed strategists. We have a responsibility to use our resources to make the task of future ordinary people less difficult and less dangerous for them." TW

In promoting civilian-based defense of national security, Gene Sharp is careful to clarify that national security "is not identified with ability to secure from other parts of the world all desired economic resources on one's own terms, nor with capacity to control the economies, politics and military actions of other countries and to intervene militarily throughout the world" (*National Security Through Civilian-Based Defense*, ATS, 1985). Such capacity, in Sharp's view, is likely to provoke hostility and in the long run make a nation which possesses it *less* secure.

Though Sharp did not specifically address the U.S. situation, it seems clear that civilian-based alternatives to the military presume objectives very different from those of our "Defense" Department, and that non-violent means would not be effective in pursuing a policy of Third World domination.

Love of enemies: an invitation to the abused

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott - English professor and theologian -- has recently considered what it means for abuse survivors to love their enemies. She draws on her faith despite being raised in a religious environment that denied women the right to even *pray* publicly.

Born in Philadelphia in 1932, Mollenkott was sexually violated by her mother before the age of three. Her father, a chiropractor, moved out when she was nine. She says the Plymouth Brethren Assemblies taught her to "silence herself." Her brother was assured a college education and she was not because of her gender.

Eventually, Mollenkott got herself to Bob Jones University, where she struggled with her sexual identity. She felt that "the only way out from living with my family was to get married, so I did. Professors told me that once I had shown God my willingness to behave like a decent Christian woman, the feelings would come.

"I can remember the morning after my wedding -- the utter greyness. I thought, 'If I die, I die.'"

The 17 years that followed, during which Mollenkott believed that if she was subservient enough her husband would love her, were worse. "He told me that if he told God not to listen to my prayers, God wouldn't."

Mollenkott left her husband and

adopted the Episcopal Church during the 1960s. She chose the Episcopal Church because she wanted weekly communion and because she wanted a Church environment in which to raise her son. She became straightforward about her sexual preference for women and began a relationship that has lasted 11 years.

The cost of that move was that her brother forbade her to see his children.



credit: Sr. Helen David

And her father (whom she stayed in contact with through the years) rejected her when he "got right with the Lord. That really stung. His second wife talked him into believing that was a terrible thing."

When challenged by a friend to work on Christ's admonition to love enemies, Mollenkott saw two avenues. The first was political; the second personal.

In political instances, Mollenkott said she stressed the importance of challenging the system rather than "going after people." She added that she is not a pacifist; she feels sympathy when critics challenge any violence in Nelson Mandela's resistance to apartheid, but overlook the violence inherent in the system.

(And she adds that outing -- the practice of exposing people's homosexuality -- may be necessary when people in power abuse power to hurt the lesbian and gay community. She proposes a Biblical confrontation -- first individual, then by a group and only later, and only in a spirit of love, before the courts or media.)

Mollenkott said addressing the experiences of the abused is difficult.

"It's a very dangerous thing to tell an abused person that forgiveness is important because it can easily be one more form of abuse."

At the first workshop she offered on the topic, a woman revealed that she had been ritually sexually abused by her mother and a group of women. She did not feel she could forgive.

Mollenkott said she responded, "You will forgive your enemies... It may be centuries from now but you will be able to forgive."

The woman's face lit up with relief.

The key, Mollenkott says, is to say to the Holy Spirit, "I am willing to see this a different way." We should never go beyond our comfort zone. All we need to do is to clear away the resolute refusal."

Interviewee **Virginia Ramey Mollenkott** is a feminist theologian and an English professor at William Patterson College in New Jersey.

Mollenkott was reconciled with her mother.

"I held her in my arms when she died. I felt I delivered her back. She had delivered me here and I delivered her back. I continue to feel tremendous strength coming from her."

After years of journaling, she came to see her mother differently. "It's like *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*," she said. "He was looking at the water snakes and he thought they were so ugly -- and all of a sudden they are beautiful."

"I saw her background and the repression she lived with. When you have no power, you are going to try to steal power from those around you -- from children. But none of that would have changed my feelings. I had to present the willingness."

Her mother came to accept her daughter and her partner.

"She was learning to love," Mollenkott said. "She accepted my lesbianism, which was a huge thing for a fundamentalist."

At the funeral, Mollenkott offered

the eulogy. Her partner and her brother read the Scripture.

Reconciliation with her brother followed his divorce, Mollenkott said. When she invited him for Christmas, he came.

She greeted him at the airport saying "Don't tell me about your views and I won't tell you about mine. Let's just be brother and sister."

"It didn't work to perfection," she added. "I took him to St. John the Divine because he's an artist. At the end, he said 'They haven't finished it. That's a sin.'"

When she explained that the Cathedral staff had opted to provide a training ground for artists and to serve neighboring Harlem instead, he answered "Well, that's wrong."

But he has come for Christmas three

years in a row and he has thanked her for understanding him.

"The fact that we're both people of faith gives us something to step out onto," Mollenkott said. "That's true even though if we talked about our belief systems, we'd go crazy."

"Everybody is at their own leading edge," Mollenkott said. "I believe the universe is resolving itself. It doesn't mean I am right and they are wrong. We need to learn to care about each other, to keep emphasizing the human element."

"I believe the essence of faith is constant and total reliance on the inner guide, on the Holy Spirit within. I'm trying to learn at every moment to ask 'What is the truth about this?' I really think that a faithful life is such a simple life, a joyous and peaceful life." **TW**

The key is to say to the Holy Spirit, 'I am willing to see this a different way.' All we need to do is to clear away the resolute refusal.

Lines in the Sand

Who defines national security for us? When press acts as a partner with government, what happens to dissent? When TV coverage shows us all the glory of war and none of the heartache, are we at risk of becoming a more dangerous nation?

These questions are raised in a new video essay on the role of the media in Operation Desert Storm.

Lines in the Sand, written and produced by activist/writer Ed Griffin-Nolan, explores the information control strategies employed by the U.S. military, and largely accepted by mainstream media, during the war.

Featuring footage shot in Iraq shortly after the war, *Lines in the Sand* offers a troubling look at some of the human faces censored by the Pentagon.

The 10-minute video, recommended for classrooms, community groups, and churches, is available for \$19.95 plus \$2 postage and handling from Griffin-Wirth Associates, 168 Parkway Drive, Syracuse, New York 13207; (315) 471-4953.



“In defense of conscience”

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

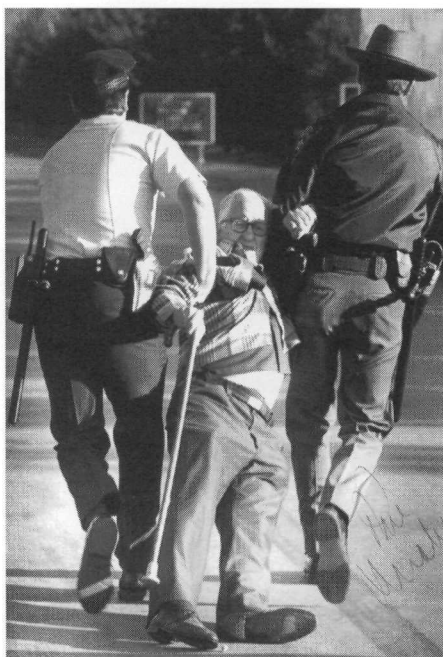
Building the Beloved Community

Judith A. Bechtel and

Robert M. Coughlin

Temple University Press, 1991

It was Pentecost Monday, 1983. Two hundred forty-three people had been arrested at the Capitol Building for praying against the nuclear arms race. Maurice McCrackin, in keeping with his longstanding principle of not cooperating with unjust arrest, had refused to walk. He was, nonetheless, treated deferentially by Federal Security cops who transported him gingerly to the D.C. City Jail, employing a stretcher. But now a jurisdiction was being crossed. The jail deputy was going to have none of this “crap,” dumping Mac abruptly face down on the black top. “You gonna walk, old man?” As McCrackin begins a calm explanation, the officer yanks him upwards by his hand-cuffed arms, eliciting groans of pain. (It will be discovered that his arm was thereby fractured a hair-line.) I step forward off the jail elevator in an attempt



is fetched for McCrackin. The other three of us walk.

Reading *Building the Beloved Community*, the new biography of Maurice McCrackin by Bechtel and Coughlin, is a little bit like going to jail with him. It is an adventure which lays an unforeseen claim upon you. By virtue of his actions and commitments, you are suddenly faced with choices in your own life. Just reading harbors its own moment of truth.

Good biography is always at least good history (if not finally also good theology). Given Maurice McCrackin's spiritual and political instincts, this one is an entre into the eras and movements of the past 50 years, from the pre-war missionary fervor (he served in Iran, then called Persia), to the early days of the civil rights movement, from the McCarthy era (he was vilified for his part in Highlander School sessions with Martin King, Rosa Parks, Myles Horton and other “communists”), to the several anti-war movements, and the struggle

for community-based economic justice. He followed his conscience into his time and urges us to follow our own.

Bechtel and Coughlin clearly recount the history. It's well-documented, but without intrusive footnotes. All in all, it hooks like a novel.

At the close of World War II, McCrackin was called to St. Barnabas church, a dually aligned Presbyterian-Episcopal congregation in Cincinnati. Beyond the expectation (and even desires) of his superiors, he successfully integrated the congregation and by 1948 was leading a campaign to break down the barriers of segregation in private educational and recreational institutions. It came to be his first experience of risking “disrespectability.”

Like all action with a moral trajectory, that campaign led into another. The community which gathered to carry off the former soon initiated “Operation Freedom” - a campaign of support for sharecroppers in Haywood and Fayette counties, Tennessee. They were being evicted (and suffering what today we would call state terrorism and low intensity warfare if it were located in a more distant region) because they were registering to vote. Mac rallied help with an impassioned plea:

They do not need to have people tell them what they ought to do. They know, they are doing it. But they do need to have friends and to meet those friends face to face from time to time. Go and share a bit of the danger. Stand watch for a few nights at a store which may be dynamited during the night. Let the weary owner get a few nights' rest. (p.139)

McCrackin did. For his frequent trips bearing money and clothes to the dispossessed he was jailed on fabricated charges for 45 days. He fasted and non-cooperated, but also was building jail-house community, as was his pattern.

book review

to intervene gently but am yelled at: “Back off, son.” It is a sudden moment of moral decision. The two young charismatics from Cincinnati who are with us go down instinctively on their butts signalling their own further non-cooperation. I quickly join them. “Oh God,” opines the deputy, deciding to phone for help in a situation sliding out of his control. In the end, a wheelchair

His first and longest prison experience, however, was in connection with his refusal to pay federal taxes for war. He had faced a moment of truth packing Christmas boxes for kids at the church's neighborhood center. As they sorted out the guns and weapons, his Peacemaker friend Wally Nelson asked: "Do you ever think that next March 15 you'll be paying for *real* guns?" The question stung and stuck. Once again his conscience was set afoot. On Christmas Eve, 1958, after a series of resolute non-cooperations with the IRS, Maurice McCrackin began a six-month prison term. It was for him a baptismal experience, clarifying vocation and strengthening his conscience. Here was where he developed his principles of non-cooperation. Reasoning that if the tax was unjust, then so were the measures to exact and enforce it, he refused to participate in any legal proceeding, to walk, even to eat for periods.

It also set him to the life-long work of ministry among prisoners. Perhaps his most notorious and intriguing imprisonment was for contempt in refusing to cooperate with a Grand Jury. An inmate friend of his escaped with two other prisoners coming to Mac for help. In essence he was made a hostage and his car taken, but maintained his demeanor of friendship throughout. When the prisoners were recaptured he refused to testify, instead drawing public attention to the prison conditions which they had fled. His open-ended contempt sentence developed into a test of wills with the judge, but in the end he proved incorrigible, a thoroughly indigestible and unrehabilitatable specimen of humanity.

If anything gets short shrift in the book, it is his development work of the last decade or so. Against the gentrification of his Cincinnati neighborhood, McCrackin and friends have pioneered in experimenting with the urban land trust movement creating a new form of



community control and neighborhood-based economic alternatives.

An edifying and troubling theme throughout the story is his relationship to the Church. Sadly, he received little or no public support from Church hierarchy for these difficult and risky ministries. Episcopal Bishop Henry Hobson visited him in jail -- to explain that the Diocese was moving to remove him as director of the Findlay Street Neighborhood House. After a long judicial process the Presbyterians defrocked him in 1962, essentially for holding to his conscience above civil and ecclesiastical authority. It was in the course of that trial, over against the theological abstractions and churchly legalities, that McCrackin first told what he eventually called (and often recounted as) "the Pilgrimage of a Conscience." (This book is the documented elaboration of that spiritual autobiography.) It stunned the committee with its concreteness and passion. In the end, however, their official sensibilities prevailed.

It needs be stressed that in the course of the ecclesiastical investigation it was never found that he was pastorally remiss in his duties. Indeed, for all his trips and jail bits, the congregation's personal

responsibility for ministry was deepened and its lay leadership empowered. When the churchly verdict came down, a core of St. Barnabas members, without rancor of any sort, withdrew to form Community Church where McCrackin's ministry abides to this day.

In recent years, Mac's conscience has been more openly recognized and honored. The Presbyterians have reinstated his orders and even "repented" of their judgment. Now 86, McCrackin has slowed a step but not ceased his witness. (The Gulf War landed him in jail again

*Witnesses,
the quick and the dead*

this year.) He enjoys a perspective in which "retirement" has been rendered meaningless.

And now this blessed biography. Beware, dear friends. It opens and closes with a bite. It puts questions and choices before the reader. Thanks go to Bechtel and Coughlin for this good book. And to McCrackin (not to mention the Lord of his conscience) for this good life. **TW**



Papua New Guinea: Fertility spirit

(Originals of the art work by Betty LaDuke here and on page 5 are done in four colors.)

credit: Betty LaDuke

The December issue: *Birthing in the face of a dragon*

Revelations 12



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THE WITNESS

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LA DUKE

Birthing in the face of a dragon. Rev. 12

Detroit

I BEGAN READING *Witness* with the letters to the editor and thoroughly enjoyed them. My, my, what a fuss about homosexuality! You would think, after all we have been through in the 20th century, stretching the rules to encompass fast divorces, abortions, autonomy, "healthy" greed and robust competition amongst canines and hominids, that this trifle about fellow sexes bedding together would present no great challenge. If Christianity is to wink at premarital sex, teen experimentation, single motherhood and kinky married bedgames it can surely put up with the gay community. Myself, though -- I mean, for my part I am rather glad Jesus isn't strolling around our McDonald's parking lots these days. I have a sneaky suspicion he'd give us *all* a good stiff kick in the butt, and go look for another planet. But as long as he's not around, we make of Christ what is comfortable to us...

Your "meeting the challenge" editorial was really superb. It is a poignant, gut-wrenching tribute to the city. It reminded me of the love I conceived, as a preschooler, for Chicago, too. Funny how we fall in love with cities, isn't it? They get into your blood and they stay there.

I very much enjoyed "Standing up to Death" and thought John the Baptist was excellent as a visual accompaniment to it. I think I would challenge, however, his premise that street corruption is largely based in sexual abuse. But it is a well done article. I wish I could find something redeeming in Blaise and Virginia's presentation of the "Swords" gallery, but Eric Mesko's work only reminded me of my worse housekeeping habits...

Dierdre Luzwick
Cambridge, WI

[Dierdre Luzwick's art appeared in the September and October issues of *The Witness*.]

WHILE THE WHOLE [October] issue is excellent, the core of it all is expressed in James Boggs' "Making Over Motown." Boggs says "We have to stop seeing the city as just a place to which you come to make a living. Instead we must start seeing it as the place where our humanity is enriched because we have the opportunity to work and live in harmony with people of many different ethnic and social backgrounds."

The photo of Poletown children is an icon of the agony and the potential of the Detroit neighborhoods.

Bill Melnyk
Sewanee, TN

I'VE READ of your "Confession" issue [Sept. 1991]. I've even finished most of your "Detroit" Issue.

In a few minutes I'll be joining some neighbors in cleaning some empty lots to make a mini-park. We've bought a tractor-lawnmower with rototiller and snowblower attachments. We hope to turn our neighborhood into a garden area while we also try to save some of the sturdy but empty homes in the neighborhood.

But, our efforts will be for naught unless there is a confession on the part of our country that our political system simply does not work. How much can small neighborhood groups like ours save if the political structures of city, state and nation continue to have policies aimed at making matters worse.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, MI

Pro-Choice

Operation Blockade Christians are certainly not giving a loving Christian message to intelligent caring by-standers. I could not help but think of that as I was willing to be a Patient Escort at the Planned Parenthood Clinic in Warren, Michigan yesterday. As a follower of Jesus it pains me to see His name used as harassment against women who have appointments for health care which is nobody's business but the woman and anyone SHE wishes to confide in.

The Witness has been pro-choice, but cancel my subscription if you care only for

those keeping women dependent.

Barbara M. Palmer
Utica, MI

[Ed. Note: I can only presume that this letter is precipitated by Barbara Palmer's knowledge that, when I edited the Episcopal diocesan paper in Michigan, I published an award-winning article about an Operation Rescue maneuver. That article gave an inside view, allowing participants to speak for themselves. It gave a mixed portrait but was not a condemnation.]

There are other *Witness* readers who are concerned about my personal views on abortion. There have been lengthy discussions among the ECPC board members and the contributing editors about the issue. I understand that the policy of *The Witness* has been to support a woman's legal right to abortion; I think it is also true that *The Witness* could do more to address the myriad of levels on which abortion affects women. It is championed as a right, but can be experienced as an assault, further alienating women from their bodies. There is clearly much more to be said. I look forward to the many conversations which will follow.]

'Not religious'

THE WITNESS IS NOT ANGLICAN! It is a radical left, pagan, new age, feminist propaganda rag! However, as a conservative, tradition, Bible Episcopalian [sic] I feel this \$20 is well worth it to keep up with the latest lies, non-Christian stances, and other aberrations of the radical left!

Fred Blanton
Fultondale, AL

'Too religious'

[After six issues from Ambler and one from Detroit, Danielle LaGrange writes:]

I WOULD LIKE TO CANCEL my subscription to *Witness* magazine. I request a refund for those issues not received. Thank you but I did not realize that religion was the main topic of this magazine. I am not interested.

Danielle LaGrange
Camden, NY
DECEMBER, 1991

Letters



Credit: Taizé, Ateliers et Presses, 71250 Taizé, France

My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for you have regarded the low estate of
your handmaiden.
For behold, henceforth all generations
will call me blessed;
for you who are mighty have done
great things for me,
and holy is your name.

And your mercy is on those who fear
you
from generation to generation.
You have shown strength with your arm,
you have scattered the proud in the
imagination of their hearts,
you have put down the mighty from
their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree

you have filled the hungry with good
things,
and the rich you have sent empty away.
You have helped your servant Israel,
in remembrance of your mercy,
as you spoke to our fathers and moth-
ers,
to Abraham and Sarah and to their pos-
terity for ever. *Luke 1:46-55*

THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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A woman clothed in the sun and stars

And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars; she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth; she brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to the throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for 1,260 days.

-- Rev. 12:1-6

To be such a woman. To be clothed in the beauty and power of nature. To be dressed in the symbols of earthly powers and rulers. To be honored by God and with child. Is to be as we were to be. In right order with God. Practicing dominion. Giving birth to a child who likewise is called upon by God to interact with the powers and the rulers of this dark age for our salvation.

The image of Mary has always been -- to my detriment -- one that is too tame and sanitized. She is perpetually virginal. (See page 14.) But this woman in Revelation 12, on the other hand, fascinates me. She is classically understood (by the Catholics at any rate) to be an image of Mary the mother of God. But she is powerful and honored by God. She has dominion. All this while she is in labor, surrendering to the onslaught of life that *will* come, assent or no. And this woman takes this role even though, at her feet, there waits a dragon whose reason for being is to devour her child.

All of us -- whether we are parents or not -- know the ex-

Artist **Robert McGovern** lives and works in the Philadelphia area. **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is the editor/publisher of *The Witness*.



The woman in sunlight

credit: RMcGovern

perience of laboring to deliver some God-infused part of ourselves into a hostile climate. We also know the sometimes paralyzing fear that intrudes on our most heart-felt work when the U.S. precipitates a Gulf War or when we imagine a nuclear holocaust or when we feel the weight of those who starve to death each day in this world of ours.

The dragon *is* real. We can feel his breath. We know the dragon's cruelty and voracious hunger in the movements of imperial power and in personal cold anger and hatred.

And within us is something waiting to be born, something God-given and sacred. Something small and frail and dependent on us for its very blood and growth.

And our lives, of course, are entwined with those whose experience of the dragon may be more immediate -- the mothers of Palestine, of South Africa, of El Salvador.

For that reason this issue is dedicated to women who choose life in the face of maddening terror. Najat Kafity (whose husband is the bishop of Jerusalem) speaks of her experiences in the Holy Land today (page 12). Mirtala Lopez and Sting depict the agony of the mothers of the disappeared (pages 10 and 11). Anne Finger, whose book *Past Due* is reviewed on page 22, writes in excruciating detail about birth and life and disabilities and motherhood. Assata Shakur writes of her disappointment and hope for her African-American child (page 19).

This issue is intended to make graphic some visions of the dragon in our world today. (And it is understood that the dragon is alive and well in *all* nations regardless of their politics.) The issue is also intended to honor the woman who is in travail, who is groaning with creation and maybe even dancing despite the odds.

It is comforting to me, and almost a surprise (which says unfortunate things about Church teachings) that God cares so much about the woman described in Revelations 12. Her child is intended to rule, but it is she who wears the stars and sun and stands upon the moon. It is she, not the child, who at this point in the story stands face to face with the dragon. And it is she for whom God has prepared a place.

I had a chance to lead a workshop on this text recently.

Most people characterized the dragon as the predatory spirit of consumerism and militarism in our culture. They felt a desire to shelter the child from its distorting, death-dealing values. Some even felt relief that the child was snatched away by God.

People felt empty when they imagined arriving in the wasteland. Some argued with God about the usurpation of the child. Although, it was conceded, that the child does in fact belong to God, so perhaps it is not an act of usurping at all.

But it was in discussion of the love

*All of us -- whether we
are parents or not --
know the experience of
laboring to deliver
some God-infused part
of ourselves into a
hostile climate.*

that God had for this woman that I felt particularly challenged.

"Who is this woman?" I asked.

"The Goddess," a white-haired woman responded at once.

A younger woman laughed with relief, saying, "Thank you. Thank you for saying that."

I felt the mixed feelings I always feel when confronting the goddess image. When I was pregnant, I wore a goddess necklace around my neck; it was comforting to have a pendulously pregnant and rounded woman to hold onto as my own body changed.

I know the goddess image holds some antidote to my experience of the Christian faith. Where *do* I fit in a belief system that raises up a male God and His son? Where *do* I fit in a body of the faithful which as recently as 1966 made it possible for Anthony Towne (author and companion of William Stringfellow) to dismiss even the possibility that the Holy Spirit might be female and to write

about God's "stag parties." He, keeping the entirety of God locked into male identity. And me, having to *work* at not regretting my anatomy and my psyche.

I am grateful to the women who are resurrecting Isis, because it gives me a chance to reconfigure my understanding of a woman's body and courage. I am even more grateful to the women who are researching, dreaming and discovering a history of women in the Old and New Testaments. I hesitate and reserve judgement on the images raised in the new inclusive language texts, but I desperately need to hear those words and imagine a sacred female force within God.

But I am uneasy also.

Somehow it seems that people often move very quickly from considering the Goddess to focussing on the Goddess within. In itself, I don't believe this is inappropriate, but something nags at me, reminding me that God is also other. God is magnificent in Her/His foreignness as well. Wild and untamed, God intervenes in our lives in ways that can dethrone our internal goddesses and gods. And, in the end, that is a profound relief.

It is humbling to know ourselves as creature not creator. It is the original lesson learned in the Garden of Eden. But there is something wonderful about being formed in love and created by someone *other*, whose responsibility, it ultimately is that we live.

And it is a delight to sing praises to that lively and sometimes unpredictable God who sees so much farther and moves with such freedom through our lives.

William Stringfellow, whom I love (Anthony Towne's limitations notwithstanding), said that the vocation of all creatures is to praise God. It is a joy to praise the Creator who brought us to birth and who cherishes us as we labor in the face of the dragon.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

The Figure in Clay

by Mary Randle TallMountain

Climbing the hill
When it was time,
Among sunken gravehouses
I filled my fists with earth
And coming down took river water,
Blended it,
Shaped you, a girl of clay
Crouched in my palms
Mute asking
To be made complete.

Long afterward
I buried you deep among
Painted masks.
Yet you ride my plasma
Like a platelet,
Eldest kinswoman.
You cry to me through smoke
Of tribal fires.
I echo the primal voice,
The drumming blood.

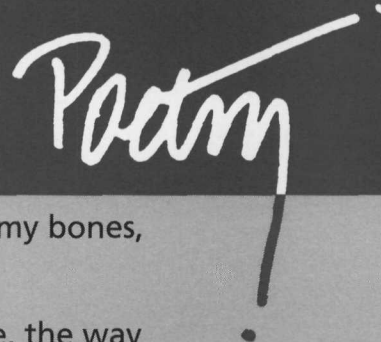
Through decades waiting
Your small shape remained
In morning ritual
You danced through my brain,
Clear and familiar.
Telling of dim glacial time,
Long perilous water-crossings,
Wolf beasts
Howling the polar night,
Snow flowers changing.

Now watching you in lamplight,
I see scarlet berries
Ripened,
Your sunburned fingers plucking them.
With hesitant words,
With silence,
From inmost space
I call you
Out of the clay.

It is time at last,
This dawn.
Stir. Wake. Rise.
Glide gentle between my bones,
Grasp my heart. Now
Walk beside me. Feel
How these winds move, the way
These mornings breathe.
Let me see you new
In this light.

You --
Wrapped in brown,
Myself repeated
Out of dark and different time.

Mary TallMountain is an Athabascan Indian poet, a mystic and a Roman Catholic. From The Sacred Hoop, Paula Gunn Allen, Beacon Press, Boston,



They Dance Alone

by Sting

Why are these women here dancing on their own?
 Why is there this sadness in their eyes?
 Why are the soldiers here
 Their faces fixed like stone?
 I can't see what it is that they despise
 They're dancing with the missing
 They're dancing with the dead
 They dance with the invisible ones
 Their anguish is unsaid
 They're dancing with their fathers
 They're dancing with their sons
 They're dancing with their husbands
 They dance alone They dance alone

It's the only form of protest they're allowed
 I've seen their silent faces scream so loud
 If they were to speak these words they'd go missing too
 Another woman on the torture table
 what else can they do
 They're dancing with the missing
 They're dancing with the dead
 They dance with the invisible ones
 Their anguish is unsaid
 They're dancing with their fathers
 They're dancing with their sons
 They're dancing with their husbands
 They dance alone They dance alone

One day we'll dance on their graves
 One day we'll sing our freedom
 One day we'll laugh in our joy
 And we'll dance

*Ella danzan con los desaparecidos
 Ellas danzan con los muertos
 Ellas danzan con amores invisibles
 Ellas danzan con silenciosa angustia
 Danzan con sus padres
 Danzan con sus hijos
 Danzan con sus esposos
 Ellas danzan solas
 Danzan solas*

Hey Mr. Pinochet
 You've sown a bitter crop
 It's foreign money that supports you

One day the money's going to stop
 No wages for your torturers
 No budget for your guns
 Can you think of your own mother
 Dancin' with her invisible son
 They're dancing with the missing
 They're dancing with the dead
 They dance with the invisible ones
 Their anguish is unsaid
 They're dancing with their fathers
 They're dancing with their sons
 They're dancing with their husbands
 They dance alone They dance alone



Mother of the disappeared

credit: Robert Lentz, Bridge Building Images, Burlington, VT

Lyrics from *Nothing like the Sun*, A & M Records

Mirtala Lopez is 22. Like many women her age, she looks forward to having a home and family of her own. Unlike most, she has faced and accepted the possibility that she may not live long enough.

In El Salvador, it is a risk all women face. During El Salvador's 11-year civil war, 75,000 Salvadorans have been killed by the U.S.-funded military or para-military death squads. Thousands more have been displaced from their homes and villages.

Lopez lost her father and eight brothers and sisters in the war.

At the age of 11, she was forced to flee her village with her seven-months-pregnant mother. Her youngest sister was born in a refugee camp.

Another sister gave birth, surrounded by gunshots and exploding mortars, in the midst of a military attack. That sister was captured, tortured and killed by a death squad in the village of (*Dulce Nombre de Maria* "The Sweet Name of Mary") when her son was two. The child now lives with his grandmother.

For Lopez, the risk is heightened by her commitment to another birthing process: the struggle for justice for her people.

At age 15, she joined with others in her refugee camp to found CRIPDES, the Christian Committee for Displaced Persons in El Salvador. Today, she coordinates its human rights and legal assistance work, and serves as its representative to the Committee for the National Debate for Peace, a Church-led coalition.

CRIPDES has led the repopulation movement in El Salvador, assisting refugees to return home and rebuild their

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

THE WITNESS

communities. In the repopulated villages, the organization has established education programs, health clinics, agricultural training and crafts cooperatives.

"The majority of the people living in the repopulated communities are women and children, because their husbands and partners have been killed or disap-



Facing the dragon in El Salvador

By Marianne Arbogast

peared," Lopez says. "So there is a special emphasis on the work of women, so women feel able to take on responsibility on all levels."

For her efforts, Lopez has been jailed, tortured, and threatened with death.

In April of 1989, she was arrested at CRIPDES' head office with 63 others, including two mothers with three-day-old babies.

"We were all put in one room," Lopez recalls. "People were beaten; we heard children and women scream as they were hit. They accused us of working for the FMLN [the Salvadoran popular liberation movement]."

Though most were released within three days, Lopez remained in jail for four months.

"Eight times, they put over my head a rubber hood filled with a powder that causes asphyxiation," she said. "I was beaten so badly, all my skin was bruised; you couldn't see my skin color. I still suffer internal injuries from the torture."

Since September 12 of this year, she has received four death threats signed by the Salvadoran Anti-Communist Front. She interprets these as desperate actions by opponents of the September peace accord signed by the government and the FMLN.

"There are people who are against the accord because they profited from the war and want to continue profiting," she says. "There are wealthy landholders who own over 600 hectares of land, and the accord says no more than 240 hectares. There are also sick minds, and [sectors of the military] who want to demonstrate that they're the primary political force in the country."

"The accords are the product of the struggle of the people," Lopez says, "but they're written on a piece of paper. Now we are coming to what may be the most difficult part of the struggle."

Lopez takes the death threats seriously. But, she says, "my commitment to my people is stronger because of the threats. The war has been very cruel, but it hasn't been enough to crush our hope in God and the construction of the kingdom of God we all struggle for."

"I want to have a home and family and children and continue to work for social justice and peace," she says. Risk is "a normal part of our daily lives. I have been living it and I will continue to live it. Fear is normal." But "I work based on faith in God. Our hearts become very strong."

TW

I think I have known them all my life -- their gestures of hopelessness, their smiles while tears open grooves on their cheeks, the shrug of the shoulders giving in to Fate--these mothers of pain in the Middle East. Whenever I have seen Palestinian women on television, after a child has been arrested, after a home has been bulldozed, I have wanted to cry out, "Stop it. What you are doing to her, you are doing to me, and I can't stand it." And then I have hidden my face in shame knowing that my faith has never been strong enough to endure the suffering of my children, and I have begged God to look at the agony of these mothers with compassion; the whole time knowing that none of this was enough, and that I was a spiritual coward.

"She was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery."

East Jerusalem, YMCA building

I stare at a picture of a mother holding the photograph of her daughter. The daughter wears an embroidered dress in the colors of the Palestinian flag -- red, green and black. For those colors she was shot through the heart, Bill Warnock, of World Vision and an Episcopalian, tells me.

Ever since I have known Palestinian women as persons of faith and passion

Katerina Katsarka Whitley is editor of *Lifeline* and does media work for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. She recently visited Israel/Palestine.

Lamya Shihadeh is a Palestinian American who teaches school in Dearborn, MI.

for their children, I have wondered, what gives these mothers the courage to have more children when they know the dangers, when many of them tremble to see them out of their sight? Living in camps, the essence of impermanence, what gives them hope that this child will have a better life?

Abla Nasser, mother of three young



credit: Katerina Katsarka Whitley

Facing the dragon in Palestine, again

By Katerina Katsarka Whitley

children and principal of the Friends' School in Ramallah, offers as answer: "We say in Arabic that each child born brings his or her own survivability. God will not forsake the child. Children are a gift from God."

"And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child,

that he might devour her child when she brought it forth."

East Jerusalem, Cathedral of St. George

Across the gate from St. George's Cathedral, the children, dressed in clean clothes, their books strapped to their backs in backpacks in the fashion of children everywhere, arrive on foot or accompanied by a grandfather in his flowing *kefiyeh*; some are dropped off by taxi or a private car. They are beautiful children, their dark eyes shining, their mouths ready to break into huge grins. As I photograph them, and they give me the sign of *intifada* defiance, I think of their mothers. When they walk to school alone, how many are fearful that these children may not come back? How many hours before they hear that this exuberant child, doing what his friends do in the manner of children everywhere, has thrown a stone at the IDF, only to be arrested and beaten?

"When I send them off to school, I know anything can happen," a mother tells me. "I need to accept this. So I say to them, 'Be careful! God be with you!' Their course is filled with danger. But we have to have courage when we see *their* fear, because we cannot eliminate

the cause." One of her sons threw a stone after the *intifada* had begun. She sat him down and told him of the danger. But he didn't seem worried. How much can a nine-year old understand of danger?

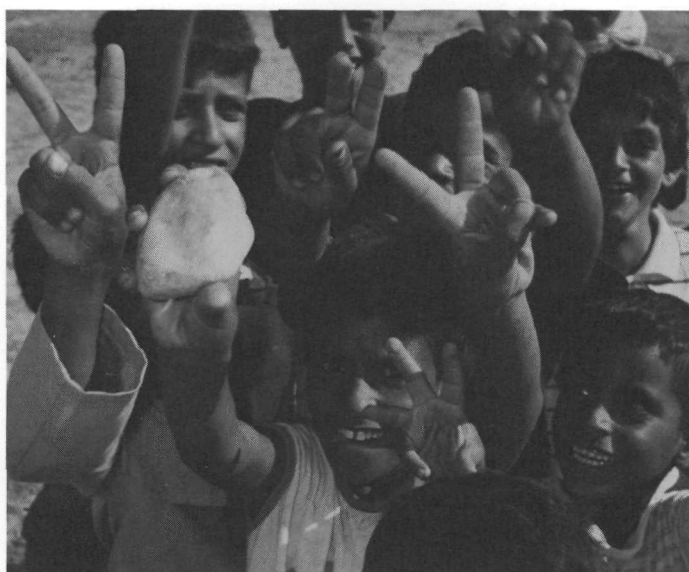
I asked Nasser, who is currently studying at Harvard, to tell me about the mothers who have lost children since the *intifada*. What sustains them?

"What can I say," she begins, her voice full of awe. "I don't know where they get this courage. We go to offer our condolences to the mother, and she comforts *us*! You feel they must be full of grief but they comfort *us*. You see, the Moslems believe in fate and in martyrs. The mother is happy that her child is in heaven." "Do you see a difference in Christian mothers then?" I ask her. "Christian mothers have a different approach altogether," she says. "They too are proud that the child gave himself for the land, but they show deep grief."

"She brought forth a male child...but her child was caught up to God and to God's throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness..."

Grandmother Fadayel of Ramallah, remembering English she learned in missionary school over 40 years ago speaks: "Fayek, my grandson was walking on the main street and the IDF caught him, smacked him, bent his head, twisted his hand over his shoulders. They caught him about 11 and till 1:00 they have been running on the street with him. They took him to the tents and put him in. They moved him in five different prisons. The boy was just walking down the street. They said he threw stones from afar but that he didn't hit anybody." The priest interrupts with a bitter laugh, "That's what they always say; that's the reason for the arrest." The family were fined 1,000 shekels (\$200). "If we don't pay, they keep him another two months." Many children, knowing of their families' great financial difficulties, ask the parents not to pay the fine. But how can parents stand that? The grandmother continues:

"Rizek," that is, her own son, the boy's father, "did not eat for days. He sat and cried. The mother and father, they ran here and there saying help me, help me. The boy, he was so thin when he came out. His clothes were on him 20 days. (Even though) we gave clean clothes to the lawyer for him."



Palestinian youth with stones

credit: Lamya Shihadeh

Pastor Fanous explains: "These people are not used to asking for help. I have to find out from others. They are proud, they are not used to this." So I ask the grandmother about those early days, in 1948 when Israel was created, when they were told to leave their homes in Jaffa. "We left without nothing. They told us it was only for two weeks..." But it was permanent.

I try to imagine being thrown out of my home with babies in my arms and nothing else. "How did you survive?" The memories show on her eloquent face: "I had very hard time. My husband without work and I had six children and all so small, and I was pregnant. I couldn't find a cup of milk to drink, I had to sleep on a mat on the floor. The children wanted to eat, we

had no money." A kindly woman opened a milk center and when this young mother of six children went to drink one cup of milk and bring one back for the children, they offered her a job cleaning up. "Until I die, I'll never forget 1948. We had such a hard time."

"She brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron."

Nasser explains how difficult it is to be honest and protective of the children at the same time. These are the children who learn courage when they are conceived, she says simply. Their childhood is without enjoyment and their adolescence has the additional burden of their claiming the right to be liberators of their land. The Palestinian mothers have to have courage to deal with this, because the children blame the parents for having acquiesced to the situation. The additional burden of the mother is that almost every family has a male jailed, shot, dead or exiled.

Then I ask her, hating myself for doing so: "You know, the Israelis accuse Palestinian mothers of hiding behind your children, of endangering their lives." I hear her sharp intake of breath, and for a while she is unable to speak. "Oh, how can they say such a terrible thing. How can any mother inflict pain on her child? The Israelis too are human beings, they must feel the same way."

And there lies the crux. In this terrible conflict, in order to hate the enemy, the other side sees him as less than human. Once you dehumanize the enemy, you can do anything you please. "I don't want them to hate," Ablā says of her children.

TW

Hope against the odds

Najat Kafity considers herself a sheltered Palestinian woman. With her husband, the Bishop of Jerusalem, she has lived in international compounds where her two daughters could play with children from around the world - they did not have to face the austerity and the repression that is common for Palestinian families in the occupied territories.

But between the births of her first and second child, she lost the security she thought foundational. She had grown up in Nablus. Although it was officially Jordanian, she understood it to be Palestinian. She attended an integrated school which was primarily Muslim but included Christian Palestinians and one Samaritan Jew. Students shared their traditions. Her father was an Anglican shop owner. Her extended family was close by.

Yet, in 1967, Kafity was suddenly unable to nurse her second child. She was living in Beirut where her husband was serving an All Saints' Church. The Israelis had invaded the West Bank and Jerusalem. For three weeks they did not know if their family members were alive or dead.

"I couldn't nurse my child. I was so upset I got stomach aches. It was part of the tension that we had.

"In 1968 my parents decided to emigrate to the States taking six children with them. I only had a little of one day to say goodbye to my mother. I didn't even want to kiss them. I was very mad. I just said goodbye from far away and

Najat Kafity participated in a recent telephone interview from Jerusalem with **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann**.

ran to the car."

Seven years later, Kafity says they noticed troubling signs in Lebanon. The civil war broke out with a vengeance in 1976. She and her family lived on the "so-called Muslim side" of Beirut and were subject to the Maronite attacks.



Jewish "women in black" in Israel vigil weekly against Israel's continued occupation of Gaza and the West Bank

credit: Andrew Levin

"In March they began shelling indiscriminantly. We had two bombs in our area -- one on the first floor, the other next door. My husband was at a conference in America. I was alone with two kids. I remember the two children sleeping with me and hearing the shells and not knowing where they would hit."

Kafity and her family returned to Jerusalem when her husband became

Executive Secretary.

Although Jerusalem had been familiar, "it was a new environment for us; Jerusalem was occupied," Kafity explained. "Military by different power, different culture, different language. It was painful to ask for a permit to be allowed to visit Jordan or to go abroad.

"There were lots of moments when it occurred to my mind to leave. This is not the quality of life I want for myself and my children. But it is not easy to uproot

yourself. There is always this hope that things have got to change.

"The Israeli soldiers cannot be happy to do this. They probably would like to get rid of the gun and live normally. I would look the soldiers in the eye and it's as if they would be saying, 'We are as captive as you are.' You see the hearts and arrows on their guns and you know they are young people.

"I have watched those [Palestinians] who are out of prison. They are angry, angry that there is no jobs, no opportunity and people will not understand them. They are asking about just things that any human being ought to have. They keep asking, 'What have we done? We didn't cause the holocaust.'"

But even in the face of anger, unremitting arrests, home destructions and new Jewish settlements on increasingly sparse Palestinian land, Kafity says women have continued to bear children.

"During *intifada* time, lots of women bore children at the age of 40. It replaces the ones that are gone. It roots us in this land. Let's give these kids a foundation. Let them stand on a land which is their own land -- not having soldiers coming at any moment to detain them or threaten them or search their homes or go into their schools."

Recently when Kafity and her husband visited Haifa, they stopped at the home in which he had been raised, but which his parents had been forced to forfeit in 1948 when Israel was created. Samir Kafity moved out at the age of 13, suddenly a refugee. A 13-year-old Hungarian Jewish boy moved in with his family and remains there.

"There are no words to describe that the house is his [her husband's]. It's painful to have to forget that those things were ours. We must convince ourselves that that is final."

Kafity referred to the then-upcoming peace conference as a baby.

"With every birth, people ask will the child be healthy or handicapped? Will the birth bring joy and peace or will we be saddened by this baby? We are waiting -- very soon we are going to get the baby and we want to see it.

"We don't want the children to be sucked up by this dragon and go through what their parents went through. We will be supportive of this new birth and somehow there is a seriousness." **TV**

THE WITNESS

Native Spirituality/Politics

Thousands of people identify with the "New Age," or the "human potential movement," which have ushered in a renaissance of awareness about Indian spiritual practices.

While using Indian spirituality to break out of the strictures of our contemporary lifestyles is clearly beneficial, it also causes serious problems. For although the New Age gleans the ancient wisdoms and practices, it has assiduously avoided directly engaging in the actual lives and political struggles of the millions of descendants who carry these ancient traditions, of those who are still alive on the planet today, and who want to continue living in a traditional manner.

...In fact, if we ever became more personally engaged and let into our hearts and minds the full spectrum of horrors that Indian people have faced, and still face -- if we ever accepted that American corporate and military interests and surely American commodity and technological visions drive the juggernaut -- the pain of these realizations would be overwhelming.

...It is a fundamental tenet of Indian perception that the spiritual aspect of life is inseparable from the economic and the political. No Indian person could ever make the kind of split we wish to make for them. So why do we?

Jerry Mander, *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Rise of the Indian Nations*, 1991, Sierra Club Books

Confronting Stereotypes

The Rural Southern Voice for Peace in Burnsville, North Carolina is looking for people around the country to take part in their Armed Forces Listening Project.

The Project began with interviews with 36 active-duty Marines based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. They discussed topics ranging from conscientious objection, to solving international conflicts without violence,

to their own reasons for joining the military.

Volunteer Candace Powlick said, "One of the most important aspects of the project was the humanization that takes place when you talk to someone face-to-face. It was a real breakthrough in confronting stereotypes."

For more information, contact: Armed Forces Listening Project, Rural Southern Voice for Peace, 1898 Hannah Branch Rd., Burnsville, NC 28714, (704) 675-5933.

Nonviolent Activist 9/91

Jesus & Church Investments

The General Synod of the Church of England has taken the Church's commissioners to court for refusing to divest holdings in businesses with holdings in South Africa.

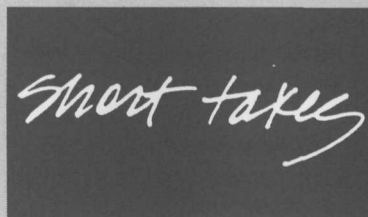
In defending the commissioners before the British High Court, attorney Robert Walker contended that Jesus' advice in the Sermon on the Mount is an example of "Christian fecklessness... all very well for those seeking personal sanctity," but neither "permissible nor admirable" in a bureaucratic situation involving stewardship of the salaries, pensions and housing of present and future generations of clergy.

The Christian Century, 10/30/91

The Rich Got Richer

Between 1980 and 1989, the combined salaries of Americans in the \$20,000-\$50,000 income group rose 44 percent. The combined salaries of people earning \$1 million or more rose 2,184 percent. The average wage of those in the under-\$20,000 income category rose just 1.4 percent.

Detroit Free Press 11/1/91



Birthing Women

Beth S. Bailey

I sit with you as you
labour
in the ancient meaning of the work.

You shift and pant
the baby's oceanic bath water dripping
moistening the air with the powerful beckonings of
the sea
smells of spring soil
odors that trail through my brain
invariably awakening vague primordial echoes of
coming to life.

You kneel, and groan deeply with gravity's pull
You squat. You pace swaying your body
swollen with child
the way a bush bows to the ground with its heavy
burden of fragrant blooms.

I perch on the birthing stool you've restlessly
abandoned
near your kneeling breathing blowing breathing
figure.

My bottom sags loose my mouth forms an O
and a deep resonant exhale involuntarily vibrates
downward
as I am rocked in the wake of these birthing currents
I suddenly long to be with you in drama, if not
patience.

To squat low
Opening our pelvises to the earth
And then to howl with labour's effort
to Roll & Rumble with the force
To sing the babies home
with that deep bass sound
of women opening their bodies to another being
like the crashing of the midnight surf like the encores
of Sweet Honey in the Rock
like the mammas of millenniums past.



Holy women don't

I am preparing to spend Christmas Day in pain. This is not some extreme aesthetic response to over-commercialization, but rather a simple acknowledgement of the laws of nature. Because, according to the doctors, 25 December is the date that I am due to give birth to my second baby.

But once you start giving it some thought, the whole question of the birth of Jesus is a fascinating one. I mean, there Mary was, alone with Joseph in this meager little stable full of animals, with no midwife, no help of any sort -- not even any hot water around. How did she do it? Did God really give her an easy ride (a true miracle), allowing her to recline on the straw muttering a few hallelujahs before the baby popped painlessly out, or was it altogether a more convincing arrival? Did she perhaps take the stoic's way out, stepping out into the night, saying she would be gone for some time, only to arrive back with a mewling, puking little bundle, the placenta neatly buried under a fig tree? Or did she simply squat in the corner amid the cow dung with her blue and white robes tucked up around her stomach, howling her pain while Joseph stood helplessly by watching and wondering?

In many circles, of course, such images are considered blasphemous. Early on, the Church plumped for the miracle version of Sarah Dunant wrote a longer version of this article for a magazine of the BBC. Artist **Judy Chicago** coordinated *The Birth Project* (See page 22). The original is in full color. **Beth Bailey** works with midwifery in Alb., NM.



credit: Judy Chicago

Feel pain? by Sarah Dunant

ents, with no mess or naked loins but instead a neat and pain-free virgin birth. Only two of the four Canonical Gospels bother to mention the actual event at all and even then it hardly gets headline treatment: "The time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son" (Luke Ch. 2, v. 6,7) followed by a swift gallop on to the shepherds, the Wise Men and general rejoicing and wonder. In contrast, the Apocryphal or Gnostic Gospels, written some time early AD, go into more detail, introducing the idea of the unbroken hymen as proof of a virgin birth. By the eighth and ninth centuries, this had been fabulated into a wonderfully vivid tale about the gossip midwife, Salome, who dared to question the miracle and approached Mary to check, but whose hand withered as soon as she came within a breath of the holy vagina. The message was clear. The birth was God's and not Mary's work, and from then on art dutifully followed orthodoxy.

In short, anything which connected the Nativity to the idea of real birth, full of blood and mess and agony, had been whitewashed out. Which, if you come to think of it, is interesting. Because in every other respect, when it comes to pain and suffering, Christianity is not exactly a squeamish religion. On the contrary, as any good Christian

will tell you, through suffering comes redemption. Martyrdom makes great copy, and in the final chapter of the death and resurrection, the agony of Christ is essential. In a million statues and Stations of the Cross, we are asked to immerse ourselves in it. The more blood, sweat and pain, the better. It is, after all, his suffering that gives life. So how about a little recognition of Mary's suffering in giving *him* life? Does that count for nothing?

Of course, I'm aware the question is naive. The exclusion of childbirth from the story of the Nativity hardly comes as any surprise. Christianity has always had trouble with the power (and especially the sexuality) of women, and to accept the suffering of Mary's labor as an act worthy of contemplation would be to make her a very powerful figure indeed. In theological terms, the Church soon formulated what it considered to be a convincing explanation for the notion of Mary's pain-free birth. Since the agony of labor was viewed as God's punishment of Eve's rebellion, so the release of Mary from such torment was seen as a mark of her exceptional obedience. (The whole association of labor and sin was later given form in the Church of England

ceremony of churching, whereby a woman who has given birth has to kneel at the church entrance to be made clean; a service that for centuries was common practice.)

And yet, this refusal to acknowledge Mary's pain is still remarkable. Because as anyone (man or woman) who has ever been

present can testify, childbirth is one of the few times -- for many of us, perhaps the only time -- in human existence when the connection between suffering and life is so meaningfully and exquisitely drawn. If there wasn't a birth at the end of it, labor would be quite literally an unbearable torture. But as it is, all the agony, all the mess, the blood and indignity are supremely worthwhile. That is

exactly what makes it a transcendental experience, one where, against all the odds, the physical gives way to the spiritual. And that is exactly why it is tragic that it should have been so assiduously expunged from the story of the Nativity.

Either way, the result was the same. Unto us a child was born. So this Christmas Eve, as you stand in the pew ready for Midnight Mass, or cram the last of the presents into the children's stockings, spare a thought for Mary, intent on God's work, in excruciating contractions and desperately trying to breathe her way over the mounting tidal waves of pain. Because, as any woman will tell you, it couldn't have been done without her.

TW

Raising children

By Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Sometimes we worry about the way we are raising our children.

Our marriage is grounded in a belief, both political and religious, that we are called to throw our weight and our voices behind those whose voices are seldom heard.

For that reason, we are both writers. For that reason, we have both spent time in jail, in war-torn countries and in Detroit.

Our five-year-old joins Detroit grand-

mothers chanting "Pack up your crack and don't come back!" She knows four houses on our block are burned out because drug dealers act crazy. She has stepped over the line twice with us when we were protesting the presence of nuclear weapons at a local air force base.

Lydia travelled in utero to Nicaragua when we joined a Witness for Peace delegation. Her presence within me pitted my motherly desire to protect her at all costs in seeming tension with the cries of the mothers we met who spoke

of the deaths of their children and husbands who had been abducted by the Contra.

Part of me wanted to run, run from their unrelenting pain. I dreamed of a place to live where we could shut out the reality of our fractured world.

Children offer us such a bittersweet relationship to life. We'd like to buy any insurance to protect them from harm, from pain, from ugly hatred. Yet even as we try to draw blinds between us and the world, attempting to lock the joy of our family within our own walls, we're suddenly in tears over a headline that announces that someone else's child is in trouble. It was only when I got pregnant that I began to cry regularly when I read



Lydia, then 3, waves goodbye to her father after he's arrested for prayerfully trespassing at Williams International, a local manufacturer of engines for nuclear missiles.

credit: Rebecca Cook

the newspaper. All that I love and the love that others hold seems so fragile.

But if being human means knowing that we are connected to one another and if joy revolves around our ability to recognize each other's pain and delight as our own, then I'd like our daughter to meet Dorothy Garner and hear her yell "Thank you, Jesus" when a crack house is dismantled by the hands of people who live nearby. I want Lydia to learn to play with the children of the Mothers of the Heroes and Martyrs, dancing out a child's hope in the face of war.

In the summer of 1990, Bill and I were invited by Stew Wood, Bishop of Michigan, to Israel and the occupied territories.

We agonized, finally deciding to leave our then 4-year-old home with her grandmother, aunt and cousins, while we took her baby sister with us to the Middle East.

The interfaith delegation we travelled with was receptive to Lucy's presence, although a few people gently asked why we'd subject a baby to the rigors of a human rights tour in a hot, arid country where pain is a staple.

We added a portable crib, diapers and dehydrated vegetables to our luggage. And in no time, Lucy won the hearts of everyone on the delegation. When a Palestinian American complained that Israel's holocaust memorial is built on land confiscated from the Palestinians and that therefore she could not visit it, Jewish members of our delegation winced with pain. The history of deep wounds and land rights, the deaths of people's family members flamed before us. Just then, Lucy would call out or pull herself up against someone's leg. She would

Photographer **Rebecca Cook** works in Detroit. Photographer **Andrew Levin** is the Midwest Coordinator of the Jewish Peace Lobby and lives in Ann Arbor, MI. **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is the editor/publisher of *The Witness*.



Lucy is held by Palestinian women in Gaza City.

credit: Andrew Levin

look to us for recognition. She was a living counterpoint to the pain and a reminder of the kind of world we seek.

Lucy was passed from lap to lap. She became a refuge for people who were either overwhelmed emotionally or too fatigued. Periodically, someone in our group would scoop Lucy up and carry her out of a meeting and onto the street where she would crow with delight at children playing or the approach of a donkey wagon.

As we struggled with justice issues and fought the parameters in our own psyches which call one people victim or oppressor, Lucy showed an equanimity that was stunning. Anyone who jingled keys or clicked their tongues spoke her language and she beamed.

When we visited refugee camps, Lucy

would shriek with joy before the van came to a stop. She would cry out to the children and they in turn would surround her, reaching out to touch her blonde hair, her hands, her face. Mothers would look at me from behind their veils; we could sense the difference in our cultures and

our lifestyles, but we also knew in our bones what it felt like to hold and nurse your child and that knowledge travelled between us like an electric shock.

We had been forewarned that people in the camps in Gaza and the West Bank were weary of westerners who come to stare at the squalor

in which they must live. But Lucy broke down that dynamic, offering the residents an eager, upturned face and hands that reached for theirs. In many ways she became a way of offering our hearts to those we visited in that disputed land.

As we struggled (in Israel/Palestine) with justice issues and fought the parameters in our own psyches which call one people victim or oppressor, Lucy showed an equanimity that was stunning.

When soldiers fired a tear gas canister at boys throwing stones, we had to flee. We had been told that tear gas could be very harmful if not lethal to a baby. Our driver threw the van into reverse and drove to the other side of the camp. We had wet washcloths ready to put over her face if she was affected by the tear gas. In our air conditioned van, she was safe. But even on the other side of the market, women shopping raised their veils over their noses to protect themselves. I found myself weeping for the concerns they must have for their children.

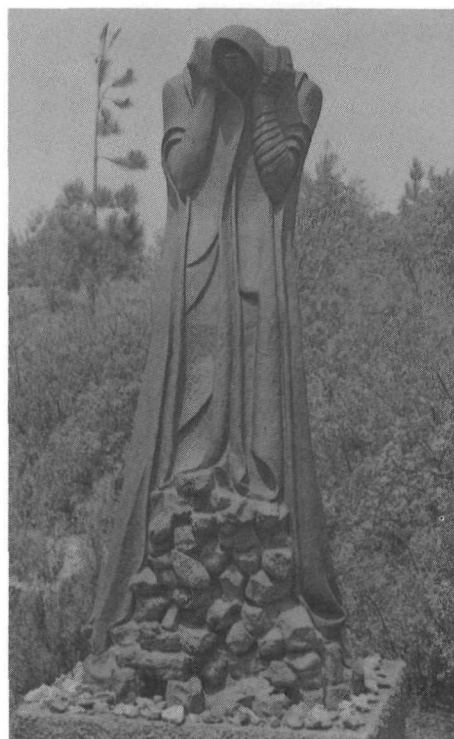
We did visit Yad Vashem, the Jewish holocaust memorial in Israel. I was awed by the silence and the space. I was disoriented in the dark, high hall lit with pinpoint lights -- one for each child killed in the concentration camps.

But when I walked through the display of children's art, I became unable to breathe. Holding Lucy against my chest, I looked at drawings of a mother dead on the floor and soldiers standing above her. I looked at a self-portrait of a young boy, mouth open screaming "Where is mommy?" And neatly, next to each drawing, is printed the date when the child artist was executed.

Staggering through the historical section of the museum and its enormous photographs of starved children and corpses piled in wagons, I felt overwhelmed with horror. I was abruptly brought back to reality when I realized an older Jewish couple was holding hands with my little daughter. "Nice child," they were saying, "How old is she?" For that one minute, Lucy offered a respite from the horror. She was a tiny bit of sanity in that hall; a tiny piece of humanity that makes us willing to work to preserve life.

Bill has a copy of a newspaper article posted in the Dachau camp. In it, the gestapo warn townspeople that a couple was caught peering over the

fence. They were made to stay the night and warned that anyone else with the same curiosity would be made a permanent resident. And yet for decades we have all wondered what difference might have been made, which lives might have been saved, had those townspeople torn down the walls brick by brick.



At the Jewish holocaust memorial in Israel, this faceless mother stands weeping over the stones commemorating her children.

I cannot promise my children prosperity. I cannot promise them health or a lifetime of privilege in a first world country. I can't even promise them that the random gunfire between cars on the freeway or in fast food restaurants won't someday touch our lives. Too many other lives have been rent with loss and unspeakable pain for me to practice denial in the face of it.

Elias Chakour, a Palestinian priest, wrote of the trauma his village suffered in 1948 when the men were arrested by Israeli soldiers and taken away. No one

knew if those taken were alive or dead. The only thing that kept the women sane, Chakour wrote, was that the children still needed food. Someone must plant and harvest and prepare food. For these little ones, whose loss did not translate into vacant stares and madness, for these little ones who still asked to eat, the mothers maintained life.

For our daughters and the children and parents of the world, we are attempting to continue planting and harvesting, writing and travelling, living and protesting in a way that offers hope.

I worry that our five-year-old knows too much about the world. I wanted to cry when I curled next to her on the floor of our bedroom where she had chosen to nap below the window, and Lydia said, "It's nice here Mommy. No one can shoot you." She carries issues of justice in her heart which are too heavy for the grownups in this world.

Yet we can offer our daughters the company of people of great courage. The Mothers of the Disappeared, the elderly Jewish couple at Yad Vashem, the mothers in Palestinian refugee camps, the grandmothers challenging Crack, a couple in Germany vigilling for peace outside the military installations which surround them, and a host of friends who have prayerfully resisted nuclear weapons and U.S. military interventions around the world.

There is in the eyes of these people a joy and a promise. They do not pretend that there is no pain. They are lifting themselves over the walls of the concentration camps of this decade and they may pay a price for that, but they are doing it in the name of freedom and they are doing it for the children.

If I cannot eradicate the pain of the world or insulate my family from it, at least I can offer them the company of people such as these. They are our best security.

TW

To My Daughter Kakuya

by Assata Shakur

i have shabby dreams for you
of some vague freedom
i have never known.

Baby,
i don't want you hungry or thirsty
or out in the cold.
And i don't want the frost
to kill your fruit
before it ripens.

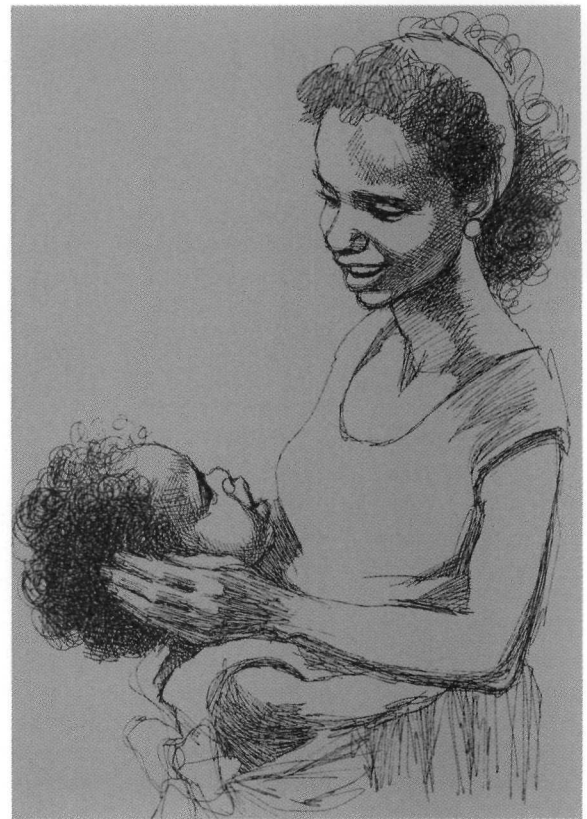
i can see a sunny place--
Life exploding green.
i can see your bright, bronze skin
at ease with all the flowers
and the centipedes.

i can hear laughter,
not grown from ridicule.
And words, not prompted
by ego or greed or jealousy.

i see a world where hatred
has been replaced by love.
and ME replaced by WE.

And i can see a world
where you,
building and exploring,
strong and fulfilled,
will understand.
and go beyond
my little shabby dreams.

Assata: An Autobiography, Lawrence & Co., Westport, CN, 1987
Assata Shakur, a Black Panther, gave birth to her child in prison.



credit: Eleanor Mills

Advent's invitation

by Penelope Duckworth

Not long ago at the Catholic Worker Infant House in Redwood City, a shelter for battered children, a small boy of about five was to be placed in a foster home. The woman who runs the house was walking him out to the car to meet his new foster parents when the boy, who had grown to feel very secure in his time at the shelter, said to her, "Will you carry me?" The woman reached down to reassure him and said she thought he was getting a little too big to be carried. The boy responded by saying, "I mean in your heart." The woman was surprised that the small child spoke so figuratively and told him that she certainly would. As he got nearer the car he said, "Will you remember to kiss me

goodnight?" This time she said she would; she would remember him each night, and she would carry him in her heart.

This story illustrates what is being asked of us this Advent.

Christ is once more coming into the world. But he does not come into a Christmas-card world of gentle beasts and hovering angels. He comes into a world as war-torn and as unjust as the one he originally entered almost 21 centuries ago.

But Christ will come because there are some courageous enough to look death in the eye and still push for new life. Like a child, Christ looks for us to help. "Will you carry me?" he asks, and

we look out and see imprinted on the world the face of a dragon that will try to devour us and any new life we may bring. But there are other powers that, in the wild logic of God, come to our aid; powers of love and hope and gentleness.

The Christ child asks us, again and again, "Will you carry me? Will you carry me in your heart? Will you carry me and remember to kiss me goodnight?" Let us respond with Mary and pray that our souls will also magnify the Lord and carry Christ, bringing him into the world in even these dark and troubled times.

Adapted from a sermon by Penelope Duckworth, Episcopal chaplain, Stanford University, CA.

Living in hard places

by Katherine Hancock Ragsdale

Past Due: A Story of Disability, Pregnancy and Birth by Anne Finger. Seal Press, Seattle, WA, March, 1990.

I like living in hard places. Well, I'm not so sure I like it: I just seem to find myself there a lot (p. 59)

Anne Finger knows something about dragons. As a woman with a physical disability, a worker in an abortion clinic, and a writer and activist, Finger has seen the dragon's faces in her own life, in the lives of other individuals, and in society at large. In *Past Due* the reader sees those faces through Finger's eyes. *Past Due* is a deeply personal chronicle of one woman's decision to bear a child in a dangerous world, of her pregnancy

plex, and cruel irony is a regular companion. One gets the feeling that in coming to terms with that reality early in her life, Finger has obtained some wisdom about the world.

At age three Finger had polio. As a child she used crutches and braces and had "surgery so many times that when someone asks me how often, I always have to count the thick caterpillar scars that crawl up my legs to figure it out" (pp. 11-12). As a teen she walked home from high-school every day, pushing herself to the edge of collapse in order to force her legs to do more. At age 29 she first read about post-polio respiratory problems and premature aging. She read that the aggressive rehabilitative techniques of a quarter century earlier may have damaged already weakened nerves, leading to a host of problems in middle age.

At the Feminist Women's Health Center, where she works on Saturdays, she regularly makes her way past protesters who harass already vulnerable clients and accuse Finger of killing babies. She checks to make sure UPS packages are expected before accepting

delivery, hoping to screen out bombs sent by "right-to-lifers" (read: domestic terrorists). She helps the teenager who showed up late (apparently because she was caring for a house full of siblings) and the woman who is only pretending

to get an abortion she doesn't want but her boyfriend is trying to force her to have.

Every day at the clinic I confronted what it meant to have some control over our wombs and less control over our social circumstances. You can decide to no longer be pregnant... but you can't decide not to be poor anymore, or to have support so you can finish school, or to have a partner who wants to raise a child with you. (p. 55)

And she remembers, and is reminded, how much worse it used to be and could be again.

When encountering big dragons face-to-face human instinct is not so different from puppy instinct; roll over -- belly up, neck exposed -- and hope, by surrendering, to be allowed to live. Finger has seen that instinct in action, too:

A few women told me, when it was over, that they understood how the "right to life" felt, or that abortion shouldn't be legal. (Save me from my power, save me from control over my life. Give me a father-state to tell me what I must do and can't do. Give me answers cast in stone.) (p. 52)

Finger, however, refuses to surrender her power to the state, to the medical

"I wasn't born disabled but had polio when I was three years old. I believe very strongly that we have to protect the lives of disabled infants. [Yet] when I was a child in the hospital I was subjected to things that were inhumane . . ."

Barbara says, "If you had been my child, I would have killed you before I let that happen . . ."

My heart stops. (p. 33)

book review

and her dreams, of a difficult birth and her child's precarious start in life. Precisely because it is so personal it is also profoundly political. Finger refuses to accept easy outs -- consequently, her readers are required to search for something more than easy answers.

In this book the answers are never easy, the problems never less than com-

Katherine Ragsdale is the advocacy coordinator in the Women in Mission and Ministry Office at the Episcopal Church Center and vice president of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights.

establishment, to her own disability, or to politically correct, but not adequately thought out, answers. As she allows us to see what that refusal to surrender means in her own life, we are forcefully reminded how much is at stake for us all.

Perhaps the most daunting aspect of each of the issues raised in this book, the thing that most feeds the temptation to roll over and whimper for easy answers, is the complexity of the questions.

Thinking about reproductive technology is hard for feminists... If we believe in the right of women not to have children, then do we have to support the right of women to have children?... What about the fact that the unequal distribution of resources within our society often means that middle-class women will have sophisticated medical techniques available to them, while poor women will struggle to get basic medical care? Can we get access to these technologies without increasing medical domination over women's bodies? (p. 44)

And what about choosing not to have a child because it would be born disabled? Especially if you're disabled yourself. Which disabilities are too much to cope with? Have you sufficient humility to allow another to draw her line elsewhere?

Thinking about health care is hard, too. The medical establishment is often (even usually) arrogant and unresponsive, seeing patients as diseases to cure or injuries to fix rather than as people to care for. Unnecessary surgery is the norm, especially for women, e.g. hysterectomies and Caesareans. Yet Finger, who

has more reason than most to distrust doctors and medical technology, finds that she doesn't really believe what her body has told her -- that she is pregnant -- until a medical laboratory confirms it. Thinking about having a baby is hard.



credit: Betty LaDuke

If she really believes what she says about the value of disabled persons' lives, why does she want so badly to have a "perfect" baby? And what about the effects of the pregnancy on her?

Being post-polio and pregnant was somewhat like dealing with the discomforts of pregnancy and the discomforts of old age at the same time. This must be how the biblical Sarah felt, pregnant at ninety with Isaac. (p. 81)

Making the hard decisions doesn't necessarily remove the dragons. After a long and difficult labor, Finger's plans for a midwife assisted home birth are abandoned and she is rushed to the hospital where her large (and late) son is delivered in critical condition with the

threat of brain damage and subsequent disability. The tempting surrender to easy answers now involves blame. Is the possible brain damage due to the way the doctors handled the delivery after she arrived in the hospital? Or is it because the midwife missed her cues and waited until too late to move them to the hospital? Or perhaps it's Finger's fault for trying a home delivery in the first place.

There are no easy answers here. No easy outs in making decisions or assigning blame. There is solidarity in the struggle, acceptance of ambiguity and uncertainty, and reaffirmation of the need for vigilant and thoughtful participation in the political life of our communities. There is also courage, resolve, and humor in the face of dragons.

Past Due is a good read. It made me laugh often.

We have to be trained in CPR, so we can resuscitate Max if he stops breathing. They can't find the English version of the CPR videotape, so they show us the Spanish one, even though neither of us knows Spanish. If Max's alarm goes off we are to shout Ayuda! Ayuda!

It made me cry often.

[As a child] I had five more operations. I didn't walk any better after all of them than I had before. Yet the surgeon had done a "beautiful job" I heard often... He used seven clumsy stitches to suture up a five inch long incision... It was as if he wrote on my body: 'Ugly. Piece of junk. Ruined. Doesn't matter.' (p. 68)

But most of all, it made me think -- always.

TW

Judy Chicago: birthing art

by Blaise Tobia & Virginia Maksymowicz

Judy Chicago's approach to art challenges conventional notions not just of the artwork, but of the artist as well. Rather than working alone, in isolation from society, and cultivating an identity as a "genius" or an "eccentric," she is very much part of the world and prides herself on her ability to organize hundreds of women to collaborate on monumental art installations about issues that affect their lives. She sees the artist as someone who can

work within a community to help that community give powerful expression to its vital beliefs and concerns.

Chicago's first large-scale project, *The Dinner Party*, completed in the late 1970s, required the assistance of a large group of women in many capacities, including researchers, expert ceramists, embroiderers, and others. Its scale (39 large ceramic plates and embroidered place settings on a massive triangular table) and boldness in seeking to symbolize the enormous contribution of women to our civilization drew a great amount of attention. *The Dinner Party* still evokes a mixture of responses from admiration to outright disdain for its blatantly female imagery.

Even more controversial has been Chicago's second large-scale work, *The*

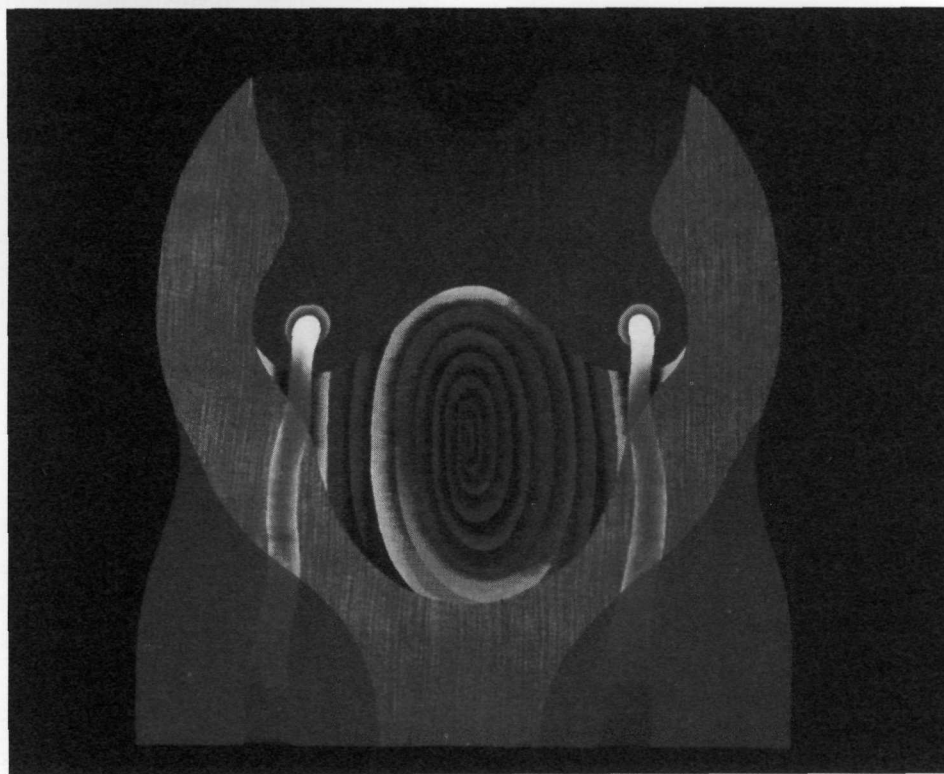
Birth Project, a series of approximately 100 needlework images about childbirth created by over 150 women from the United States, Canada and New Zealand. While Western art has a healthy share of madonna-and-child images, there have been virtually no representations of birth itself. By her design of an artwork that describes not only the joy of childbirth, but also its violence, its pain, and the conflicting emotions the process can engender, she hopes to challenge the prevailing creation myths that led to such an omission. "The idea that a male god created man is such a reversal of the reality of how life comes forth!" she said in an interview with the *New York Times*.

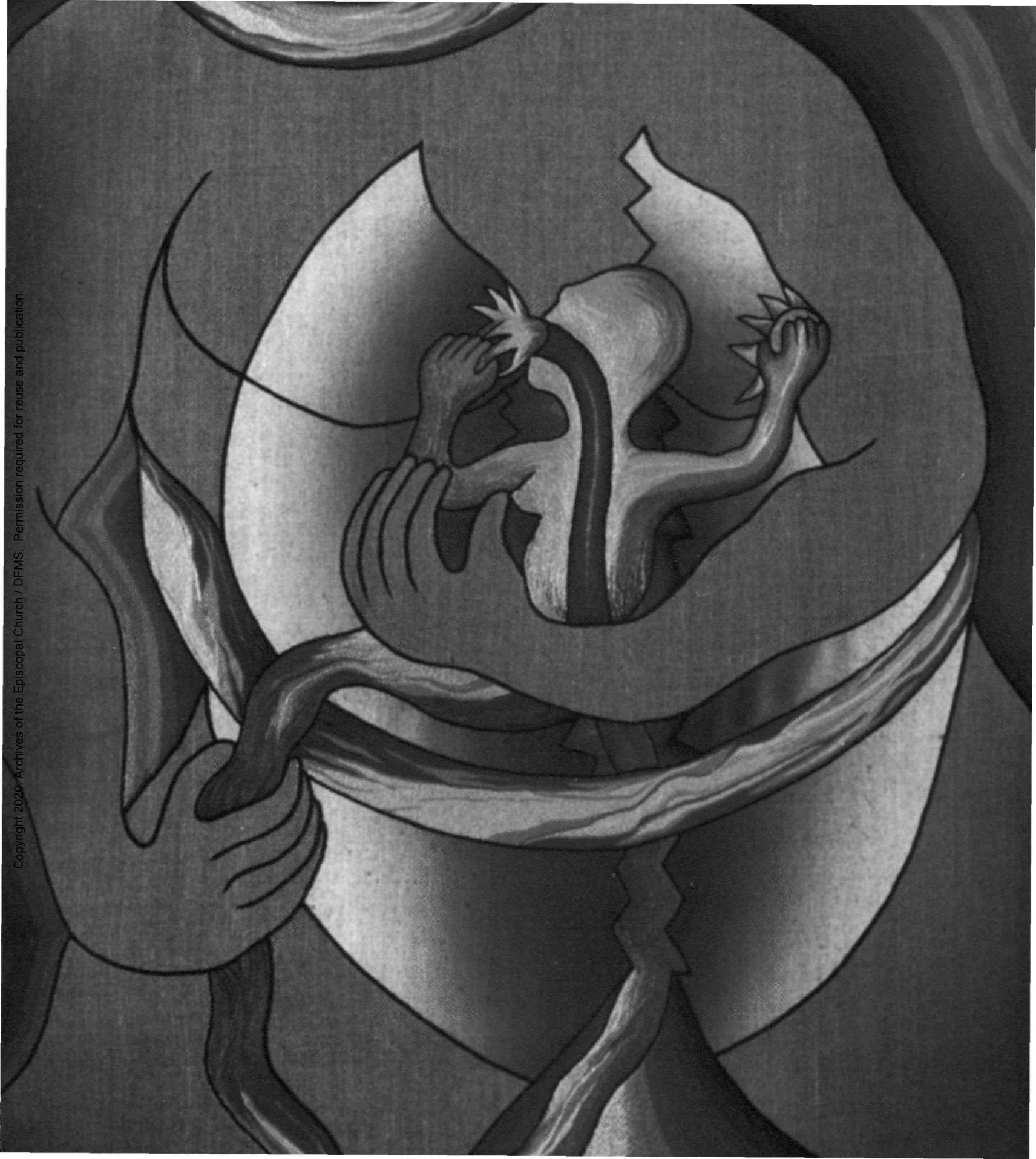
Men are often put off by the graphic images that Chicago and her co-workers have created. The husband of one needleworker called it pornography. But many of the women who see *The Birth Project* are impressed with its beauty and its pain, and, more importantly, with the essential truth of its imagery. The women who donated their time and their skills (not always without conflict -- artistic collaboration, with its clashes of vision, can be a tough process) appreciate the way in which their traditional "women's" crafts, like needlework, can be made to function as a powerful form of communication.

Judy Chicago's next exhibit is scheduled to open at the Spertus Museum in Chicago, Illinois in 1993. Called the *Holocaust Project*, it is another grand installation combining tapestry, stained glass, painting and photography, designed in conjunction with her husband, photographer Donald Woodman. Chicago and Woodman hope to extend the concept of the Jewish holocaust to include a consideration of all those who have been victimized by historic events.

More information about Judy Chicago's work can be obtained by contacting the Through the Flower Foundation, P.O. Box 8138, Santa Fe, NM, 87504.

art and society





Mother and child team

Mariana Beecher was four-years-old when she and her mother were arrested by the Salvadoran military. Her mother, Josie, was working for Venture in Mission, serving an Episcopal parish in San Salvador. They still live in El Salvador, although Josie Beecher now works for the Lutherans because the Episcopal Church considered the work too dangerous for a mother and child.

"I'd do everything possible to keep my child safe," Beecher said. "But because she's important to me, I want her to understand about the issues of justice that are so fundamental. I don't want to send her off to boarding school so that she doesn't see anything ugly or unpleasant. I want her to see the beauty and things that can go wrong."

"I had expected her to say something about sin and she did although she never mentioned the word," Beecher said.

Mariana said something about sin when she was a four-year-old under arrest too. When the soldiers attempted to segregate the Beechers from five of their

just weathered a military attack.

"I debated whether to take Mariana with me. But she had always gone with me and the people there loved her. She would come into the camp and have 100 little kids running after her. I knew that if I came without Mariana the people in the camp would know that I was scared. On the other hand, I was real nervous about bringing my kid into that situation. I ultimately decided to take her because we're kind of a team.

"As I drove in, they were saying mass and a refugee was reading the story of Abraham and Isaac. The point to me was that God asks us for everything, for that which is most dear to us. If we give completely and trust completely then we're going to be okay. That lesson has come back to me over and over again. I'm not whole without my daughter, so if I'm there to be God's servant and to witness to my faith then it has to be the whole of me."

Mariana and Josie Beecher spent six months in the U.S. in 1990, recovering from Josie Beecher's second arrest during which her life was threatened and she was accused of aiding the popular resistance to the U.S.-supported government in



Josie and Mariana Beecher during their recent visit to the U.S. "I want her to see the beauty and the things that can go wrong," Josie Beecher says.

Salvadoran neighbors, "Mariana started screaming, 'You can't separate me from my friends,'" Beecher says. Later when the soldiers were interrogating one of the mothers and yelling at her, "Mariana climbed up on Martha's lap and they stopped. That came about because she loved and cared about those people too," Beecher said.

It has not been easy deciding how best to live with her daughter and her faith.

Beecher says when she was first in El Salvador she was asked to relieve Church workers helping a community that had

El Salvador.

(On that occasion, since Beecher was able to anticipate the arrest -- it followed on the heels of the murder of the Jesuits -- Mariana was safely housed with the Baptists.)

When Josie Beecher decided to return to El Salvador, the Episcopal Church refused to send her back.

"They were very concerned about my daughter and about me," Beecher explained. But feeling a calling from God to return, she did so under the auspices of the Lutherans. She now works for the

*Witnesses,
the quick and the dead*

Mariana, now 7, attends a Roman Catholic school for Salvadoran kids in San Salvador. She's completely bilingual. Last Ash Wednesday, Josie Beecher wondered what her daughter would be taught about sin.

Mariana came home with a cross on her forehead and explained to her mother that it is wrong that people don't have houses and don't have enough to eat. Mariana added that we have to work so that will change.

Josie Beecher participated in a phone interview with **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** (editor/publisher of *The Witness*) while in the Diocese of Washington this Fall.

Christian Committee for the Displaced.

Josie Beecher says her work with Mendaro Gomez, the Lutheran bishop in El Salvador, is deepened by the fact that she is a parent. He also has children and weighs their safety against his commitment.

"He has five kids and he is somebody that is under constant surveillance and death threats. He's in many ways the successor to Archbishop Romero. One of the reasons he and I have come to be close is that we both have children. We worry about the consequences of the decisions that we make.

"The people I work with are generally women with kids. It's back to that story of Abraham and Isaac. I couldn't do my work at my best if I didn't have my child there. I couldn't be the best possible mother if I weren't doing the work that's so important to me."

Josie Beecher, who grew up in Seattle, was raised an Episcopalian and remains one, she says, despite the fact that she attended an Episcopal boarding school in La Jolla, California. She adds that her bishop, Ronald Haines, in the Diocese of Olympia, continues to be extremely supportive.

Mariana Beecher was adopted by Josie Beecher five years ago in Guatemala. Her birth mother was a Salvadoran refugee who delivered her in a refugee camp.

Asked whether women in El Salvador ever try to avoid birth because conditions are too awful, Beecher said, "No. I've listened to so many stories of women, on the move from the military, dropping out of the line to give birth and joining back at the end of the line to keep moving. They tell those stories over and over again because it is a story for life. It is such a constant battle against death -- be it starvation or bombings. Death is so present that women there are constantly exercising forcefully that option for life."

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And at night we win to the ancient inn
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At the inn at the end of the world.

The gods lie dead where the leaves lie red,
for the flame of the sun is flown,
The gods lie cold where the leaves lie gold,
And a child comes forth alone.

G.K. Chesterton
A Child of the Snows
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Merry Christmas from *The Witness* staff!



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