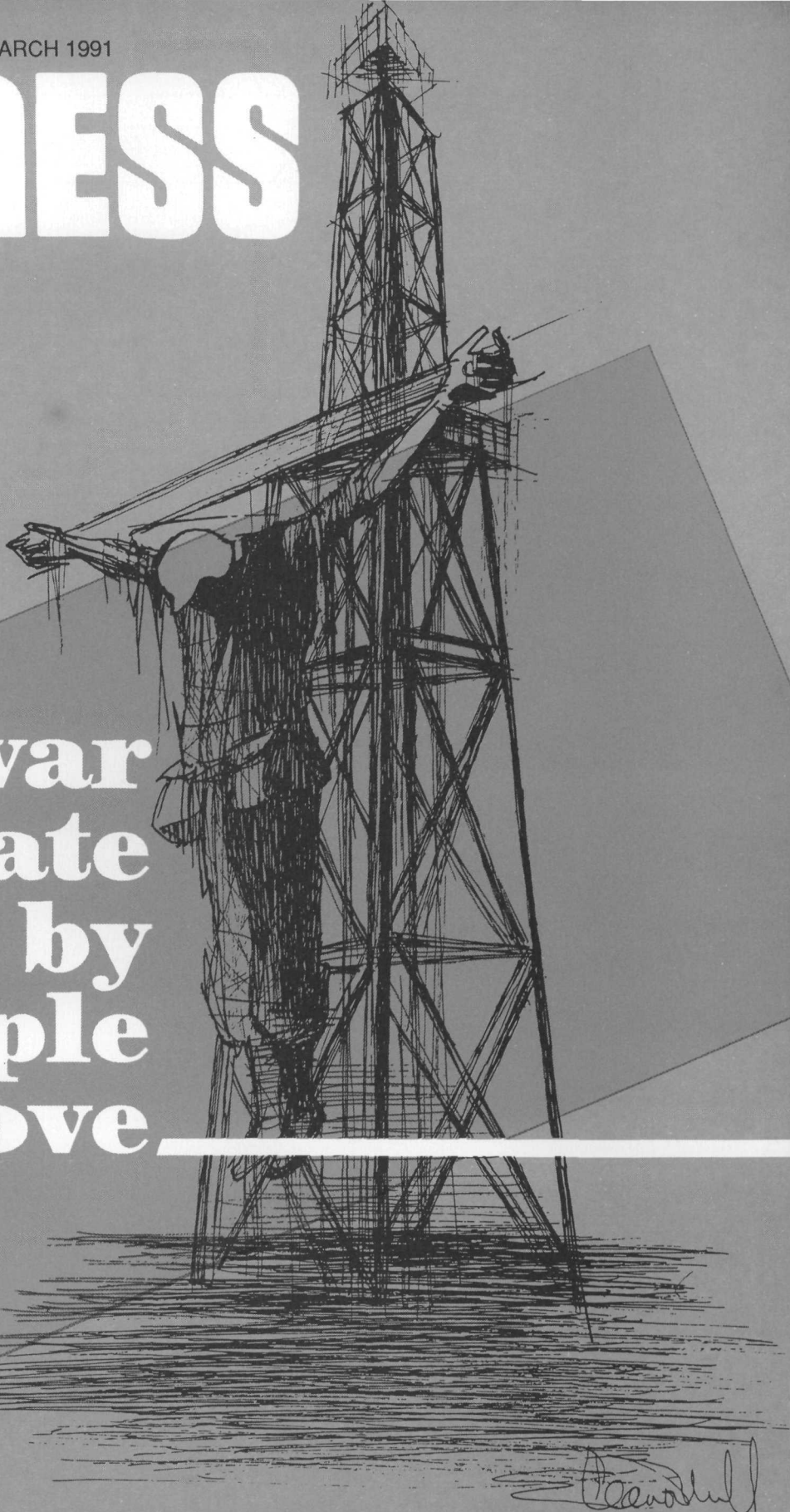


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THE WITNESS

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



Bevattul

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Letters

Moved by Jon's story

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

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

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

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

Doing what Christ asks

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

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

The Rev. David Gracie
Philadelphia, Pa.

Laments church's turn

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

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

Jailed war protestors weave a

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ronald G. Andrews
State College, Pa.

Congrats for concern

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

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

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

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

Not in compliance

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

Anthony Brady
E. Syracuse, N.Y.

fabric of hope for peace

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sam Day
Rock County Prison
Janesville, Wisc.

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

Right-wing tide rising

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

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

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

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

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THE WITNESS

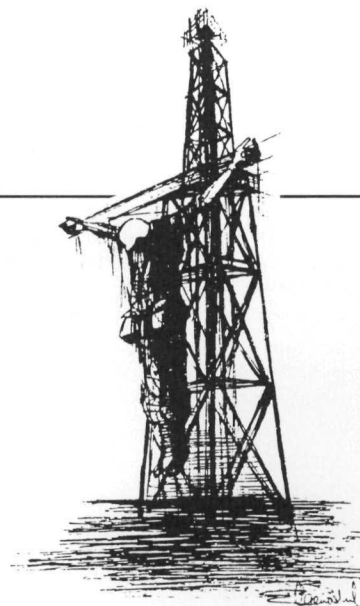


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What they're saying about the war

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

— **Jesse Jackson**

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

— **Dolores Huerta**
United Farm Workers

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

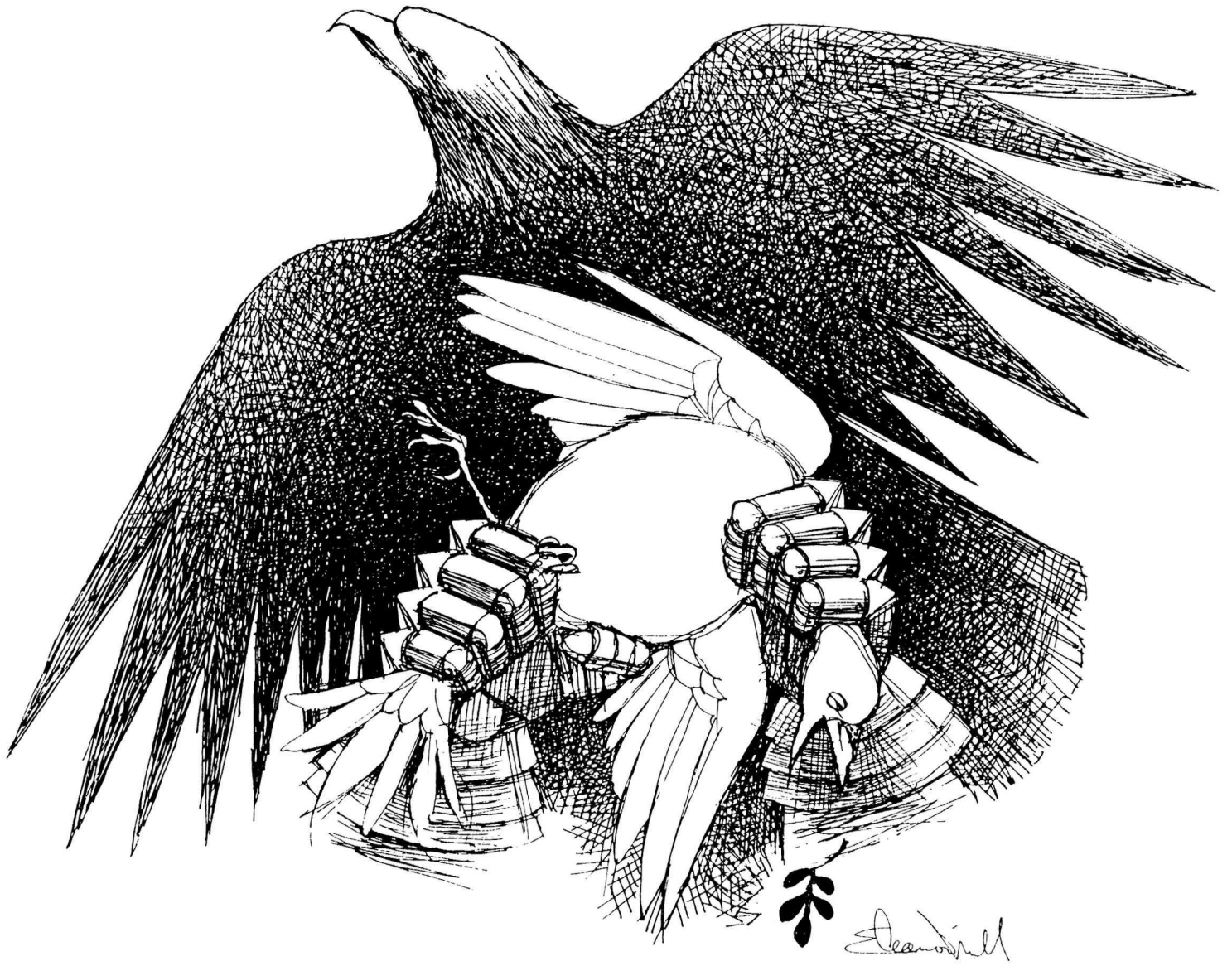
"Article III states that the President has conspired to engage in a massive war against Iraq employing methods of

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

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

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

— **Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, D-Tex.**



The bitter fruits of war

by Manning Marable

Y

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

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

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

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

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

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

over international oil sources.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

struggling against neocolonialism.

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


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

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

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

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

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

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



To potential WITNESS authors

THE WITNESS will now accept manuscripts on computer disks, either 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" floppies. The word processing program must be MS/DOS compatible. Acceptable programs are WORDSTAR 3.3 and above.

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

by Susan E. Pierce

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

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

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

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

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

"My parents had a keen appreciation



Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

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

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

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

had experienced back East.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued on page 23

Episcopal Peace Fellowship office

Where can I get information about conscientious objection?

What can I do to deepen my efforts at peacemaking?

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

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

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

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

Another consequence of revitalization

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

flooded by war queries

by Mary Lou Suhor

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Resources

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

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

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

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

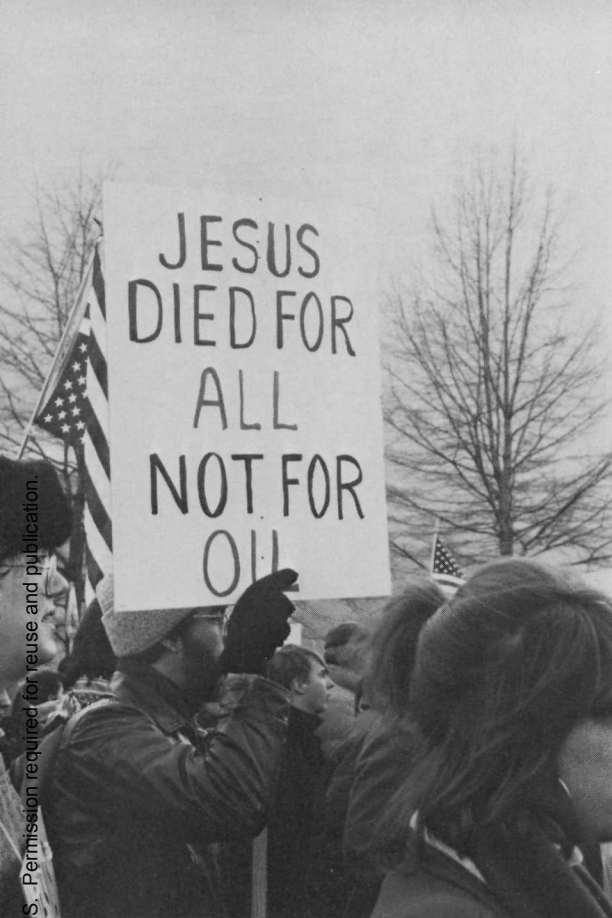


Over 200,000 protest Persian Gulf War

More than 200,000 anti-war protestors marched in Washington, D.C. Jan. 26 in the largest demonstration since the Vietnam War, according to the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, sponsor of the event. An equal number demonstrated simultaneously in San Francisco, and a march in Bonn, Germany that day drew 150,000 against the war.

In Washington, a mix including students, war veterans, religious and ethnic groups, and military families, trudged down Pennsylvania Avenue amidst an array of flags as marchers indicated their patriotism and support of U.S. troops by demanding that they be brought home. It was estimated that 53% of the marchers were women, 47% men. Youth dominated the march with representatives from more than 600 campuses across the country. Vermont's Bread and Puppet theater was also on hand with its huge grieving mother figures; also, their characters in black, carrying replicas of dead bodies weaved throughout the crowd to add a note of stark realism to the event. Perhaps most poignant was the attempt of the marchers to witness, frequently through homemade signs and symbols, how they felt about the war. Accompanying photos show some of their efforts. For information about future war protests contact: the National Campaign, 212-227-0221, and the National Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, 212-777-1246.





Protesting the Gulf War with Becca

by Joyce Clemmer Munro



Becca and Joyce Munro display their signs for the peace march.

Except for an orange-tinged rim near the horizon, it is still dark. The cold passes through my sweater, turtleneck, and woolen long johns as though they aren't there. How much of this cold is temperature, how much fear? I have put on my hiking boots but this is no hike. I wish it were.

Then I remember last night, when my daughter Becca, 9, stood on a stool to lead her 3-year-old brother Ian in a homemade peace chant. Seeing us pack knapsacks, he ran for his, and we played along, so for Ian a peace march means a chocolate bar that he can keep in his room. Meanwhile Becca pored over a piece of posterboard with her rainbow of markers.

Now she is beside me. Together we

are going to march in Washington to protest the war in the Persian Gulf.

It is the first march for both of us and I am afraid. Becca is a small spot of green that will wash in the color that thousands of people make. But if I keep my eye on her sign, which she is holding high even as we wait in gray dawn for the bus, I might be able to track her. I worry secretly about tear gas, but I have damp washcloths with baking soda on them hidden in my pack. I hope Becca won't see something that I don't want to or can't explain. Then again this war is something I can't explain. Mostly what I fear has a more subtle edge. That no one will notice and care that we are there. That the belief one person can make a difference will end up false, and this march will be dismissed as child's play.

We board the bus. Almost at once we wolf down the sandwiches we brought, and start on the tangerines and candy.

Joyce Clemmer Munro is a free-lance writer living in Harleysville, Pa.

After three hours we arrive at the RFK Stadium. Looking out the window at the brown and black and white and yellow people, I begin to get excited. They shuffle in a clumsy dance. Some wear prayer shawls, others long dangling peace earrings. According to their license plates, they come from Maine, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Indiana, Nebraska, Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York. Hundreds of thousands of people.

Briefly, we of the same bus try to keep track of each other, but we have had such a short time to become recognizable faces, and after a few moments of trying to turn every stranger's face into a new friend, we break apart like a cookie. Five of us hang onto each other's coats through the Metro turnstiles and up the escalator into sunlight.

We get news that the march has begun, but nothing happens where I stand. I am cold no longer, and I have memorized the pattern of the woman's scarf in front of me.

Who is here? Vietnam veterans are leading the march. Then military families. Next Arab-Americans. Then religious people. Followed by labor unions and students. There are almost as many men as women. "I'm glad you're here," one gray-haired woman says to Becca, patting her head, but she is by no means alone. Babies bobble in backpacks, and below them children, at the elbows of their parents. This is a march about relationships between people.

I want to be part of the religious group. From here I can read only their signs, not their faces: Quakers Have Always Been Opposed to War, Hutterites for Peace, One Presbyterian for Peace. Banners identify Methodists, Catholics, and Episcopalians. My sign expresses my concern but not my faith. From where I stand, no Mennonite banner billows out above me, and I feel alone and small.

I look up. There is President Bush on

Becca's sign, complete with elbow pads and a pencil in his pocket. He looks hurried but with one hand is throwing away missiles and machine guns, while the other hand is picking up a flower and a recycling symbol as he moves to fill the empty bowl of a skinny frowning child. A plump dove with tiny feet tilts forward at his knee. Under the President's perfectly tied shoes are the letters: !!P!E!A!C!E! Then I remember: I am here with my daughter, my friends Loey and Marilyn, and I have met an ex-Catholic woman who works for justice issues among Episcopalians. I am in good company.

Finally we begin moving. It could be a party. People have climbed light poles to take pictures. Someone goes past selling homemade cookies big as pies. We walk near the edge where there is air and we can set our own pace. With loud voices a group of students behind us leads a chant. "Hell no, we won't go, we won't die for Texaco." Becca makes a slight adjustment to the language and adds her strong Sunday school voice.

We have been warned that there are hecklers along the march, but we never see them. People on our side of the sidewalk wear peace buttons and holds signs, or stand quietly watching.

But they are not the only ones watching. In front of the White House, the cold knot in my stomach comes back. White, blue, and yellow cars are bumper to fender. Behind them a row of police stand with legs apart and arms folded. Next, a dashline of their motorcycles and sleek brown horses. Just behind the wrought iron fence are groups of police. Across the lawn against the building in the glare of the sun are more of them. I am shocked. They look tense. They are expecting someone that is not me. This could be another country, but it isn't. It is Becca's first look at the White House and she takes a picture.

The confusion and despair I have felt in the past weeks and months as I lis-

tened to Congressional speeches, live coverage of the war, and call-in programs fall away. I can read and hear pieces of the truth all around me here. "The New World Order is an Old World Order" — of course, imperialism. Democracy? We could be in the Baltics and El Salvador. Human rights? Why not invade South Africa? "Invest in solar and wind energy, not war." How about a viable energy policy that emphasizes efficiency, alternatives, and independence of imports? And a more just economic policy for that matter. An act of conscience and citizenship would be for me to say I am willing to pay a humanitarian tax. Hungry mouths in the world, poor schools, and struggling clinics are not beside the point in this war.

Like one sign I want to shout: "This is not a video game." The "peace dividend" that was reaped in 1990 is being used up now as drawing board missiles, tanks, helicopters, and bombers get their reality check. They are "tools in the toolbox" — the act of destruction has co-opted the language of construction. What is being built in the Persian Gulf? I search my heart. I could believe in "smart bombs," for I have benefited from other "smart" things, but I suspect the most insidious real gain in the Persian Gulf will be a greater shift in our economy toward military development. To call these weapons "tools!" This is a war of words, and I am here to protest language that turns to dust in the mouth.

Suddenly every dream I have for Becca seems past. People around me are noticing a Vietnam vet's sign. It is President Bush holding an American flag. As the vet walks along, he pulls down on a stick and the hair and flag change to Hitler and the Third Reich. "The policies don't change, just the faces," his sign says. In a flash I can see it — skin with bone sticking through it — my daughter's wasted body. It is too real. I look away to the sidewalk where two African-American police officers stand, a man

and woman. The vet has just flashed his sign at them. Their bellies shake.

This is not the Third Reich. I am here because I live in a country that gives the minority opinion room to express itself. I am in Washington to remind the government of my rights. I am in a peace march because food, education, medicine, clean air and clean water are what I want for the innocent children of the world. And a rainbow of markers so they can pour out their thoughts for us. Until then these children might as well be little stones crying out.

Jesus welcomed the little ones. He also said people who didn't treat children with reverence should have millstones put around their necks. Only those of us who are like little children can enter the Kingdom. Jesus welcomes the child in each one of us. I am here because of the tenderness of Jesus.

Tomorrow I will go to church. I'll probably bawl my head off as I tell them about this march. I'll see tears in their eyes, in empathy for the mess I'm making but also because Jesus wept. I know we'll pray, maybe we'll even get down on our knees. We'll talk in quiet groups. Some people will hug me. Some will tell me they disagree with me. I hope we try to answer the question: Who is the enemy I am to love? Sooner or later after more tears, talk, and prayer, I hope we will want to do something. Maybe we'll write some catchy songs about peace. Or print armbands that say, "We're using the tools of peace," and volunteer at Habitat for Humanity. Maybe we'll go to members of Congress with warm bowls of water to wash their hands. Or throw a feast for the homeless. Or put on sackcloth and ashes.

But what if my fellow Christians are numb? What will I do then? I may lose my faith.

I grab at Becca's sleeve. "This is a good thing, Mom," she says with eyes shining as we enter the rally on the Ellipse. "I want to go on a peace march

again soon." The coordinator is telling the crowd where those who wish to participate in an act of civil disobedience should register. I want to pull her tightly into my arms, because suddenly she seems too young to be on the journey that this march has become.

For me right now, my enemy is the government of my country and myself. I will need more opportunities than just this march to engage my enemy. Becca jumps up on my back to see the rap group on stage. They ask us to hold hands with persons next to us in a long quiet moment of silence. A seagull rises above us. Each throbbing thing, great and small, in this world has wings,

whether I can see them or not. God help me see, please, whatever the cost.

This walk has purged me of lassitude, but it stretches out to some vanishing point I cannot see. More problematic than my indifference is the possibility that I may act with courage. How would God work in my life, if I opened myself up more to prayer? How else will my daughter want to express her hope for peace? I suggest we ride the antique carousel outside the Smithsonian, but she pulls back. On my wooden horse I make silly faces and call out to her; for some time after that she doesn't talk to me. Right now, she does not want any part of today to be mere child's play. **TV**

My father was a hero in the war

**My father was a hero in the war.
He was a flier and he got a medal.
He lost his stomach to an ulcer fifteen years later.
That didn't kill him either.
That was when I was thirteen.
I remember his cries and screams in his sleep
No matter how much he drank to try to silence them.
That was when I was twenty-one or so,
a quarter of a century after the war.
He used to wake me when I was home from college.
I am almost forty now.
Last night I went to bed late.
He doesn't scream anymore.
Now he only mutters and groans.
But I can still tell that he is dreaming
about Messerschmitts and nightmare bursts of flak
that were a part of his daily life in war.
As a child he told me all about it.
Yes I learned all about it at my father's knee.
He flew in B-24's.
No one knows what they are anymore.**

**I didn't fight in Viet Nam.
I had learned at an early age that war makes
madmen, cripples, addicts and corpses.
My father was a hero in the war.
I wasn't.
I hope my son understands.
I hope he became a pacifist at his father's knee
like I did.**

J. P. Gallagher

Short Takes

Blacks will suffer worst casualties

Overall, blacks make up about 20% of all active-duty military personnel, but their percentage is higher among the enlisted grades, especially in the Army and particularly in front-line combat units like the infantry and tank forces.

This means that African-Americans — about 12% of the population, “could become 25% of U.S. casualties in a massive ground conflict with Iraq,” notes Edwin Dorn of the Brookings Institution in Washington. This is a bitter prospect for those who believe that blacks did more than their fair share of the dying in Vietnam.

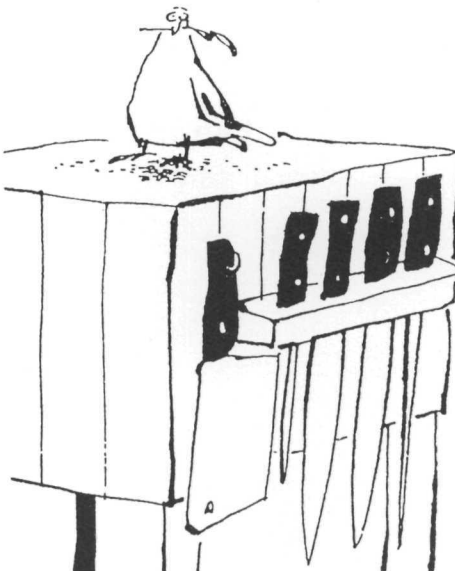
Michael T. Klare
The Guardian 1/30/91

U.S. as world policeman

With the U.S. military buildup (of 460,000 U.S. servicemen and women) in the Persian Gulf, 40% of all active-duty American military personnel currently are deployed outside the United States and its territorial waters. Prior to the Gulf conflict, 435,000 U.S. troops already were assigned to 395 major military bases in 35 foreign countries. Accompanying them were more than 168,000 civilian Pentagon employees and 400,000 family dependents. Another 47,000 U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel were stationed aboard ships in foreign waters and 10,000 U.S. troops were stationed at 20 military bases on the American overseas territorial possessions of Guam, Johnston Atoll, the Marshall Islands, Midway Island, the Virgin Islands and Wake Island, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Altogether today more than a million American military personnel and civilian Pentagon employees are stationed abroad. Prior to World War II, the U.S. maintained only a handful of military installations in foreign countries. When troops were dispatched overseas they generally were returned home in short order. The first permanent U.S. bases in foreign countries were established in Cuba and in the Philippines following the Spanish American War in 1898.

The Defense Monitor, Vol. XX No. 1
Center for Defense Information



Quote of note

Why do grown-ups always say, “Don’t hit” and then they go and start a big war?
Benjamin Rottman, age 6
Letter to the Editor, *LA Times*

Can’t support war in Mideast

War is evil. What happened in Panama leads me to say that I cannot support the war in the Middle East at this time. With all the problems we face in today’s world, it is unbelievable that we still use war as a solution.

Bishop James Ottley of Panama
Episcopal News Service 1/25/91

Words from Will

You can’t say civilization don’t advance. In every war they kill you a new way.

Will Rogers

Bishops say don’t obey

Twenty-six Roman Catholic bishops signed a Pax Christi USA statement urging U.S. forces in the Gulf not to obey orders or policies aimed at killing non-combatants. They expressed support for conscientious objectors and condemned any blockade of food or medical supplies to Iraq.

Peace Media Service 12/90

CCR sets up hotline re FBI visits

Since the beginning of the Persian Gulf crisis, the FBI has stepped up its surveillance of the Arab-American community and anti-war activists, according to the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York. Although claiming to investigate anti-Arab violence, the FBI has been asking about political beliefs and affiliations and about terrorism, making the illegal assumption that people know something about terrorism just because they are Arab or opponents of U.S. government policy.

The Movement Support Network of the Center for Constitutional Rights has collected a list of such incidents and has distributed a fact sheet in English and Arabic explaining the right to refuse to talk to the FBI. It states in part: “You have a right to tell the FBI: ‘If you want to talk to me about anything, please make an appointment to see my lawyer.’ Ask for the agent’s business card, and tell them your lawyer will call them.” CCR has set up a hotline to advise persons of their rights: 1-800-388-1277.

You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.

Jeannette Rankin

War against HIV/AIDS

Women are now the fastest growing group of persons contracting HIV/AIDS in the United States. In New York City, HIV/AIDS is the primary cause of death for women 25-34 years of age, and soon to be the leading cause of death among women of childbearing age.

In New York City, 51% of women with AIDS are black; 32% are Hispanic.

As of 1989, 29% of women with HIV/AIDS in the United States were infected through heterosexual contact, an increase from 11% in 1984. Some 60% of women living with HIV/AIDS have been infected by intravenous drug use. More than two-thirds of HIV-infected children in the United States were infected by their mothers.

Inter-Unit Working Group on HIV/AIDS
Episcopal Church Center



A Way of the Cross for the lesbian and gay community

by Claudia L. Windal

Jesus, I have watched you make this journey countless times and only now do I realize why I have felt your pain and anguish so intensely. Your pain, Jesus, has been my pain, and your journey to Calvary, mine also. Be with me as my example. When I despair and feel I can do no more, when I believe I can go no further, let me turn to you, who despite pain and agony continued in order to complete your earthly mission.

I

Jesus is condemned to death

You knew the accusations were false and the charges against you exaggerated, and yet you did not retaliate despite the death sentence. Be with me as in hatred I am called faggot/dyke, as I am falsely accused of causing the devastation of AIDS, of a sinful and perverse life style, and as I am condemned to gay/lesbian bashings, job losses, rejection by family and friends and loss of self-esteem. Like you, Jesus, let me turn to my inner strength so that I might continue the journey.

II

Jesus takes up the cross

You might have easily been tempted to push away the cross, Jesus, but instead, you extended your arms and shouldered the heavy burden. Rather than respond-

ing, "No, not me!" let me embrace my crosses of homophobia, fear, prejudice, violence, sickness, and rejection, and be about that which I am called to be — your visible presence in the world today.

III

Jesus falls the first time

The weight of the cross and the distance to Calvary became too much and you fell. It would have been so easy to remain on the ground trying to regain your strength and composure. You didn't hesitate, Jesus. You struggled to your feet, picked up the heavy cross and continued the painful walk to Calvary. Help me, Jesus, not to retreat to a dark "closet" when I feel the pain of the journey, nor turn to drugs and alcohol to dull my senses, keeping me from feeling that pain — when the weight of rejection, ridicule, and physical violence becomes too heavy for me to bear.

IV

Jesus meets His mother

As the crowd jeered at you, you must

have felt as if no one cared; then you saw the sad, yet warm and compassionate, eyes of your loving mother. Not all eyes that I meet, Jesus, are filled with prejudice and contempt. There are many who care about me. Some are supportive "straight" women and men, employers and parish communities. Others are family members who love me as son/daughter, sister/brother without concern or condemnation of my sexual orientation. Let my eyes continue to meet their eyes as sources of strength and assurance that I am cared for and loved.

V

Simon takes up the cross of Jesus

As the soldiers feared that you might die on the way to Calvary, Simon became your unwilling assistant, taking your cross upon his shoulders. Despite his upset and grumbling, you loved him and appreciated his gesture of support. Everyday I meet people who are upset that I am gay/lesbian; they mutter and grumble about my presence and yet they interact with me, work with me, employ

The Rev. Claudia L. Windal, an Episcopal priest in Minneapolis, Minn., is a candidate for a D. Min. in Spiritual Care of Persons with HIV and a contributing editor to *The Voice of Integrity*.

me, and worship with me. On occasion, despite themselves, they react kindly to me. Jesus, let me take advantage of these opportunities and view these persons as sisters and brothers, accepting their kind gestures and not being put off by their grumbling.

VI

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Jesus, you responded to Veronica's compassion by leaving the image of your face on her towel. We lesbians and gay men can leave our imprint on the world; a lasting image of caring, compassionate, justice-seeking, giving, and loving persons. Give us the courage to "come out" so that the world might know of our existence and our work. As we are known, so we will make our imprint on the world.

VII

Jesus falls a second time

Even without the weight of the cross, you fell, Jesus, and once again you mustered your strength and continued the journey. Despite my best intentions, Jesus, I occasionally fall back into self-pity and when I do, I look longingly to the safety of my "closet" and I want to retreat there. Let your example remind me that I have the strength to overcome obstacles so that I might leave the "closet" door closed as I continue my journey.

VII

Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem

Jesus, your weakness and pain must have been nearly unbearable, yet you transcended that pain to reach out to others in need. I know that prejudice, ridicule, gay/lesbian bashing, and discrimination will always be a part of my life, causing me much pain and anguish. Help me, Jesus, to reach out beyond my pain, and in my own woundedness reach out to others who have experienced similar fear, oppression, and rejection.

IX

Jesus falls a third time

The journey was nearly complete and yet you fell once again. Let me never become smug and over-confident about my ability to handle hurt and rejection, fear, and anger, since I, too, may fall repeatedly as I journey through life. When I do fall, Jesus, be there for me as my example of strength and courage.

X

Jesus is stripped of His garments

As you finally reached Calvary, Jesus, the soldiers roughly stripped off your clothing and gambled for possession of your tunic. Sometimes Jesus, I feel as if I too have been stripped of everything important to me: my family, a parish community, the privacy of my sexual activity, a decent job, and even my dignity. Help me understand that although these things give life a sense of fulfillment, they are not everything, for you are with me to stretch out your arms and embrace me in love.

XI

Jesus is nailed to the cross

You were placed on the hard wood of the cross then nailed to it, Jesus. Through the torment you spoke nothing, nor did you cry out. How difficult it is for me not to strike out when I hear homophobic slurs and read accounts of the violence against gay men and lesbians; as my church's House of Bishops votes to disassociate itself from the ordination of a gay man, and as a movement builds to canonically prohibit the further ordinations of lesbians and gay men. Jesus, let me look to your example of courage and strength.

XII

Jesus dies on the cross

From the beginning of this journey to your last breath you spoke only forgiveness, Jesus: "Forgive them for they know not what they do." May I too forgive

when I am laughed at and labeled dyke/queer, when I am told by a supervisor not to mention my sexual orientation because employees will lose respect for me, when I must remove my pink triangle from my name tag (there for those with AIDS in an attempt to put them at ease), because those in charge feel it is a political statement, and when I witness a lover denied a place at his lover's side in an emergency room or life partners separated for the holidays because their families are not comfortable with the relationship. Help me to forgive them, for certainly they know not what they do.

XIII

Jesus is taken down from the cross

Finally, the struggle came to an end. Your limp and lifeless body was placed in the waiting arms of your mother. I often worry that I will have to face tribulation, sickness, violence, fear, and finally, death, alone. Reassure me, Jesus, that I am not now, nor will I ever be, alone, and at the end of my journey I will find myself placed in your loving and outstretched arms.

XIV

Jesus is placed in the tomb

At last, your suffering ended and your body was put to rest. As you promised, Jesus, in three days you rose from death and fulfilled your guarantee of eternal life for each of us. These is much for me to do before my death, so much to accomplish, so many dreams and aspirations to realize. I find comfort in your assurance, Jesus, that the pain I have known as a lesbian/gay man will someday come to an end, and that acceptance and unconditional love will be mine in eternity where suffering, sickness, prejudice, violent crime and homophobia will be no more. Amen.

Medals on our blouses?

by Mary E. Hunt

Women in combat came to public attention during the U.S. invasion of Panama in late 1989. The current situation in the Middle East raises the question of their presence once more. The result of the discussion is a no-win situation for women, damned to discrimination if they cannot fight and damned to combat if they can. This reality presents a dilemma for religious feminists who believe in the equality of women but reject combat as a solution to global conflict. The dynamic is reminiscent of the struggle for equality in the board room though we may reject capitalism, equality at the altar although we may reject patriarchal religions, and so forth.

Little did I dream that the current Persian Gulf War would emerge, adding analytic data to my earlier concern. At this writing, thousands of U.S. servicewomen are baking in the desert and dodging missiles along with their male counterparts. Some may be home in body bags by the time this article is published. The issues take on even greater urgency than they did following the Panama incursion when no one really raised the question until a U.S. victory over a weak opponent was assured. This time such a victory is not as likely. Ironically, tabloid stories of grandmothers going off to war and style section accounts of husbands left behind struggling to find the diapers are the flimsy substance of the current public debate. Will women simply fight and talk about it later?

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There are more than 225,000 women in the U.S. combined armed services making up 11% of the total; estimates of their numbers in the Middle East indicate that they are probably about 10% of the total there. Officially they are in non-combat roles, but the threat of chemical warfare and the rigor of the conditions in Saudi Arabia render that distinction dubious if not moot.

What begs analysis is whether this is a feminist achievement or a patriarchal ploy. Is it proof that women can and should do anything men do, or a good example of how even feminism can be coopted to serve the end of patriarchal power structures?

On the one hand, I urge women's equality in and access to all avenues of society. On the other hand, I oppose combat almost without nuance. Thus I am left in a kind of feminist limbo, having to sanction, at least implicitly, something that I oppose in the name of affirming something that I support.

I embrace the notion of women in the military with all of the enthusiasm I reserve for women in the episcopacy, and perhaps a little less. While I understand that cosmetic changes alter the aesthetic, I am not persuaded that they finally change structures at all. Rather, I suspect that in certain instances, as in the case of women in hierarchical leadership in sacramental churches, such additions of women to the structures may serve to maintain rather than to dismantle those structures. The Roman Catholic Church, like the military, is hierarchical by design, de facto and de jure excluding women from leadership and decision-making roles, and using outmoded reasons for doing so that mask the real issue, namely, whether this model of reli-

gion, like this model of military, is good for anyone, male or female.

My basic worry about women in combat is the liberal claim that equality demands it. I wonder if there aren't really places, the combat-ready military for one, where alleged equality is really the diminution of the human spirit, beginning with women's and including men's, hence reinforcing rather than shifting the power equation.

Many issues call for attention. Inevitably the point is raised about women's competence and suitability for combat. In 1991 this sounds like a pitiful pedestrian concern about women's strength and spunk when evidence is plentiful that some women, as some men, are more than qualified for combat. Since modern warfare is based more on technology than brute strength, and since some women's physical strength surpasses some men's, this issue no longer commands sustained discussion except to point out how dated it is.

Politely speaking, combat does not require the highest mental, physical or spiritual capacity known to humanity. Just as some men are not physically and/or psychologically suited for combat, neither are some women. The point is that one qualified woman would be enough to justify inclusion of women in combat on the grounds of equal access, just as one Afro-American, one Hispanic and/or one Asian-American man was, in principle, sufficient to integrate the ranks.

Asking the question, "Should women be in combat?" borders on the disingenuous. It presumes that women are not in combat and that it is an ethical question asked by those who would protect women's virtue out of concern for

women's well-being. The fact is that women are in combat already, virtue or no. It is time to reframe the question to reflect the reality.

Captain Linda Bray led her troops in Panama to a dog kennel where enemy troops were alleged to have been hiding. Gunfire was exchanged. This is combat by any definition, and Captain Bray is a woman. Hence my claim that women are engaging in combat is proved albeit by an incident that was embarrassing to the military when it handed out combat medals. The question would be usefully reframed as "What does it mean that women are in combat?" this being the concern of those who stress strict equality; or "Should anyone be in combat?" or "How can we avoid combat?" These questions, virtually absent from public debate, are kept at bay by continually asking the wrong "should" question.

Another issue is whether war is really a male construct, something that women will imitate when given the chance but would probably not come up with on their own. I am increasingly leery of any brands of feminism that make earth mothers of all females, positing certain qualities of harmony and well-being to women, while saddling men with the blame for aggressive, bellicose behavior. I have seen enough pacifist men and been involved in enough feminist battles to know the difference.

Still, at times when men have held sway, which would be most of recorded history, conflicts have been solved by fighting rather than developing consensus. Women, on the other hand, have been responsible for a range of anti-war efforts, prominent recent ones including the Jeannette Rankin Brigade during the Vietnam War, the Greenham Common and Seneca Peace Encampments against nuclear weapons, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo and other groups of relatives of disappeared persons in Latin America, the leaders of which are usually women.

The most persuasive case for women

advancing in the military, something that combat hastens, is the practical case in terms of employment and future benefits. While it is true that combat is a sure route to decorations and promotions and for this reason women should have access, such arguments miss another point; namely, the erosion of military benefits at a time when those who sign up are disproportionately poor, people of color, and lacking in basic educational skills.

The G.I. Bill, long considered a ticket

"Asking the question, 'Should women be in combat?' borders on the disingenuous. The fact is that women are in combat already . . . It is time to reframe the question to reflect the reality."

to higher education after military service, now requires that military personnel contribute financially during the time served in order to be eligible afterwards. This is something many women who struggle to make ends meet on a military salary, especially if they have children, cannot afford and/or do not think they will ever use. Hence they lose out from the beginning due to inadequate counseling and the economic disadvantage with which they began their service. So much for an equal opportunity employer in an unequal society.

Likewise, many military training programs that attract women have little

transfer value outside the military.

The much touted military discipline, "guaranteed to make a man out of you," is similarly dubious for women. Hazing and harassment that bonded men to other men in the homosocial environment that used to be the military in "the good old days" has not been redesigned to take into account women's ways of bonding.

Sexual harassment is common. Abuse, even rapes have been reported. The notorious case of a woman student at the U.S. Naval Academy, Gwen Marie Dreyer, being chained to a urinal by eight of her male classmates, then photographed for their pleasure just before the Army-Navy football game, touched off an investigation of that institution. The Committee on Women's Issues, including Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland), found recently that "there are structural impediments to assimilation of women" at Annapolis and that "breakdown in civility and discipline contributes to sexual harassment at the academy." It is reported that "low-level sexual harassment can pass as normal operating procedure" among some students and faculty.

The Catch-22 for women in the military, and especially for women in combat, is that they must conform to a norm in which what is feminine is inferior. Recruits are taunted with the epithet "girls" if they do not perform properly. It is one thing for a young man to have stereotypically masculine traits ingrained into him, quite another for women. Women must choose between participating in the implicit degradation of all women by tolerating the abusive macho practices, or distinguish themselves as feminists or be accused of being lesbians because they maintain their integrity as women in a system in which being a woman under any circumstance is wrong. This dynamic leaves me pessimistic about rapid changes in military life even if women enter combat, and fearful that women who do will be vic-

timized by enemies on both sides, including their would-be comrades. Who would want her daughter in such a situation?

Even patriotism is gender-linked in a patriarchal society. While for men the ultimate expression of loyalty to one's country is to serve honorably in the military, in combat if necessary, women are given a very different message. To serve in the military, other than as a nurse or in some other support position, is at best anomalous, at worst invading men's territory, in short unpatriotic. It never occurs to people that groups like Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women Strike for Peace and similar groups express a kind of patriotism that both women and men would do well to imitate. Rather, the gender-bound nature of patriotism, like every other gender-bound dimension of society, is kept under wraps until women cross the gender line as in the case of combat. Then it rears its ugly head, confusing those who do not perceive the message and punishing those who do.

This analysis, while only hinting at the complexity at hand, helps to highlight the feminist dilemma around women in combat. It is further complicated by the problems that such women face when they seek combat positions in a society in which fundamental equality in other arenas is denied.

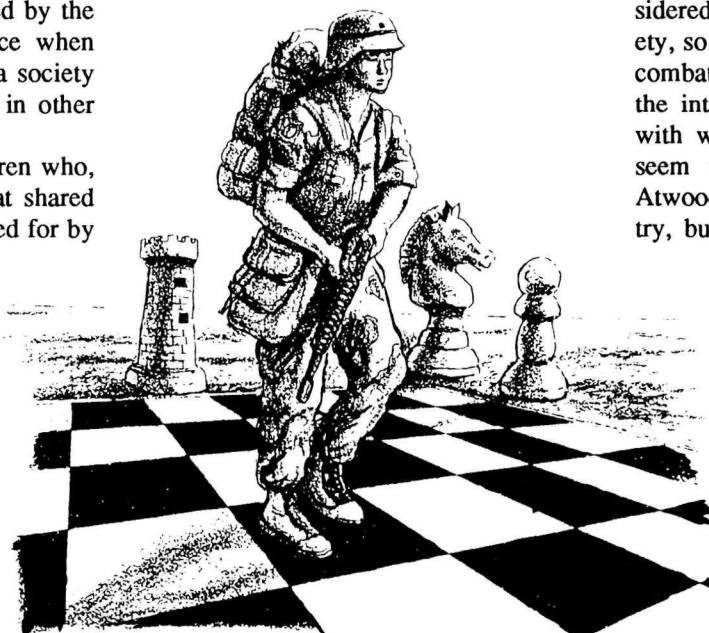
The major impact is on children who, despite feminists' best efforts at shared responsibility, are generally cared for by women. While there are cases in the current "Operation Desert Storm" where both parents are on duty with children being left in the care of grandparents, future combat for women may mean increasing problems for children especially if, as is the case with many, the mother is a single parent.

It does not follow that

women should not be in combat, but that men ought to assume an equal role in child rearing. Such not being the case, women's entrance into combat, and the injuries and deaths that will inevitably result, will bear disproportionately on children. Our society seems reluctant to equalize such responsibilities outside the combat situation, and/or to develop adequate support structures for most children. Perhaps women's increased participation in the military will have the unexpected side benefit of hastening the day when men assume their fair share of child-rearing.

This difficult scenario admits of no easy feminist solution. Involved are not only deeply held beliefs about the inferiority of women, but also economic, political and racial structures that guarantee that the impact of such beliefs will be felt most profoundly by young, poor women of color who will be the first female canon fodder when combat is officially opened to women, and the ones to suffer most economically if it is not.

I suggest three preliminary moves toward resolving the question from a feminist perspective. First, it is important to insist on reframing the question, begin-



C. Harris

ning with acknowledging that women are in combat and then asking whether *anyone* should be. Women have learned that how such questions are framed, indeed who frames the questions, determines the answers.

We can redirect the analysis to question whether anyone, male or female, is usefully dispatched to combat at a time when nuclear, chemical and even some conventional weapons virtually assure mass destruction. We are not talking about hand-to-hand combat with national security at risk due to women's lack of upper body strength.

A second feminist ethical move is to take the debate to where women are, to listen to their perceptions, and to theorize out of that base. This kind of grassroots, participatory ethical model avoids the pitfalls of dogmatic liberal feminism wherein mostly white women in no danger of combat make decisions for those who are faced with the choice. More important, it avoids the pitfalls of patriarchy by educating women to listen to one another instead of to the conventional wisdom, especially in this kind of life-death situation.

Women's lives have always been considered expendable in a patriarchal society, so there is reason to think that once combat is open to women it would serve the interest of society to fill the ranks with women. Such a sinister plot may seem more the stuff off a Margaret Atwood novel than of a civilized country, but the U.S. track record on abortion,

for example, seems to indicate that women's well-being is a low priority. As in the abortion case, I trust women to make responsible decisions as women have made throughout history. Opening combat to women and then coping with the massive numbers of women who conscientiously object would be a strong statement. Sup-

port for such a move will be garnered by inviting women to discuss these matters and then to strategize creatively on the basis of their discussions. I would bet on this or another equally creative option as an alternative to gung-ho militarism from most women.

A third feminist move is to broaden the ethical umbrella to include men in the company of those who, in the name of equality, stress peace, justice and cooperation. This is perhaps the most promising strategy because it accomplishes two goals at once. On the one hand, it models equality by insisting that whatever solutions we hope to implement will have to include women and men working together (in sharp contrast to the military decisions about women in combat that are made by all-male combat-trained soldiers). On the other hand, it offers an alternative to the "equality at any price" liberalism that would tolerate women in combat in order to achieve that goal. It takes account of the reality of unequal power dynamics for women and men that assure that equality is impossible in patriarchy and that women will always pay disproportionately for their rights.

This strategy is also practical since it gives peace groups a concrete "both-and" goal. Both gender equality and peace can be pursued through creative educational programs, counseling for women and men about alternatives to military service that will result in job skills and express their patriotism. Children of both genders can see Mom and Dad resisting participation in a military machine that would happily take both of them. And even men and women in the military can consider their role in preventing future wars. Obviously this is a long term, perhaps unachievable goal, but it sets a trajectory for educational programs, lobbying, resistance efforts, tax withholding and other effective strategies that women and men can engage in together before it is too late. **TW**

New editor . . . continued from page 9

"flirting with Marxism," in her search for a meaningful witness, but still found something missing.

"I was reacting against the church," she said. "I felt the church needed to stand up in the world against injustice, and it wasn't doing that. So I translated church things to the secular, but in doing that I always felt a loss."

Her hunger for a community of activists which shared her Christian perspective persisted, until she found the Detroit Peace Community, which she characterizes as an ecumenical, faith-based group originally founded to do "acts of resistance to the nuclear arms race within a liturgical response during the church year." The community, based in the city's Catholic Worker House, has broadened its agenda since its inception, she noted, to include issues such as U.S. involvement in Central America and, more recently, the Persian Gulf war.

When she joined the community, she said, "It was a relief to be able to express politics from a Christian point of view."

She met her husband through community meetings held at his house. When they were both arrested during a 1983 Advent action against a local arms manufacturer, romance blossomed as they wrote letters back and forth in jail, and tried to sit next to each other in court. They married in the fall of 1984.

She and her family live in a low-income, racially-mixed neighborhood. She explained that staying in the inner city comes out of "a consistency of values" to live simply and to focus on justice and peace issues both at home and abroad.

Living in Detroit, a city largely abandoned by industry and the middle-class, plagued by unemployment, drugs and one of the highest murder rates in the country, made Wylie-Kellermann and other activists aware that "while we were protesting injustice in Central America, we were living in a city where

kids are also in pain, where kids are also dying every single day."

She said that she looked forward to editing THE WITNESS because, "I have the greatest respect for its 75-year history and the remarkable job it's done of standing with the oppressed and outcast, and its prophetic tradition."

She said that disillusionment with the bigotry and rigidity of mainstream media caused her to take her journalism career in another direction. However, she did so reluctantly, she said, "Because I still have the feeling that if Gospel convictions are going to fly, they will fly in the 'real world,' too."

However, she added, "My experience in secular media showed that they have a very small newshole and what they are willing to print is usually biased."

Citing the importance of publications like THE WITNESS, Wylie-Kellermann quoted a former CIA researcher who went to work for *Soujourners*. "He said, 'Power is the ability to control people's reality. The biggest threats to the Pentagon's version of reality are the small religious communities and the alternative press.'" **TW**

Hart Island

**Today they are burying
the city's derelict dead.
There are no mourners,
no women bringing spices:
only these prisoners
from a city gaol,
digging a final home
for the homeless,
chalking their names
on the pine coffins.
There is no need
for seal or guard
on this Island sepulchre:
and on the third day
no stone will be rolled away.**

Godfrey Wilson

(Hart Island, near Ellis Island in New York Harbor, is the "potter's field" for New York City. Prisoners from Rikers Island dig the graves.)

Remembrance, pain and hope

by Dorothee Sölle



On the night of Nov. 14, 1940, the Anglican Cathedral town of Coventry, England was carpet-bombed for 11 hours straight after Adolf Hitler selected it to be an example of how German military might intended to break the spirit of the English people. The morning after, as townspeople gathered at the smoking ruins of ancient St. Michael's Cathedral, a caretaker said, "We cannot respond to this in hatred." Thus was born the idea of a ministry of reconciliation, founded by a now-international community of prayer and reconciliation called the Cross of Nails after a simple crucifix fashioned out of nails salvaged from the shell of the old Cathedral. After the war, when a new modern Cathedral was built next to the ruin, among the first guests invited were Germans. The following article is excerpted from a lecture delivered by noted German theologian Dorothee Sölle last year at ceremonies commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombing.

It is not easy to be German in this century, carrying the burden of collective shame and responsibility. I would like to introduce to you my generation of German intellectuals, writers and artists, by recalling the haunting question under which we started our spiritual journey. It has been a question that took at least 10 years of my young adulthood and will never leave me.

Today, living in a world of confused spiritual orphans, I sometimes feel that legacy of this frightening and unanswerable quest has given us a certain advantage over the generation of young people now wrestling with a thousand questions. We who were 15 years old when the war ended had but one question we asked our fathers and mothers, our teachers and professors, our textbooks and traditions: "How could it have happened?"

The most terrifying responses went like this: "We didn't know." "We had no Jewish friends." "We heard rumors but never saw those things with our own eyes." These were not isolated responses. We heard them over and over again.

I got my hands burned touching these responses because I knew they were evasive self-protecting lies people used to claim their innocence. They preferred to plunge into oblivion.

During the controversy surrounding President Reagan's 1985 visit to the Bitburg military cemetery, Chancellor Helmut Kohl contended that he could not be held responsible for the events of 1933-45 on the basis of the "grace of being born too late" and thus was too young to share responsibility — an outrageous use of the theological concept of grace.

What "grace" is he talking about? Can there be a grace that never saw the night the people in Coventry endured? Is grace to be restricted to the daylight only? My sense of this is that "God is memory," to borrow a phrase from process theology.

In other words, to live in oblivion is to separate oneself from God. There is no grace in being born late. Grace shines through those who do remember, but living in the limbo of oblivion is to dismember oneself from God.

We need re-membering in the most literal sense of the word: making us into members of the human family again. This is specifically true today, as a new page in the book of history is opened before our eyes. What is the spiritual meaning of the reunification of Germany? Will it kill the process of remembrance? Will it legitimize German and Western militarism, including the export of arms and atomic and chemical technologies? Will Germany's unified economic power increase our capacity to exploit the poor in the Third World? In others words, will we Germans dismember ourselves again and live with the arrogance of economic power?

There were times in my life when I doubted the possibility of re-membering my German people into the human family. Yet shame is, as the great 19th century Jewish thinker Karl Marx says, a revolutionary virtue. It leads beyond the status quo. The shame we were born with has transformed in an essential way the theology of my generation. What do we have to say about pain and suffering, about innocent people killed in Coventry and elsewhere? Do we have to accuse God? Can we defend God? Historical experience has shaped our theology, especially the concept of God's acting in history.

In a recent conversation about God being the all-powerful ruler, a young woman from an evangelical perspective remarked, "Auschwitz was God's will. Otherwise it would not have happened." When questioned, she added, "God has created the world and us without asking our opinion. He can act as it pleases him. Our task is to glorify him nevertheless." In these words I heard a traditional timeless theology, untouched by reality and

conceived in a coldness free from pain and love. The young woman identified God with Fate, and obviously believed more in the power of destiny than in God's love. Her God has become a sadist.

I suppose Christian theology has to pose the question of human suffering anew after Auschwitz and Coventry, Hiroshima and Chernobyl, to name just a few. What is the role of the theologian after such events?

I like to speak of God's pain — *der Schmerz Gottes*. I am not speaking of something God could do away with or avoid. If we speak of God's pain, then we have another concept of God than the purely masculine one. This God is our mother who weeps over the things that we do to each other and to the animals and the plants. God comforts us like a mother. She cannot make the pain go away by magic — although occasionally that happens — but she holds us in her lap until we stand up again with renewed strength.

God could not comfort us if she were not connected to us in pain, if she did not have this wonderful and rare ability to feel another's pain in her own body. To have compassion means to suffer with, to be present. The Gospels describe Jesus as one who has this ability. If Jesus is there when someone is slapped in the face, Jesus winces and feels the blow. If someone is lied to, Jesus is there with the need for truth. If a whole people is trampled down by the brutal might of the empire, Jesus weeps over Jerusalem.

I have just said in a realistic and limited way, "if Jesus is there when these things happen." But now let us try to think of God, and we can remove this limitation. *All* who suffer are in the presence of God. There is no longer any "if." God does not forget.

The religious question of suffering is not the one we so often hear: "How could God allow this to happen?" but rather one we have yet to learn: "How

does our pain become God's pain?"

Before we can think of God's pain and our pain together, we must learn to distinguish between them. The New Testament is very clear on this point. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul distinguishes between "worldly grief" and "godly grief." Worldly grief, Paul says, produces death. It knows no hope and leads to nothing. When I think about worldly grief, I think of the dreadful diseases spreading among us, like alcoholism, anorexia, and workaholism, to name a few. These diseases arise in a climate of affluence, which manipulates our non-material needs so they are transformed into addictions.

Paul contrasts this worldly grief with another kind: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret." (*II Cor. 7:10.*) What is this godly grief which does not just revolve around itself but calls forth conversion? How is our pain, so often expressed only in worldly grief, different from God's pain?

Is not each pain, each heavy suffering, each kind of torture and torment, such an unbearable misfortune that we should combat it with all means available to us? That is the response of an atheistic consumer culture which says, "Take a pill. Get rid of it right away." Suffering is pushed away like a bothersome shadow. Human beings are thought of as machines — they function, they produce, or they are broken, don't work anymore, and need new parts or must be replaced. This technocratic model dominates our thinking. A machine feels no pain. There are some theologians who seem to conceive of God as an indestructible giant machine, which will presumably continue to function even after a nuclear war and the destruction of creation.

I can see how such fantasies of God perfectly express God's might, greatness and independence, and yet I can't find in this way of thinking any hint of God's pain and God's connectedness. I find it

difficult within such a system of thought to believe in God's love. The totally transcendent God is not bound to us through pain, and Paul's distinction between worldly grief and godly grief loses its meaning if there is no sorrow dwelling in God.

Paul mentions to the Corinthians the fruits which God's grief has called forth in them. "For see what eagerness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment." (*II Cor. 7:11.*) That the guilty are called to account is certainly one aspect of this blessed grief.

Would the Argentine "Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," who call for the punishment of those who tortured and murdered their family members, partake in God's pain? Would all those in Argentina and West Germany who want to let the past rest in peace close themselves off from the pain of God? Yes, this is what the Bible means — if we do not participate in God's pain, then we do not partake of God.

Godly grief arises from God's pain over a barbaric world filled with injustice and the destruction of life. To participate in this pain of God means to become aware of the grief of God. Accordingly, signs of godly grief, or the sorrow that God wants, are: to become outraged, to engage in resistance, to long for change and force it to come about, to call the guilty to account. This grief does not just brood over itself. It is the kind of grief we find in the hearts of those who resist the extermination of creation and the plundering of the poor. It is the grief that was in Martin Luther King and Dag Hammarskjöld, the outrage, which cannot be lulled to sleep, over the brutality of a system that does not participate in God's pain and refuses to believe in God's vulnerability.

In John's Gospel, Christians in first-century Palestine experienced their day-

to-day lives as prisons of fear. Life is hopeless. Mary Magdalene, weeping inconsolably over Jesus' murder, is the clearest witness to the pain. Mary Magdalene neither accuses nor defends God; she weeps, which means she is deep in God. To accuse — or defend — she would have to have distance from God. She would have run away like the male disciples. But she is in God's pain and surrounded by it. "Truly, truly, I say to you," says Christ, "you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice." (*John 16:20.*)

The world rejoices in the triumphal march of the Roman Caesars when yet another people is forced to its knees, pil-

"Will Coventry be a symbol of the past, or will to 'conventrize' a city, a region or a country be a word of the future because of our silence?"

laged, raped and sold into slavery. The world rejoices in the glittering gladiatorial combats and sports shows the Romans hold to distract people from the misery of hunger. "You will weep and lament," because in a world of legalized violence, each word which speaks seriously of justice and peace is clubbed down and mocked. The Romans knew exactly what a threat the Christian community posed to the politico-religious state consensus.

Visiting El Salvador helped me to understand the New Testament better. In this tiny country, under the military boot of the empire, the poor weep and lament when their harvests are burned, their teachers and trade unionists abducted and disappear, when the secret service and security forces routinely torture prisoners for weeks. "You will weep, but the world will rejoice." Meanwhile, television there, firmly in the hand of the empire and its local collaborators, broad-

casts sports programs and fashion shows.

In El Salvador, the pain of the poor is also God's pain. God suffers with them and transforms their pain. God will liberate them and heal the land. The most important image the Bible uses for God's pain in the world is an image from the experience of women, that of giving birth. (*John 16:20.*)

How does this transformation from fruitless, senseless pain to the pain of God happen? How do people move from the pain which crushes their hearts to the labor pains which lead to birth? How is our pain connected to God's pain?

I don't think it's possible to transform worldly grief into joy. That would be too much to ask, as though we could simply rearrange a grief deep as an abyss. It would also be too little to ask, because it would only replace worldly grief with worldly joy, which is essentially the joy of having, possessing, using and consuming. I think our task is to transform worldly grief into the pain of God.

With God's pain I have experienced something unusual. Without soothing, dulling or lying about the pain, I have been brought into a deep joy. It is as though I had touched the power of life which is also in pain — pain, after all, is life's protest against illness and death.

I am not speaking of an automaton God who after pain sends joy and after rain, sun; rather, I see the sun *in* the rain. I don't want to look for this power outside of pain, for that would mean separating myself from God and betraying God's pain. "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." (*Is. 9:1.*) Where does such a sentence come from, if not out of the pain of God? How can we see darkness and light together, if not in the one who embraces both?

The questions of suffering upon which western European Christians must reflect today are not just, "How shall I bear my pain? How shall I deal with my loneli-

ness, my fear, my illness?" These individual human questions can be answered entirely within the framework of the self-help boom, in which individuals whirl from group to group, from personal growth experience to personal growth experience, from encounter to encounter. The task of theology is not to follow the wisdom of this world, pastorally useful though this may be.

If we want to move from worldly grief to godly grief, then we must learn to become aware of God's pain. Then our questions will be, "How do I conduct myself toward the nameless suffering which I cause? What stand do I take toward the business deals my bank carries out in cooperation with torturers and racists? How do I deal with the large-scale destruction of foodstuffs? How am I tied in with the war industry? How much energy do I consume, and at what cost? How much longer can I stand to be an accomplice in a system of injustice?"

All these questions belong within the question of suffering. We cannot afford to stick these questions in a "political" box, and our personal questions about suffering in a different box, as though we could keep our entire relationship with God in a little box marked "Private." If we think this way, then we take away from God the possibility of drawing our pain into God's pain; we make ourselves incapable of taking part in God's pain and experiencing it as the labor pangs of birth.

We do not want to relieve the grief of this world and our pain with the methods of this world, with tranquilizers. For God calls us in the midst of our pain to God's kingdom. God wants reunification of all our separations. God's pain originates in separation of human beings from their siblings.

Listening to God's cry means entering into the process of reconciliation between ourselves and our neighbors. It is a call to resist the war against the poor, to undermine the walls and ghettos we

construct for self-protection, to reverse the so-called "military-related" research and industry, to stand up for a different economic world order.

We live in a time of a new concentration of power in Europe, a power that threatens rather than invites and reconciles the poor nations. Will Coventry be a symbol of the past, or will to "conventrize" a city, a region or a country be a word of the future because of our silence and cynical resignation about the crimes we commit?

We should nourish our hopes and gather the good news in our surroundings. But we cannot make ourselves completely dependent on the results of our own actions. Under the spell of being successful we are still in Egypt.

Many times interviewers have asked me after I participated in actions like blockading a military camp where chemical weapons were stored, "Do you really think you will succeed by actions such as this?" I try to explain that there are things in life you have to resist on behalf of your own dignity.

There is a cynic in me who knows how useless non-violence and civil disobedience are, but there is "that of God" as well. And God loves the world and asks me to do so, too. Sometimes I reach that point of no return with others involved in justice and peace struggles. Then we act, inside or outside the law. We learn resistance, create islands of freedom from the need to exploit and destroy. There is this indestructible hope, hidden in all of us.

Let me remind you of the words of St. Augustine, who said that hope has two lovely daughters, anger and courage. Anger so that what cannot be, may not be and courage so that what must be, will be. Many of us lost hope for a more just and loving world because we lost sight of the two daughters. We need both anger and courage, just as we need God's remembrance, God's pain, and God's hope. TW

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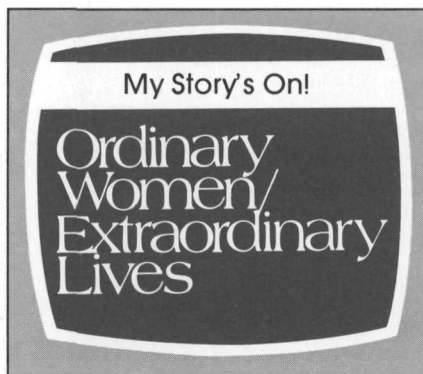
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