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# THE WITNESS



New  
Peacewatch:  
H-Bomb Truck  
Vigils • Sam Day

The Children of War • Susan Pierce  
Seminarians Visit Nicaragua • Anne Gilson

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# Letters

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## Pastoral issue lauded

Congratulations on the November issue of THE WITNESS. I particularly appreciated the open, accepting, hopeful tone of the editorial, "Pastoral on economy signal event." I trust that, with the release of the first draft of the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the American Economy, several questions have been answered.

I was pleased to read the interview between Archbishop Rembert Weakland and Bishop John Burt, entitled "Policy suggestions will jar." I was impressed with the "give and take" of the interview, an instance of two leaders of our churches conducting a discussion with mutual respect for each other, weighing the pros and cons, honestly striving to understand each other.

Despite the ill-chosen title of Manning Marable's commentary, I appreciated his remark that the bishops' pastoral "should have a profound impact on the nation and the world." I agree — but only on those who read it with an open mind and a realization of the task of implementing it when it has been perfected. Dr. Marable's knowledge of the various papal and episcopal writings on social justice was gratifying. Would that all American citizens were aware of the church's social teaching! I was positively thrilled to find that Richard W. Gillett was so knowledgeable of Pope John Paul II's encyclical, *Laborem Exercens*, which he mentioned in his fine article, "Revolution in the workplace."

I deliberately pass over Sheila Collins' article, apparently written with "tongue in cheek" or with "pen dipped in acid." I can only hope that, after reading the pastoral letter — "long overdue" — she will experience some chagrin that she failed to "see the face of Christ and the gifts of ministry" in the bishops who seem to have more compassion for the poor than she gives them credit for. I

recommend that she take to heart some of the excellent points made by James Lewis in "On being authentic."

Thank you for a thought-provoking issue. May God bless you in the New Year with peace, good health and many new subscriptions!

**A. Prendergast  
Adrian, Mich.**

## Cites Talmudic lesson

In their pastoral letter on the American economy (November WITNESS) the Catholic bishops are teaching our business schools the lesson of the Talmud:

Even when competing against your fellow man in the race for pelf and power, you still are your brother's keeper.

**Hyman Olken  
Livermore, Cal.**

## Confuses two issues

Canon John C. Fowler unfortunately confuses two issues in one letter ("Fed up with women," November WITNESS). After establishing his "ethos" by listing innumerable liberal causes in which he has participated, the author devalues female ordination as an important church issue. "Whether or not" he writes, "women ought to be ordained to the priesthood is no longer important, if it ever was." One is reminded of an old slogan: "Are liberal men liberal about women?"

Odd that the Rev. Fowler can determine important causes (Blacks, Chicanos) and unimportant causes (women's rights in the church). Similarly many 19th century abolitionists believed that Black men should be permitted the vote — but not women. "Equal rights" means equal for all. Equal opportunity means permission to compete for leadership — even if "underpaid." Who can tell how many girls and young women have been inspired by female priests, ministers and rabbis to become fully functioning human beings.

But then, in his last paragraph, the Rev. Fowler inserts his second theme. "If I . . . read one more story of a . . . discontented woman, fearful of her empty life . . ." Unfortunately, male clergy, too, may be overaged, divorced, discontented. Motivation is a legitimate test of employment in the church. Gender is not!

**Fred M. Amram  
Philadelphia, Pa.**

## In turkey leftovers

The day after Thanksgiving, a group of Episcopal men and women met in Cambridge to plan our next act of resistance to U.S. policy in the Caribbean and Central America. In our understanding that effective activism is grounded in ongoing dialogue and analysis among committed, well-informed folks, we gathered to discuss the connections between various structures of oppression in our world/church: eg, white supremacy, economic injustice, male gender superiority, homophobia, U.S. imperialism, discrimination against the elderly.

While we learned much from sharing and examining our various experiences in the civil rights movement, Vietnam War resistance, feminist and gay/lesbian work, women's ordination efforts, pro-choice politics, nuclear disarmament activities, anti-Klan organizing, and work with prisoners, *nothing* we shared was as helpful to our realization of the particularity of *women's* oppression as that most astonishingly candid letter by the Rev. Canon John C. Fowler of Tucson, which appeared among our turkey sandwiches.

Fowler's powerful words testify to the extent to which woman-hating is alive and kicking in the Episcopal Church. We appreciate this man's remarkably self-revelatory document, which we will cite frequently and circulate widely in the U.S., Canada, Nicaragua, Cuba, Argentina, Zimbabwe, Kenya, West Germany, New Zealand, England, Ireland,

and Australia. We shall be passing Mr. Fowler's letter around as the best example we have yet seen of how a *liberal* Christian man's spirituality and politics can be rooted in a misogyny so ugly it screams.

**Ms. Anne E. Gilson**

**The Rev. I. Carter Heyward**

**The Rev. Sydney Howell**

**The Rev. W. Early Thompson, Jr.**

## Hierarchy of suffering?

The Rev. Canon John C. Fowler, who is "fed up with women" (November letters), can be an activist in a dozen different worthy causes every week, but until he sees Christ in every human being — including "overage, divorced women" — his ministry will be an empty gesture.

As far as the issue of full personhood and equality of opportunity for women being "pale, whimsical and silly" beside the "real moral questions," I didn't know there was a hierarchy of suffering. Sexism is as much a social evil as racism, hunger, poverty and the threat of nuclear war.

Canon Fowler is typical of the clergyman who talks out of both sides of his mouth about human rights. His words drip with hatred and contempt for women. His name is legion.

**Sally S. Bulmon  
Dowagiac, Mich.**

## Prays daily for canon

My first reaction to the letter from Canon John C. Fowler was sheer fury! Fortunately, the daily lectionary readings for this week included selections from the Epistle of James — "Each of you must be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to be angry. For anger cannot promote the justice of God." So I put the magazine down for a few days and tried to understand Mr. Fowler's perspective.

My conclusion: His letter represents the epitome of the female/male problems

in the church and in society. It is impossible for the White male to empathize with the powerlessness of the female of any color. For the White male, power and authority are a right. As long as we support this concept, men will have difficulty understanding the struggle of women to attain, not necessarily power, but acceptance and respect; and the same authority which has been given to them as to men by God.

Mr. Fowler enumerates his "humble" accomplishments in 35 years of social action in the Episcopal Church. Apparently, he was at the front of these causes and failed to notice all the women behind him. My sense is that at the base of his letter is his own feeling of discontent, fear, inadequacy and non-recognition. I shall pray for you daily, dear brother in Christ.

**Judy Yeakel  
Langley, Wash.**

## 'Flaws weaken article'

The useful article by Patricia Wilson-Kastner and Beatrice Blair on abortion which appeared in the October WITNESS contained some flaws which weakened the authors' statement of their position.

In defining the biblical concept of person, the authors did not consider passages which speak of God's agency with the fetus, such as *Jer. 1:5* or *Ps. 139:13*. These are interpreted by some to underscore fetal personhood.

Brain-damaged or insane people who do not have the ability to make choices would seem to be "non-persons" according to the authors' biblical criteria.

The authors' concept of person is indistinguishable from the concept of person developed by the Supreme Court in all its abortion rulings. The Court's concept of person Paul Ramsey describes in *Ethics on the Edges of Life* as "atomistic individualism," deriving from Rousseau's

*Contrat social*. The Court has ruled accordingly that marriage, family, parenthood can have no bearing at all upon the woman's choice. The authors clearly do not accept this: "All finite reality exists as part of a complex interrelated whole which is ultimately related to God. All moral decisions must be made in this context." This seems self-contradictory.

Because a zygote is not an adult does not mean that it is not human and a potential person, unless it is not a human zygote. The authors hurt their case with the examples of cloning and cancer cells. Women (and men too, by the way) grieve over miscarriages and abortions over who could have been. To trivialize the humanity of the fetus is to trivialize this grief.

The section titled "Pastoral issues" was particularly good. It struck me as an especially cogent summary of Anglican moral theology in general, as well as in relation to the specific question.

**Pierre Whalon  
Temple Hills, Md.**

## Authors respond

The thoughtful letter of Pierre Whalon raises complex issues and points to some of the difficulties in treating questions of the definition of person and the ways one uses Scripture to illumine contemporary problems. We hope to address some of the substantive points raised in forthcoming articles. Let us respond briefly now to specific questions:

1. Use of the Jeremiah or Psalm references (or others like it) is difficult, because these texts are poetic, speaking of the profundity of God's care for the individual, not addressing the specific questions of fetal personhood and when the human comes to be. We tried to use material with clear legal and ethical overtones. Complex interpretation of

*Continued on page 23*

*Ash Wednesday, Feb. 20, marks the beginning of Lent – the season during which we reflect on the death of the Savior. The following story is presented as our guest editorial in the spirit of the season and in recognition that 1985 marks the end of the UN Decade for Women. We are grateful to the author and to Daughters of Sarah magazine for allowing us to reprint.*

## What child is this? by Mary Jo Cartledge-Hayes

When the angel Gabriel came to Mary, she quailed at sight of him. "Be not afraid," spoke the angel. "I am come from the Lord to deliver great tidings. Unto you will be born a child to bring light into the darkness. Generations will rise up and call your babe blessed; its name will live forevermore."

Mary was greatly troubled but placed her faith in the Lord. She and the angel spoke at length and then retired, the one to return to God, the other to find Joseph, her affianced.

Joseph heard the story told by Mary and was filled with wonder. He, a poor man, to share in the miracle of the birth of a savior . . . With firm steps, he led Mary to the house of her parents.

"The Lord has spoken. Mary carries a child who will bring peace on earth."

The wedding feast was held with much rejoicing.

At length the time came for Mary to be delivered. She and Joseph journeyed to Bethlehem and found shelter there. In the night sky appeared a wondrous star, leading shepherds and wise men to the stable where the baby lay.

The first shepherd looked into the face of Joseph and was sorely afraid.

"What child is this whose birth causes

the angels to proclaim from on high?"

Joseph spat upon the ground; a great trembling wracked his shoulders.

"Is this not Mary, your wife, gone to childbed? Does not the light of the world wait here, in the manger, for us?"

Joseph spat once more and dragged a hand through the beard upon his face.

"No child of mine lies here," spoke he, "nor wife of mine." He strode forth and disappeared into the night.

The shepherds and wise men came together, asking, "What manner of man is this, who can leave his wife, who can turn his back on the Lord and on our salvation?"

Greatly troubled, they approached Mary. Her face was still damp from childbirth; her eyes shone with the radiance of God's love.

The babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lay close at hand in a manger. Wise men and shepherds knelt in adoration. They placed gifts before the holy child. At last one wise man rose and offered his hand in thanksgiving to the mother. "Verily, I say unto you, this is the Son of God. Praise to him, and to you, who have entered into this miracle."

Mary brushed a tendril from her forehead with a weary hand and smiled. "All praise to God . . . but my child is not

the son of God."

Consternation flew across their faces like clouds before the moon. "But the angel on high spoke to the shepherds; the star has led us here to you. Doubt you, woman, the messages of your God?"

"I doubt not," spoke Mary. "God is here with us, incarnate, but my child is not the son of God. She is the daughter of God, sent to cleanse us of our sins and lead us to the life everlasting."

In silence, the men withdrew to consider these words. Then they gathered their entourages and rode into the night, their mouths sealed against this blasphemy. The final shepherd to leave, with many a cautious glance over his shoulder, hurled a torch into the stable. The straw, long dry, kindled quickly.

The blazing star hung low over the stable; flames rose to embrace it. The beacon shone long into the night.

Then the world sank into darkness . . .

After many generations, God, in great wisdom, sent another child to the weary earth. This one's name would be Jesus. He at least, would be permitted to speak.

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**Mary Jo Cartledge-Hayes** of Spartanburg, S.C., "grew up Episcopalian," but is now a member of Trinity United Methodist Church. This short story evolved from research she did for a Sunday School class on women in the church.



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# THE WITNESS



## Table of Contents

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Identifying H-bomb trucks</b><br>Samuel H. Day, Jr.               |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Africa, Black America connect on apartheid</b><br>Manning Marable |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Children of war call for peace</b><br>Susan Pierce                |
| <b>17</b> | <b>Lessons learned in Nicaragua</b><br>Anne Gilson                   |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Church resolution hits U.S. aggression</b>                        |

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Nonviolent peace activists  
have taken up truck-vigiling as a way  
of raising public consciousness  
about the arms race.

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# Identifying H-bomb trucks

by Samuel H. Day, Jr.

**T**he United States Department of Energy is justly proud of the care it takes to protect nuclear bombs and warheads from theft or sabotage while transporting them on the nation's highways.

The custom-built truck-and-trailer rigs that carry this deadly cargo are like mobile bank vaults. The trucks are armored and fitted with bullet-proof glass. The thick-walled steel trailers are booby-trapped with a variety of substances — foam, gas, explosives — to repel the most persistent intruder.

The trucks travel in convoys driven by an elite force of couriers trained to protect the shipments at all costs. The couriers are armed with pistols, shotguns, automatic rifles and grenade launchers. A high frequency radio network links them with a communications bunker that can summon tanks and helicopters if needed. Such protective measures are admirably designed to deter "terrorists." So formidable are they that no assault has even been attempted since the present H-bomb transportation system emerged from a hodge-podge of private carriers in the early 1970s.

But in recent months the Department of Energy has begun to discover that

neither the armaments nor the secrecy that shield its H-bomb highway convoys are protection against a different kind of challenge. The new challenge comes not from thieves or saboteurs or political desperadoes, but from nonviolent peace activists who have taken up truck-vigiling as a way of raising public consciousness about the nuclear arms race — and thereby pricking America's conscience about her deep and mindless involvement in the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction.

Truck-vigiling is the art of identifying unmarked H-bomb trucks and their escort vehicles on the highway and then tracking them from city to city so that peace groups can make the passage of the weapons convoys known to the general public. The purpose is to bring people face to face with — and make them think about — the H-bomb as it passes schools, churches, public buildings, parks, playgrounds, and other familiar places.

The technique was first practiced last August at the Pantex nuclear weapons plant near Amarillo, Tex. For eight days a team of volunteer observers took up roadside positions outside the plant, which assembles nuclear weapons and ships them to military depots all over the country. When H-bomb trucks emerged, the observers gave chase in their automobiles, only to be stopped by state police squad cars summoned by the convoy commanders. So the observers hit on

the idea of telephoning ahead when convoys were sighted. In that way, cooperating peace groups tracked outbound H-bomb convoys through Oklahoma City and Denver.

A more ambitious truck vigil took place four months later at Oak Ridge, Tenn., site of the Y-12 plant, which manufactures uranium components and other parts for nuclear warheads. While volunteer observers staked out the Y-12 plant for seven days in mid-December, peace groups stood by in more than a dozen communities along the westerly routes to Pantex and to the Rocky Flats plutonium trigger factory near Denver.

The Oak Ridge stake-out came to a head on the afternoon of Dec. 17, when an observer spotted a six-vehicle H-bomb convoy speeding out a back gate of the Y-12 complex. He pursued the convoy to the nearest freeway and then placed a call that set the bells ringing on a cross-country telephone tree.

On the eastern outskirts of Nashville three hours later an observer from that city's peace community fell in behind the H-bomb convoy, followed it through town, then flashed the word to Memphis. At Memphis in mid-evening several carloads of peace activists followed the convoy through the city and across the Mississippi River into Arkansas. At Little Rock more vigilers braved a driving rainstorm to watch the convoy pass

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**Samuel H. Day, Jr.**, is a consultant to *THE WITNESS*, a contributing editor of *The Progressive*, and an associate of Nukewatch, a public interest group based in Madison, Wisc.

# A Truckwatcher's Guide

**T**his U.S. Department of Energy photograph shows a tractor-drawn "safe secure trailer" of the kind used to transport nuclear bombs and warheads and their parts and ingredients. Here's what to look for:

¶ Unmarked, unpainted steel sides on the trailer.

¶ Unusual square-rigged radio antenna on top of the tractor cab, with a wind-break behind the antenna.

¶ Parallel stripes on the cab, sometimes straight and sometimes Z-shaped.

¶ U.S. Government license plates on front and back, beginning with the letter E (for Department of Energy).

¶ On the rear of the trailer, a panel of black and white diagonal lines covering the lower one-third. Above them, a small sign stating, "This vehicle stops at all railroad crossings." Along the top of the rear, the letters AM TA FA.

When carrying strategic cargo, the safe-secure trailers are escorted by one or more courier cars, usually Chevrolet Suburbans. The escort vehicles have up to three radio antennas, the most prom-



inent of which, at the left rear of the automobile, is attached to a small white box.

If you should see a convoy, make note of the time, place, traveling direction,

and any identifying characteristics. As soon as possible, telephone Nukewatch, (608) 256-4146. Or write Nukewatch, 315 West Gorham, Madison, WI 53703.

—S.H.D. JR.

through after midnight. At Oklahoma City the next morning the H-bomb trucks acquired an additional escort — an entourage of automobiles bearing signs with such messages as "No bombs in Oklahoma."

The Oklahoma City encounter, widely publicized by local reporters who joined vigilers at the freeway's edge, was America's first public demonstration focusing on the highway transportation of nuclear weapons. It followed weeks of careful preparation by Oklahoma City's Benedictine Peace House, which cooperated every step of the way with the Oklahoma state police.

Nonviolence in thought and deed and openness in dealing with H-bomb workers and law enforcement officers are hallmarks of the trucks campaign, which draws much of its inspiration from a similar campaign, begun two years ago, to focus attention on the Department of

Energy train that carries nuclear warheads from Pantex to Navy submarine bases in Washington and South Carolina. (See "Death Train Challenge: Litany of Love or Holocaust?" by Jim Douglass in the July 1983 issue of THE WITNESS.)

"Remember that the H-bomb trucks are merely a symptom of the problem posed by the nuclear arms race," says a brochure distributed to truck vigilers by Nukewatch, the Wisconsin-based non-profit organization which sponsored the Pantex and Oak Ridge vigils. "We cannot stop the arms race by stopping trucks. Let the trucks serve instead as a way of galvanizing our determination — and the determination of our friends and neighbors — to do away with production of weapons of mass destruction and to work for a nonviolent social order."

The "death train" campaign draws an analogy between the trains that carried

millions of victims to the death camps of Nazi Germany and those that carry the prospect of nuclear death to millions in today's world. Then, as now, witnesses to the holocaust looked the other way. Truck vigilers, too, want to break the public silence that shields the weapons shipments.

"The more people know about this country's weapons program, the less they can deny responsibility for it," says Nathaniel Batchelder of the Benedictine Peace House in Oklahoma City.

Since the unmarked H-bomb trucks blend in with other 18-wheelers on the interstate highways and their civilian crews are indistinguishable from other drivers, truck vigilers must first learn how to spot their quarry. Nukewatch helps them by distributing official Department of Energy photographs of the trucks (called "safe secure transports") and pointing out their identifying charac-

teristics (a square shaped radio antenna that looks like a luggage rack atop the truck cab, diagonal black and white stripes on the back of the trailer).

Having learned what to look for, the next step is to learn where to look. The H-bomb trucks pick up and deliver at more than 100 factories and military depots around the country, but the heaviest concentrations are at a few key installations: Pantex, Oak Ridge, Rocky Flats, and plutonium production centers at Hanford, Wash., and Aiken, S.C. By staking out such places, observers can be sure of finding H-bomb trucks sooner or later.

The Pantex stake-out included half a dozen nuns and novices from Amarillo's Franciscan Sisters of Mary Immaculate, headed by their mother superior, Sister Bernice Nogger — all inspired by the example of Amarillo's Catholic bishop, Leroy T. Matthiesen, a leading critic of the U.S. nuclear weapons program.

At Oak Ridge the stake-out participants came mainly from the Knoxville peace community, some of whom conduct a monthly vigil at the entrance to the Y-12 plant. Active support also came from several families in Oak Ridge itself, a former Atomic Energy Commission "company town" not noted for questioning governmental nuclear policies.

The staking out of a nuclear plant goes hand in hand with the organizing of a network of peace activists whose function it is to keep track of H-bomb convoys and set up vigils and demonstrations along the way.

From Pantex the networks stretched only as far as Oklahoma City and Denver. But from Oak Ridge they extended southwest through Nashville, Memphis, Little Rock, and Oklahoma City to Pantex, and northwest through a dozen communities in Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, and Colorado to Rocky Flats. These groups included a pot-pourri of religious and secular peace organizations, Central America activists, and purveyors of vari-

ous domestic progressive causes. In Kansas and Colorado most were veterans of the nuclear "death train" vigil.

As one who has worked on various peace causes over the years, I have found the H-bomb truck campaign to be especially promising in several respects:

1. It helps demystify the nuclear arms race. Truck-watching brings you face to face with the H-bomb program and the people who run it. Seeing an H-bomb truck or an H-bomb factory close up can dispel your fear of the unknown and at the same time strengthen your commitment to resist.

### Truck-vigiling legal

**Is it legal to look for, follow, and relay information about trucks carrying nuclear bombs and warheads and their components? The U.S. Department of Energy says yes.**

**"We don't like having our vehicles targeted like that," spokesman Ben McCarty of the department's Albuquerque Operations Office commented in December after Nukewatch vigilers tracked H-bomb trucks from Tennessee to Texas. "But we respect their rights under the Constitution to protest."**

2. At the same time, truck-watching can also dissolve stereotypes and break down barriers. At Pantex, and particularly at Oak Ridge, the truck watchers developed friendly working relationships with local police and security guards. The contacts help focus the concerns of the peace activists where they really belong: on the policies themselves rather than the people who carry them out.

3. By its very nature, truck watching requires interpersonal and intergroup cooperation. Whether you're keeping a 'round the clock watch on all five exits of an H-bomb factory or hurrying to a freeway embankment in advance of an approaching convoy, it just won't work

unless everyone pulls together. Arcane organizational and ideological squabbles seem to melt in the cooperative, mutually supportive spirit required for successful truck watching.

4. Truck watching is often crowned with *success* — a commodity not overly abundant in the peace movement. The system really seems to work. It offers a way for a relatively small number of dedicated people, with very little budget and even less technology, relying only on their wits and their stamina, to take on the superagency of a superpower — and sometimes win.

5. Beyond that, truck watching offers a direct means of bringing home to our friends and neighbors the reality of the Bomb and the reality of our complicity in its manufacture. Perhaps the realization will help us bring the death trucks to a halt before all humanity pays the awful price for our monumental folly in having set them in motion.

A coast-to-coast H-bomb truck watch has been tentatively scheduled for early spring. It will extend from Southern California east along Interstate Highway 40 to the Carolinas; north from Amarillo, Tex., into Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana, and north from Oak Ridge, Tenn., into Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

If you or your group would like to participate, contact Nukewatch at 315 West Gorham, Madison, WI 53703.

### Resource

**Truckwatch kits** — Containing two photographs of an H-bomb truck with instructions on how to identify one; reprint of an article, "H-bombs on Our Highways," by Samuel H. Day, Jr. in the November 1984 *Progressive*, and a truck-watch sign-up sheet linking you with others interested in raising public consciousness about H-bomb highway transportation. Available for \$5 from Nukewatch, 315 West Gorham St., Madison, Wisc. 53703. ■





# Africa, Black America connect on apartheid

by Manning Marable

In recent weeks, thousands of Americans have participated in demonstrations denouncing South Africa's official policy of White racism. The initiator of the nonviolent protests was Randall Robinson, the executive director of TransAfrica, a Washington-based foreign policy lobbying group. In a strategy session with Congressman Walter Fauntroy and U.S. Civil Rights Commissioner Mary Frances Berry held several weeks after the presidential election, Robinson proposed the revival of Martin Luther King's nonviolent direct action protests to dramatize the recent repression of Blacks under the apartheid regime. Robinson, Berry, and Fauntroy staged a small symbolic protest in front of the South African Embassy on Thanksgiving eve, and they were "pleasantly surprised" when the embassy officials panicked and called the police.

Their arrests sparked a series of nonviolent demonstrations. Within two weeks, actions were staged at South African consulates in at least a dozen cities, including Salt Lake City, Boston, Chicago and Houston. Leaders arrested so far represent civil rights organizations, religious groups, labor and liberal constituencies. In New York City, those arrested for blocking the consulate entrance included Judge William Booth; Rev. Herbert Daughtry, chairperson of the Black United Front; Roman Catholic Bishop Emerson J. Moore; Hazel Dukes, state chairperson of the NAACP; and New York City Clerk David Dinkins. In Washington, D.C., Joslyn Williams, president of the Greater Washington D.C. Central Labor Council; Congressman Parren Mitchell and social activist

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**Dr. Manning Marable** is a contributing editor of THE WITNESS. He teaches political sociology at Colgate University, and his column, *Along the Color Line*, appears in 140 newspapers internationally.

Dick Gregory were arrested.

Although much of White America — and especially the Reagan administration — was taken by surprise at this sudden burst of civil rights activism, the question of apartheid has long been a central issue for Black and progressive activists. One little noticed feature of the 1984 Democratic presidential primaries was the increased focus on U.S. economic and political links with the racist South African regime. Jesse Jackson repeatedly attacked the Reagan administration's growing detente with Pretoria — its decisions to support IMF loans to South Africa, the U.S. training of the South African Coast Guard, the sending of 2,500 electric shock batons to South African police, and the establishment of offices in Johannesburg designed to promote expanded U.S. investment in the country. Jackson's emphasis on South Africa forced the Democratic Party's platform committee to call for the immediate release of African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, and for the freeing "of all other political prisoners in South Africa." This was the first time that any major party had denounced apartheid unconditionally. In early August, Black Congressman George Crockett secured a nonbinding Congressional resolution urging President Reagan "to use his good offices" to secure Mandela's release. Because of the efforts of Jackson and other Black American leaders, the imprisonment of Mandela began to be linked with the plight of another, more publicized political prisoner, Soviet scientist Andrei Sakharov.

Since the late 1970s Afro-American groups have pressured U.S. entertainers and athletes not to perform inside South Africa. The boycott campaign was initiated by small Black community-based groups, but in recent years has mushroomed. In December in Los Angeles, a local group "Unity in Action" threatened to picket the NAACP's 17th annual Image Awards ceremony for Black

performers, unless two prominent nominees who had toured South Africa, Tina Turner and Danieëlle Hall, were rejected. Given that the awards were designed to honor entertainers who have presented "positive images of Blacks," the NAACP had little choice but to drop Turner and Hall.

On college campuses, students have organized a divestment movement to pressure universities to withdraw funds from companies doing business in South Africa. To date, over 40 universities have divested more than \$175 million in stocks linked to South Africa. Since 1979, Black leaders have secured divestment legislation in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Michigan, Maryland, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and dozens of smaller cities, amounting to another \$400 million in public funds. Thousands of Black and White Americans are planning nonviolent demonstrations and teach-ins from March 21 through April 6, 1985 to promote the cause of democracy in South Africa.

Reaganites are admittedly hostile to the anti-apartheid movement, but are increasingly on the defensive. When the recent wave of protests began, administration officials announced that they would have absolutely "no impact" on Reagan's cordial policies towards apartheid. "The real losers in this are the Black community," blurted one White House official, in a curious display of inverted logic. But a group of 35 Congressional conservatives, led by Republican Congressman Robert Walker, have warned the administration that even they would "seek sanctions" against South Africa unless it moved immediately to halt racial violence and "demonstrated a sense of urgency about ending segregation laws."

Under pressure from both the left and the right, Reagan reluctantly agreed to meet Anglican bishop Desmond Tutu, recent winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, to discuss apartheid. The recent dem-

onstrations indicate that the civil rights movement in the United States has absolutely no intention to capitulate to racism, whether from Johannesburg or Reagan's White House. The current mobilizations represent, in the short run, an attempt to revive the old civil rights coalition of Blacks, liberals, Latinos, Jews, and labor. Despite the refusal of some Orthodox and Conservative Jewish groups to take part in the protests — because of Israel's extensive economic and political links with the South African



regime — many Jewish rabbis and political activists have endorsed the actions. William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, was among those arrested at the South African embassy in Washington. In San Francisco, members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union have refused to unload cargo from South Africa, and over 500 dockworkers and community leaders have demonstrated on their behalf. As M. Carl Holman, executive director of the National Urban Coalition observes, these "sit-ins have been useful" in bringing together all liberal, labor and minority forces around a clear-cut issue of moral and political immediacy. "This kind of action will probably result in a spurt of action in other areas."

Viewed historically, however, the anti-apartheid campaign represents a renaissance of Black solidarity and identity with Africa. And in many respects, this connection of culture and politics has very deep roots among Afro-Americans. In the 18th and 19th centuries, for example, Black Americans were acutely aware of their African kinship, and sought to express their connectedness in numerous ways. Free Blacks in the northern states in the years before emancipation frequently named their fraternal societies and educational institutions after their ancestral home. The first Black school in New York City, founded in 1787, was called the African Free School. Boston's Black community founded the Sons of the African Society in 1798, to provide financial assistance to the poor. When Afro-Americans were prohibited from worshiping in many Whites' churches, they started their own denomination in 1816 — the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Many 19th century Black leaders, disillusioned with the failure of American democracy to embrace Black freedom, proposed a mass emigration back to Af-

rica. In 1887, the Kansas African Emigration Association advocated the creation of a "United States of Africa, for the elevation of the African and for the perpetuity of our race." Black abolitionist leader Dr. Martin Delany went to Nigeria and successfully negotiated with local chiefs for a tract of land suitable for Black American emigrants.

In the 20th century, a major shift in Afro-American social thought occurred, produced by the rise of racial segregation. Blacks were denied the right to vote, were refused employment or service in public establishments, and were forcibly removed from White neighborhoods. Over 5,000 Black Americans were lynched between 1882 and 1927, and many publicly burned. The new racial codes segregated all sports facilities, restaurants, buses and trains. Birmingham, Ala. even outlawed Blacks and Whites from playing checkers or dominoes together in 1930. Facing the reaction against racial equality, most Black American leaders now advocated a political philosophy of civil rights and integration. Blacks were "fully American," and as such, should be extended basic civil liberties and rights shared by whites. Any connection with Africa was deliberately ignored or forgotten. Gradually, by the 1950s, most Black Americans knew little about Africa's history or its people.

Yet the links between Africa and Afro-Americans did not disappear entirely during these years. W.E.B. Du Bois, noted civil rights leader, sponsored an important series of political conferences which brought together West Indians, Black Americans and Africans between 1900 and 1945. In increasing numbers, African intellectuals came to the United States and took part in desegregation campaigns. Nnamdi Azikiwe of Nigeria and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana both attended all-Black Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. Their respective rise to power in the 1950s was covered extensively in Black American newspapers,

and the achievement of African independence captured the imaginations of U.S. Blacks.

Congressman Adam Clayton Powell of Harlem attended the initial conference of Third World and nonaligned nations in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. After independence, connections across the Atlantic deepened in both symbolic and concrete ways. In both downtown Dar-es-Salaam and Nairobi, major streets were named in honor of Du Bois, the "father of Pan-Africanism." In South Africa, young Black leaders such as the late Steve Biko developed their Black Consciousness movement against apartheid by drawing upon the rhetoric and tactics of the Black Power movement in the 1960s. Black American students and tourists in increasing numbers began to make pilgrimages to their "homeland"; U.S. Black cultural fashions and hairstyles began consciously to imitate African patterns.

Ironically, it was only with the achievement of desegregation and the granting of democratic political rights in the 1960s that Black Americans could fully revive their political and cultural relations with Africa. Black mayors and elected officials began to use their offices to develop closer economic and civic ties with their African counterparts. Black Congressmen lobbied for increased U.S. aid to support Africa's development, and pressured administrations to halt economic and political support for apartheid. The recent demonstrations are a return to a rich historical tradition of support and identity with Africa — sharpened by the realization that no genuine democracy can exist for Black Americans so long as others in the African diaspora remain under racist rule and economic exploitation. And the current mobilizations against apartheid also illustrate that African issues will continue to assume a central place in Black American politics as long as race exists as a dominant factor in American life. ■

# Children of war call for peace

by Susan Pierce



**Shauna McWilliams of Belfast**  
**'Remember us in years to come'**

**A**rn Chorn, 17, lost his entire family and saw people executed every day for months by the Khmer Rouge in his native Cambodia. Shauna McWilliams, 14, from a Catholic family in Belfast, lost a brother to the violence in Northern Ireland, his body beaten beyond recognition. Marvin Perez, 17, of Guatemala, was imprisoned for joining a student movement while in junior high school.

They are members of the Children of War tour, which crossed the United States at the end of 1984 to bring their message to 25,000 high school students. The 38 youths spread out across the country in six groups and visited 36 cities in 12 days to share their war experiences, their vision of hope for the future, and a blueprint for working toward peace. Twelve Americans, representatives of ethnic minorities, accompanied them.

The tour was organized by the Religious Task Force for the Mobilization for Survival, an interfaith, interracial coalition based in Brooklyn, N.Y. Planners of the tour wanted to have these young people, who had suffered so much, share their desire for peace with American youth, many of whom feel terrified and powerless in the face of the constant threat of nuclear war. The idea of solidarity among young people and their ability to work together to effect change was a major theme of the tour.

Participants in the tour showed strength and courage in relating the tragic stories of human loss and suffering, the realities

which lie behind the political rhetoric and newspaper headlines. Hanna Rubiez, 18, from Beirut, Lebanon, told his story at a New Jersey high school. He said, "I don't know my country before the war, but when the war began in 1975 I was only eight years old. That means I had only eight years of fun, of joy, of good life, of decent life. The last 10 years have been terror, fear, darkness, afraid of bombs.

"My family has suffered a lot; my father was kidnapped twice and I did not know if I would ever see him alive again. But luckily he came back. My family was torn apart in 1982 during the Israeli invasion. I was wounded in that time, but I am here with you now."

The other young people have similar histories of devastation and loss. Anna Maria Lopez, 17, from El Salvador, now living in the United States, was marked by death squads as a subversive for trying to raise money at her school to build a water tank. Many of her schoolmates were murdered. Her father was also under death sentence for his work as a farm organizer. He left home for a month and the army watched the house day and night. Anna Maria slept only two hours a night for two years because she was in constant fear.

Sira Bugeninbe-Nsibirwa, 15, grew up in Uganda witnessing the horrors of the Idi Amin regime. Sira was shot in the abdomen while escaping across the border to Zaire with his father. Donal Daly, 14, from Belfast, saw his mother assassinated in their home when he was 10 years old. Maysoun Ayyad, a 15-

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**Susan Pierce** is a free-lance journalist based in Philadelphia.



## Arn Chorn's story

### 'Family killed before my eyes'

*The stories of Cambodian youth are the most devastating of all. After five years of civil war and bombings by the U.S. Air Force between 1970-75, those who survived faced the Khmer Rouge forces, who ruled from 1975 until the 1979 Vietnamese invasion. Arn Chorn, one of 13 children of a poor peasant family, was put in Wat Ek labor camp, next to an execution ground where it is estimated 15,000 people were murdered. Arn witnessed countless atrocities, including cannibalism, until he escaped to Thailand. He now lives in New Hampshire in a foster home with other refugee children.*

*This is his story in his own words:*

"I was nine years old when the Khmer Rouge took over my country. Politics helped to make that happen. Certainly I didn't understand. I was not only nine years old but I was from a poor family in a small village. I do know that even before the Khmer Rouge took over, many thousands of my people were killed by bombs from B-52s and others.

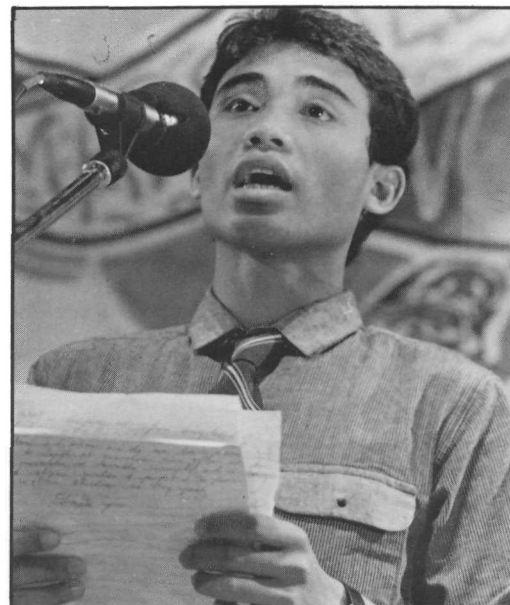
"In 1975, the killing was everywhere. The old temple walls were covered with blood. And the space was filled with the screams of my people pleading for mercy. One human life meant nothing, and those that did not die lived at the very edge of death; we were always half-starved. In the wildness of these moments, I did not realize what it meant when a child would go out into the burial ground seeking food. It was worse than a nightmare. My family whom I loved so

much — more than anything — was killed before my eyes; my father and mother, brothers and sisters and thousands of other innocent Cambodian people.

"Within three years here, in the land of freedom and opportunities, I began to learn about the children of Beirut and the children of present-day Israel, and the children of El Salvador; the children of Africa, who are also victims of violence. And I began to realize that there are many victims.

"And I can cry again. I'm not ashamed to cry. All of us need not be ashamed to cry. In fact, maybe the first thing we have to do is cry. Our tears may even be the power necessary to change violence into love, change human madness into human kindness. The tears may be the water of new life.

"So now I offer you the tears of all Cambodian children who have



suffered so much and we join with the tears of all those who suffered yesterday, today and maybe tomorrow, and we cry with you.

"Please, never again. No more Cambodian genocides, no more Jewish Holocaust, no more Beirut massacres. The only way we can make all my friends and all my family who have died have any meaning is for their deaths and suffering to take meaning by your actions together. If we could, the deaths of children from Cambodia and the deaths of the sweet and precious children everywhere, those many thousands who know, would join me in saying 'Thank you very much.'"

year old Palestinian living in a refugee camp in Israel, saw her family's possessions destroyed by vigilante attacks. Abacca Anjain, 17, from the Marshall Islands was evacuated with her family when her home island, Rongelop, was contaminated by nuclear testing.

Even some of the North American tour members knew about struggling to survive. Junior Cuevas, 13, Mexican-American, the son of migrant workers, recalled the plight of a migrant family: "When I was younger, I didn't understand why my parents always had me

and my sisters working after school and on Saturdays and Sundays, but now I realize that it is because farm workers get paid so cheap that they rely on the whole family to make ends meet. It has not been a very easy life for me and my sisters and I see it happening the same way to all farm workers' families and their kids."

But despite all they have been through, those on the Children of War tour refuse to be bitter — they want to break the bonds of hate and violence strangling their homelands. Ronny Al-Roy, 15, a Jewish Israeli, said, "I joined this Chil-

dren of War tour and it's simply a turning point in my life. On this tour I met Danny Kuttat. He's a Palestinian boy, and we sat together and talked about everything. And it gave me the strength to continue."

Others in the tour echo Ronny Al-Roy's sentiments displaying a sense of the power young people working together can create to change the world and put an end to violence and war. In their own words, they bear witness to the sanctity of peace, in a way that transcends age, race, or cultural boundaries.

Lieneke Boesak, 15, daughter of the



**The Rev. Paul Mayer of the Religious Task Force, left, joins U.S. and international youth in singing.**

Rev. Allen Boesak, a leading opponent of South Africa's apartheid system and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, stated her hope for the future; "To me peace and justice means that the human dignity of all people shall be recognized, that there will be enough food for all to eat, that all will participate in government and that Black and White will hold hands and stand together as one nation and one people."

Shauna McWilliams told an audience; "We've talked — we're now more aware of what's really going on in the world. I've had kids and adults come up to me crying, thinking they can't help us anymore. Well, you can and in many ways. Even to sit down and think of us, and remember us in the years to come would please us. An awful lot of hard work, time and money has been spent in this. And I

hope you appreciate it. We all now feel as if we've done something to promote world peace."

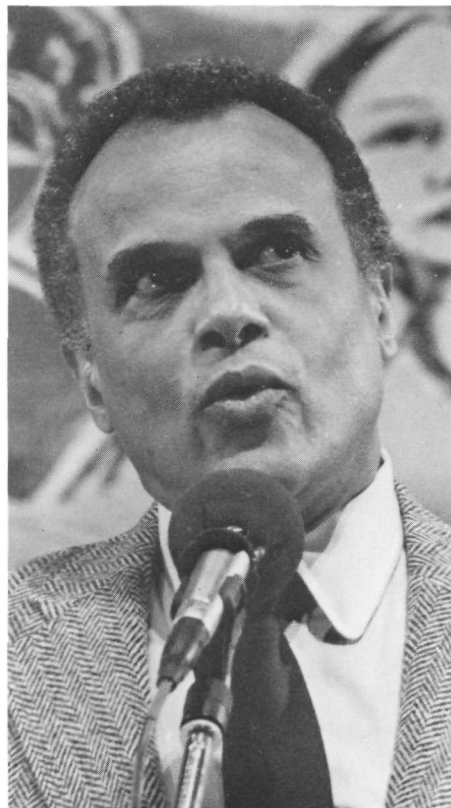
And Hanna Rubiez summed up the basic purpose of why they had all traveled so far and relived such painful memories: "I came on this tour to share my experience with American youths, to tell how it's like to live in war, and also to give them a message of peace. I don't believe anymore in violence. My country had 10 years of violence. It didn't solve any problems. So I believe now the way to solve the problems is by talking, negotiations, and not by war. I really like to talk to teenagers because this world is going to be ours in 20 years. We are going to rule this world, and we want a peaceful world. Our fathers start these wars and we have to continue them. Why? Why do we pay the price of these

wars? I think we teenagers should have a new way of communicating with each other and talking our problems over. That's why I'm here."

In response to a challenge by Under-Secretary General of the UN, Robert Mueller, the Children of War pooled the reasons why they came together, their beliefs and conclusions in a Children of War Peace Declaration:

*We are:* The Children of the World. We have gathered to share our experiences, hopes, and goals for peace and justice.

*We come from:* War-torn areas of the earth such as Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Israel, the West Bank, South Africa, Namibia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Uganda, the Marshall Islands, Cambodia and Vietnam and from the United States and West Germany.



Harry Belafonte, Advisor  
Children of War Tour

*We believe:* That it is the fundamental right of all children not to be killed or to kill.

*We have seen and experienced:*

- racism, sexism and discrimination;
- hunger, homelessness and poverty;
- widespread feelings of fear and hopelessness as we face the threat of nuclear war;
- ships, tanks, and soldiers in our countries and at our borders;
- invasions, foreign occupations and civil war;
- family and friends shot, massacred, beaten and kidnapped;
- the effects of radiation fallout due to extensive atomic testing.

Through our parallels in suffering we have come to understand our similarities.

*We have realized:* By living, laughing and playing together, the extent of our

fellowship. We are one family, working together on the earth. We must solve our problems together through negotiations, cooperation and peace. We acknowledge this as our only means of survival.

*Therefore:* We pledge our lives from here forward to:

- exercise justice and fairness in our personal relationships
- endeavor to extend this commitment beyond ourselves to our communities and nations.

*In order to affect world change:* We announce today our commitment to building an on-going Children of War network to share this message with more young people and help develop peace leadership for our future.

Advisory committee to the Children of War tour includes the Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., Bishop of New York; the Rt. Rev. J. Antonio Ramos, Latin American and Caribbean Office, National Council of Churches; Coretta Scott King, Harry Belafonte, Liv Ullman, and Robert Farrell; the Rev. William Howard, Reformed Church in America; and Sister Marjorie Tuite, National Association of Women Religious.

WITNESS readers — youth and adults — who are interested in future campaigns and programs and networking with the Children of War can contact Religious Task Force, Mobilization for Survival, 85 South Oxford St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11217. Telephone 212-858-6882.

## The nights of Bhopal

Two thousand, more or less  
A generation gone  
Or a child in the night  
Numbers like memories  
Climb in the night  
Red eyes stare at the gauges  
Their trembling dials gone senseless  
The night shift works in a fever,  
sweating and cursing  
like workers everywhere  
Naming the gods who put them here  
The gods who breathe  
the gentle nights of Bhopal.

Breezes circle the plant  
Like a sullen dog  
Moving with menace  
Down the alleys  
Scratching at the doors  
Where the children sleep  
And the mothers watch  
For the night-shift to return.

**Benediction:**

Industrial accident  
Cool words for human waste  
Legacy of the standard I bear  
But never chose  
And would gladly lay down  
For the laughter of but one  
Daughter of Bhopal.

— Ralph W. Pitman, Jr.

## SUSTENANCE

**Sustain:** 1. to give support or relief to; 2. to supply with sustenance: nourish; 3. to keep up: prolong.

Help us support, nourish and prolong

**THE WITNESS**

with a

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# A Luta Continua — the struggle continues

by Barbara C. Harris

**double standard:** (*n*) a set of principles that applies differently and usually more rigorously to one group of people or circumstances than to another . . .

I have been infuriated by the blatant double standards that permeate and pervade our society for almost as long as I have been aware of them. For years I have raged against disparities in “socially acceptable” behavior and career choices for men and women, in education and job performance expectations for Whites and non-Whites, in military deferments and medical treatment for the affluent and the poor and in the prosecution of Black-on-Black crime versus that of Black-on-White.

It would seem that a double standard is again being applied; this time to an area that is fast becoming a fact of life — bombings of public facilities by persons or groups espousing a particular cause or protesting a particular practice.

Now bombings are scary, no matter who instigates them or carries them out. Bombs, like bullets, seldom have names on them and lots of people can and do get hurt, maimed or killed when bombs are detonated, thrown or left hidden to explode on their own. The loss of even a single innocent life as the result of such an incident is one too many.

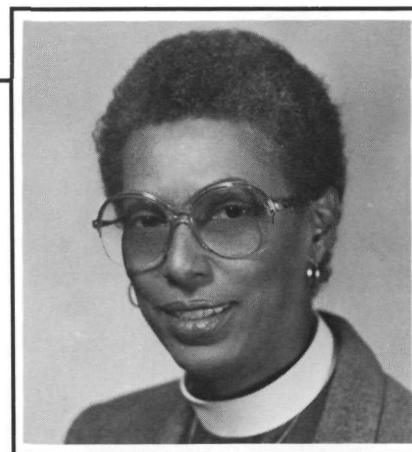
What troubles me, in addition to the bombings themselves, is the fact that *who* is responsible or *what* is the target seems to determine how seriously they are regarded. Some seem to be of great concern, while others, particularly when only property damage is sustained or the lives of “innocuous” people are lost, seem to generate far less cause for alarm or even suspicion. The memory of the

1960’s bombings of Black churches in Alabama and their snail-like legal redress is all too painful.

On the one hand some are the target for far reaching investigation that takes on the proportions of a witch hunt, while others, although lamented and condemned, are summarily held not to go beyond individual expressions of protest. If, as the government maintains, bombings of public facilities by members and sympathizers of movements such as those for the independence of Puerto Rico, Black liberation and similar groups are acts of terrorism, what, with little more than a cursory look, makes the bombings of Planned Parenthood offices, abortion clinics and other women’s medical facilities different? If, as the government insists, the former are part of larger conspiracies, how do the latter, almost simultaneously with their reporting, emerge as the work of individual “fanatics,” spurred on only by some super religious zeal?

It is somewhat curious, to say the least, that government agencies have appeared reluctant to investigate these wanton acts of destruction with an almost cavalier dismissal of the notion that there might be some organized, concentrated effort behind them. Some find it hard to believe that the rash of these targeted attacks, though geographically widespread from New Jersey and Washington, D.C. to Florida, are totally isolated and unrelated incidents that fit no pattern and suggest no planned organized effort. And the seeming hesitancy on the part of law enforcement agencies to search for connections with the same diligence extended in other incidents raises the ugly question — does it all depend on whose ox is being gored?

After the Christmas bombings, the



Associated Press reported FBI spokesman Tom Hill as saying that there had been 20 bombings and arson incidents at abortion facilities in 1984, compared with two in 1983 and three in 1982. Accepting his figures for the moment, that escalation alone makes two other recent statements even more disturbing.

Within a matter of days following the arrest of four people by the Federal Government for those bombings of abortion clinics over the Christmas holidays, John M. Walker, Jr., assistant Treasury secretary in charge of enforcement operations announced: “There is no evidence of any conspiracy or involvement of pro-life groups in these crimes.” In an earlier statement, Attorney General William French Smith declared that there was no indication of organized acts of terrorism that would necessitate the involvement of his department in such cases.

Contrast this attitude with the protracted, dragnet-like investigation of the U.S. Attorney’s office into the bombings attributed to the FALN, the Puerto Rican independence group, which has resulted in people with no proven connection with the organization drawing stiff prison sentences for merely refusing to testify before a Federal Grand Jury.

Drawing the moral to the tale: Bombings of *any* kind should warrant close scrutiny.



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# Lessons learned in Nicaragua

by Anne Gilson

Over the last two years some of us at Episcopal Divinity School have become increasingly concerned about what our government is doing in Latin America. Through studying liberation theology, feminist and Black theologies, we became even more focused on what was happening in Nicaragua.

Since the revolutionary triumph in 1979, the Sandinista government has made remarkable strides in the areas of literacy, health care, education and housing. And over that same period of time, the U.S. Government has become more and more antagonistic and militarily aggressive towards Nicaragua — in the name of God and country, of anti-communism and National Security.

So it was that our interest grew. And in August, 1984 — 11 of us — representing EDS, Harvard Divinity School, Andover-Newton Theological Seminary, Moravian Theological Seminary, and Trinity College (Dublin, Ireland) left for 3½ weeks in Nicaragua.

If a more equalized distribution of food, land, health care and education was underway there, what was the U.S. Government so upset about? How could we, as people of faith, learn from changes that were taking place in Nicaraguan

society? How could we communicate to U.S. church people what was going on? This trip, we hoped, would give us some answers.

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## 'Project Nicaragua' Participants

Laura Biddle, Episcopal Divinity School, Diocese of Virginia

Florence Gelo, Andover-Newton Theological School, Unitarian Universalist

Anne Gilson, Episcopal Divinity School, Diocese of Bethlehem, Pa.

The Rev. Dr. Carter Heyward, professor of theology, Episcopal Divinity School

Elaine Koenig, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Virginia Lund, Episcopal Divinity School, Diocese of Michigan

Kirsten Lundblad, Harvard Divinity School

Patrick Michaels, student spouse and musician

Laurie Rofinot, Episcopal Divinity School, Diocese of Minnesota

The Rev. Jane Van Zandt, Diocese of Massachusetts

Carol Vogler, Moravian Theological Seminary, Bethlehem, Pa.

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We were a mixed group — seminary students, faculty; 10 women, one man; multi-denominational. We became part of several thousand Northamericans who have traveled to Nicaragua in the

last five years to experience what was happening there, to help with the coffee and cotton harvests, and to stand, physically, at the Honduran-Nicaraguan border as witnesses for peace. After an orientation period in Managua at the Anglican Institute, we left for Estelí, a mountain town in the northwest.

While in Estelí, we talked, worked, worshipped with and were taught by the townspeople — including mothers, farmers, factory workers, peasants, Salvadoran refugees, folks from the Christian Base Community, a day care organizer, health care workers. Back in Managua, we had spoken with government officials, businessmen opposed to the government, church officials — both pro and con — including then Anglican Bishop-elect Sturdie Downs, Roman Catholic Bishop Bismarck Carballo (who with Archbishop Obando y Bravo opposes the Sandinista government) and Padre Ernesto Cardenal, Minister of Culture.

In a three-hour session with the staff of the Anglican Institute and Bishop Sturdie Downs, we were told "We see some things in the revolution as *signs* of the Kingdom of God, but the revolution itself is not the Kingdom of God!" Bishop Downs went on to describe the efforts of the Sandinista government to coordinate community projects with the churches so that services are not needlessly duplicated.

However, Bishop Bismarck Carballo

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**Anne Gilson** is a seminarian at Episcopal Divinity School and a political activist involved in peace and Central American issues.

denounced the Sandinista government and asserted that the objective of the government seems to be to weaken the Catholic hierarchy. "The ideology of Marxism involves class struggle which means a hatred between classes. This runs counter to Christianity and the commandments to love one another. The Christians (those involved in the Base Communities) have turned into Marxists. But almost never do Marxists turn into Christians."

And Padre Ernesto Cardenal, organizer of resistance to Somoza in the Solentiname Islands, poet, and liberation theologian as well as Nicaragua's Minister of Culture said to us:

*The church here is like the church everywhere. It is divided into reactionaries and progressives. The progressives believe that the love of God is inseparable from the love of one's neighbor and that, therefore, we must help create a society in which all people are cared for if we are to love God. The reactionaries believe that to love God is more important than to love one's neighbor and that these two loves are really separate issues.*

*It is very clear to many people that the survival of the people, the actual feeding of the hungry and clothing of the naked, is the most basic form of pastoral care. This revolution has happened because there are so many faithful people. It is the same in the church throughout the world. There are those who work for, and those who work against, basic social change. Each of us must decide which side we are on, musn't we?*

Since we were in Nicaragua to stand *en solidaridad* with the people, we tried to open our hearts, arms, and minds to their new society. To be in solidarity in Nicaragua required a letting go of that

which would keep a check on the revolution.

One of our many face-to-face encounters with our Nicaraguan friends was with the Mothers of Heroes and Martyrs — women whose children have died either during the revolution or since 1979 in defending the country. Our meeting was two hours late. A couple of days before, we had heard gunfire some three miles north of the city. The *contras* — or U.S.-backed "freedom fighters" — were moving further south. The mothers had called a meeting of their own to deal with the emergency. There we were, 10 gringas y un gringo, whose country was paying for the bullets that kill their children, waiting to talk with them as those bullets moved closer.

Finally, just as we had decided to come back later, the mothers finished their business and insisted that we join them. Terror stories were increasing day-by-day as the bodies of their daughters and sons were returned to them in pieces. The sound of gunfire told the story.

The mothers were angry with the status-quo keepers who were tightening the grip on Nicaragua. "It's very simple," said one mother. "Take back the message



**The Rev. Jane Van Zandt of the Diocese of Massachusetts holds a Nicaraguan orphan in Esteli.**

that what we want is peace. We're tired of spilling our blood. Some of us have already lost loved ones and others of us are destined to lose more. Do whatever you can to deter the aggression against us." And there was an air of determination in that room to come together — Northamericans and Nicaraguans — to survive.

Our face-to-face encounters with the mothers and churchpeople and workers who supported the revolution were manifestations of a theo-political phenomenon going on in Nicaragua that is so deeply rooted now that it can only be characterized as *conversion*. By "conversion" I do not mean the reputed widespread "conversion" of Nicaragua to communism. In the Nicaraguan context, it means *conversion to the God of the poor*.

Conversion to the God of the poor has been the impetus of the Nicaraguan revolution, and the process did not stop in 1979. It involves vulnerability and openness and recognizing interdependency between human beings. In this connecting of lives, God is discovered to be with us.

In Nicaragua there has been and continues to be a turning around — a reprioritizing of resources, a clarity surrounding the nature of commitments. There is no longer a death penalty and the maximum prison sentence is 30 years. Health care is free. (One of our group had to receive 14 rabies shots. There was no charge.) Widespread vaccination campaigns have protected children from measles and polio. Education is free for adults as well as children. The rate of illiteracy has fallen from 50% to 13%. Peasants have greater access to land, and Nicaragua is almost completely self sufficient in food production.

Surely it would be naive not to acknowledge that the Sandinista government has made its mistakes. The revolution is by no means perfect. There continue to be serious problems with racism (particularly with the Miskito, Suni, and Rama



Indians), classism, sexism, and homophobia.

But most people we talked with agreed that the social advances are being undermined by U.S.-backed counter-revolutionaries. Nicaragua has had to put increasing amounts of energy into defending itself from contra attacks. Health care facilities, schools, and farming cooperatives are the most common targets, for they are the basis of the economy and concrete symbols of progress for the poor. While in Nicaragua, I heard a firsthand account of a contra attack from Australian filmmaker Jim Stephens:

"The contras come into a village, set the church bells to ringing, march through the streets singing hymns," he said. "This is psychological warfare as the revolutionary movement in Nicaragua has a strong base of support in Christian communities. They grab the most notorious Sandinista supporter (usually male), tie him to a post, and cut his skin into strips. They then proceed to plunder, rape, and murder. When they have finished, they cut the heart out of the person tied to the post."

These attacks are increasing in number and severity and U.S. taxpayers are footing a large part of the bill. More than one of us felt guilt and shame for what our country is doing in Nicaragua. And more than one I suspect, personalized that guilt and shame. We had to move beyond our own feelings to see that ours was not an isolated experience. In taking seriously and valuing the lives of our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters we began to see connections between our oppressions — that the worshipers of the god of upward mobility — the god of the status-quo keepers, are holding down those who seek to voice differing views.

Mary Hartman, a U.S. nun working with the Human Rights Commission in Managua, said to us at one point regarding the growing numbers of visiting Northamericans: "Nicaragua is a place where the weak come to get re-energized

for the work that must take place in the United States."

We have been back from Nicaragua five months now. Our, and their, elections have come and gone. Daniel Ortega and the Sandinista party won an expected victory despite the best efforts of the Reagan Administration to discredit it. As Carlos Manuel, a Sandinista election representative in Esteli, said, "The United States has justified intervention in Nicaragua by the lack of elections and post-election will justify intervention by saying that the elections were not satisfactory."

But the facts show that seven parties were represented in Nicaragua's election. The percentage of people voting was higher than ours, and the percentage of votes given to the Sandinistas was higher than that which Reagan received.

We brought back from Nicaragua urgent messages from the people. "Please tell Senor Reagan to leave us alone. All you have to do is go on TV and tell the U.S. people the truth. Then they will see. The most important thing is to get Reagan out of office."

And in the baggage claim area of Logan Airport upon our return, some of us wept at the naivete of that, in the arms of our friends who had come to meet us. The task seemed so huge and our resources so small.

But the tears could not last long because we remembered our Nicaraguan friends and the lessons they taught us. One stood out — that even in the face of death, there is hope — not hope of reward in the after life, but in the God of life who is present — *presente* — in the here and now, between and among us.

## Resource

*Central America: A Report and Recommendations to the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council of the Episcopal Church from the Central America Taskforce.* June, 1984. Available in Spanish and English. A 70-page report containing information about the political, eco-

nomic and cultural climate, the Episcopal churches in Central America, map of the area and comparative statistics, the Con-tadora proposal, and enabling resolutions from the Episcopal Church. \$1 per copy. Authorization given to duplicate all or portions of the report for study purposes in the parish. Write Mission Information Office, Episcopal Church Center, New York, N.Y. 10017. ■

## The trouble with our state

The trouble with our state  
was not civil disobedience  
which in any case  
was hesitant and rare

Civil disobedience  
was rare as kidney stone  
No, rarer; it was disappearing  
like immigrants' disease

You've heard of war on cancer?  
There is no war  
like the plague of media  
There is no war like routine  
There is no war like  
three square meals  
There is no war  
like a prevailing wind

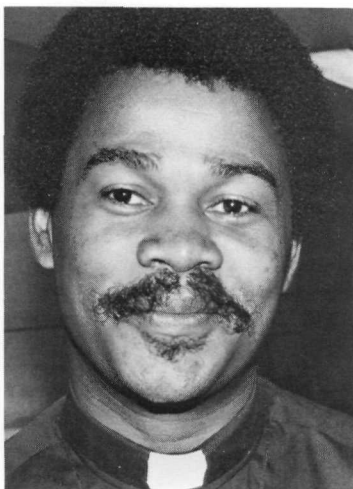
It blows softly; whispers  
*don't rock the boat!*  
the sails obey,  
the ship of state rolls on

The trouble with our state  
— we learned it only afterward  
when the dead  
resembled the living  
who resembled the dead  
And civil virtue shone like paint  
like paint on tin  
and tin citizens and tin soldiers  
marched to the common whip

—our trouble  
the trouble with our state  
with our state of soul  
our state of siege  
was  
civil  
obedience.

— Dan Berrigan





Sturdie Downs

## Bishop, diocese seek autonomy from U.S.

**T**he Rt. Rev. Sturdie Wyman Downs, new Bishop of Nicaragua, is the first Nicaraguan to attain this post since the country became a missionary district of the Episcopal Church in the United States in 1968. The 37-year-old priest was elected on the first ballot at a special diocesan convention in September, 1984.

When the announcement was made, the congregation rose in standing ovation and the bishop-elect broke into tears.

A life-long Episcopalian, Downs was

born in Corn Island, on the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua. In 1973 he married Eufemia Gallopp, a Christian education graduate and teacher. The couple has three sons.

In the two day regular convention which preceded the special convention, Nicaragua was authorized to enter negotiation with the dioceses of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Costa Rica with the intention of forming an Anglican province in the near future. In 1982 the Church in Nicaragua decided to ask for its autonomy from the Episcopal Church. The issue will come before the upcoming General Convention in Anaheim.

## Church resolution hits U.S. aggression

**T**he following resolution, adopted in November 1983, was unanimously reaffirmed (two abstentions) by members of the 15th national diocesan convention of the Episcopal Church in Nicaragua assembled in Bluefields in September 1984:

Considering that our government and people have demonstrated their desire for peace and good will internationally and,

Considering that the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and the Contadora group comprised of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama have recommended political and not military solutions in the region, and,

Considering that the above organizations have recommended non-intervention of the world's power groups in the Central American area and the removal of foreign military forces in the Central American countries, and,

Considering that Nicaragua is constantly being assaulted, with strong possibilities of an invasion, and,

Considering that the attacks from both north and south of our frontiers have caused large losses in our economy and in human lives, and,

Considering that the Reagan administration has publicly admitted U.S. aid to the *contra* revolutionaries with money and arms and the U.S. intention to destroy the Nicaragua revolution, and,

Considering that the economic assistance given by the Reagan administration is an open violation of the actual international laws, and,

Considering that the Nicaraguan government has made concrete proposals of peace to the Reagan administration as well as to the governments and people of Central America

We hereby resolve the following:

- To condemn most energeti-

cally the economic and military aggression of the Reagan administration toward Nicaragua, and also other countries that are contributing to this political interference in the matters of other states;

- To make an appeal to the entire Anglican Communion, and especially to our churches in Central America, that they do all they possibly can to influence their members, their communities, and their governments to help in the steps taken for peace in Central America and by so doing avoid war among brothers; and

- That each member of the Episcopal Church of Nicaragua try to defend by concrete actions the lives and future of our children, our youth, and our aged people, showing love toward our fellowmen, as our church teaches us to do.

May the peace of God be with all the people of Central America.

## SHORT TAKES

### Famines: acts of God?

The American Friends Service Committee unites wholeheartedly with other religious organizations in an urgent call for extraordinary presidential action to save lives in Africa.

Our major efforts focus on assistance to community level projects seeking to develop self-reliance and reduce the vulnerability of poor people to forces outside their control. Such projects include cooperative income-producing activities for rural women, assistance to nomads who are making the transition to agricultural life and development of cooperative efforts for the benefit of local communities. . .

Famines are not simply the result of acts of God. Natural disasters have a much more devastating impact when they are coupled with policies and practices which are imposed on vulnerable people. Such policies include international pressures that African nations export cash crops in order to service their debts to international lenders. They include the models of economic development whose primary beneficiaries are the industrialized nations. They include unequal access to political power and economic resources for different groups within each nation. And they include outside intervention for geo-political purposes in localized African conflicts.

It must be added that the role of the Republic of South Africa exacerbates the impact of drought in southern African nations. Its destabilizing role is directly related to the level of suffering today in Mozambique and other "front-line" nations.

**Asia A. Bennett**  
Executive Secretary  
AFSC

### Traveling light

"When Anglicans ordain a priest, part of the ritual includes *piling clothes* on the ordinand. Whereas at a Buddhist ordination the ordinand is stripped at the end, and washes the feet of those who will ordain him. The Gospel calls on us to travel light. If we have the deep compassion that compels us to share with those who suffer, it is going to cost us something."

— **The Rt. Rev. Paul A. Reaves**  
Anglican Archbishop of New Zealand  
at the U.S. House of Bishops meeting

### Gospel according to Ron

Ronald Reagan, at a National Prayer Breakfast: "If you could just add together the power of prayer of the people just in this room, what would be its megatonnage?"

**Witness for Peace Newsletter**

### Indians unique

American Indians today are distinguished from all other residents of the United States by the fact that neither they nor their ancestors left their homeland to seek political identity in a foreign nation that offered the hope of freedom. Congress has no power to abrogate the Indians' citizenship in their native tribes. Nor has it attempted to do so. As a result American Indians have a unique status. They are Americans who are citizens both of their tribe, nation or pueblo and of the United States.

— **FCNL Newsletter 11/84**

### New on ECPC board

Chris Weiss, of Charleston, W.Va., director of Women and Employment, was recently named to the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church publishing Company to fill the unexpired term of the Rev. Carter Heyward. Heyward has become a contributing editor of THE WITNESS.



**It's difficult to forgive your enemies when you can't even remember all of them.**

— **The Churchman**

### U.S. loses to World Court

The Reagan Administration suffered a clear setback when the World Court ruled 15 to 1 in late November that the Court did have jurisdiction to hear the case calling on the United States to stop violating international law by supporting military attacks against Nicaragua. The ruling raises the question of who is the aggressor in Central America, and the United States will have to decide whether to defy an order by the World Court — and face further international condemnation — or abandon its policy in Nicaragua.

In October Congress voted to terminate support for the contras. The legislation does leave \$14 million in a fund that the President can use after March 1, 1985, if he can prove the Nicaraguan government is interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. To secure approval in the new Congress, the President will have to change the mind of Sen. David F. Durenberger, the new chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Durenberger predicted his committee will "choose to play absolutely no role in this (the contra aid) and turn it over to the political system and say this is a political issue. Let's chuck this thing overboard and get back to what we're supposed to be doing."

**Central American Update**  
Interreligious Task Force  
on Central America

### No vocation to martyrdom

"The people do not have a vocation to martyrdom. When the people fall in combat, they do so simply, without great fanfare. They don't hope to be enshrined as a venerated statue later on . . . We must give over our lives by working, not by dying. Let us do away with all slogans that make a cult out of dying! The revolution needs men and women who are conscientious and lucid, who are realists but who also have an ideal. And, if one day it is our turn to give up our lives, we will do so without melodramatic gestures, in the simplicity of one who is carrying out just another task."

(Words of Jesuit Luis Espinal written on the night before he was killed in 1980 in Bolivia.)

— **Latinamerica Press**

**Letters . . . Continued from page 3**

poetic material is required to use it in ethical and legal discourse. A comprehensive treatment would do this, but our reading of the evidence is that it would not change the basic argument we are making.

2. Any attempt to define theologically or philosophically what a person is endeavors to give an abstract norm to which individual human beings more or less closely correspond. Such definitions are always fuzzy around the edges; the minimum lines for humanity therefore need to include dimensions of healthy human functioning as well as a minimum which is empirically observable. The legal edge of our definition (a human being is the viable offspring of human parents) is helpful because it makes it possible to draw a line and speak of a beginning point to human life. It is true that a comprehensive definition of human personhood needs to include also theological and normative dimensions as well as the legal and empirical. Such a definition should clearly incorporate individual and social dimensions of human personhood in more specific ways than we did in our article.

3. We made the comments about cloning and cells to point up that just because a fetus is *in* a human and *may* become human does not necessarily mean that it *is* a human being. We do not wish to deny or trivialize the human suffering and grief in the complex interrelationship of miscarriage or abortion.

**Beatrice Blair  
Patricia Wilson-Kastner  
New York, N.Y.**

**Kudos from New Zealand**

I am enclosing a check for a subscription to THE WITNESS. I am an Episcopalian bishop from New Zealand and have been spending study leave at the General Theological Seminary in New York. During this time I have been very impressed by the copies of THE WITNESS which I've seen in the library.

**The Rt. Rev. Godfrey Wilson  
Papakura, New Zealand**

**Awaits 'leap of faith'**

I continue reading THE WITNESS for two major reasons: First, it addresses the socio-politico-theological issues and concerns which are the church's domain by "birthright." Secondly, it speaks to me, a poor (economically) and minority (racially, although anthropologically,

race is a myth) person. My hope is that THE WITNESS, along with others, will help usher in that day when the church will be united in taking a "leap of faith," not only in words, but equally in action, in witnessing to the Good News.

**Avelino T. Baguyos  
Overland Park, Kan.**

**I and THEY**

By what right  
Do THEY proclaim  
The State should say  
That I should have no choice?  
That the egg within me,  
Just fertilized,  
Has rights  
That supersede  
My wants, my needs?  
Rights that make me,  
Not a person —  
But a brood mare,  
Carrying my fetus  
For the State.

THEY cannot quote  
The Bible;  
"The breath of life"  
Comes not 'til birth.  
Church Fathers —  
Aquinas, Augustine  
Held varied views.  
Personhood to neither  
Came early as  
Three months.

But still THEY claim  
That, for this span of time,  
My body is no longer mine.  
THEIR voices cry,  
"No need to see  
"Your doctor, pastor,  
"Priest or rabbi.  
"Your husband  
"And your family  
"Can have no say."  
THEY want the State,  
All-powerful, to intone:  
"Your reasons matter not;  
"Your health,  
"Your family,  
"Your life.  
"Until the egg has grown  
"And you have given birth,  
"you're mine."

It matters not  
To THEM, who seek  
To rob me of my personhood,  
My right to choose my course,  
If the egg was fertilized  
By brother, father  
Or by other violence  
'Gainst my will.  
THEY still believe  
The State, the law must say  
"The Egg is sacred,  
"Your wishes, naught."

What new decrees  
Will next THEY want  
To issue from the State?  
Perhaps that "To avert  
"Conception's murder;  
"That no device or pill  
"To do this crime  
"Shall henceforth  
"Be transported, sold."

Dogmas of religion,  
Believed by many  
Or by few,  
Should never seek to bind  
All men or women  
To their credal beliefs —  
Make criminals of those  
Who follow different codes.

Would that THEY would  
Leave me,  
Leave my sisters free  
To meet with doctors,  
Husbands, rabbis, priests —  
With whom we will.  
To talk with our consciences  
And our God.  
To make hard choices  
For ourselves.  
To decide as persons,  
Whole and free.

— Walter C. Baker

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