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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 hositilities 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 Perisan 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

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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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

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

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 decision. "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

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 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 adminstration. 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.

"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."

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 because 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.

"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."

"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 Madeline 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 advocy 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 Colloquium, 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.

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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.' "

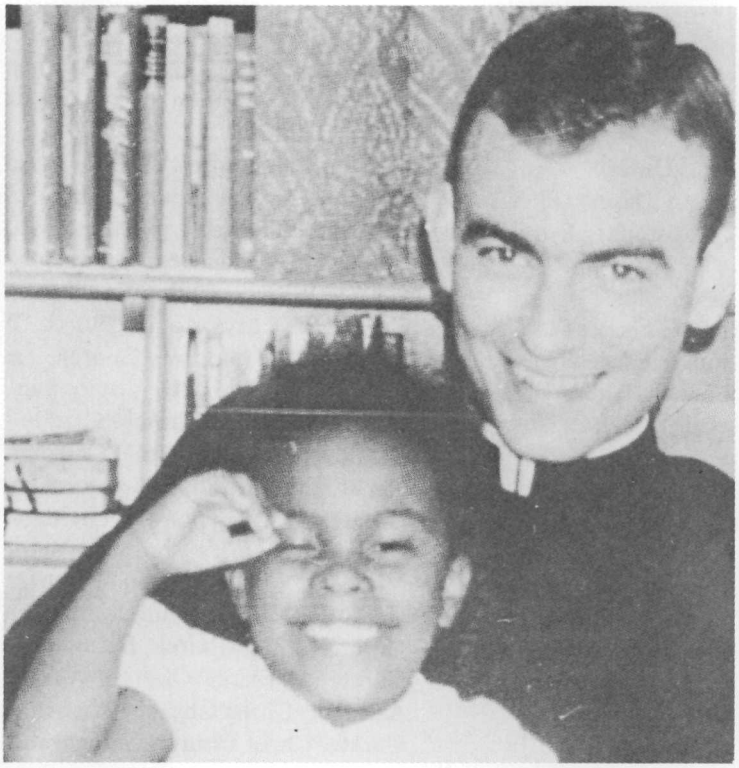
Jonathan Daniels: Civil rights martyr

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

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 nonconformist. 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

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

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 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.

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

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 onlookers 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 acceded 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.

"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

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. Blayney 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 clasping of hands
> Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the morn
> Sing songs of the angels when Jesus 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. TW

Resources

William J. Schneider, *The Jon Daniels Story, With His Letters and Papers.* New York: The Seabury Press. 1967.

Henry Hampton and Steve Fayer, *Voices of Freedom.* New York: Bantam. 1990.

Howard Mansfield, "The Movement's Unheralded Hero," *The Washington Post*, Nov. 6, 1990.

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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:

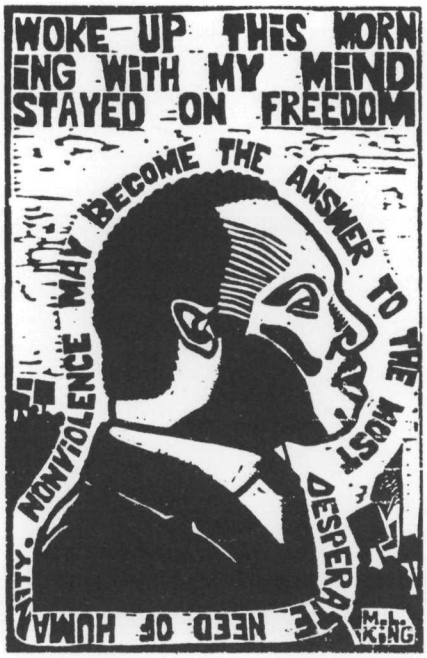
- 900,000 people have died in the country from direct military action or through indirect results of the war;
- 500,000 children under five have died as a result of the war;
- 1,000,000 people have become refugees;
- 8.7 million people — half the total population — have become so affected by the war 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 violence, 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 politics, 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 contributions 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 unnaming. 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 explosions 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 whipsaw 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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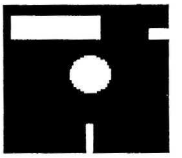

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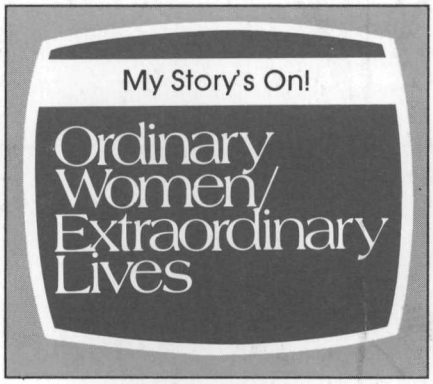

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