



Bill Ofenloch and Rick Gaumer, both on the CPF staff, were two of the nine people arrested for chaining themselves together in front of Saint Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. The judge dismissed the charges "in the interest of justice." - photo by Elizabeth Miller

THE YEAR OF RECONCILIATION

In Pope Paul VI's call for Holy 1975 he stated:

As is well known, in recent years one of the Church's most pressing concerns has been to disseminate everywhere a message of charity, of social awareness, and of peace, and to promote, as far as she can, works of justice and of solidarity in favor of all those in need, of those on the margins of society, of exiles and of the oppressed - in favor of all men, in fact, whether individuals, social groups or peoples. We earnestly desire therefore that the Holy Year, through the works of charity which it suggests to the faithful and which it asks of them, should be an opportune time for strengthening and supporting the moral consciousness of all the faithful and of that wider community of all men which the message of the Church can reach if an earnest effort is made.

On Nov. 18 the U.S. Bishops begin their annual conference in Washington, D.C. We urge them to listen carefully to these words of Pope Paul and help make them a reality. We ask, in the spirit of the Year of Reconciliation, that the Bishops confront the issues of amnesty, political prisoners and world hunger.

In many countries supported by the U.S. government, such as Chile, South Korea and South Vietnam, Catholics are speaking out against their government's policies. We support these protests, pray that they remain nonviolent, and ask our Bishops to do the same.

In this issue are articles on amnesty and world hunger which outline what the Bishops' stand has been and asks them to reconsider their positions. We ask you to write to your Bishop and ask him to raise these issues at the conference.

FOR AMNESTY AND POLITICAL PRISONERS

In the spirit of the "Year of Reconciliation", Pope Paul has called for amnesty and release of prisoners. To mark the beginning of the second International Week of Concern for Amnesty and Political Prisoners, and in the spirit of the Holy Year, the C.P.F. sponsored a vigil at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday, Sept. 29. We went to St. Patrick's to ask the Church - laity, clergy and hierarchy - to take a stand against our government's policy in South Vietnam and ask our government to withdraw all funding except for humanitarian reasons; to call for universal unconditional amnesty and to pray for those in prison and in need of amnesty and for those who have the power to release them, that they may do so.

Nine people ascended the steps of St. Patrick's and chained themselves together by their wrists to symbolize their solidarity with the political prisoners in South Vietnam and those who would be helped by a genuine amnesty. We were standing in front of the Cathedral, not blocking access to the church, while the vigil of forty people continued on the other side of the street. Immediately approached by the police and asked to leave, we attempted to explain why we were there. However, before five minutes had elapsed the nine of us were led away into a police van while still chained together. The arresting officers told us that "a Monsignor told us to 'arrest them, get them out of here.'" No one from the Cathedral directly spoke to us.

Those arrested included Joanne Sheehan, Rick Gaumer and Bill Ofenloch of the CPF staff, Fr. Dan Berrigan, Riley Bostrom, Fr. Jack Egan, Margaret Murther, Esther Pank, and Sister Judy Peluso. We were charged with "disrupting a religious service", a class A misdemeanor which carries a sentence of up to one year in prison and/or a \$500 fine.

The leaflet handed out by the vigilers stated: *In a letter to Cardinal Rossi on August 17th, 301 South Vietnamese Catholic priests risked imprisonment themselves in stating that the people are living under constant threats and fear and are still being jailed for opposing the practices of the government of South Vietnam. They go on to say, "Even if the Vietnamese religious leaders do not condemn the government, at least they should break with it and make it clear that they are not on the side of the government in its works of repression and destruction of the citizens' rights." We endorse this statement, and readress it not only to our religious leaders but to all Catholics. This war is our responsibility and we must act to end it.*

Those who have spoken out and refused to participate in a war that is immoral - Vietnamese and Americans - must be freed.

PLEASE HELP!

On October 7th we mailed 4,511 appeal letters asking you, our members and friends, to support us. That was over three weeks ago and so far we have received only 10 responses. We realize that the mail is often slow and we hope that this is the case, not that you have disregarded our letter. We would like to print the BULLETIN more often, but we do not have the money. In our last issue we had intended to report on the situation in South Korea and the growing problem of world hunger, but we could not afford the extra paper to print these articles. Please, if you think that the CPF should continue and you would like to receive the BULLETIN more often, we need your help. Even if you can only send \$1 or two, this would help us pay for printing and postage. If you can send more, please do, for we must pay the rent, the phone bills, etc.

AMNESTY IS NOT EARNED - REENTRY

by Bill Ofenloch

President Ford's program for healing the nation comes as a cruel disappointment to those who have been hoping and working for amnesty. What he offers is a far cry from any genuine amnesty. Ford admits this and acknowledges that he doesn't support an amnesty though he is in favor of reconciliation. Apparently the Administration believes that this vindictive program will be capable of healing the divisions of our longest, most unpopular war and reconciling those who refused to fight. We would question this attitude and offer that the earned reentry program will cause more divisiveness than healing.

The government's program operates as follows: The draft resister who is underground or in exile can report to a U.S. Attorney in the district of the violation, who determines how long a period (up to 2 years) of alternate service to demand. This decision is based on a superficial review of the man's situation and does not take into account whether or not his case bears sufficient legal merit to sustain conviction. This question will only be raised if a man has an attorney challenge the indictment before he turns himself in. After the period of service is determined by the U.S. Attorney and an oath of allegiance is sworn, the draft resister must report to Selective Service. If he already has a job lined up that meets the criteria it can be approved by Selective Service. Otherwise, he must take the one assigned by the State Director. The regulations governing this "Reconciliation Service", as it is fraudtently named, are basically the same as those for alternate service; except a person can be reassigned at any time not only for cause but even solely at the discretion of the Director.

The military resister who is charged with desertion or being AWOL reports to the military and is processed out in a week or less with an undesirable discharge (U.D.). He or she must then report to Selective Service for the job assignment, also up to 2 years. This period is determined by a military board (composed of 3 colonels and one captain) before which the person doesn't appear. A loyalty oath is also required. At the completion of "Reconciliation Service" one is eligible to have the U.D. raised to a newly devised "Clemency Discharge" which allows no veteran's benefits.

At first it appeared that someone could obtain a U.D. and then not have to do the alternate service. The military's control ended at the time of discharge and the program made no provisions for other prosecution. However, the Pentagon has announced that it can courtmartial any who sign the affirmation not intending to do the service. They also noted that it is a federal crime to falsely sign any official document. Whether they will choose to prosecute is an open question.

Ford has also set up a clemency board. Nine members, representing diverse views on U.S. involvement in the war, will consider the cases of those who were in prison at the time the program was initiated (presently they are furloughed awaiting future instructions). They will also review the cases of those who already have less than honorable discharges for AWOL or desertion. The clemency board can assign "Reconciliation Service" as a condition for their granting release or a clemency discharge.

This earned reentry program is riddled with inequities. First, of all, in light of the full, unconditional pardon granted Richard

Nixon, this punitive program illustrates the shameful double standard of justice that exists in this country - one for the rich and powerful and another for the poor and powerless. Of course, the crimes of Mr. Nixon can not be seen as equivalent to the actions of war resisters. Furthermore, a pardon (even a full, unconditional one) is not what is meant by amnesty. What President Ford has done for war resisters, though, is far less than what he has granted a former president about to be indicted.

The major objection to the program is that it is punitive while it claims to be healing. The government demands that those who resisted the war must now admit that they were wrong and beg forgiveness. Alternate service is punitive. A loyalty oath implies that refusal to participate in an undeclared, immoral, and probably unconstitutional war is disloyal. To refuse to bomb and napalm hundreds of thousands of innocent Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian civilians is an unpatriotic act. To refuse to submit to the draft by registering or performing alternate service is not tolerable by a country that does not acknowledge conscientious objection to a particular war (the just war doctrine of the Christian Church). We should be clear that this is what the earned reentry program means.

Many other objections have been raised to the fairness of the processing involved. There are no appeal rights to the assignment Selective Service imposes. One must take the job assigned and perform satisfactorily for 2 years or else face renewed prosecution. All who enter the program must execute a waiver of their constitutional rights to a speedy trial, due process, and against double jeopardy to allow this later prosecution.

Some may choose to avail themselves of this arrangement with all its conditions and be willing to perform the service and appear suitably penitent. It might be better for some to take this step rather than suffer worse conditions underground or abroad. It is not for us to condemn those who participate in this program. However, we must emphasize that this is really not such a benevolent offer.

Opportunities under the regular laws and policies of the government were often more generous. The penalties imposed by the earned reentry program are more severe than those usually given by the courts. In fiscal year 1973, 3,495 men were brought to trial for violations of the Selective Service Act. Only 28% (977) were convicted and of these, only 260 went to prison. The others received an average of 2 years service under parole. This illustrates another negative aspect of Ford's program - that there is no safeguard to review the legal case against each person who appears to have violated the Selective Service law. In light of the conviction rate, 70% of these cases are faulty and would be dismissed or acquitted at trial.

In regards to military violators, the already existing procedures can result in a better resolution of the charges. Most long-term AWOL's or deserters can receive Undesirable Discharges in lieu of court martial (Chapter 10's) without alternate service. The clemency discharge which is obtained after "Reconciliation Service" is completed promises to be just as discriminatory to those seeking employment as a U.D. A single type discharge could be a much better idea if the government were interested in eliminating future discrimination. Although a Chapter 10 discharge with no confinement is not guaranteed and a few men returning have received prison time, the vast majority of those returning to military control can receive one of they are willing to accept the U.D. Otherwise, they are at least assured of a trial. While it is not the epitome of judicial fairness, there is an opportunity to challenge the charges and present some evidence in mitigation.

Numerous other inequities in the program have appeared. Nothing is done for the half million veterans with less than honorable discharges except if the reason is exclusively AWOL or desertion (Art. 85, 86, or 87 of UCMJ). This is only a small fraction of the total. The clemency review board that will consider these discharges is all too similar to that after World War II. That board pardoned only 1,523 of the 15,000 men it considered. In this case, the board is only empowered to grant "clemency discharges" - practically meaningless gestures - and adjustment of prison sentences contingent upon alternate service if required. It won't be very easy to confuse this with amnesty.

The Catholic Peace Fellowship's primary purpose is to initiate educational and action programs in the context of Christian nonviolence. We are a membership organization affiliated with the Fellowship of Reconciliation. We are supported by contributions from members and friends. The CPF BULLETIN comes out irregularly, although we try to get out 5 BULLETINS or SUPPLEMENTS a year. This issue was edited, typeset and printed by the staff - Joanne Sheehan, Rick Gaumer and Bill Ofenloch, with help from Brendan Coyne and Michael Murphy. Articles and comments may be sent to us at 339 Lafayette St., New York, N.Y. 10012. Our phone number is (212)673-8990.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND AMNESTY

We are disturbed that the United States Catholic Conference, representing the bishops of this country, abandoned its earlier stand for universal unconditional amnesty and "welcomed" Ford's "earned reentry" program. Bishop James Rausch, the U.S.C.C.'s general secretary had called for an unconditional amnesty on June 4, 1974. He spoke of Pope Paul's call for reconciliation and amnesty in Holy Year 1975, and said it was quite appropriate that we, as Americans, strikingly in need of reconciliation "give serious consideration to broad, unconditional amnesty." "Our government's grant of amnesty, then, becomes its own way of repairing the damage resulting to the nation and its people caught up in that upheaval (the Vietnam war - ed.). To grant amnesty is to take a necessary and appropriate step to bring healing and reconciliation to the nation. Such a display of generosity would represent the best of both our Judeo-Christian tradition and our American heritage."

Earlier, Fr. Brian Hehir, director of the Division of Justice and Peace of the U.S.C.C., testified for unconditional amnesty before Congress. He was particularly concerned that most of those who violated the law were selective conscientious objectors who could not obtain C.O. status from their draft board or discharge from the Armed Forces. Although Fr. Hehir stated that the war resisters should remain open in principle to service for their community, he proposed that an unconditional amnesty would be the best way to promote reconciliation "to resolve this moral dilemma of the Vietnam war. I submit that the requirement of *quid pro quo* in the present case, may be more than either reason or reconciliation require."

Yet on Sept. 16, the executive committee of the U.S.C.C., 5 Cardinals and Bishops including Bishop Rausch, "welcomed" the announcement of "conditional amnesty" (as they called it) and the clemency review board. This approval is strikingly inconsistent when one takes a careful look at the Presidential program.

The loyalty oaths and enforced service are hardly in the spirit of reconciliation and forgetting which is rightfully amnesty. We feel that those who resisted the draft or the military would be more than willing to serve the common good, and have already done so by speaking out for life in the face of heavy legal penalties. Any service will only be of benefit to the individual and the human community if it is voluntary. Should we ignore the fact that war resisters have suffered substantially -- not as much as those who lost limbs or even their lives in Vietnam, but considerably more than the millions who escaped through draft deferments weighted in favor of the affluent and better educated? Are the war resisters now expected to renounce their principles before a vindictive government and accept the burden of the entire nation which bears responsibility?

Therefore, we urge everyone to continue to demand universal unconditional amnesty. If the President will do no more, Congress ought to act. We believe that the Catholic Church, on every level, should speak out and act to achieve amnesty and the release of political prisoners in the spirit of reconciliation which Pope Paul has proclaimed for Holy Year.

If you or someone you know is considering this clemency program - do not contact the U.S. Attorney's office or Selective Service for information. Aside from the fact that the information may be misleading, it will alert them and lead to possible arrests. You should first consult a qualified draft or military counselor or lawyer, if necessary, to see whether you are actually in legal jeopardy or if there are better alternatives open.

For reliable counseling and referral a network of centers is being set up throughout the country. At present they are: East Coast Amnesty Information and Action Center, 339 Lafayette St., N.Y., N.Y. 10012 (212) 228-1500; Amnesty Action, P.O. Box 7477, Atlanta, GA. 30309 (404) 373-5833; Denver Center, 1764 Gilpin St., Denver, CO. 80218 (303) 321-3717; California Council for U.U.A., 5899 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. 90064 (213) WE7-0236.

WORLD HUNGER AND THE BISHOPS

On November 5, 1974 the World Food Conference convenes in Rome under the auspices of the United Nations. The purpose of the conference will be to access the world food crisis and attempt to develop some policy to alleviate the famine plaguing the world's poor.

On November 18 in Washington D.C. the American Bishops hold their annual convocation. This past September 19 the Executive Committee of the U.S. Catholic Conference, an affiliate of the Bishop's Conference, issued a three point statement concerning the food crisis urging the U.S. government at the conference to support:

"First, an international food reserve to provide a permanent supply to meet global emergencies; second, an increase in short term emergency relief to areas threatened with starvation; and third, technical assistance for developing countries to increase their food producing capacity."

As another year passes and another 10 million people face death by starvation we find this statement of the hierarchy of the Church woefully inadequate. The Catholic Peace Fellowship therefore urges the Bishops to adopt a more augmented and encompassing stance concerning this global crisis.

The Canadian Bishops focused on the hunger issue in their past Labor Day message. They made a twelve point statement for Christian responsibility in regard to hunger:

"As consumers, as Christians then are we prepared to:

- (i) Question the goals of an economic system which urges us to consume and waste extravagantly, rather than share available food resources?
- (ii) Resist advertisements and other forms of social pressure which generate affluent eating habits?
- (iii) Practice the tradition of fast and abstinence by reducing our consumption of food, especially meat?
- (iv) Channel the savings we achieve by moderation, whether money or goods to neighbors in need through effective voluntary agencies?
- (v) Develop new educational programs in families, churches, and schools oriented towards changes in consumption patterns and personal life styles? Such programs could, for example, examine the cultural significance of eating together as families, as friends, as colleagues. Is it not time to change the emphasis from the physical pleasures to the fraternal values of eating together? As citizens, as Christians, are we prepared to ask our policy makers to:
- (i) Make substantial contributions towards the creation of a world food bank (composed of wheat, rice, and coarse grains, plus fertilizer, fuels, and other agricultural resources)? Current proposals call for regional storage depots that could be drawn upon by countries facing emergency food problems.
- (ii) Make our own concessional sales of wheat to poor nations at below market prices while subsidizing Canadian producers? Canada has used a two-price system to benefit domestic producers and consumers. But Canada has yet to provide comparable advantages to the less developed states which purchase wheat.
- (iii) Increase the purchasing power of the poor countries by paying just prices for their exports? The prices Canada currently pays these nations for their commodity exports (e.g. tea, jute, coffee, cotton, bauxite) is generally not adequate to meet rising food prices and production costs.
- (iv) Provide more effective forms of agricultural assistance which will help developing countries to produce more food for their own peoples? Much of the assistance that is provided now does not meet the needs of the small farmer in these states.
- (v) Increase the purchasing power of low-earning Canadians, including small farmers and fishermen, by developing effective programs for the redistribution of income in this country? Various proposals for a guaranteed income have been designed for this purpose.
- (vi) Break economic and cultural patterns which downgrade agriculture and drive farming families off the land? Present practices ignore fertile land which cannot be worked by large scale "capital-intensive" machinery and methods. Is it not time to question the priority given to physically easy "city jobs" and to being a consumer? Is it not time to emphasize the personal and social values of creative physical work and primary production?
- (vii) Increase research studies on effective stewardship of the

(continued on page 4)

AN ALTERNATE CHRISTMAS

by Brendan Coyne

Realizing that the Christmas season is merely an ever-expanding period of frantic consumerism, some people have begun to change from the deeply ingrained pattern of consumption to a meaningful, life-supporting celebration of Christmas. Last season's retail sales hit a record high of \$9.3 billion, up \$700 million from 1972. Our society's rampant consumerism hurts human relationships, promotes pollution, threatens natural resources, and exploits the poor. We must search for ways to renew the spirit of giving and sharing: an alternate Christmas.

A helpful guide to positive ways of celebrating Christmas is the *Alternate Christmas Catalogue* (\$2.50 from Alternatives, 1500 Farragut St., N.W., Washington, D.C.). The Catalogue presents the thinking behind an alternate Christmas. It has many gift ideas including crafts and products made by community-controlled enterprises, instructions on creating gifts that mean more to giver and recipient and descriptions of life-supporting groups that deserve support.

Another good source of products for consumers interested in spreading the nation's wealth is the *Shop the Other America* catalogue (.25 from the New World Coalition, 419 Boylston St. Rm. 209, Boston, Ma. 02116). The catalogue lists more than 140 items produced by community development corporations in poor and minority communities. The catalogue describes these corporations and the alternate marketing philosophy they represent.

A pamphlet entitled "Some Friendly Suggestions for Holiday Gifts and Alternatives," (25 cents from the American Friends Service Committee, 48 Inman St., Cambridge, Ma. 02139) questions the validity of Advent as "40 shopping days before Christmas." The Friends suggest that we re-channel the money, time, and energy allocated to expensive gifts to support peace organizations and to help the victims of war and poverty. The pamphlet also offers ideas for meaningful gifts.

The *Last Whole Earth Catalogue* (available through book stores) has many ideas for creative gift-giving. The War Resisters League (same address as CPF's) has a Peace Calendar and Appointment book. For those who would like to give books this Christmas, a list of books available through CPF is enclosed in this SUPPLEMENT.

We must reconsider giving expensive gifts to children. Having been conditioned to expect lots of Christmas goodies, most children will find it difficult to accept an alternate Christmas. But with dialogue and their full participation in the decision, children will understand the need to reduce the cost of Christmas gifts.

Toys are important in a child's healthy development, but many toys are sexist, racist, violent, superficial, and dangerous. One can write the Public Action Coalition on Toys (PACT, c/o Ralph Nader's Citizen Action Group, Rm. 503, 2000 P St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036) to learn how to aid their efforts. They seek to convince the toy industry to consider the social impact of its products.

One suggestion for alternative gifts for children is a book from the bibliography of children's books, *Books for Friendship*, (AFSC, 160 N. 15 St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19102). Another possibility is the discussion and choice of a children's charity for a child to contribute to. Some suggestions: the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation's orphan fund (Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. 10960, Quaker Service Fund for Children (AFSC address as above), UNICEF, 331 E. 38th St., NYC 10016.

It's not difficult to make your own Christmas cards. Try to personalize those you purchase with a brief greeting and buy them from a non-profit organization, such as the FOR, Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. 10960.

For many, Christmas activities are limited to frenzied shopping sprees, a big meal on Christmas day and a succession of superficial parties. The preparation for Christmas can be joyous. We can gather with family and friends to help one another make gifts, decorations and wrappings and share creative ideas. We can share the baking and food preparation rather than leaving it to Mom. Perhaps a brief reading on reconciliation prior to our Christmas meal can add to the feast's significance. When we do get together, we should entertain one another, appreciate and acknowledge one another's talents. This Christmas demonstrate your concern for humanity. Share your ideas for celebrating an alternate Christmas. Remember that Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ.



Hunger (continued from p. 3)

soil and the seas, and on balanced development of the rural and urban sectors of Canada?

We urge the American Bishops to join with their Canadian brothers and issue a parallel statement for Americans. All twelve points are equally if not more so applicable to American society. Americans and Canadians as the major food exporters of the world must be prodded by the church to be accountable for their stewardship of the most vital resource of the earth - food. Let us not stand on Judgement Day with filled stomachs saying, "But Lord, when did we see you hungry?"

the catholic peace fellowship

339 LAFAYETTE STREET
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