

THE WITNESS



Thou shalt not kick butt

Sue Hiatt

Herstory from Gulf war

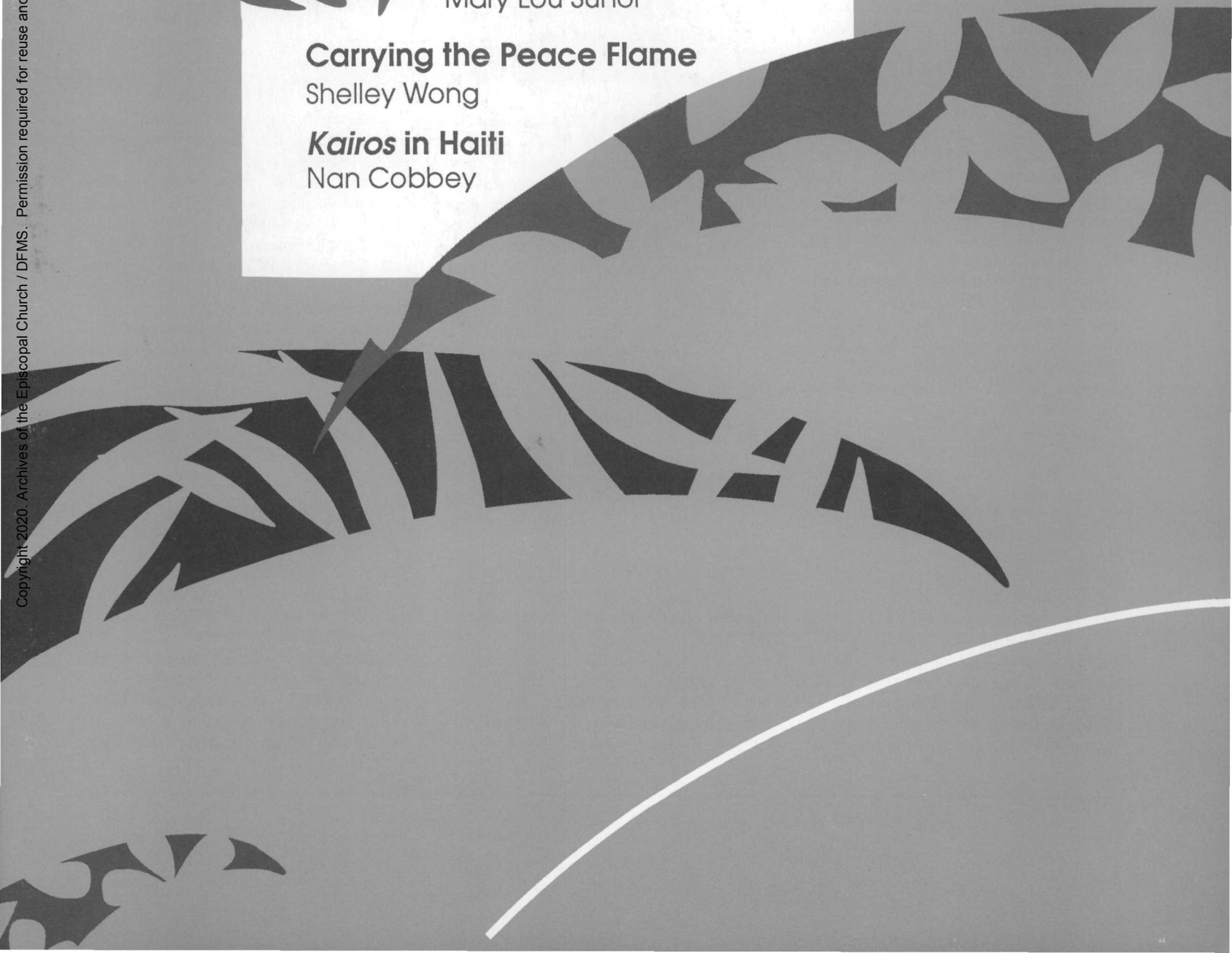
Mary Lou Suhor

Carrying the Peace Flame

Shelley Wong

***Kairos* in Haiti**

Nan Cobbey



Letters

Her kind of priest

I wish to express strong support for the articles by Charles Meyer — both the one on the afterlife and the one in the February issue entitled “Hastening the inevitable.” I do so as a recently bereaved person who has volunteered for hospice work.

I shall confine my remarks here to the article on the afterlife. I do not have it anymore for ready reference because I have passed it on to someone, saying that it was the best thing on the subject that I have ever read.

Charles Meyer’s remarks hit me in the solar plexus because they expressed exactly the way I have felt about these things for many years. What struck me was that the article was refreshingly free of the conventional Christian dogmas about the need for Christ in salvation.

Here there was no dogma, no conventional Heaven or Hell, no requirement of blind faith.

I originally got this idea from a traditional Christian author, Dante — not from his Scholastic philosophy, nor from the vivid descriptions in the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* or *Paradiso*, but rather from that one concept that outshines all the poetry and the theology: the Beatific Vision. The Beatific Vision is given, I believe (and I would gather that Charles Meyer does, too), to anyone who fervently seeks the Light, who in seeking the Light will endeavor to walk in the Light — regardless of the person’s sectarian beliefs, race, nationality or class, and regardless of whatever evil that person may have done in the past. The fact that the light is “the Light that lighteth every one that cometh into the world,” may be unknown to the person who experiences it. To the Christ who is that Light, I believe, that is unimportant.

I found it difficult to believe that the various critics of the Charles Meyer ar-

ticle had really read it. Perhaps they just read the title and assumed it would be “the same old churchy stuff.”

I believe, contrary to the reader who wrote from New Jersey, that Charles Meyer is exactly the kind of priest that I will want at my bedside when the time comes — either his kind, or a Quaker.

Virginia Gunn
Nottingham, Pa.

Irritated by IRA story

St. Mary’s Library has been receiving *THE WITNESS* for a good number of years, and I read it with interest and appreciation. But I find myself irritated at Robert Hirschfield’s story sympathetic to the widow and children of an IRA member slain unarmed by the British in Gibraltar in 1988. (February issue)

Granted that the British acted vengefully and probably unlawfully, and granted that the widow and children deserve concern and sympathy, there is no acknowledgment that the IRA has any responsibility for the results. Maybe that’s all author Hirschfield wanted to say, but given the long history of the IRA’s unrelenting senseless terror against innocent civilians — not just “tommies” — singling out this sad tale without comment ignores and trivializes the terror and death the IRA is responsible for in the first place.

The Rev. John M. Scott
Philadelphia, Pa.

Hirschfield responds

Reading John Scott’s letter, I am reminded of the time prior to the *Intifada* when journalists were reluctant to write sympathetically about the suffering of Palestinians under Israeli rule because the Jewish response would always be, “What about the terrorism of the PLO? Why don’t you write about that?”

I believe the suffering of Margaret McCann is not mitigated by her late husband’s membership in the IRA. I don’t believe she should have to endure conditional compassion because of the all too frequent killings of innocents by the IRA. Unfortunately, we are all at times prone to the kind of tit for tat thinking that trivializes human suffering and has done so much to exacerbate the situation in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and everywhere else.

Robert Hirschfield
New York, N.Y.

APSO backed CORA

The March issue is, as usual, great. I particularly appreciate your picking up on APSO’s statement in “What they’re saying about the war.” Would it be possible, however, to note that APSO endorsed or adopted the statement as it was written by the Appalachian Development Projects Committee of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (ADPC/CORA)? It is important that it be known that the churches were following the lead of the grassroots community groups with whom they are in partnership through CORA.

Sandra Majors Elledge
Communications Director, APSO
Blacksburg, Va.

War just and moral?

Thanks for the continued anti-war stance of *THE WITNESS*, especially appreciated since President George Bush said in his State of the Union message that the Gulf War is “just” and “moral.”

Oh, were it that simple and clear! Just a matter of an evil bully on a rampage, raping his helpless neighbor and needing to be stopped by Sir Galahad in shining armor. Such imagery makes it too easy for us and effectively avoids our own

moral struggle and tough questions:

- What about our "using" Saddam Hussein against Iran?

- What about the arming of Iraq by us and the Western Alliance?

- What about the curious selectivity in our righteous indignation over human rights abuses:

- Our own role in El Salvador (where military murders continue), with the Contras in Nicaragua, and elsewhere in Central America?

- Lack of relief for Panama's invasion victims? —

- Amnesty International-documented cruelties and abuses by nations we don't want to upset?

- Our own history of slavery, racism and invasion of Native American nations?

- Our neglect of the most needy and alienated at home, and the torture and cruelties resulting from this neglect?

- What about the unrepentant glee over exorbitantly priced high-tech weaponry?

- What about the suspicion that this war was carefully planned even before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait — from the statement of our ambassador to Iraq that the United States would look the other way in regard to Kuwait — to the rhetoric painting Saddam Hussein into a corner — to refusing to deal with the Palestinian question — and finally to handing Saddam martyrdom power on a silver platter?

We have put the spotlight on the speck in Saddam's eye (and it IS a brutal one). But in so doing, we have neatly blinded ourselves to the hefty logs in our own eyes.

The murder, mayhem, destruction, suffering and alienation caused and to be caused by this war have yet to be recog-

nized or fully realized. When they are we'll be like that pathetic figure in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel painting of the Last Judgment, holding his face in shock and horror.

The Rev. Henry L. Bird
Richmond, Maine

Litany on Gulf weather

I would like to share with THE WITNESS this Litany I composed on the occasion of hearing the Persian Gulf weather forecast on local TV:

2/6/91 "Clouds over Saudi Arabia. A little snow possible over the mountains of Iraq. But then clearing. Should be a nice day in Riyadh and Baghdad. Locally cloudy and a chance of rain at the Coast."

So matter of fact. So business as usual. It made my gut wrench! What has become of us? What has become of us all?

I will not accept it.

I will not say, "How nice!"

They'll have good weather tomorrow when they blow the hell out of each other!"

Hear us good Lord.

Save your people.

From acceptance of war

Good Lord, deliver us.

From complacency when streets run with blood

Good Lord, deliver us.

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From closing our eyes to the nightmare that surrounds us,

Good Lord, deliver us.

From turning away from reality

Good Lord, deliver us.

From self-righteous pity and imagined innocence

Good Lord, deliver us.

Hear us, good Lord.

Save your people. Amen.

Anne Geiger Graham
Cannon Beach, Ore.

No thanks

After I get through financially supporting the *Christian Challenge*, the *Advocate* (Episcopalians United), *Foundations* (Episcopal Synod of America), *The Trinitarian* (Anglican Catholic Church), and *Ecclesia* (American Episcopal Church), I just don't have the resources nor the inclination to pay any attention to publications such as yours.

The Rev. Clayton T. Holland
Bonham, Texas

Moved by conflict

As a first time reader of THE WITNESS, I was impressed with the March issue as a whole, and especially moved by the article "Protesting the Gulf War with Becca" with the soul-touching description of a parent's deeply felt emotional conflict. The writer was torn between a desire to teach a heart-felt belief while at the same time dealing with the fear of all that the reality of this teaching holds for this child's life.

As a Mennonite myself, I was encouraged and inspired by the fact that an Episcopalian magazine published a Mennonite writer, given the stormy history of our two churches' relationship in the past.

Diane Alderfer Kropf
Harleysville, Pa.

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THE WITNESS



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Transform the 'culture of death'

The shadow of the Persian Gulf war has loomed large over life in the United States and the Middle East, but was also a brooding presence at the recent World Council of Churches' Seventh Assembly in Canberra, Australia. Particularly striking was a keynote address by Korean feminist theologian Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung on the assembly theme, "Come, Holy Spirit, renew the whole creation." Her presentation included liturgical dance based on traditional Korean forms and a ritual where she read a list of martyrs and then set the list aflame. She removed her shoes to honor the spirits of Australia's aboriginal people and asked the audience to follow her example.

Chung is a citizen of a country that has suffered devastating war, occupation and colonial exploitation. The following excerpts of her testimony are powerful indictments of the "new world order" and a call to First World people to repent and join in a world community devoted to justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

I came from Korea, the land of spirits full of *Han*. *Han* is anger. *Han* is bitterness. *Han* is grief. *Han* is broken-heartedness and the raw energy for struggle for liberation. In my tradition people who were killed or died unjustly became wandering spirits, the *Han*-ridden spirits . . . Without hearing the cries of these spirits we cannot hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. From my people's land of *Han*-filled spirits I came to join with you in another land of spirits full of *Han*, the spirits of the indigenous people, victims of genocide . . . I wish I could celebrate our coming together, but my heart is overwhelmed with sadness due to the war in the Persian Gulf.

This is a time to weep. The cries of mothers, wives and children who lost their beloved in the war break our heart. Now we need a wailing wall in order to weep with them . . . In the midst of this senseless destruction of life with billion dollar war machines, we call upon the Spirit who "intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words" (*Rom. 8:26*). We pray to the Spirit asking her help desperately, "Come Holy Spirit. Renew our whole creation."

But what do we mean by this prayer? "Oh God! We messed up again. Come and fix up all our problems." Are we saying "Come Holy Spirit, stop the Gulf War and repair the ecological catastrophe," or are we saying "Oh God, we

know you are the strongest warrior, so powerful — we are sure your armament is stronger than Saddam or Bush"? . . . Isn't this our temptation, to remain in our passivity, using prayer as an excuse not to struggle in solidarity with all forms of life? . . . I know there is no magic solution to human sinfulness and healing our wounds. I also know that I no longer believe in an omnipotent, macho warrior God who rescues all good guys and punishes all bad guys. Rather I rely on the compassionate God who weeps with us for life in the midst of cruel destruction.

The spirit of this compassionate God has been always with us from the time of creation. God gave birth to us and the whole universe with her life-giving breath — *Ruach* — the wind of life . . .

However, what we see around us in this time are the signs of death . . . What makes us separated from this life-giving breath of God? I want to call it the unholy spirit of Babel. It is a spirit of so-called upward mobility, acquisitiveness and division. Our brother Jesus called this greedy acquisitiveness "Mammon" . . . This evil spirit produces nuclear bombs and chemical weapons to keep its peace without justice.

Mammon is active not just in the Gulf but everywhere. It is in the division of North and South Korea; apartheid in South Africa; genocide of indigenous

people in Australia, the Americas and many other parts of the world; devaluation of women and children, people of color and differently-abled people. . . and finally, the ecocide of our earth. This is the same evil spirit that crucified Jesus on the cross . . .

What is happening right now in the Persian Gulf is the best example of the "culture of death" . . . Who goes to war and sheds their blood? They are mostly young people from poor families. Many of them are people of color. Why do they go to war? For the economic and political interests of the few in power . . .

War is the consequence of the patriarchal culture of "power-over" . . . Women know that patriarchy means death. When their men shed blood, women shed tears. Their powerful tears have been the redemptive, life-giving energy for the tearless men's history. Only when we have the ability to suffer with others can we transform the culture of death into the culture of life . . . The movement for justice, peace and a healthy ecology is a movement for life . . .

Dear sisters and brothers, with the energy of the Holy Spirit lets us tear apart all the walls of division and the culture of death which separate us. And let us participate in fighting for our life on earth in solidarity with all living beings and building communities for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Inauguration is *kairos* moment in Haiti

by Nan Cobbey

When radical Roman Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide became president of Haiti, where opulence lives next door to penury, the mighty were put down from their thrones and the last became first. His inauguration Feb. 7 was a moment of *kairos*, one of those special times when divine judgement and grace unite.

For the rest of our lives, those of us present will remember the joy of watching this meek-looking priest take over the reins of government, leaving behind the cruelty, cynicism and corruption of the regimes of "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son, "Baby Doc."

The poor of this Caribbean nation, despised for nearly two centuries and thought by the rich to be too immature for democracy, braved the threat of violence to vote last December. They chose by an overwhelming majority the one they believe will never let them down.

Aristide is their priest and prophet who stands by them even at the risk of his priesthood, often at the risk of his life. He denounces injustice, names the guilty, and teaches the people to see clearly the roots of their oppression.

Affectionally known as "Tiuid," he is now Haiti's 40th president and in a position to turn the established order upside down.

The day of his inauguration he declared to his people — brutalized for over 30 years by the *Tonton Macoutes*, the terror squads of the Duvalier dictatorship — that not one more drop of blood was to be shed.

Nan Cobbey lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. and is Features Editor for *Episcopal Life*. She spent two years in Haiti as a Volunteer For Mission.

The next day he led tens of thousands onto the grounds and into the cells of the infamous Fort Dimanche where the Duvaliers tortured and killed as many as 60,000 of their political enemies. Under banners that read "*Jamais plus*" (Nevermore), survivors and families of victims reclaimed their sense of freedom and dignity. Aristide pledged to turn the place into a museum, a permanent reminder of what must never be allowed to happen again.

The Sunday after his inauguration, the new president invited the poor to the palace for breakfast. So many came the event was moved out to the courtyard where, before the TV cameras of the world, Aristide told the comfortable in his country and in the Haitian diaspora: "Listen. You can hear the voices of God in the voices of the poor. I want you to hear those voices."

One by one he invited guests to come forward. He held the microphone for them as they told what their lives were like, what their hopes were. One man with no fingers or feet, who lived on the busy Rue Pavee in downtown Port-au-Prince and begged from passing cars, pleaded for a chance to work his own bit of land. Even without fingers, he said, he could plant plantain.

With his arm encircling the man's shoulders, Aristide spoke directly to the wealthy, encouraging a response, encouraging involvement, saying that by working together Haitians can solve their own problems. Then, in a gesture that left no doubt how he views his new role, Aristide lifted one of the bowls to be served to his guests, walked across the lawn, knelt in front of a woman going blind, and fed her breakfast.

The 37-year-old Aristide is 5-foot-4,

slight, bespectacled, soft-spoken, gentle. But he is fire in human form the minute he opens his mouth. He can blast the corruption of his country's government, the imperialism of the United States, and the thievery of the powerful in every nation with impassioned eloquence.

In 1987, with the economy deteriorating and violence mounting, he challenged his congregation to take historic risks, saying, "This is the time of resurrection for our people. It is the theology of liberation we are talking about . . . it is coming to fruition with this generation, a generation pitting itself against a corrupt system, against a mentality in church and society that allows some to sit in comfort while millions suffer. Our history today is that of the Jews who refused to be slaves."

Such words win him few friends among the powerful. His own order — the Salesians — expelled him in 1988 for his political preaching. Since he started his denunciations five years ago, Aristide has been surrounded with enemies. He has survived a series of assassination attempts, seen his church burned and his congregation brutally attacked (12 killed, 70 wounded trying to protect him), but he seems to fear no one.

And yet this man can sit in front of the TV cameras of the world with tears streaming down his face and talk about his grief for the four children burned to death at *Lafamni Selavi* (Family is Life), the hostel he founded for street children in the capital. The hostel was set on fire in the middle of the night, five days before his inauguration.

At the funerals, he spoke to his nation first as priest, crying, praying for the strength to love those who hate him and asking God not to let the people who

chose him be discouraged or hurt by his sufferings; then as prophet, accusing those who wounded him of cowardice; then as president, dry-eyed and forceful, pledging a new era of democracy and peace.

This is the man who is leading the nation, and for whom hundreds of thousands of poor people cleaned the streets of a capital city drowning in garbage because few public services had been performed for months. In each tiny village and town, hundreds of freshly-painted murals of him, symbols of his campaign, and the Creole proverbs he used to enliven and inspire them, appeared on newly white-washed walls. The proverbs teach of working together, building a future, depending on one another, learning about each other's burden.

The word *lavalas*, is seen frequently. This Creole word means literally, "torrent, a rush or flood of water." It is used in reference to the vast masses rising up to reclaim their freedom and their country. Symbolically and spiritually, the word means a torrential sweeping away, cleaning out of corruption, of evil, of all that would sully the freshness of this new day.

Since its adoption as motto for the election campaign, *lavalas* is part of every blessing, greeting and description of hope. It appears on walls, on headbands, on T-shirts on banners and has even been added to a beloved Creole proverb that is now the rallying cry of this new movement:

*"Yon sel nou fèb
Ansanm nou fò
Ansanm, ansanm nou se
lavalas!"*

(Alone we're weak

Together we're strong
All of us together are *lavalas*!)

The day Aristide was inaugurated president — five years to the day after "Baby Doc" Duvalier fled — was a national holiday. No businesses opened, no public or private transportation was permitted into the city center. The streets belonged to the people and hundreds of thousands took them over, waiting in front of the Legislative Palace where he would be sworn in, in front of the Cathedral where a Mass would be sung in his honor, and at the National Palace where he would address the country as the first democratically elected president in Haiti's history.

The speech was a masterpiece, delivered in Creole, the language of the people, and not in French, the language of the elite. Aristide, who speaks six languages, called forth the pride and joy of a people too long ignored by their leaders. He reminded them of their glorious

history and heroes. He tapped their collective memory and affirmed their struggle. Most important, he entered into dialogue, calling forth from them the words that told how they would build their common future.

"Titid" and his people reminded each other what they believed above all else: "Alone we're weak, together we're strong, all of us together are *lavalas*."

Over and over they chanted it. Hands clasped and raised above their heads in great chains, they sang this promise and commitment to each other.

There will be plenty of sacrifices ahead for this nation of 6 million. The new Aristide government faces a budget deficit projected at \$20 million, depleted foreign reserves, declining agricultural production, ecological devastation and desperately inadequate health care.

But this sunny afternoon at the presidential palace was a celebration of hope. Aristide reminded the populace of the



New President of Haiti Jean-Bertrand Aristide feeding woman at inauguration

words their ancestors sang during the 13-year struggle for freedom and independence at the turn of the 18th century: "*Libete ou lanmo*" (Liberty or death). He told them that today the cry must be "*Demokrasi ou lanmo*" (Democracy or death).

He delighted the youth in his audience by teasing them into a rhythmic question-response about their values and their future. "Would you live in a dog-eat-dog world?"

"No!"

"Would you walk together, supporting each other, loving each other?"

"Yes!" "Yes!" "Yes!"

He paused. "Do you feel the blood of Charlemagne Peralte running through your veins?"

The thunderous response left no doubt that the young intend to live up to the valiant example set them by Peralte, the freedom fighter killed by U.S. occupation forces in 1919.

At the Cathedral just a few hours earlier, the president of the Conference of Bishops, Monsignor Leonard Petion Laroche, had compared Aristide to Moses. Now, before the microphone on the palace steps, facing a crowd that stretched as far as you could see — this priest-become-president sounded like Moses.

He was calling his people to be a family. He told them with breathtaking directness, "I love you . . . I can't keep myself from telling you, re-telling you, telling you, re-telling you 77 times 7 times."

Calling out over the heads of foreign dignitaries, guests and journalists directly to his real audience — the poor and the peasants — he said, "No amount of time would be enough, no bow of honor low enough to salute you. It is through your grace that we are fed. I may be here, speaking to you from the National Palace, but it is not the National Palace that gives us our yams, plantains don't grow in the National Palace; no one plants corn at the National

Palace. It is your gardens in every corner of this land, watered with your sweat, that feed this nation."

He made it very clear with whom he stood. "I will be asking the legislature to cut my salary. Pay me 50 *kob* (10¢). Pay me 10 *gourdes* (\$2). Pay me whatever, but a salary of \$10,000 a month is a scandal in a country where so many have no food, have no work." (*The Haitian dollar is pegged to the U.S. dollar and has equivalent value — Ed.*)

He paid homage to the women of Haiti, praising them for enabling Haiti to have life, to build democracy, to educate the children. Then, in the final chapter of this remarkable dialogue, he demonstrated his daring and his faith. He spoke a "message of love" to Lt. Gen. Herard Abraham, the head of the armed forces, who had put down a January coup attempt and saved him the presidency. And he announced that the long-awaited "marriage" between the Army of Haiti and the people of Haiti would be cele-



Aristide with Lt. Gen. Herard Abraham

brated from that day forward.

The marriage metaphor popularized during Aristide's campaign began to take on reality when, with a smile and a voice warm with emotion, the new leader said: "If you see a soldier in your neighborhood and he looks tired, give him a chair. If he looks thirsty, give him a drink. If he needs sleep, give him your *kabann* (bed). Because from today, the Army is wedded to us, our partner, bound to protect us from the *Macoutes* and *Zenglendes* (thugs)."

The soldiers standing in formation in the sun on the palace lawn were visibly moved. They were ready to hear him when he said, "Not one more drop of blood is to be spilled."

To Abraham, he gave the charge of making this peace a reality. Then Aristide told him he wanted the top generals — seven of them altogether — retired from service and he named their replacements. Within days, Abraham carried out Aristide's commands.

In the end, the three days following the inauguration became a time of transformation for the Haitian people. On the first day, crowds gathered at dawn for the march to Fort Dimanche. Thousands stayed at the prison complex for hours, fascinated, horrified, expectant. They seemed to be taking back what had been taken from them during the years of Duvalier brutality.

On the second day, the diaspora was invited to the palace and encouraged to come home, to invest in Haiti, to know they were welcome and needed.

On the third day, the poor came for breakfast with the president and were told the National Palace was theirs and they were to feel at home in it.

And everywhere, in the capital and the countryside, one saw the faces of hope, the faces of those who had been least and now were first in the heart of their new president.

May God help him — and keep him alive. TW

Short Takes

Be all that you can be?

The widely-held belief that service in the military can be economically and socially uplifting for the poor (if they don't get killed first) is sharply disputed by a new Defense Department study. A three-year study called Project 100,000 compared the post-military experiences of veterans who scored low on aptitude tests and were considered disadvantaged with a similar group of non-veterans and found that military service had provided "little, if any advantage" to the veterans.

Synapses Messages 1-2/91

Unhealthy ratio

The developing world has one soldier per 240 inhabitants and one physician per 1,950.

Bread for the World

Slap that wrist

How do you punish a white-collar criminal who happens to be the son of the president of the United States? Kindly and gently. An administrative law judge first recommended that Neil Bush, who helped cost taxpayers about \$1 billion as a director of the failed Silverado Savings and Loan in Colorado, be punished with a "cease and desist" order prohibiting him from violating S&L regulations in the future. The federal Office of Thrift Supervision thought the sentence too light, feeling that Bush should demonstrate that he fully understands conflicts of interest. As the *Wall Street Journal* paraphrased an agency spokesperson, Neil Bush should have to "take a class on ethical behavior or serve on a corporate board without incident." Tough or what?

Dollars and Cents 3/91

Woman's work is underpaid

Women college graduates have approximately the same earnings as men who are high school dropouts: the averages are \$20,000 per year for women with bachelor's degrees and \$19,000 per year for men with less than a 12th grade education.

Daughters of Sarah 1-2/91



America's incarceration addiction

The U.S. incarceration rate is not a reflection of the American crime rate, says Norwegian philosopher and criminologist Nils Christie. It is a reflection of America.

"I don't think you Americans realize," said Christie, a professor at the University of Oslo, "how extreme is your need to incarcerate."

Christie notes the U.S. has one of the highest rates of incarceration in the world. For every 100,000 citizens, 407 are in prisons or jails. That is nearly double the rate of 230 a decade ago. By comparison, the British rate is 100, the French 92, and the Norwegian, 47.

Whereas most people see imprisonment as a reaction to crime, Christie views it as a reflection of national character. What does it say about a country that overloads hundreds of prisons or jails, Christie asked.

Graterfriends 11/90

An unjustifiable war

If this war really was about Saddam Hussein's hatefulness, then we would have taken different sides in Central America, the Philippines, South Africa, Angola and many other places. If the war was about human rights abuses in Kuwait, how in the world would we justify our Central America policy?

*Margaret Swedish
Central America Report 2/91*

Blood for oil began on U.S. soil

The war for oil did not begin on Jan. 16, Aug. 2, or any other date in this century. The United States began fighting its petroleum wars in the 1890s in Oklahoma, and the Osage Nation was one of its chief targets. In the three decades after 1871, when Osages purchased a reservation from land they had previously sold to the Cherokee in Oklahoma, your government engaged in low-intensity warfare designed to undermine every effort by Osages to organize our own government and control our own resources.

*Robert Allan Warrior
Christianity & Crisis 3/4/91*

Recycling good for economy

The United States recycles about 22.6 million tons of paper a year. Recycling can provide 36 jobs for every 10,000 tons of material, as opposed to six jobs generated for every 10,000 taken to a landfill.

*Columban Justice and Peace
Newsletter 10/90*

Linda Backiel update

Defense lawyer and civil rights advocate Linda Backiel, jailed last December for refusing to betray confidentiality by answering questions before a federal grand jury about a former client, recently petitioned U.S. Federal District Court Judge Charles R. Weiner to release her. Stating that continued incarceration will not force her to testify, Backiel, a noted authority on grand jury abuse, was joined by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who urged the court to free her "in the interest of truth and the Constitution of the United States."

Among those participating in the petition was past grand jury resister Maria Cueto of Los Angeles, formerly on the staff at the Episcopal Church Center, who was twice imprisoned in the late 1970s and early 1980s for refusing in principle to testify before a federal grand jury allegedly investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement. Friends of the court briefs urging Backiel's release were filed by 18 organizations, including the ACLU of Pennsylvania.

Fight against apartheid not finished

by Manning Marable

In a major parliamentary address last month, South African President F. W. de Klerk announced the repeal of the last major elements of apartheid. Calling for the "elimination of racial discrimination," and the abolition of "injustice" and "tyranny," de Klerk called for the abolition of the Group Areas Act, which limits where non-whites are permitted to live; the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, which allocated 87% of the nation's land to whites; and the Population Registration Act, which categorized all South Africans in strict racial groups, required everyone to carry identification cards, and limited the rights and privileges of non-whites. The abolition of these repressive and anti-democratic provisions would establish the basis for constructing a real democracy.

De Klerk was widely praised for these bold pronouncements. The parliamentary walkout staged by the right-wing Conservative Party in protest of de Klerk's speech only reinforced the sharp break with legal racism that the president's address represented. This was the culmination of a series of governmental reforms over the past 12 months.

In February 1990, the African National Congress was legalized, and ANC leader Nelson Mandela was freed from prison after 27 years. In May, hospitals were technically opened to all ethnic groups. Last October, the Separate Amenities Act was repealed, which ended the legal basis for racial segrega-

tion in many public places. In February 1991, government officials announced that parents would no longer be required to state the race of their infants when registering births.

The Bush administration was quick to announce de Klerk's speech as "dramatic and far-reaching." Apartheid's old friends in the U.S. Congress and corporate community called for an end to sanctions against the regime. U.S. businesses began to talk of reinvesting in South Africa, and announced the death of the divestment movement.

But has the leopard really changed its spots? What is actually occurring inside South Africa is a desperate attempt by the white establishment to consolidate its power and privileges, while simultaneously transforming the political system to permit non-white participation — even opening up the possibility of a black president.

However, three years ago, then-President P. W. Botha announced the start of an official "privatization" program, which would sell off government-owned monopolies to white corporations. In Oc-



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tober 1989, the regime sold its Iron and Steel Corporation to private interests for over \$1.4 billion. To foster the development of a petty capitalist class among Africans, the government announced its intention to sell its breweries for African-style sorghum beer to blacks.

This rush towards privatization represents a sharp repudiation of past governmental policies by the ruling whites. Despite pro-capitalist rhetoric, the apartheid regime developed a series of powerful state-owned monopolies, including railroads, airports, telecommunications, petroleum pipelines, television and radio

stations, and harbors. Now that the specter of black domination of the government exists, whites want to push government-owned assets into private hands.

More ominously, South Africa has not moved to reform the system in all aspects. Many political prisoners still languish behind bars more than a year after Mandela's release. Two weeks after de Klerk's address, the South African police arrested 11,000 people in a two-day period. Although the massive arrests were declared to be aimed at violent crime, the ANC questioned the regime's motives and called for a breakdown by

race of all prisoners.

The struggle to abolish apartheid has two phases. The first phase, which is the outlawing of all discriminatory laws, is nearly complete. The second stage, the establishment of a political and economic democracy in which all citizens have opportunities for development, is just beginning.

The struggle to free South Africa isn't finished, and we have a political and moral responsibility to make sure that the Bush administration doesn't embrace the so-called "reforms" as the final phase of democracy in South Africa.

Archbishop Tutu calls for continued sanctions

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, head of the Anglican Church in South Africa, has announced his continued support of economic sanctions against South Africa to protest its policy of apartheid.

In a recent column written for the *Los Angeles Times* responding to the recent reforms proposed by South African President F. W. de Klerk, Tutu described de Klerk as "a bold, courageous reformer," but presented four conditions that would have to be met before Tutu would call for an end to sanctions:

- Schools must be open to all races without qualification, under one education ministry;
- All political prisoners must be freed and exiles allowed to return home under a general amnesty;
- The Population Registration Act — which classifies all South Africans according to race and undergirds white rule — must be abolished without qualification; and
- There must be a mechanism for negotiating a new constitution "which is representative of the people of South Africa and which does not allow groups defined by race or ethnicity to veto de-



Archbishop Desmond Tutu

cisions which are democratically reached."

Tutu said he was angered by the euphoric reaction of Western governments to de Klerk's announcement. He was particularly critical of the government's plan to replace the Population Registration Act with "transitional measures." Tutu denounced the announcement that the law would be repealed as a "stratagem."

U.S. sanctions cannot be lifted unless the law is repealed, Tutu insisted.

"A key reason for our demand for the repeal of the Act has been because it enables the exercise of political power to be limited on the basis of race," Tutu said.

"Yet the government clearly intends replacing the law with measures having substantially the same effect in that crucial area," Tutu continued. "The implications are that white South Africans will have the right to veto the terms of a new constitution. This is totally unacceptable."

Tutu also said de Klerk's proposal also did not deal with "the very serious questions raised by the government's use of police and army death squads," nor did it deal with the freeing of all political prisoners and the return of exiles "under a general amnesty."

"At its core, apartheid is not simply the segregation of facilities and suburbs," the Archbishop said. "It is the denial of political power to people on the basis of their race. This will be ended only when black South Africans have the vote, and the central thrust of our struggle against apartheid."

— **Episcopal News Service and Southern Africa Church News**

Thou shalt not kick butt

by Sue Hiatt

Listen to the words of a distinguished American, Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his old age recalling his youth and his generation's youth as soldiers in the Civil War: "We shared the incommunicable experience of War. We have felt, we still feel, the passion of life to its top . . . In our youth, our hearts were touched with fire."

For Holmes, perhaps for men always, war was an "incommunicable experience" — "the passion of life to its top." Recently, I heard Secretary of State James Baker speak of the passion that war engenders for him — "the deepest passions have been stirred" even in this apparently passionless man. For generations, perhaps even still among many men, war is apparently life's pinnacle — a "high" that most women don't understand. Perhaps our "high" is something else — giving birth? Motherhood? Nurturing children? In any case, love and war have been and are closely intertwined in the human heart, at least the male human heart. What are late 20th century Christians to make of this as we face the consequences of yet another war?

The Bible is, as always, of many minds on the subject, but certain passages are very clear. The prophet Micah speaks of the latter days — some distant eschaton when God's ways and laws will at last be in effect. Nations, confident of God's judgments solving their squabbles, will beat their swords into

plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and no one shall learn war anymore. War will be unnecessary and nobody will act out of fear. We will all sit under our own vines and fig trees at peace with each other forever.

Clearly this is a future the prophet longs to see — war has lost its thrill for Micah. But at the same time it is a future the prophet doesn't expect to see any time soon. Not until the nations come to the house of God and obey God's law. Not, in short, until human nature is redeemed by God.

Paul asks the Colossians to let the peace of Christ rule in their hearts — to forgive each other and above all to love

each other in mutual gratitude to God. (*Col. 3:12-15*) Paul envisions peace among the believers, not in some future time but here and now.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells the crowds assembled to hear him preach upon the mountain that they must love their enemies. This just after he has told them not to resist those who mean them ill, but to turn the other cheek when struck and to give away their cloaks to those who would rob them of their coats. When faced with murmurs at this radical teaching, Jesus reminds his hearers that they must behave better than other people. Believers must in fact be perfect, even as God is perfect. (*Matt. 5:38-48*)



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There is not much confusion here about what Jesus thinks of violence, and by extension, war. Human nature is no excuse for violence toward others. Even self-defense is not sufficient provocation to fight; certainly hatred of an enemy is not. The dominical mandate, like much of the biblical witness, is clear. War is wrong — some might claim it as an occasional necessary evil, but the weight of the evidence is that it is always wrong.

Why then do we still engage in it? Why does a Christian leader of a great power see it as an acceptable tool of diplomacy and policy? When George Bush asked Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning for the Episcopal Church's blessing of his Persian Gulf War he didn't get that blessing, and Browning urged him to continue diplomatic efforts. Bush turned instead to another clergyman, Billy Graham, who blessed it willingly (there are always court prophets around if Elijah or Isaiah or Jeremiah say something you don't want to hear). But the president appears not to have been upset or alarmed by Bishop Browning's advice. He did not take it seriously since the church hasn't made its anti-war message very clear over the years.

In a way one can't blame him for not knowing that Christianity teaches that war is wrong. It hasn't taught that very often through the ages. In Bush's youth perhaps his heart, too, was touched by fire in World War II. A mere hundred years ago Holmes said that as a fighting man honed to kill other men, he "felt the passion of life to its top." That didn't, and still doesn't, raise many Christian eyebrows.

The churches, with the exception of the peace churches — the Society of Friends, the Mennonites and a few others — have been unable to absorb Jesus' message of non-violence and non-resistance. In recent years we have tacitly told people like George Bush that war is OK — not to be preferred, but acceptable behavior.

We've done this by supporting the military establishment with a far-flung chaplaincy program that includes a bishop for the Armed Forces. By contrast, early in this century another American bishop — Paul Jones of Utah — was tried and removed as diocesan for his pacifist positions.

We've done it by failing to speak out about the creeping militarism in this country. Forty-five years ago we forced upon Japan a constitution outlawing militarism — now we resent their not having to burden their economy with large military commitments.

We've done it by arguing a "just war" theology. We find cases when war is permissible rather than condemning it across the board and making exceptions only after the fact and in the presence of contrition — the way we deal with other forms of sin.

We've done it by not objecting to bellicose language in the domestic sphere — by supporting a "war on poverty" and a "war on drugs," by tittering when leaders and generals talk about "kicking butt" instead of challenging such demeaning and violent language.

We've done it by not protesting over the past decade when war was used as an instrument of policy in Libya, Grenada and Panama and more subtly in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Many Christians, many Episcopalians don't believe war is wrong because we haven't preached that part of the Gospel. We've told them certain kinds of sexual behavior are wrong, we've even told them greed and stealing and murder are wrong, but we neglected to mention organized murder — war. Many good Christians, including Episcopalians George Bush and James Baker don't think war is always (or even often) wrong. As ministers of the Gospel we need to work on that.

Let us look again at what Jesus preached and lived. How could we have failed to notice, much less convey to

others, that Jesus' teaching includes non-violence, forgiveness and a constant striving for peace and justice?

We begin to redress the balance by asking God's forgiveness for our failure to speak out. We go on from there by praying to God for the strength to stand against each and every war and to offer our compatriots less evil alternatives for national leadership in the world.

A new world order can only come from new methods. Wars never solve problems; they only breed new ones. Any student of history knows that. For the love of God and out of respect for humanity let us say what Pope Paul VI declared in his stunning address to the United Nations General Assembly, "No more war — never again war." TW

Etiquette

Of course we raped her.
That's how it's done around here.
A stranger approaches.
Someone offers hospitality.
After dark the townsmen
pound on the door until the host
throws out his virgin daughter.
It's the mannerly thing.

The girls don't mind.
They want to maintain
the town's gracious name
as much as we do.

Word is spreading
about our village.
The strangers tell others
about our charity.
Our population's on the rise.
See all those fine boys
wrestling in the dirt?

You ask where the girls are.
Why would you want to know?
They're useless creatures, so
useless that even their mothers
cry when they're born.

May Jo Cartledge-Hayes

Herstory from Persian Gulf war zone

by Mary Lou Suhor

Since her safe return from the Persian Gulf, Agnes Bauerlein, mother of 11 and grandmother of 14, has dedicated herself to speaking engagements "to put a human face on a war in which thousands were slaughtered."

Unlike U.S. conquering heroes coming home eager to celebrate "a brilliant military victory," Bauerlein wishes all the yellow ribbons could be changed to black for mourning and purple for repentance, after what she witnessed in the war zone.

A peace activist who has been jailed many times for non-violent civil disobedience, Bauerlein left January 12 for the Persian Gulf Peace Camp in Iraq. She and 73 others went to interpose themselves between opposing armies at a site only one and a half miles from the Saudi Arabian border.

The group had celebrated Bush's "deadline" night of January 15 as it ended without incident. But when a steady drone awakened them the following night, the sound was all too familiar. Bauerlein wrapped her blanket around her, went outside, and wept. She had survived the bombing of her Nazi-occupied city of Nijmegen in Holland during World War II as a teenager, although she lost a sister, 18, and brother, 9, to British bombs in 1944. She wrote in her Gulf journal on January 16:

We awoke last night to the droning of airplanes overhead. I knew what that meant. It was 2:30 a.m.. We left our tents and gathered outside, and soon could see, in the direction of Baghdad, the night darkness light up from the explosions created by the bombs dropped on that poor city.

God help us all! We've gotten our-

selves into another bloody war. Unbelievable as that may seem, men's cold and hard hearts have not yet been touched or opened themselves to God's deep love for all. What our presence here now means, I don't quite know. We will suffer with the people, on all sides. The people, the poor people on all sides will suffer the most. God be with us in this dark hour . . .

Bauerlein had gone to the Bedouin-type encampment to spend three weeks as part of a creative peace initiative in the area. The desert site was formerly used as a stopover by Muslims enroute to Mecca. It consisted of corrugated tin roofs under which tents were pitched on a cement floor. Seven to fifteen campers shared a tent. From the campsite, Agnes, 62, wrote to Charles, her husband of 40 years:

Giving birth is a long and painful process, as I well know. The need to give birth to a presence of peace in the Gulf area became blatantly clear. A non-violent resolution to the conflict is the only answer. Pray God our mission will bear fruit.

After the first bombs fell, Bauerlein said, "I was overcome by an utter feeling of powerlessness. We had lost control of the situation, of our lives, and I didn't know if I would ever see my family again. It was only when I abandoned myself to God and said 'thy will be done' that a great peace came over me. I felt a bond at that moment with poor, powerless people all over the world who have no control over their lives either. One night one of the rockets came over our camp very low and exploded nearby, and I thought, this is it."

The peace activists dedicated themselves to the everyday operation of

maintaining their camp after war broke out, and to discussion of whether they would move if asked to leave. All were not of one mind about this.

"As I look back on it, we were a microcosm of the world," Bauerlein said. "We represented 17 nationalities and ranged in age from 22 to 79, the median age being 40. We were about equally divided, male and female. Among us were environmentalists, naturalists, secular humanists, people of faith. We were all agreed that war was not an option, that we were there to be a non-violent presence for peace. All of us were strong-willed, or we wouldn't be there. We soon found out that we had our work cut out for us just to run the camp efficiently."

Many of the international campers were shocked at the "aggressive behavior" of their American and British colleagues, Bauerlein said. "The eight Indians, especially, were scandalized and rendered almost mute at first. But then after many disagreements we divided into affinity groups of 10 to 15 and formed a representative steering committee to run the camp. The Indians had also brought a sewing machine and sacks of material and spent their time making clothes for the Iraqis."

Bauerlein was troubled that patriarchy was alive and well in the camp, and that it was difficult for feminists to stand their ground.

The camp had two meals a day, consisting mostly of vegetables and rice and pita bread. No meat was served, but there were a few eggs and some cheese. Meals were at 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. "We even had arguments over what time they should be served," Agnes said. Campers cooked and cleaned the area. There were

showers and simple standup latrines common in the Middle East. Water came from tanks used by a contingent of some 30 Iraqi boarder guards nearby. The camp also had electricity until 6 p.m. when blackouts were initiated after the war began.

"This made for very long, lonely nights. To make matters worse, the nights were bitter cold and I hadn't brought enough clothes. I slept with hat and gloves on, in two sets of clothes and my down jacket. I was under two blankets and a sleeping bag, with two blankets underneath me on the cement floor. The Brits were wise — they had brought hot water bottles."

Throughout the day, campers did their chores, wrote or prayed, held meetings, and played soccer and table tennis with the Iraqi guards and exchanged family photos with them.

"The Iraqis were gentle souls," she said. "Not one of them wanted to be fighting this war. And considering they had recently gone through an eight-year war, that was understandable. Many carried prayer beads and prayed five times a day, and this is reflected in their demeanor toward people."

Ten days into the war, Iraqi administrators sent two buses and a truck for the campers, fearful that they would be killed by bombs. On that same day Charlie Bauerlein and daughter Ann were boarding a bus in Philadelphia to join more than 200,000 others at a massive peace demonstration in Washington, D.C., Agnes later discovered. Her husband, who served in World War II and comes from a family of career servicemen, is now a member of Veterans for Peace. "Charlie appeared throughout my time away on radio talk shows, on TV, and gave many interviews about my peace venture. Not all of my children felt the same way. About half were supportive, I would say."

"The buses arrived to take us from the Gulf Peace Camp at 2 a.m., and we were

asked to pack," she reminisced. "It took us five hours to shut down the camp. Then three of the British sat down and refused to leave. The bus driver went to the post and returned with soldiers. He asked them to force the protestors to board the bus. But they laughed and refused, saying these were their friends. The bus driver had to drag the three himself, and we finally left at 11 a.m. for Baghdad, 248 miles away.

"Enroute to Baghdad, the driver used back roads to avoid attack. He dodged huge craters and bombed out vehicles along the way.

"We arrived at the Al-Rashid Hotel, around 7 p.m. and were just getting supper when the air raid siren sounded. Some went to their rooms, but I spent that night and each night thereafter in an underground bomb shelter with Iraqis and foreigners, but no military. A Palestinian woman reporter for a Canadian paper was there, as well as the CNN people. I slept right next to Peter Arnett," she laughed. "Of course, the press ignored our story."

Bauerlein felt that the media was collaborating in its own censorship. The

anti-war movement was very strong in Germany, France, Holland and Belgium and people in the States didn't hear about it, she said.

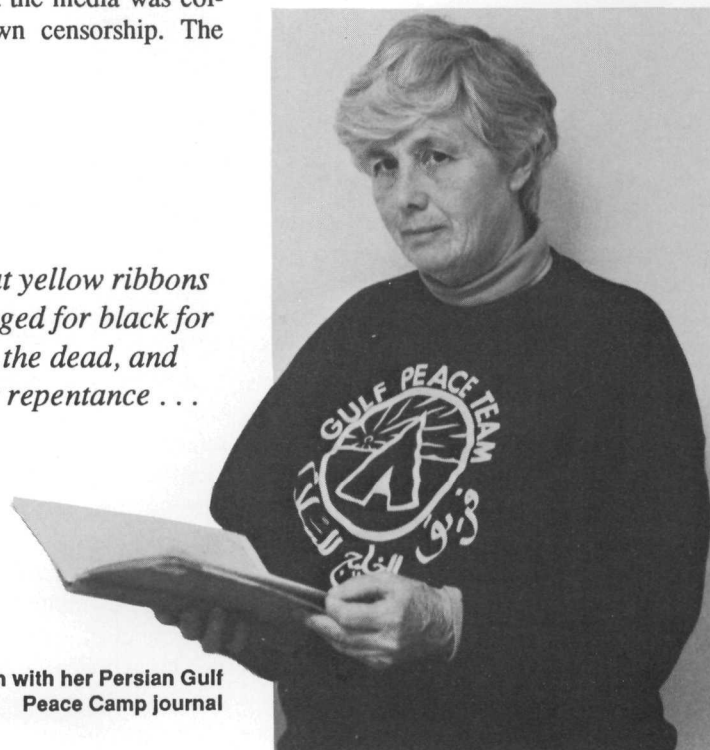
The Gulf Peace team was able to confirm that what the Iraqis claimed was a milk factory bombed by the Allies — and which the United States claimed produced chemicals for warfare — was actually a milk factory. "We visited the site; it was built by the French, and there was no doubt that it produced baby formula. Also, the air raid shelter which we bombed, killing hundreds of women and children, was indeed a bomb shelter. We heard later that the U.S. military had acted on old information."

"We were also taken to a hospital, perhaps the saddest experience of all. It had nothing — no topsheets, no water for the doctors to wash their hands as they moved from patient to patient. I still can't understand why we had to bomb the infrastructure so thoroughly. Why take out the water and sewage systems? We now know that people are using the

Continued on page 19

*Would that yellow ribbons
be exchanged for black for
mourning the dead, and
purple for repentance . . .*

Agnes Bauerlein with her Persian Gulf
Peace Camp Journal



Community church or state church?

by Reginald G. Blaxton

Rarely do public officials have an opportunity to describe from their perspective the relationships existing between church and state, or more precisely, in this instance, between the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Washington and the city of Washington, D.C. In this article, I will attempt to describe the social context in which the institutional identity of the diocese has been shaped. I will also suggest a reason for the gap between pastoral practice and public ministry, which I perceive to be at the root of the diocese's institutional identity crisis.

I write as a native Washingtonian of black-American descent, who has spent the better part of 38 years in the District. I was educated in Washington's public schools, and have worked, since 1984, for its municipal government. Over the last 30 years, I have been affiliated with two parishes of the diocese in different capacities — in the 1960s with the Church of Saint Stephen and the Incarnation and since 1982, as an assistant rector at Saint George's Church.

In common with many other Episcopalians, I have a citizen's interest in the well-being of this particular political jurisdiction; my identity as a citizen has been formed in the crucible of this city's social, economic and political life. And in saying so, I want to make a theological point. As Daniel Day Williams observed in the late 1960s:

The search for identity always

takes place within the history of a people. No one belongs to humanity in general. We live in communities with concrete traditions, values and faiths. The search for identity involves the search for the people to whom one belongs or can belong.

If Williams is right, public identity always entails a choice. I choose, thus, to identify myself by reference to the social, political and economic life in the District of Columbia. My primary identification is with the city itself, its "concrete traditions, values and faiths."

If the federal government were to relocate to Boston or Atlanta tomorrow, my primary identification would not be seriously impaired. For unlike other U.S. citizens who see Washington first and foremost as the nation's capital, my sense of belonging is not dependent on the city's peculiar status in federal law. Furthermore, the acceptance by District residents of the home rule charter in 1974, and the decision by voters in 1980 to approve a statehood initiative argue powerfully that the majority of residents do not view themselves as belonging to the federal establishment. Rather, their primary identification, like mine, is with the city itself which, to distinguish it from the federal enclave, we will call "D.C."

In 1790, when Charles Pierre L'Enfant was surveying the Potomac region — eventually to plan a city stretching from Georgetown to the Anacostia River — he imagined the federal city as "a city oriented to a new nation and a new continent, and the future."

What L'Enfant could not anticipate was the clash between the federalism inherent in the establishment of a capital city and the competing claims of local

democracy as they have developed over the last 200 years. According to author Frederick Gutheim:

In [L'Enfant's] overall conception, the federal and local functions were closely interwoven. There was no sense of economic or social class segregation. If the city as a whole was to function as it was planned, L'Enfant was correct in asserting that its various functional elements should be simultaneously developed and be able to interact with each other.

We know that as the city grew beyond the bounds established by L'Enfant, interaction between the federalism of the nation's capital and the democratic yearnings of its residents became more and more competitive, with the local community struggling hard against the federal establishment to find its rightful place in the political sun. Most of the political struggle for self-determination took place during the last century, a period roughly coterminous with the establishment of the Diocese of Washington, independent of the Diocese of Maryland.

What I have tried to describe in very broad strokes is the social matrix in which the Episcopal Church finds itself today. Historically, the presence of the church in the city antedates the founding of Washington by some 80 years. But in its modern political form, as the Diocese of Washington, the Episcopal Church now finds itself buffeted by competing claims.

On the one hand, with varying degrees of intensity, the Episcopal Church has aligned itself and defined its interests with the federal establishment in the District of Columbia. Thus the church

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has been able to boast of its unique role in the spiritual formation of the nation's leadership elite — presidents, cabinet officers, members of Congress and the federal judiciary. Interestingly, the church's Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul explicitly invokes L'Enfant's plans for a church "for national purposes" in the federal city as the *raison d'être* for its current mission and ministry.

The alignment of the Diocese of Washington with federal interests has had an extraordinary effect on the way in which the diocese sees itself and is perceived by others. For example, during the recent election of an Ordinary for the Diocese of Washington, one of the can-

didates, formerly rector of a local parish, cited his pastoral relationship with the current President as a qualification for office. In this example, the alignment of the local church with federal interests is explicit. It calls to mind the warning about the public character of the Episcopal Church sounded by one of the seminal figures of the 19th century, the Rev. William Reed Huntington. In 1870, Huntington wrote:

If our whole ambition as Anglicans in America be to continue as a small but eminently respectable body of Christians, and to offer a refuge to people of refinement and sensibility, who are shocked by the irreverences they are apt to encounter elsewhere; in a word, if we care to be only a countercheck and not a force in society; then let us say as much in plain terms, and frankly renounce any and all claim to Catholicity. We have only in such a case to wrap the robe of our dignity about us and walk quietly along in a seclusion no one will take much trouble to disturb. Thus may we be a church in name and a sect in deed.

But if we aim at something nobler than this, if we would have our Communion become national in very truth — in other words, if we would bring the church of Christ into the closest possible sympathy with the throbbing, sorrowing, sinning, repenting, aspiring heart of this great people — then let us press our reasonable claims to be the reconciler of a divided household, not in a spirit of arrogance . . . but with affectionate earnestness and an intelligent zeal.

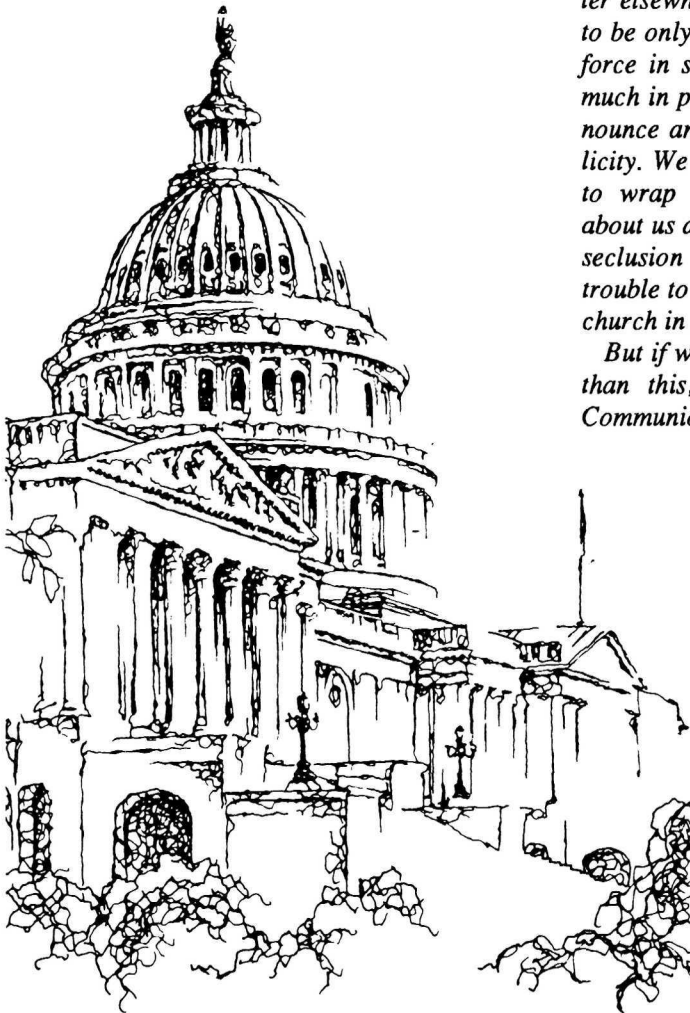
We should note that "national" in Huntington's

usage does not denote any kind of federalism. Rather, the task of the church, according to Huntington, is to align itself publicly and comprehensively to its local community in such a way that it is able to establish an empathetic and responsive relationship with all those who live, work and worship within its spiritual bounds.

In recent memory, the Diocese of Washington has been able, at times, to establish with D.C. the kind of relationship Huntington envisaged. Its alignment with the federal establishment, while strong, has never been total and complete. During the 1960s, in response to the winds of social change then blowing through this community, Suffragan Bishop Paul Moore co-chaired with Baptist pastor Walter Fauntroy the Free D.C. Movement — a citizens' coalition to secure legal self-determination for residents of the District.

Throughout that decade, the Diocese of Washington evinced a strong and substantive interest in the development of local democracy, as D.C. matured as a political entity independent of the federal establishment. Several of the clergy of the diocese were recognized and respected as community leaders — for example, Dean Francis Sayre, the Rev. William A. Wendt and Canon John T. Walker — who could be relied upon directly to address local issues and concerns.

I have attempted to describe the tension between the church's chosen, dominant role through most of its history as chaplain to the federal establishment on one hand, and its more hesitant engagement in local democracy on the other. I suggest that the public place of the Episcopal Church in the life of the city is unclear at present. The ambivalence of the church toward D.C., complicated by the geographical extension of the diocese across several jurisdictional boundaries, is a reflection of this tension. This ambivalence is not likely to be



overcome without a thoroughgoing, self-critical assessment of the role the church is prepared to play in the life of the local community. In this regard, the church is much like another local institution, *The Washington Post*, which attempts simultaneously to live out both a local and a national identity. When there is a contest between the federal establishment and the competing claims of the local democracy, the church, like the newspaper, will inevitably be caught in the crossfire and, despite its attempts at verbal evenhandedness, will be seen as favoring the interests of the federal establishment.

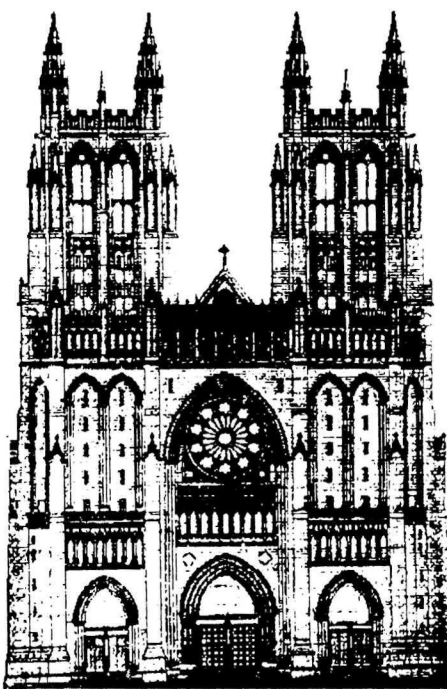
For example, I was surprised that when Episcopalian George Bush twice vetoed the 1990 Appropriations Bill passed by both the Council of the District of Columbia and the U.S. Congress — citing his religious conviction that local, public monies should not be used to fund abortions — diocesan officials maintained a discreet silence. Later, President Bush explained that he was justified in taking this action because the federal government gives the district most of its funds.

The truth, of course, is more complicated. The Episcopal Church's official posture of abortion is a moderate pro-choice position, at variance with the President's personal views. The federal payment to the District, more than 19% of appropriated General Fund revenues in 1985, declined to about 15% in 1989. Thus, the federal payment has remained stable in monetary terms and decreased as a percentage of D.C.'s total operating revenue. Yet the diocese managed to say nothing publicly to clarify the issues involved. Nor did it publicly discuss the morality of the President's use of the veto to make his personal religious beliefs the basis of local public policy.

Here is a clear example of the conflict inherent between federalism and local democracy. Without a serious attempt within the church to discover its public place — or in other words, to achieve an

institutional identification with the citizens of D.C. — we may expect that the church will be widely perceived to be indifferent or even hostile to "the traditions, values and faiths" of the people who view this as their home rather than as the nation's capital.

As community-based leaders, parochial clergy have, I believe, a special role to play in clarifying the public purposes, identity and goals of the local Episcopal Church. It is not the role to which Episcopal clergy here have grown accustomed. They see themselves instead in a "pastoral" role. According to this view, Episcopal clergy function best when they are able to influence parishioners by means of the pastoral relationships they have established with them. The work of pastoring — traditionally, the cure of souls — is essentially a private transaction between clergy and laity which centers on healing, guiding, sustaining and reconciling parishioners when they come with problems of interpersonal friction, grief, or moral confusion.



Pastoral care as it is taught in Episcopal seminaries is individually-focused, private and apolitical. It is modeled on contemporary disciplines of psychotherapy and social work.

The question remains, however, whether merely private pastoral care, divorced from a sensitive appreciation of the public context of life, can ever be fully responsive to the felt human need for spiritual resources, support and nurture. As Robert Bonhous has written:

To date, the term pastoral care does not connote any kind of ministry to the social conditions which help create, continue and complicate individual problems . . . pastoral care is quite proper when it is given to sick persons but not to sick cities . . . The trouble is that the same attention to a dying community (not to mention death-dealing institutions like war) is regarded as "meddling" when the pastor gets involved.

Bonhous concludes with the observation that the nature of existence in an urban society will require that pastors relate differently to the community than they have been relating. I could not agree more. TW

Resources

Daniel Day Williams, *A Theological View of Identity*, and Robert A. Bonhous, *The Impact of the Urban Crisis on Pastoral Theology*, in William B. Ogelsby, Jr., *The New Shape of Pastoral Theology: Essay in Honor of Seward Hiltner*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969.

Frederick Gutheim, *The History of Planning for the National Capital, National Capital Planning Commission*, 1977.

William R. Huntington, *The Church-Idea: An Essay Towards Unity*, in James Thayer Addison, *The Episcopal Church in the United States 1779-1931*, Boston: Scribners, 1969.

Tigris for water and in addition to the war victims, 15 to 20,000 are expected to die from diseases like typhoid and dysentery."

In the hotel, Bauerlein, a Roman Catholic who represented the organization Pax Christi at the Peace Camp, would do an hour's meditation to begin her day. So as not to disturb those around her, she would go to the hotel vestibule very early. There she noted a daily ritual. The hotel manager would rouse two men who had been offered shelter in the lobby. He would fold their blankets while they visited the bathroom and then quietly slipped into the street.

"We never saw homeless on the streets of Baghdad, even under these conditions," she said. "The people told us that Arabs traditionally would not tolerate that. If a person needed shelter one would offer his or her home. The fact that we have homeless by the millions is unfathomable to them."

As she prayed, Bauerlein said she had an inter-faith experience which remains with her. The Buddhist monk in the peace camp would pray, beating on a drum and gong as she meditated, and at the hotel a Muslim would spread his prayer rug and chant. "Here we were, our prayers rising like incense to the same God, each praying in our own way. I felt a profound sense of unity with them," she said.

On the fifth day campers were put on a bus which had been sent from Jordan to take them to Amman. As they left, Iraqi guards asked Bauerlein if she could mail letters for them. And one, with tears in his eyes, pleaded, "Pray for us."

The trip took from 7:30 a.m. until midnight, on secondary roads. On the border, Bauerlein came face-to-face with another result of war — thousands and thousands of refugees. This, too was familiar to her, since her family had worked with the Dutch underground to

help Jews escape during World War II. "We saw long lines of cars, loaded down, waiting to enter Jordan — some had been there for three days," she said.

During their eight days in Amman, peace campers met with the Austrian director of the UN refugee program. In August alone, Jordan processed 800,000 refugees, at a cost of \$52 million. The government had been promised certain sums by various countries but had only received \$17 million, the director said. They were processing 3 to 5,000 refugees a day into 30 camps. Every other day the Red Cross and Red Crescent met refugees at the border with food and blankets; some refugees died from exposure. Trucks go to the 30 camps daily with supplies from the Red Cross and Red Crescent, but still fall short of what is needed, he told the campers.

In Jordan, Bauerlein and the others helped set up a Peace Camp, which members are now bringing medical aid to Iraq. While there they also met with women's groups, including Palestinian women; cultural and school groups, and the head of the PLO in Amman, who described the history of the Occupied Territories.

"In all our meetings, it became clear that our first world lifestyle is hurting two thirds of the world," Bauerlein said. "Each of us has to look at our own complicity in this. We love our materialism and violence — witness our TV and magazines. Our high tech war was totally destructive to human beings and to the earth. And people over there laugh when we say we're a democracy. They know we have the best Congress money can buy.

"The danger now is that we will put everything back the way it was before. Many saw Saddam Hussein as a Robin Hood. They didn't like his methods, but saw Kuwaitis as the greedy Arabs of the region. One has to be aware of the complex history of the Middle East, including the oppression of the Palestinians, to

analyze what went on," she said.

Bauerlein was not always a peace activist. She was shocked out of her numbness following her experiences in World War II when she offered her house to the Plowshares Eight, a group of activists who were awaiting trial for an anti-war civil disobedience act in 1981. Shortly after she returned from Iraq, one of the eight, John Schuchardt, was again arrested for speaking out against the war at a church service attended by George and Barbara Bush. Agnes phoned her congratulations, asking him what he was charged with. "Disturbing the peace, and that's just what we should be doing in our churches," he told her.

It is Bauerlein's fond hope that the churches, which for the most part, were non-supportive of the war, would continue to oppose war and future arms buildups. Her present fantasy is that her Catholic Church would encourage its 60 million members to hold back 5% of their taxes used for such things. The government couldn't possibly prosecute millions of people, she said.

Her optimism about the future flows from the reception she received upon returning to her Philadelphia home February 10.

"I was told that 80% of U.S. citizens were in favor of the war and that I would be facing a hostile public. If that were the case, I thought, it's easy to be pro-war when war has never been fought in your back yard. But the reaction was just the opposite. I have received stacks of supportive letters, and phone calls from total strangers praising what I did. People are searching for alternatives to war and are angry about the nuclear buildup.

"It is painful to hear the shouts of victory when I remember the victims — I see Iraqi soldiers, too, as victims of a military run by a tyrant, who were slaughtered by power-hungry Western countries in collaboration with rich Arabs. We need to acknowledge that." **TV**

Carrying the Peace Flame

by Shelley Wong



Judy Imai
with the
Peace Flame

Judy Imai, a third-generation Japanese-American, is a key figure in the current three-year peace pilgrimage entitled Global Walk for a Livable World. She carries a kerosene lamp lit from a flame burning in Hiroshima Peace Park, Japan, commemorating victims of the U.S. atomic bomb. Shelley Wong interviewed Imai in Washington, D.C. for THE WITNESS recently after Imai had walked across the United States in nine months during Phase I of the walk.

This spring the project is in Phase II, covering England and Western and Eastern Europe. In the fall of this year and throughout 1992, the walk will visit Greece, Egypt, India and Pakistan, and then go on to China, Central Asia, USSR, and Vietnam. From January to June 1993, the walk will move from Hanoi to Beijing. Then participants will fly to Tokyo and walk to Hiroshima, where the Global Walk will end on the anniversary of the atomic bombing, August 6.

What is the Hiroshima Peace Flame?

The flame was first lit in Hiroshima in 1965 when the Peace Park was dedicated. Thousands of people lit candles and joined their flames in a ceremony to light the Peace Flame monument. At the base of the monument is inscribed, "Rest in peace. We will not make the same mistake again." To remember Hiroshima is to ensure it will never happen again.

Dr. Shelley Wong teaches English as a Second Language, sociolinguistics and language education, and is a member of Washington's Chinese Community Church.

An emissary from the city of Hiroshima brought the Peace Flame to Los Angeles during the 1984 Olympics for the Survivalfest peace march. The Survivalfest was sponsored by a coalition of peace groups that helped bring the flame over to draw attention to world peace. Hundreds and hundreds of people participated in that march, and the Peace Flame was at the front of it. Since 1984, it has been kept at the Koyasan Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles.

In 1986 the flame was taken across the United States in the Great Peace March by Michael Mertens, a member of Asian/

Pacific-Americans for Nuclear Awareness (APANA). I took it on a peace walk from Leningrad to Moscow in 1987. It was an ambitious task to keep it going. Fortunately I had the help of a man from New Zealand, who carried a back-up flame.

We have to carry the flames in kerosene lamps. The flame takes on an entity of its own. I have to feed it fuel every morning and every night. Sometimes I have three flames going. The flame is sensitive to wind and rain. The big trucks going by kick up a lot of wind — a gust can easily blow it out.

What is the Global Walk?

The Global Walk is made up of people who believe we can achieve world peace and improve the environment. Many people on the walk are environmentalists; some are peace activists. We see the connection between our attitude towards human life and animals, trees, plants, the air and water. If our attitude is one of not caring, then of course we are not going to care about other human beings and other forms of life. We do community outreach in schools, churches and organizations, anywhere people gather, even along the roads as we walk. We want to change people's consciousness.

How many of you walked across the United States?

On average, about 90 people. We cook our own vegetarian meals. We have a potty bus, a kitchen, a refrigerator truck, a merchandise/office bus, and a gear bus. We do use fossil fuels, but it is the most efficient way we could find to move 100 people across the country.

Are you a *Sansei* — third-generation Japanese?

My mother is a *Sansei*. My father is a *Nisei* (second-generation), so I'm a *Sansei-hon* — that's three and a half. I feel like I'm caught in the middle.

My parents' assimilation experiences were very different from each other. My mother's early experience was in Hawaii — her parents were born there and her grandparents were early pioneers. My father experienced California-style racism towards Asians. My mother did not. I met some Japanese-Americans along the walk who said, "You're the same age as my mother, but you don't act like her at all. My mother would never be doing anything like this!"

Were you interned during WWII?

Yes, I was two and a half years old when my family was sent to Manzanar, a concentration camp in California. I don't

have a deep recollection of the camp, just sensations of confusion, anger and hurt on the part of the adults. It was an experience through which I always look at the world. It never leaves me. I remember the stinging sand. I remember the mess halls and gang showers. We had to stand in line for everything. My uncle Mino was in Italy with the 422nd U.S. Army regiment while we were in the camp.

My mother's family lived in Pearl Harbor. Her mother's family came from Hiroshima. In 1983 when I went to Japan I took a train to Hiroshima. The connections between being in the camp, Pearl Harbor, Hiroshima, and my uncle being in the American military hit me one day. It just wasn't right. That's when I decided to become a nuclear disarmament activist.

Why are you doing this walk?

I wanted to get involved in the peace movement — there are very few Asians in the movement. And I have an adven-

turesome bent. I'm not tied to family responsibilities and now have the freedom to do things like the walk. Also I like to travel and I've always wanted to go around the world, but not as a tourist — I want to have a purpose to what I'm doing.

Can you talk more specifically about what the commitment to do the walk entails?

My commitment is to keep the Hiroshima Peace Flame burning. The other part of the commitment is to ensure that the walk continues every day.

When I'm cleaning the potties, I keep thinking to myself, "I'm committed, I'm committed," because sometimes it doesn't feel like it. But somebody has to clean the potties.

The commitment also includes working out human relationships. We ask everyone in the walk to pay \$11 a day. Some people don't want to pay the entire

Continued on page 27

Racism is America's *real* enemy

As an American of Japanese ancestry who has suffered imprisonment in a U.S. concentration camp, I abhor the mistreatment of people of color, war or no war. The end result is never justified whether they be Arabs, Vietnamese, Panamanians, Pacific Islanders, or Japanese.

In the past, wars engendered name-calling, threats, suspicions, imprisonment and genocide based on racial hatred — whatever fed the demonic war energy. We continue to be stuck in a racist coma that portrays people of color as backward, ignorant, inherently violent, inhuman and animal-like. Those who advocated the Gulf War call Arabs "treacherous" and "crazy." Of course the "patriots" must believe this because then it is all right to kill "them." The victims have become expendable monsters to be

eliminated like the "Gooks" or "Japs." Thus, we Americans are the heroes purging the "insane demons" from the world. This dehumanization is a manipulative tactic calculated to prey on people's feelings.

We were told that the Iraqis are the enemies, but the real enemies are right here in this country. They stem from emptiness and fear and manifest themselves in racism, greed, oppression, and violence.

Can we change our perspective and see the Arab people as loving, intelligent, and dignified, and as close brothers and sisters? Are we not kin in a world in dire need of cooperation and wisdom in order to survive today's environmental dilemma? All of us must turn our energies toward an authentic security — a livable world for all.

— Judy Imlal on the Gulf War

Breathing in the spirit

by Anne E. Cox

When we are fortunate enough not to have respiratory problems, we rarely think of our breathing. Our bodies do it for us — in and out. We can hold our breath for a while . . . and then let it out in a big whoosh. But then the automatic, totally involuntary action of breathing takes over. Those who have asthma or emphysema know what it is like not to have the process of breathing working smoothly. It's scary not to be able to breathe, for breath is life. Yet, unless we have difficulties breathing, we rarely think of the breath in us. We just breathe in and out, steadily sustained by the breath that gives us life.

Jesus' death is about breathing. At the moment of his death, two of the Gospels say that he "breathed his last." Matthew tells us that he "cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit." Yet Matthew is also talking about breathing, for "spirit" and "breath" are so closely wedded that they are interchangeable translations. "Respiration" and "spirit" come from the same Latin root.

Jesus breathes out; that is to say, he expires. What happens when Jesus gives up his spirit? Matthew says, ". . . the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised."

Jesus' last breath was not a gentle exhalation of air, but a great, earth-shaking expiration. He breathes his last, and in doing this, sends his spirit away and out into the world. Loose in the world, his

spirit dramatically changes the landscape. The earth is opened up — the holy of holies in the temple is no longer shrouded; rocks are split open revealing the depths of the earth; and the tombs are opened, releasing the dead.

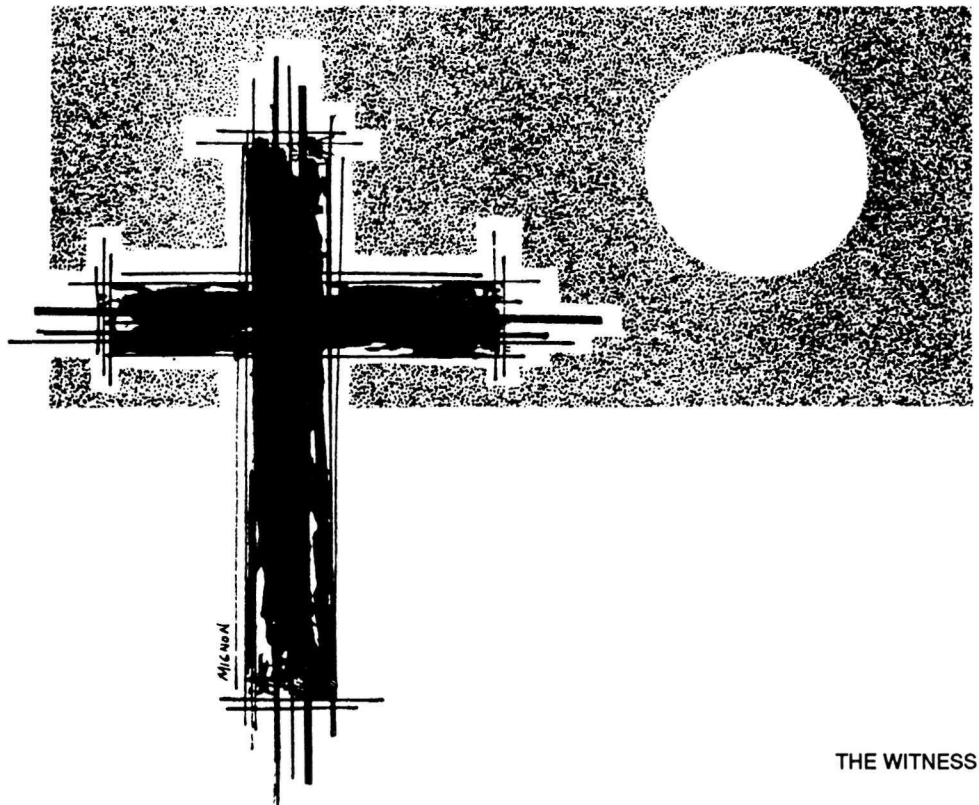
Boundaries fall away when Jesus breathes his last — inside and outside, the surface of the earth and the interior of the earth, the dead and the living. What had been separated comes together — all on account of the breath, the spirit.

Breath is used as another metaphor for rebirth in the Old Testament. God calls the prophet Ezekiel to speak to the dry bones and tell them that God will cause breath to enter them. And the prophet watches as the dry bones are knit together, and then stand, and at last have breath in them. The breath enters the bones, and after this happens God tells Ezekiel to prophesy further to them, say-

ing, "I will open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you home from the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am God, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live . . ."

The same language is used in Ezekiel as Matthew uses for the saints or "holy ones" who are raised. In Ezekiel, the bones receive breath — God says, "I will put my Spirit in you, and you shall live." In Matthew, after Jesus breathes his last, the bodies of the saints who have fallen asleep receive breath; Jesus yields his spirit, and they receive the spirit. Jesus' breath goes from him to the people.

Breath is at the beginning of life. How did God create in the beginning? — by God's breath or spirit moving over the waters. One of the Psalms talks about our connection to breathing: "When you



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take away their breath, they die and return to dust. When you send forth your Spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground." Throughout our history, God breathes the spirit into us and we live; indeed, God inspires us.

Matthew saw Jesus' death as the pivotal point in all of history, as an exchange of breath. At the time of his death, Jesus' breath is released for all of

"Air molecules that were once inside me, giving me life, may well be inside you now, sustaining you. Jesus' spirit is like the air we share."

us. We all breathe in each others' breath. Little air molecules that were once inside me, giving me life, may well be inside you now, sustaining you. Jesus' spirit is like the air we share. Matthew tells us that with his death, Jesus' spirit was released for all of us to breathe in, to take into our beings. It was released to inspire all of us.

We need inspiration! The bones in Ezekiel have no breath; they say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off."

We are also the dry bones without breath. How many empty places do we hold inside ourselves that cry out, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off." Where are we dried up? Where are we without hope, and clean cut off? Where is the lifeless spot that we shelter from the world, keeping it concealed in a grave of its own? We each have our own private

dead places that we try to keep buried — maybe a wounded heart, shattered expectations, a lost job, rejection by family, no home.

As a society we have lifeless places that do not breathe and that we would like to keep buried — racism, violence, homelessness, abuse, addictions. Yet, even though we have buried places, we are also the dry bones who cry out.

Wherever we feel cut off, that is where the prophet is directed to come and prophesy. Likewise, it is where Jesus breathes his last. When he does, he breathes life into the lifeless, into the dead, and into our dead places.

Part of the process of Jesus' death reaching into our dead places is to reveal them, look at them, rather than continuing to hide them or bury them deeper. They are revealed the same way that Matthew says the graves of the saints are revealed after Jesus' death. Matthew lets us know that there are no longer any boundaries. The pieces of life that had been held in opposition until now become part of the same fabric, pieces that had been opposing pairs become part of a totality. Just as the veil in the temple is ripped open and the earth splits apart, so too are our dead places opened up when Jesus breathes his last.

When do we know we are breathing in the spirit that Jesus released? When we are not sheltering dead, cut-off places, but exposing them to light and life, we are breathing Jesus' spirit. It is that spirit which inspires us toward life and wholeness.

When Jesus breathes his last, a whole new story begins. It is the story of the church, the story of those of us who share in his spirit, who are inspired by his death and resurrection. The death of Jesus then is about an ending, but is primarily about a beginning — the beginning of Jesus' spirit loose in the world. At his death our hope is not lost, we are not clean cut off; rather we are inspired and connected. TW

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Wellspring House:

A place of hospitality and hope

by Rosemary Haughton

Ten years ago seven people pooled their slender resources and began a venture which their friends regarded with the deepest misgiving. The group consisted of a married couple with a grown daughter, two women who had been directors of religious education in a parish, a nun, a teenager, and myself — a foreigner with a grown family who was at a turning point in her life and needed a new direction.

We had all been part of a group that met weekly to study and pray the Scriptures. In time, some of us found we could no longer only study and pray. We were led to make choices that would enable us to live the Gospel in a new way — a way of compassion, sharing and hospitality.

Each of us bought to the venture faith, a willingness to risk, and not much else. None of us had permanent jobs — several were leaving jobs. But we had a desire to create a place which could be a home for ourselves and for people in crisis. We drew up a statement of our common vision and began house-hunting — still with no money!

We found a 17th-century house on the outskirts of Gloucester, Mass., a fishing community whose shaky economy is inadequately propped up by tourism. Gloucester is on the island-like Cape Ann peninsula, and people in need are reluctant to go “over the bridge” inland

to the social service offices, one reason we chose to be there.

We moved there in August 1981, making the down payment the sale of the married couple's home, and a private loan from a congregation. We came with some furniture, some good friends to scrub and scour, and a vision. We wanted to respect the earth and people's privacy, and enable everyone to work together to help those who came.

The first two who came to the community were single women — a young girl escaping from an abusive home, and a woman whose long experience of rejection, homelessness and dogged survival had culminated in a fire that destroyed the precarious lodging she had found as combined nurse, housekeeper and guardian to an alcoholic. The first family was a mother with multiple sclerosis and her 4-year-old son, evicted after the father deserted.

What our community originally proposed was to provide a temporary home for people “in crisis.” In the years after the first guests came, we discovered that the “crisis” was homelessness — especially family homelessness — on a scale never before imagined. And Wellspring House, now incorporated and with an energetic and enthusiastic board of directors, set itself to respond to that crisis.

As Wellspring House stands at the beginning of its next decade, ready to launch into new and different projects, we look back and recognize what this place with such a modest beginning now means to so many people.

The community has helped over 200 families put their shattered lives back together and find permanent homes.

Many stay in touch.

Because shelter is not the answer to homelessness, Wellspring also means housing. In 1985 and 1987 the community bought two dilapidated houses, raised money to re-hab them, and created a small apartment house and a lodging house, both for low-income people.

It also means a place to which people want to come. A large group of volunteers, talented and capable men and women, have become part of a community committed to making a difference to the lives of people in need.

It is also a place where women come together to study, reflect and pray. Wellspring has, over the years, developed a strong spirituality which the community describes as “feminist” and also as “prophetic.” The two words blend, because they refer to the vision of a different kind of society, rooted in justice, in co-operation rather than competition, and in caring for and nurturing people and the earth.

The “right brain” awareness which “sees vision and dreams” is that of the prophetic tradition, and calls forth in women and men a commitment to a different social order in which women can grow to personhood free from violence and humiliation, and children receive from parents and society the love and support they need. Inevitably, our feminist awareness has been strengthened and deepened by the experience of living with women who are survivors of abuse, rejection, and incest, and are struggling to remake their lives and the lives of their children.

What is Wellspring House like? If you visit you will be greeted, probably by a

Rosemary Haughton, a theologian and writer, is part of the Administrative Team at Wellspring House. She recently published a book, *Song in a Strange Land: Wellspring House and the Homelessness of Women*, Templegate, 1990.

volunteer who will lead you through the kitchen, where someone is preparing vegetables for dinner. Members of the staff will take time off to talk to you and show you around. A volunteer is answering the telephone, perhaps taking calls for emergency food, since Wellspring does telephone intake for the local food pantry (up to 20 calls a day), or someone has called to ask for shelter or to talk to one of the shelter guests. Guests may be helping to set the table, or are in the playroom with their children, or in a meeting with the staff person who is each guest's "primary" worker.

In the office someone is organizing the bulk mailing of a newsletter, while others are dealing with letters and lists, and keeping the books. Perhaps it is a day to prepare for a board meeting, which takes place in the living room with its huge 17th-century hearth, once the kitchen and living center of the old farmhouse and inn. At Christmas the stockings hang before a chimney large enough for even a very stout Santa!

One of the staff who manages the Lodging House will take you to see this once rat and roach-infested but now comfortable home for low-income single people, five women and five men. They share a common kitchen where they prepare meals, have parties and entertain friends. In the front yard the garden is being prepared for spring planting by one of the tenants.

Perhaps on the way you passed the apartment house and saw a mother with a toddler coming down the steps. She cannot afford "market" rents, but can manage the low Wellspring rent for her tiny apartment.

And before you leave you will probably be taken to visit the office of the Wellspring Community Land Trust, a sister corporation formed to preserve and create affordable housing, both for sale and rent. It is part of a movement spreading across the country in response to the high cost of homes and the result-



Children playing in the sandbox at Wellspring

ing homelessness.

By the time you leave you will have a sense of a place that is alive and growing. What, then, of the future? This 10th anniversary year looks dark in many ways, as unemployment increases, more and more states cut back benefits for the poor, and ordinary people close their minds to the needs of those whose very existence arouses fear and anxiety.

This year Wellspring is sponsoring many events — concerts, plays, parties, a symposium — all directed to helping people understand better the world we live in, its needs and its dreams.

Following up on research we have conducted through interviews and discussion groups with formerly homeless women, in our Summer Symposium we shall lay the groundwork for new programs in housing, education, job creation and community organizing aimed at helping homeless and other disenfranchised women create a future for themselves. Wellspring has always been characterized by a combination of idealism and professionalism, and both will continue to be needed in the years ahead.

And we will need a lot of faith — to live day after day with women whose

lives have been shattered by abuse, rejection, incest, rape — and to deal with the abusive attitude of society towards them. There are also children caught up in such situations, carrying with them terrible memories and distorted impressions of what the world is all about. Mothers and children must struggle not only with the practical results — loss of home, family, security or income — but with deeper spiritual results which are far harder to heal: the guilt and anger, the loss of a sense of boundaries, the self-hatred and self-blame, the lack of faith in any good outcome.

Yet over and over again, we see the amazing human spirit take courage, the process of healing begin, new hopes entertained, and new dreams allowed to unfold. And in this recovery are the seeds of greater change as women begin to take responsibility not only for themselves and their children but for other people. The tiny shoots of a different kind of society — the kind Jesus dreamed of and talked about and started to create — begin to show.

Wellspring House is one of the small shoots of faith. As the community moves into new times, we hope to attract others

who will want to share the enterprise.

What the community does is, from one point of view, easy to describe — the lived reality is harder. It is based in a shared commitment to Gospel values, friendship, Christian feminist spirituality, caring, praying and hoping. It expresses itself in all that we do — making decisions together, baking bread, sharing worship, speaking in public, polishing the floor, writing “thank you” notes or newsletters, counseling homeless women or cooking their meals, playing with children or appearing in court on their behalf.

This is an exciting time to live and work at Wellspring. What will it be like 10 years from now, we wonder, as the story of what ordinary people can do when they really believe the promises of faith continues to unfold. **TV**

Lullaby

**Lullabies are work songs
not sweet and gentle
as a child remembers
but a cry.**

**Anyone who's ever rocked a baby
knows
that lullabies are work songs**

**Like the prisoner's song
for breaking rocks —
a song to give a rhythm to the
work
a song to ease the weariness
and voice the bitter longing
to be free.**

**there are times
when this beloved baby
is a shrill and tedious prison,
there are times
when I would rather break a rock
than rock a child,
there are times
when I am broken on the rock
of this unyielding, strident life
and shattered
into poetry.**

Virginia Barnhart

Christian lesbians organize new group

For the first time in history, a group led predominantly by Protestant clergywomen who are lesbians, has begun an inter-cultural, multi-racial, solidarity movement called Christian Lesbians Out Together (CLOUT). The 113 clergy and laywomen who signed the news release announcing the action say that the primary purpose of CLOUT is to empower Protestant and Catholic lesbian women and to challenge the churches to which they belong.

“While we realize the risks involved in coming out, we are aware also of the risks involved in *not* coming out,” says Irene Monroe, an African-American doctoral student at Harvard Divinity School who has worked as a Presbyterian pastor. Monroe explains that CLOUT is based on the conviction that lesbian Christian women continue to be victims of spiritual abuse in churches which insist that lesbians and gay men remain either celibate or silent about their sexual activity.

Carter Heyward, a white Episcopal priest and professor of theology at Episcopal Divinity School, concurs. “For the churches to coerce either celibacy or silence is morally unacceptable to us. To submit to this spiritual abuse is to participate in our own oppression, and, we believe, that of our sisters as well, whether lesbian or not.”

Signatories of the CLOUT document come from across the United States and Europe and represent 14 Christian denominations. According to Janie Spahr, a white, ordained Presbyterian elder who directs the Ministry of Light, a gay and lesbian advocacy organization in San Anselmo, Cal., “we see a common agenda between lesbians and gay men, but we are especially mindful of the issues lesbians face as women in the churches that are patriarchal and misogynistic as well as heterosexual and

homophobic.”

Margarita Suarez, a Latina minister, ordained in the United Church of Christ and currently a Milwaukee pastor, points out that the organizers of CLOUT include seminary and college professors, seminarians, layworkers, psychotherapists, theologians, physicians, chaplains, parish pastors and community organizers.

Suarez says, “We are sisters, mothers, and daughters, grandmothers and aunts, cousins and neighbors, friends and lovers of good Christian folk. We come from different races, ethnic groups and classes.” Diane Moore, ordained in the Christian Church, former chaplain at Brandeis University and currently a Ph.D. candidate at Union Theological Seminary continues, “We are the ones whose lives and work are at stake in all those church discussions about ‘homosexuality and the church.’ ”

A white lesbian ordained in the United Church of Christ who is pastoring a church in Minnesota, Cathy Ann Beaty, emphasizes, “CLOUT is committed to struggling not only against sexism and heterosexism but also against anti-Arab oppression, anti-Semitism, U.S. imperialism, racism, classism, clericalism, and other structures of domination and violence.”

“Especially in the context of the recent war in the Persian Gulf, it is important that we make connections between U.S. militarism, racism, and the ongoing oppression of lesbians and gay men throughout the churches and the world,” Coni Staff, a white pastor in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Church in California, stressed.

The first international gathering of CLOUT is scheduled to take place in November, 1991. Those wishing further information can write to CLOUT, P.O. Box 758, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130.

fee because our buses burn fossil fuels — they will pay for everything else but fuel. This causes friction among the marchers. Which is more important, the individual point of view or the welfare of the whole? I help by doing conflict resolution and mediation. That's the crux and the hardest to deal with.

Another part is trusting that the environment will take care of us — this is a spiritual concept. An example of it involves our Blister Bus, a van that follows us. When people can't walk any further, they get into the Blister Bus. We've gone through three Blister Buses. The first was owned by a couple who decided to pull out — we were shocked. What were we going to do without a Blister Bus? The same weekend a man in Phoenix donated his Volkswagen van. Later it blew an engine and the same week a woman with a van joined our walk and said, "You can use my van." Things like that are happening constantly, so I don't worry much about material things.

What are some of the difficulties you have had ?

Personality clashes, conflicts over sharing work, burn-out, divergent views over priorities. We decided in the first two weeks of orientation that we would use a consensus decision-making process. For some people that meant every decision had to come to the whole community. That process was cumbersome and unwieldy and created a lot of hard feelings. So what we've done instead is to give it to a small group of people, a committee. They listen and decide by consensus unless it's a major decision about money, like getting rid of a bus or purchasing another vehicle. Then it's brought to the entire group.

What are the kinds of problems that need to be handled by a committee?

All the problems we have in the larger society, we have on the walk: alcoholism, drugs, conflicts about money or because people are mistreating each other. There's also ageism, racism, and sexism.

For example, we had a homeless Vietnam veteran who was an alcoholic. He was willing to work his share, but he would go on drinking binges. One time he became violent and afterwards didn't remember anything. We gave him three chances. There were people on the walk who said we should take care of him, and that because of what the march stood for, we couldn't ask him to leave. Others said that we didn't have the resources to take care of that kind of addiction, and he was jeopardizing the walk. A small, randomly-selected group met to resolve the problem. The group asked him to leave the walk and encouraged him to enter a rehabilitation center. The process took many weeks.

I understand it's an international group — what nationalities are represented?

We have five Soviets — three women and two men. It was difficult for them at first, because beside having to adjust to the walk, they were in a new country and culture. We have a mother and daughter from Spain. At first, the presence of lesbians and people who shaved their heads bothered the mother, but she's come to terms with those issues. When you are walking along with someone whose life experience is totally different from yours and you find out they are just like your son or daughter in many ways, only with a different haircut, your consciousness has to change. I love it! I love when people get together like that.

There is a woman from Holland, a very dedicated peace activist who sends her walk newsletter out all over Europe and receives hundreds of letters in return. We have a Buddhist monk from Japan — he is one of the spiritual leaders of the walk. When there's a special

prayer to be said, he is there. He's dedicated to walking for peace. He doesn't have many material possessions. He walks and drums every day, rain or shine. We had a couple of West Germans for a short time. There's a guy from Puerto Rico who works hard at picking up aluminum cans. He's very dedicated to working for the homeless.

As a group, how much did you earn by gathering aluminum cans?

We could earn \$100 a week, easy. The problem is storing them. We separate our cans, our plastic, we do our own composting, which means finding a place to bury compost. We have our own wind generator, and solar panels supply lights in the buses.


What groups have you talked to?

Mostly students. We go to grammar schools, middle schools, high schools and colleges. Also, churches and community organizations have been receptive.

How does it work?

We have a coordinator and he or she will go ahead, make contacts with the schools and then come back and say, "We've got 10 classes tomorrow, we need 20 people." A new speaker will be coupled with an experienced person.

It's quite a commitment to make the walk, both financially and in giving of your time, and also very physically challenging. What sustains you?

Basically I believe people are good and that individually and collectively we can change human consciousness. People come and tell us about their local problems. Some come with tears in their eyes because they are so glad to see something being done for peace. They give us donations, saying, "You're doing this for us." I hear over and over, "Walk for me. Walk for us." 

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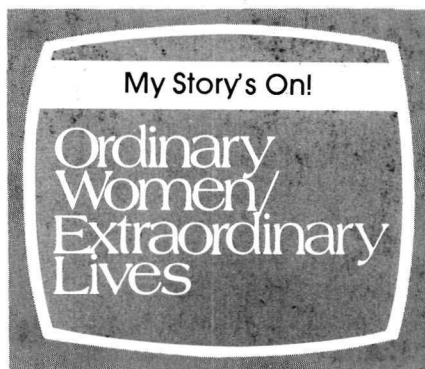
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