

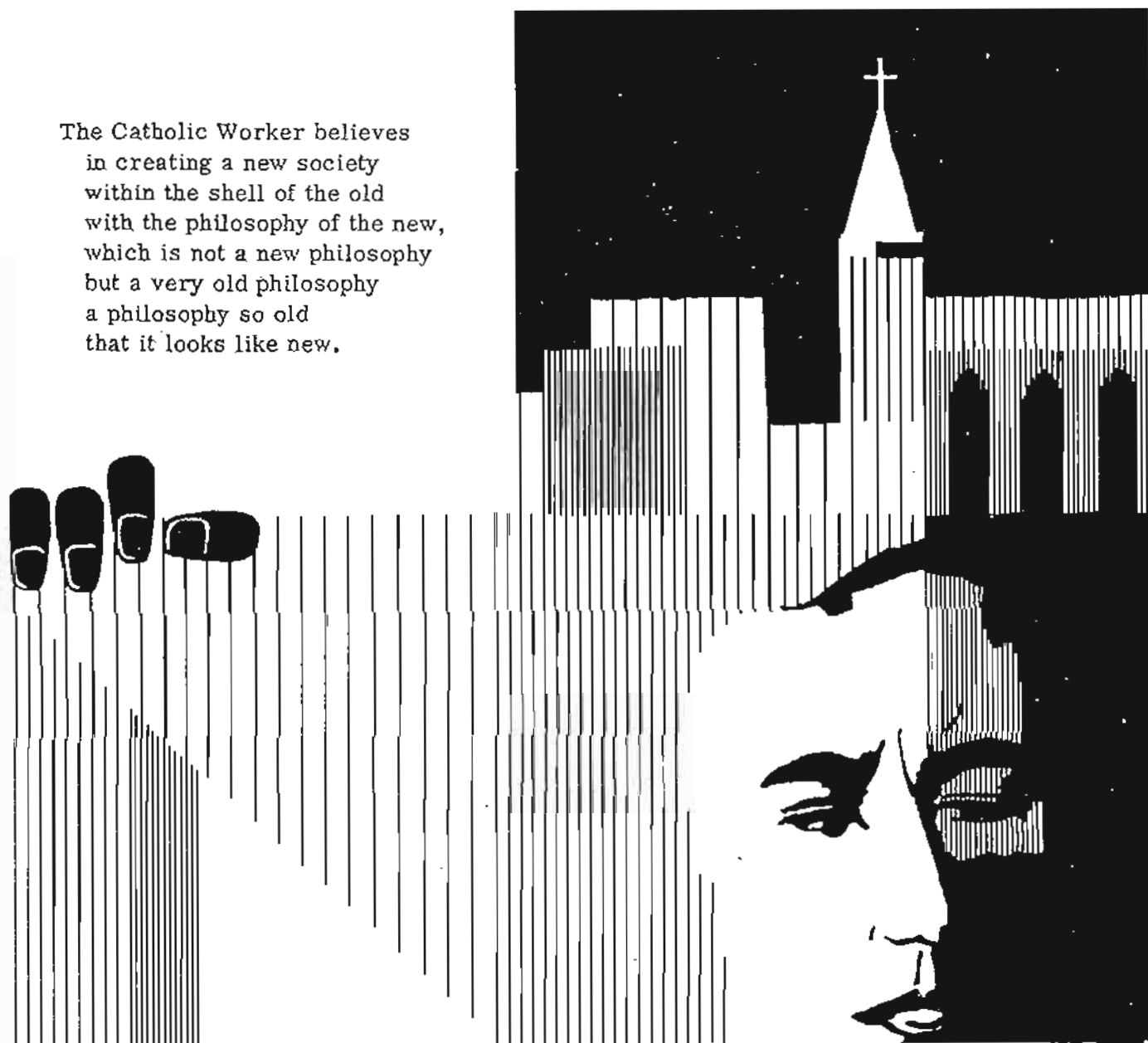


Winter 1982

"...a path from where we are to where we should be." --- Peter Maurin

BUILDING THE CITY OF GOD

The Catholic Worker believes
in creating a new society
within the shell of the old
with the philosophy of the new,
which is not a new philosophy
but a very old philosophy
a philosophy so old
that it looks like new.



Why This Issue?

We've chosen the theme "Building the City of God" because it is an image of hope. We want to counteract a possible impression--in these long, dreary winter months--that news from a Catholic Worker community, ensconced squarely in the midst of the depression of the human city, might nudge the reader toward despair.

Not so! The City of God lurks in every human situation. Robert Fox, designer of Harlem's "Summer in the City" program, speaks in a joyful article about how God is in the middle of the chicken soup we call creation. Various Catholic Workers give two or three sentence descriptions of their experience of the City of God. And--lest we float off in a cloud of euphoria--we include several reflections on continued resistance to nuclear armaments. Richard Falk's inspiring article reminds us that it is therapeutic and life giving to work for peace in the face of nuclear holocaust. There is news of the uncommonly pleasant trial at which he testified as an expert witness, as well as Martha's reflections on her experience at the Women's Pentagon Action. Lastly, as always, there is news of the houses.

EVENTS

MISSION OF THE BAPTIZED

CHRISTIAN LIFE COMMUNITIES PRESENTS "The Mission of the Baptized," a seminar series. At Lower College Church, Grand at Lindell, 7:30-9:30 P.M.

- Jan. 18 John Kavanaugh, S.J., "Following Christ in a Consumer Society"
- Feb. 15 Bob Brungs, S.J., "Science, Technology and Conscience"
- Mar. 15 Virginia Druhe, "Spirituality and Resistance"
- Apr. 19 Paul Reinert, S.J., "The Academic Community Responsibilities"
- May 17 Jason Petosa, Publisher National Catholic Reporter, "The Catholic Press and the Signs of the Times"
- Jun. 21 Mark and Anne Mersman, "Marriage and Family Issues"

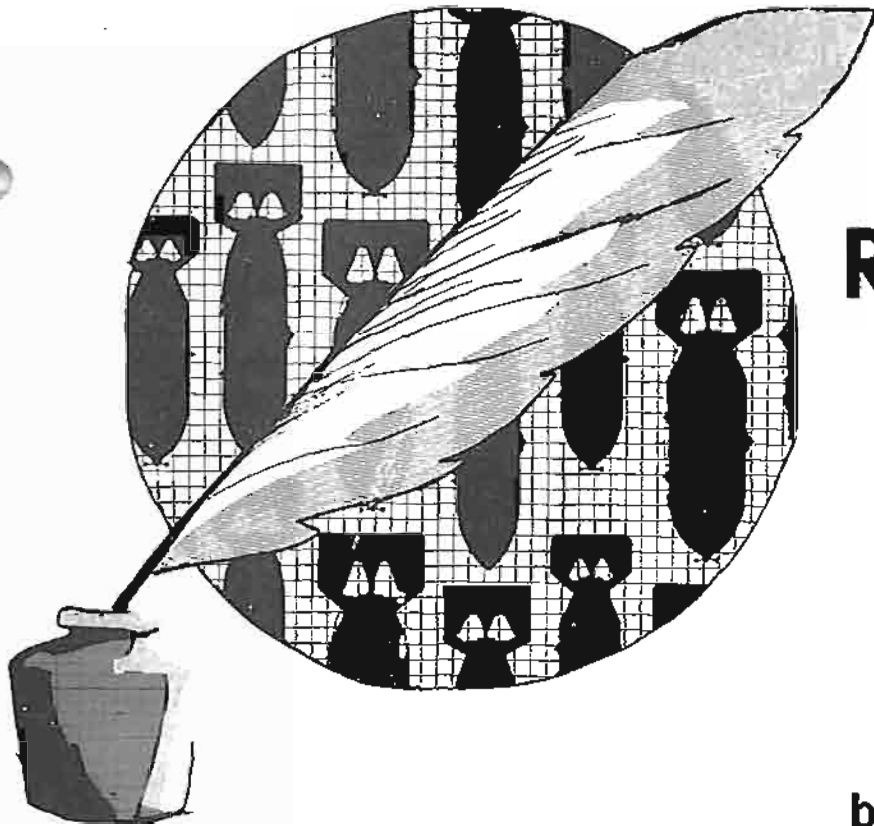
Dorothee Solle

Dorothee Solle, German theologian, feminist, and disarmament activist, will speak at Webster College's Winifred Moore Auditorium, at 2 PM, Sunday, Feb. 28. The Sisters of Loretto are sponsoring her visit to St. Louis.

March For World Peace

Plans are under way for the visit of the March for World Peace to St. Louis. The march by a group of Buddhist monks is from Los Angeles to New York City. The walkers will arrive in St. Louis on Wednesday, Feb. 17. Events on that day will include an 11:30 AM vigil at General Dynamics, an afternoon vigil at Homer G. Phillips Hospital, and a pot-luck reception with film and speakers at St. Louis University. For more information contact Martha Donovan at Karen House.

THE ROUND TABLE is the journal of Catholic Worker life and thought in St. Louis. We welcome responses from our readers and will gladly accept contributions to help cover the costs of this publication. The people working on this issue are, in addition to the authors: Virginia Druhe, Mary Heimen, Julie Lambert, Mary McClellan, Barbara Prosser, and Bill Ramsey.



RESISTANCE - Is It Civil Obedience?

by Richard Falk

Richard Falk, Professor of International Law at Princeton and author of some 22 books in his field, was in St. Louis to testify at the trial of Tom Kegelman and Mary McClellan (who were arrested for trespassing at General Dynamics last May). To raise money for his plane fare, he agreed to speak at both Washington and St. Louis University law schools. The following remarks were excerpted from his presentation entitled, "The Arms Race: Is Resistance Civil Obedience?"

I believe in what Mary and Tom have done because I think it is raising for American society, in a way that needs to be honored and is really very American in its essence, it is raising defects in our governing process. Our institutions are not raising the fundamental questions about whether the nuclear national security state conforms to international law and morality.

I don't have any illusions that we can create a lawful political community within this century in this world. I do have the conviction if we want to survive, though, we've got to begin acting as though that were possible and necessary in the future. And that requires those of us who sense these dangers and sense these possibilities to take advantage of living in a democratic society--and even to emulate the Polish workers who live in a totalitarian society--by acting on behalf of what we believe.

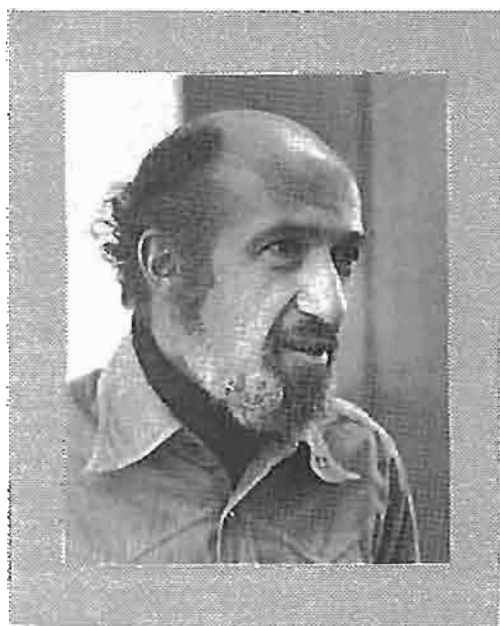
We can't disobey rules just because we personally don't like them. . . . At the same time, to be blindly obedient to abuses of state power is to forfeit that part of our social and political reality that involves perhaps the most precious element of human consciousness, namely, our capacity to feel and act upon a sense of moral and spiritual purpose.

And so the question in a sense becomes . . . is it reasonable for Americans to reach the conclusion that to do nothing about nuclear weapons policy and the national security state at this time in our history is to do something bad? I believe it is reasonable. I believe. . . the present policies do violate the minimum content of international law. . . . Furthermore, it is practical--not idealistic--to take those treaties seriously, that we would be more secure as a people, not less secure, if we tried to conform national policy to these minimum obligations. None of all of

this requires a good deal of interpretation and discussion. And none of it requires, incidentally, that we trust the Soviet Union or that we think the world is suddenly converted to pacifism. What it does require is the renunciation of threats to inflict massive destruction upon civilian populations and inhabited areas of the world. And certainly not to initiate the use of weaponry of mass destruction of that type.

Let us grant, then, that it is reasonable to say that our institutions are not addressing these questions. . .that our political parties do not really provide the American people with alternatives that raise questions about the assumptions of the nuclear national security state and the mentality of the arms race.

It is the government and the leadership of the government that is engaged in a lawless enterprise...



International law can be understood as a higher law that binds governments and peoples even when, or especially when, the dictates of that law contradict national law and the policies of official institutions. The United States government prosecuted the leaders of Germany and Japan because they failed to carry out the minimum requirements of international law. Our prosecutors in those trials said that these

proceedings are meaningless unless they apply in the future to the victors as well as to the vanquished. It was not only the political leaders who were prosecuted. Industrialists, doctors, those that supplied the poison gas to the concentration camps in Germany were all prosecuted because they obeyed state policy. . .What was decided at Nuremberg provides an essential foundation for the relationship between citizens and their government, especially as those issues relate to problems of war and peace--that there exists a Nuremberg obligation, so to speak, that is part of being a citizen. The exigence of that obligation is that when you are aware, or have reason to believe, that official policy is tantamount to the violation of basic international law restraining the use of violence--when that conviction exists after careful reflection--there exists not only a right, but I believe a duty, to act in ways that are reasonably calculated to overcome the defects of national policy.

It still becomes important to ask the further question: What is it appropriate to do? What is it effective to do? It is my conviction that nonviolent action of resistance directed at appropriate targets in appropriate arenas is a highly charged and effective political language at this time. . .It is a way of registering distress and it takes the very fact of violating the normal obligations of obedience to law as a form of expressing how serious the distress is.

Overcoming this lightheartedness about what war and collective violence mean is the serious underpinning of acts of resistance ...

Here what is being said is that the United States government has by its own Constitution declared as solemnly as it is able that international treaties are part of the supreme law of the land (in Article VI, Paragraph 2) and are supposed to shape the policies of our leaders. The United States Supreme Court has frequently. . . upheld this. So there is here a powerful legal foundation for saying that when one is acting in resistance one is really acting to reinforce applicable laws. There-

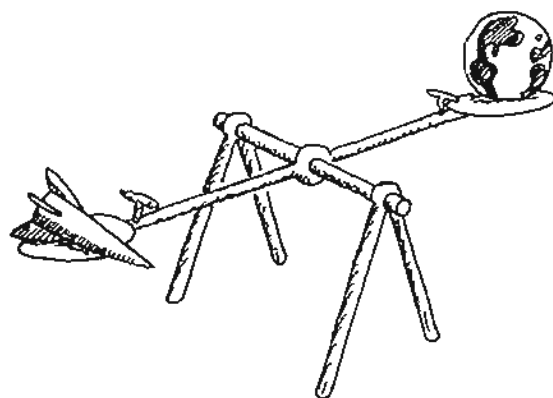
fore, it is the government and the leadership of the government that is engaged in a lawless enterprise, and is not being called to account with respect to that lawlessness at a time in history when these kinds of restraints on State power seem to me to be essential for the maintenance of our peace and security.

I feel in a very deep sense that it is overcoming this lightheartedness about what war and collective violence means that is the serious underpinning of acts of resistance at this stage. It is asking us to be serious. It is asking us not just to go blindly along like a country of sheep--which is probably unfair to the animals in question!

It is not depressing to turn toward these problems. Indeed, most of us use enormous energy to repress the great danger that is lurking within our civilization...

It is the kind of option that is not obvious to a public that has been manipulated by policies of secrecy, that has been shaped into a conformist mass by a very timid media, (especially on these issues), that has been scared beyond reasonable prudence into thinking that all evil lies east of the Urals and that we are the forces of good struggling against the forces of evil that would otherwise engulf us. It is very hard to break through all of that. And there are very strong interests that want us to believe all that. The same kind of process exists in the Soviet Union.

Just from the point of view of therapy, there is an odd kind of energy that is released to the extent that we discover our capacity to act. It is not depressing to turn toward these problems. Indeed, most of us use enormous energy to repress the great danger that is lurking within our civilization.



The most important political statement any of us can make at this time is what we do with our own lives. ...That decision can probably best be made in some kind of community with the support of others who feel similarly. It is not accidental in my view that the only people who are standing straight in relation to the abuse of State power are standing on the ground of religious conviction. Because in some profound sense, I think, the fundamental distress bound up in this nuclear national security state is one of idolatry. The unconditionality of State power, the absoluteness of the claims that our leaders make to inflict unlimited destruction for ends that they are very unclear and uncertain about, and with no serious effort to test whether there are alternatives.

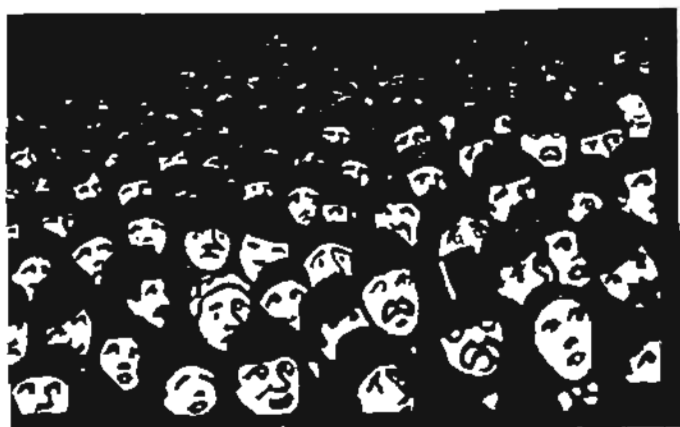
The fundamental distress bound up in the nuclear national security state is one of idolatry...

I believe that part of what we are experiencing at the present time and part of the reason to have hope is that more and more leaders of the churches of our country are beginning to have the courage and the clarity to address this issue--the overriding issue of this civilization--of the idolatry of the State.

The essence of true religion is to challenge the treating of that which is conditional as unconditional.

It is important to begin to grasp what it is we are relying on in order to base our security for the future, especially since we are the only country in the world that continues to claim the right to use nuclear weapons first. . . What does it mean to live under a government that is founded on such a principle of illegitimacy at the core of its being? It is this question that acts of resistance, at this stage, are forcing upon our consciousness. None of us can avoid these questions very much longer and maintain our sanity, much less our dignity. ■

None of us can avoid these questions
very much longer and maintain
our sanity, much less our dignity.....



Oh My People...

Tom and Mary's trial for trespassing at General Dynamics last May (Round Table, Summer 1981), at which Richard Falk testified, commenced on November 16 and lasted for three days. It was a bench trial by Judge George Gerhard, who postponed the trial a month so that Dr. Falk's testimony could be heard. Judge Gerhard treated people in the courtroom with respect and dignity. In addition, to Dr. Falk's testimony that nuclear weapons were illegal under treaties signed by the United States, treaties being the supreme law of the land under Article VI of the Constitution, Dr. Jim McGinnis of the Institute for the Study of Peace and Justice testified about Gandhian philosophy and techniques of nonviolent social change; and Dr. Fred Valeriote of Washington University Medical School testified about the urgent need, as a matter of preventative medicine, to halt the nuclear arms race. Dr. Dan Bolef, physics professor at Washington University, testified that technological developments in weapons make first strike strategy, and therefore nuclear war, likely.

After hearing all the testimony, Judge Gerhard ruled that it did not apply. (He said later that he agreed with Tom and Mary's goals but not their methods.) For the closing statement, Mary read this poem by a Turkish poet who spent many years in prison himself:

You're like a scorpion, my people,
You live in cowardly darkness,
like a scorpion.
You're like a sparrow, my people,
always in a sparrow's flutter.
You're like a clam, my people,
closed like a clam, content.
And you're frightening, my people,
like the mouth of an extinct volcano.
Not one,
not five,
you are millions, unfortunately.
You are like sheep, my people.
When the cloaked drover raises his
stick,
you quickly join the herd
and run, almost proudly, to the slaughter-
house.
I mean, you're the strangest thing on earth
--stranger even than that fish
that couldn't see the ocean for the
water.
And the oppression in the world
is thanks to you.
And if we're hungry, if we're tired, if
we're covered with blood,
and if we're still being crushed like
grapes for our wine,
the fault is yours
--I can hardly bring myself to say it--
but most of the fault, my dear people,
is yours.

Nazim Hikmet 1949

Tom and Mary were first put on probation for two years. Later reduced to six months on a condition that they do thirty days community service, it is to be supervised by the judge rather than the Probation Office. The change was made because Tom and Mary had difficulty signing some of the form conditions of the Probation Office. (In another trial, people found guilty of trespassing at General Dynamics were required to get psychological or psychiatric counselling or evaluation as a condition of probation. That condition was withdrawn after the Court of Appeals issued a Writ of Prohibition, but Tom and Mary refused to sign the condition agreeing to any form of treatment recommended by the Probation Office.) Tom is doing his community service at RAVEN, a counseling center for men who have problems of violence toward women. Mary is doing hers at the Archdiocesan Human Rights Office, in addition to her work at Karen House.

**Protesters defend
tactics in Trident
trespassing case**

**Protesters Stress
Philosophy At Trial**

**Arms Protesters
Got Their Say
In Court**

Judge permits nuclear expert's testimony

**Professor To Testify At Trial
Here Of Two Anti-War Activists**

**2 In Trespass Case Base Defense
On Duty To Protest Trident Sub**

**Civil disobedience justified,
professor tells law school**

Women's Pentagon Action

by Martha Donovan



"WE ARE GATHERING AT THE PENTAGON ON NOVEMBER 16 BECAUSE WE FEAR FOR OUR LIVES."

And so on that Monday, 35 of us from St. Louis joined over 3,000 other women gathered in Washington to mourn, rage, defy and express outrage at the escalating arms race, the contamination of our natural resources, and the violence that we as women face in our everyday lives.

Sunday morn had been spent at the Washington Coliseum strategizing, empowering, and giving direction to our action. Toward mid-afternoon, we gathered at the Washington Mall by the Air and Space Museum, which houses replicas of the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. After singing and chanting, an adult fairy tale was read that depicted a nuclear attack. As the story progressed we became the people. We all lay down and died. Then, in the story, some of us realized our need to struggle for life. We stood, shouting, "No, it's not time for us to die!" The tale closed with people celebrating and struggling for life.

Monday morning began with a silent march through Arlington Cemetery. We walked past rows and rows of tombstones that for me symbolized the graveness of our message. Toward the end of the march

the officer who had been leading us through told us in a very nasty tone, "Move it!" In the ~~bond~~ of our silence, and the power of the truth surrounding us, we brought to life the true meaning of "we shall not be moved." And we weren't. After a minute or two of defiant standing still, we moved ourselves.

From the cemetery we began the approach to the Pentagon. We were met by four immense and beautiful puppets. They had been made last year for the first Women's Pentagon Action by the Bread and Puppet Theater from New York. Each puppet symbolized a different stage of the action--black for mourning, red for anger, gold for empowerment and white for defiance.

At the Pentagon marching ground, the black mourning puppet called us to move forward and plant the tombstones of our dead sisters. At this point women called out the name and circumstance of the remembered, accompanied by a slow, constant drum beat and the moans and wails of their surviving sisters.

As the red puppet rose, the rage stage began. The drumming, now accompanied by music, became more random, piercing, and charged. Wailing and sorrow gave way to anger as we re-grouped and approached the entrances of the Pentagon.

The empowerment stage began as the gold puppet came forward, accompanied by trumpet calls. We formed groups. The white puppet led us to the Pentagon building. When we had encircled it, we stopped and began weaving a continuous braid of fabric embedded with the symbols of women. Then a group of 102 women moved forward. Some made webs of yarn in the banisters on the stairways. Others wove the doors shut and blocked the entrances with their bodies. All were arrested.

After the arrested women were taken to the basement of the Pentagon to be "processed," the rest of us re-grouped for our closing ritual. The ritual marked the change between what had occurred and what was yet to come. We looked both ways: forward and backward in time. We also looked within and without. We created the space to center ourselves in our action, to contemplate, discard, create and renew ourselves on both the individual and collective planes. We closed the ritual saying together these lines from a Black Appalachian funeral chant:

"May the longtime sun shine upon us
All love surround us
and the clear light within us
guide us all the way home."

And with that it was over. . .or has it just begun?



Martha Donovan hales from Boston and sometimes says "ide-er" instead of idea. But she puts up with our funny way of talking and shares with us her experience of working with the women's shelters in Boston, as well as cooking some mighty fine meals.

Dear J.R.P. _____

Why I Won't Pay

Enclosed is my reason for withholding one half of my fourth installment of my income tax. I cannot conscientiously pay taxes for military weapons whose sole purpose is to kill or threaten to kill our potential enemies. I also believe that by spending billions on nuclear hardware, we are taking food from the mouths of the hungry and giving it to our idol--national security--and this is evil.

What those billions would buy to feed, clothe and shelter the poor, cure the ill, educate the illiterate, train the unskilled for jobs, and welcome and care for the poor refugees!

Spending billions for meeting human needs is life giving. Spending billions for arms is death inflicting.

I am a very law abiding person. I regard even littering as wrong because it shows disregard for the rights of others; and I conscientiously feel I am doing the right thing by paying one half of my income tax to support ordinary government expenses and the other half for human needs that the government should provide but which the present administration is not doing.

Sincerely,
(a 72 year old South St. Louis
woman)



**SOME
KAREN
HOUSE
FOLKS**

This is the first of three photo essays on our houses of hospitality. Our guests pictured include Sharon, Judy (caretaker of the clothing room), Karen, Cheri (and her visitor Butch), Tara, Helen and Kiki. Kiki is Karen's daughter, and Tara is Cheri's sister. Clare Bussjaeger, a usual proofreader for The Round Table, is also a fine rock collector. Ann Manganaro, S.L., fourth year medical student, is one of the original four Workers who opened Karen House in 1977. Joe Angert is house photographer and faithful daily breakfast maker.



Sharon



Judy



Karen



Butch and Cheri



Clare & Tara



Kiki



Joe



Helen



Ann ✓



Daniel Mauk

A Vision For The Builders

by Robert Fox

Msgr. Fox, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York, is nationally known for his work in Harlem, particularly his "Summer in the City" program that he describes briefly in the article below. He was in St. Louis for the Fall Conference of the Social Action Network, and kindly allowed us to excerpt from his talks the thoughts and ideas that we found especially meaningful. Therefore, the responsibility for the disjointedness in this article lies with us.

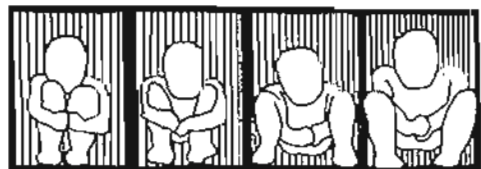
I hope in the course of what I'm going to share with you that one thing that might come through is a sense that sometimes I went along with craziness and learned in the process of relating to the people who related to the craziness some sense in what I was talking about.

We were able to employ about 150 artists for 5 to 6 years, and a whole range of artists from graphic artists to dramatists to puppeteers and poets and musicians, choreographers, photographers. And their purpose in the program (in Harlem) was not to entertain the people, so much as to transfer their gifts of turning environments upside down, tilting them, twisting them, squeezing them, looking at them differently. Tilting the environment in which we were living. The idea being that if the environment gets tilted, maybe it could be a daily bread that gets digested and would nourish us to creative responses, instead of being a determining reality that has us coming up with the same responses all the time.

Over the last several decades there is just a heightened sense of consciousness and a heightened sense of justice. A heightened sense of what peace really means. And I think a heightened respect for truth. And a heightened embrace of love. And yet the pain that goes with that is so enormous that it means an awful lot to me to be with you and share with you and to celebrate the fact that there are so many, many people. . .willing to die and be born for the values that they are about. It convinces me that the cause of justice is alive and well, albeit that it asks more dues today than it ever asked before.

As Judeo-Christians we believe
a fool's belief---that God
is in the chicken soup called creation...

It seems to me as Judeo-Christians we believe a fool's belief that God is in the chicken soup called creation. And that in a kind of mutuality is reaching to us through the chicken soup of life, reality, places, events, people. And is there trying to nourish the kind of dying and born-ing that our growth as a human family calls us to.



I think the beginnings of injustice and oppression are when we look at the world we find ourselves in, or look at ourselves, or look at one another and say, "It is no good." And take responsibility for re-making things with a controlling, oppressive power approach--making things over to our own image. Denying the fact that we are, yes, asked to be stewards. But it seems to me we are also asked to live with a kind of vulnerability allowing life to call us out of ourselves. . . It seems to me that we are asked to believe that written deep in the picture of life is all the justice and the peace and the love and the beauty that we believe is there.

Written deep in the picture of life is
all the justice and the peace and
the love and the beauty that
we believe is there...

Mutuality is to me the first note of the city of Jerusalem. Our God is a God of mutuality who has called us to believe that we are called to be God. That we are called to be co-creators. That we have the option as we live our lives, and we sense that power and truth and beauty coming through in our lives or around us, to have the faith we need to struggle to recognize the shape of it even though it is coming through very unclearly at some times. To recognize the color of it even

though it might be magenta when we were waiting for brown, or it might be black when we were waiting for white.

I think we have a vision of God
that is convenient to our
self-rejection of our humanity...

I think we tend to get 4 or 5 characteristics on the people who are different from us and then we let that knowledge not be a door to the more to come of the person, but a closet in which we lock up the person. And whatever they do or say or sing or joke or challenge us, I think we have our filter in our mindset so in place for them that they can't break through and reveal themselves to us as they are. And that's the beginning seeds of injustice. Ironically, I think the same thing is true when it comes to people who are like we are.



I think we have a vision of God that is convenient to our self-rejection of our humanity. We're made in the image and likeness of God. Well, as long as we can make a God that's safe and predictable, then we can live out that image that we've made of God and not have to deal with the tremendously challenging image of God that comes through in Scripture and creation. So we make a God who is a super-manager, on top of the situation, in control of everything. . . I think the truth is that God is an incredibly creative God, artist, creator.

I came to meet some artists in this program, Summer in the City. They would go to a canvas and make a mark on the canvas. One stroke. And then they'd step back and look at that stroke. . . And when they went back to the canvas it was as a slightly changed artist.

It seems to me the vision of the city of God. . . begins with the whole questing sense of the notion of mutuality that we have a tremendous destiny and dignity and responsibility--and it is to believe that we are co-creators with God and with one another. As a corollary we live with a tremendous active sense of wonder. . . Daring to believe that nothing is simply what it seems.

If I am going to make my life about this slice of reality and avoid that, I've got to have power-- whether it's military power, police power, fiscal power, psychological power, or ecclesiastical power...

Now when I say wonder, I think sometimes when we look at reality we have a dichotomy. I think we think that there's a whole list of good things that make you happy-- flowers and trees and lawns, boats and embraces and graduations and promotions. And you try to make your life about those things and the life of the people you care for, whereas on the other hand, there is this whole other segment of reality, including things like garbage and pain and riots and injustice and racism and sexism. . . And you try to stay away from those kinds of things because if you go near them, they're going to make you cry. To the extent that we live with that dichotomy, it seems to me, the kind of power that is so important to our society becomes so important. Because if I'm going to make my life about this slice of reality-- and avoid that--I've got to have the power, whether it's military power, police po-

wer, fiscal power, psychological power, ecclesiastical power. . . I've got to make my life about this list and avoid that list. . .



The third quality that I think is so important in order to live with a vision of the city of Jerusalem--wherever one finds oneself--is the whole concept of passion. . . I think in Baptism we use a symbol of the waters of our lives. In so many ways, our own internal insecurity and the insecurity of the institutions we relate to (the church, the government and so many others) are persuading us not to be vulnerable to the waters or to plunge into them, but to build boats of our causes, of our movements, of our programs, of our institutions, of our churches: to ride out the waters of life so as not to be affected by them. Because the fact of the matter is that. . . if we get ourselves into the waters of life, that living God--it's absolutely guaranteed--is going to ask you to die. It's not just a possibility. It's absolutely guaranteed. Death in the waters of reality. Death to myth, to fantasy, to a false sense of innocence. . . death even to serviceable old ways of knowing ourselves.

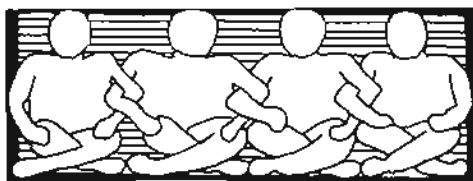
Worse still, to be born each day, because that's harder still. . . Oftentimes it's inadequate. It's unsophisticated. It's often illegal and many times it's immoral.

For me to stand on my street and let something painful touch me. . . that's an identity crisis. . . As long as I stand on the stoop and keep all my categories in place--sociology, theology, social justice social work--and use them as fixers that keep everything in my head, I can stand there, fulfill everybody's expectations, get promoted and feel very easy to go to sleep at night and feel proud of myself because I am what my people need. But if I let it get into my gut and incarnately

To be born each day - that's harder
still. It's often unsophisticated
- often times it's inadequate, it's
illegal, and many times it's immoral ...

name that pain with my tears--that's hard
. . .Ironically, it is as hard to let the
beauty in. . .And so we make a god of e-
quanimity. . .instead of passion.

The pains of freedom are so terrible.
It's so much easier to conform to an out-
side definition of myself, complain and
bitch about that archbishop or whoever
else who let me be who I am. So much
easier than to creatively respond with
my response and take responsibility. . .



To own what happens in me with pas-
sion and make that my naming of life and
God and even when it comes to discovering,
as a corollary of Baptism; it seems to me,
we are asked to live with a ministry of
Penance. . .to struggle to rejoice when I
discover sin in me. Not only to forgive
each other's sins, but it's to sin well.
It's all right to sin. It is something to
rejoice in when we discover contradiction
in us as a result of being vulnerable to
life's circumstances, and struggling to
own what's going on in me. . .To be able
to let the virus of our guilt, which is
the source of all our injustice, make us
afraid of life and need to contain our-
selves and one another, to let that virus
break through my skin. . .The it's able
maybe to get at the love of God and other
people. And the process of healing can
begin.

I think we think we are non-Eucharist
for each other when we involve each other

in the pain of contradiction or sin. And
sometimes that's the most incredible mom-
ent of our being Eucharist for one another.

We are called to Eucharistic com-passion.
We are called to feed off one another, which
to me means experiencing ourselves in each
other, rather than making each other other.
I think our own deep self-rejection of our-
selves understandable--I have to label you
and make you other because if I experience
you I'm experiencing myself.



Briefly Spoken.....

At the December monthly "joint meeting" of all three houses--which was in reality a Christmas party--we spent some time composing and then reading to each other ways in which we experienced the City of God being built. Herewith are the decipherable mementoes scavenged from that event:



I see the City of God being built when people trust each other enough that money or repayment is not a condition for that bond.

I think I experience the City of God being built when honesty overshadows pretense. Let me explain: There is something to recognizing in honesty the uselessness of scrambling to complete activities and projects when people, feelings, and gifts are tread upon. There is something to recognizing in honesty the importance of admitting our limits as well as letting go of our selfishness to open up to others. There is something to recognizing in honesty that we all are needy people and--more importantly--we have a loving God who cares for our needs. Living in this honesty is the foundation of the City of God.

Building the City of God

- neighbors who care, risk and communicate
- giving of time, money and talent--not only out of one's surplus, but also from one's substance, trusting in God to provide what one needs
- working out of service and enjoyment, that is, loving oneself, loving one's work, loving those for whom one labors
- taking much time for God's creation to unfold within--realizing one's creative potential that has been lying dormant and squelched.

The City of God gets built in funny ways, sometimes. It's not always the foundations that get put down first. Sometimes whole towns are built, and stand there in their foreshadowing beauty, beckoning and converting the hearts of a few who themselves did not realize that they could or might or should become artisan-workers. I see artisans building the City at what looks like risk: for example, people who are so enamored of their art that they give up most of what they could have for tools of smallness, simplicity, loving.

I think the process of building the City of God remains the same in every age and time--and it has two parts. First, we have to tear down our own ideas of what God's City looks like: gold streets, high technology, "success" however we define it; we have to let go of our preconceived notions. Then, when God's City has become our city, our home ground, we are enjoined by Ephesians to "stand firm our ground" against the Principalities and the Powers. In short, we must learn to recognize good and evil and choose the good and resist the evil. Sounds simple.

For me, the City of God is founded on the love one heart feels for another in the intertwining of the human life we all share in common. In God's eye, the potential of our common love and life is limitless. Because to us, that potential has limits, we grab (in the countless forms of greed) in order to never know the limits we so fear and which, in the truth of God's ways, do not exist.

I find the City of God not in structures or programs or places or even times. Rather, when I find a heart weakened and wounded that becomes free to care for another--therein is God's holy place.

From "Karen House"

by Mary Jane Antuna

As I begin the new year I am also beginning my sixth month at Karen House. Looking back, I have so much to be thankful for.

I spent my first Christmas here and it was so special! Many things made it so. First was our Christmas house decorating party. So much pride was in the air as guests and workers worked together to make the house come alive with the spirit of Christmas. Sharon helped Pete decorate the steps. Steve and Mark put up the gigantic tree and made the lights come on. Rosemary made paper chains, and all the little ones helped put the finishing decorations on the tree.

I can't forget the love and care that went into the cookie baking. Chris and Arlene had lots of fun together as they helped me make hermits. Some of the other guests helped crack the nuts, and Delicia made her favorite holiday treats. The Christmas gift giving would not have gone so well if it were not for all Teka's hard work and the wonderful job Sandy did as Santa.

The time here has been invaluable to me, touching lives and having mine be touched these past short months. I think I know now why Dorothy believed so strongly in each person's distinct dignity. Her belief was not just empty words. She lived the life of poverty of the poor. She walked the picket lines with the workers and even went so far as to go to jail because of injustice done to others. I thank God that Dorothy Day cared so deeply about others that she opened the first Catholic Worker house in the New York Bowery. In true Gospel fashion, her life was leaven for the rising of many such houses of hospitality around the country. She was not afraid to touch lives and let others' touch hers.

I am so glad, too, to be in a community of women and men who continue to hold onto the strong belief Dorothy had--who know how precious and priceless the gift of peace is. Sometimes taking such a strong stand on issues sets us apart and labels us. But that's okay! All of us have to remember we cannot smugly sit back hope peace will remain ours without struggle.



Karen House

My reflections cannot end without including a most special former guest. When it was made known to us that Monica Ray had a very short time to live, two members of our community chose to find an apartment, where Monica could spend her last days with the dignity she so deserved. Monica was 33 and died on her daughter's first birthday. I was privileged to live with her for that short time--ultimately less than a month--a close time in which I learned so much. Much like Dorothy Day, Monica expected those around her to be and give their best with no phoniness. Her picture hangs on the wall in our chapel now as a reminder of the clarity, honesty and generosity to which she calls us.

Because of Monica, so many other guests, members of the support community who come down and lend a hand, and people good to our house in a myriad of other ways--like Mary and Julie who have come down from Minnesota for a month--I am thankful to live and serve as a Catholic Worker.

Mary Jane Antuna came to Karen House after dropping in to lend a hand periodically for over a year or two. Her gentle and unobtrusive ways are a special gift to us. Right now, we are praying for her recovery from bronchitis--the cough she let go too long!

From "Cass House"

✓ by Zackery Davisson

Many blessings have been bestowed upon Cass House since you last heard from us in the Fall. As we patiently awaited Christ's arrival at the end of the Advent Season, we also anxiously awaited the birth of a child to one of our live-in volunteers, Bobbie Ross. Fittingly enough, Bobbie gave birth to a 7lb. 10 oz. baby girl on November 29, 1981. Not only was this date the first calendar day of the Church year, but also it was the first year anniversary of the death of Dorothy Day. We tried to persuade Bobbie to name the child Dorothy Day Ross, but she finally decided on Stephanie Marie. Also on November 29, over 75 people gathered in Cass House to give thanks and praise at a Eucharist to God for the life of gentle loving that Dorothy Day extended to the poor and for the precious life of a new child, Stephanie Marie.

Out of all the festive times of the year, the Christmas Season is busiest for us at Cass House. By the time Christmas day came along, many were exhausted. I was wishing that Christmas day would hurry up and be over since I was so tired from all the preparations. In fact, I was losing the meaning and the specialness of the Christmas Season. I gained a new perspective, however, and a new joy in my heart when a four year old girl named Jamie received her Christmas presents from Santa early Christmas morning. Jamie had lived with us just a few days. After unwrapping a few of her gifts, Jamie looked up to Santa with her big, warm brown eyes and said, "Santa, how did you know I loved puzzles?" And my heart just melted. A few minutes later she again said, "Santa, how did you know I needed clothes? Did you know you gave me six pairs of socks?" Suddenly, all of my rushing around, all of our decorating, and all of our work became meaningful again. Later in the day,



Jamie told Barb Prosser, "You know what? I like it here. It feels like home." You can't imagine how much this experience recharged me and re-dedicated me to working with the poor.

And none of this joy, this new enthusiasm--none of the happenings of Christmas--would have occurred without your prayers, your work, your sacrificing, and your financial contributions. How can we ever adequately express our sincere thanks to our supporters? Simply, thanks so much for loving us and our people the way you do. Thanks for all the Christmas goodies and presents you sent to us and our guests. Special thanks to Sappington Produce for the beautiful Christmas tree that for the second year in a row has touched the ceiling in the front hallway by the etched glass windows. It has become a hallmark of Christmas at Cass House.

The holiday season is also a very special time for us since we are blessed with volunteers from the frozen Northlands of Minnesota and Wisconsin. Kathy Young and Margaret Cashman from St. Benedict's College in Minnesota are a real source of joy for us. We are certainly disappointed that blizzard conditions have prevented the students from St. Norbert's College in Wisconsin from arriving thus far. Hopefully, they will make it down for one week in January. It will be their third straight year of coming to help out.

We have added some new members to our community. Larry Moore and Ed Ashton, former guests, have become live-in volunteers and play an important part in helping in the men's section and soupline. Audrey Tankins, a live-in volunteer, has become a staff member; and her presence around the kitchen is delightful. Last but not

least, Mary Elizabeth Herdliska has joined Virginia Druhe on our contemplative team in the fourth floor regions of the house. Now we have two people praying for our ministry all the time, and that surely is a blessing.

Know that all of you are welcome at our house anytime.

✓ Zach Davisson has responsibility for the men's section at Cass House and is presently earning top marks in the courses he is taking for certification as an elementary teacher, a vocation he chose after working as a teacher's aid at a neighborhood school.



"From Little House"

by Mary Ann McGivern

Peter Maurin's vision of the future centered on cult, culture, and cultivation. I'd like to add "cooperation" (cult-operation?) to that list because of my amazed awareness that so many people from the Catholic Worker support community have worked to rehab the Ella Dickson House and my knowledge that without that help we could not live here. I'm reminded of the old barn raisings, and I wonder how anyone but the very rich can survive today without cooperation. Yet I suspect we don't share our survival skills--except when the abundant harvest of zucchini threatens to crowd us out of our kitchens.

It's okay for me to ask for help because I live at a "Catholic Worker House;" but my friends who are struggling with families and the ideal of simple living often go it alone. Maybe we could form Saturday Morning Clubs, akin to bridge clubs, in which several families work together at one another's homes one Saturday a month. If just one member of the group has plumbing or (like me) tuckpointing skills, those skills will spread quickly; and we'll all have a good time. This sort of cooperative effort is one way to live out our vision of the future right now.

My parents and half my siblings (3) came to St. Louis to celebrate Christmas at the Little House with us. We had a great time. I pulled out a roasting pan for the turkey, and my sister commented on how well equipped our kitchen is. That led me to ponder the anomaly of "donations." Again, how can anybody but the very rich survive without them?

In the four and a half years since Karen House opened, I've come to take for granted having extra beds and couches and refrigerators to furnish apartments; the right sized pot for any occasion; toys to give away at Christmas; bread; freezers. But there are drawbacks. Some of the toys are guns or break easily or are broken already; we need milk, not sweet rolls; I don't remember a working can opener or toaster or a coffee pot with all its parts ever coming in donations, though I'm sure some must have.

B.J. and Paul and Sharon spent hours sorting Christmas toys so guests and neighborhood parents could choose gifts for their children--but how do we tell a kind donor that one of the most beautifully wrapped gifts in the collection was a used coloring book? Don't look a gift

horse in the mouth, they say. Nonetheless, we, the givers and the receivers, all run the risk of burying ourselves in the things we buy, sort, repair, distribute, and use ourselves.

I said this to Virginia Druhe; and she suggested we should think of ourselves as sorters and distributors, in zen fashion, being mindful that we do indeed live off of these donations, that the canned goods, turkeys, toilet paper, toys, alter wine, pampers, hats and gloves, winter coats, stoves and furnaces, books, crayons, and kitchen knives have all been eaten or worn or used gratefully in our houses and by those we've passed them on to. Our society needs a means of distributing excess goods --and we are it.

Paul's brother, Eligha, spent the two weeks of Christmas with us. It was wonderful to have him here. B.J. is planning for two refugees from Somalia to stay with us. Sharon made Christmas cookies, three batches a day for two weeks: German pretzels, gingerbread people, hermits we ate

one afternoon with Virginia, several peanut butter and chocolate chip variations, and sugar cookies galore. We had a good time eating them and giving them away. Pat Coy and the St. Louis U. volunteers had a prayer service and discussion here at Thanksgiving; they'll be back here to work soon with the start of the second semester.

Charlie and Virginia Nesmith are still waiting for their second child to arrive. Their 2 year old, Elizabeth, visits Francis Annis every day, we think for graham crackers as well as for sociability. I've just begun teaching Paul 9th grade world history, and a major assignment is that he watch the evening news. The first night, there were extensive stories on the weather, Poland, anti-Semitism, and the end of the school lunch program for a lot of poor children in Cincinnati or Cleveland or somewhere. When the show ended, I asked Paul if there was anything he didn't understand or had questions about. "Oh, I understood everything, I mean what they said and how they explained it. But I didn't get that last part. Why don't they give those kids lunches?"

Mary Ann McGivern, S.L., is getting hard to introduce without being repetitious. Among the originals at Karen House, veteran activist, she is presently trying her hand at free lance writing and rehabbing the Little House.

THE ROUND TABLE

ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC WORKER NEWS

CASS CATHOLIC WORKER
1849 CASS AVE. 63106

KAREN CATHOLIC WORKER
1840 HOGAN 63106

ELLA DIXON HOUSE
1540 N. 17th St. 63106

BULK RATE U.S. POSTAGE PAID ST. LOUIS, MO. PERMIT NO. 3087
--

Marty Mannion
5720 Woodland
St Louis Mo 63120