

Desert Voices

NDE Newsletter

#3 fall 1988

We dedicate this issue to the varied and stimulating responses the Newsletter has received.

Friends,

After many of us had lived in a little peace camp in the woods next to Woensdrecht U.S. Air Force Base in the Netherlands for four and a half years, the INF Treaty came: no Cruise missiles in the Netherlands. Now the Pentagon wants to fill the gap by putting new nuclear missiles under F-16 fighter planes at Vokel Airbase. To begin speaking out against these plans, we held daily vigils at the main gate of the base during Lent.

We want to ask U.S. citizens to vote for a peace and justice minded President who would (1) lower the military budget, (2) spend that money on projects beneficial to people at home and abroad, and (3) abolish the Mutual Assured Destruction strategy and start developing a mutual assured survival strategy, because only together can we overcome our real enemies, poverty and the ecological crisis.

Vrede en all Goeds,
Frits ter Kuile ^{no}
Amsterdam

Dear Genie Durland,

I so much enjoyed your thoughtful, interesting article ["To Celebrate Gandhi"]. I so agree with you (and Gandhi!). We are all one--one family--in the Cosmic sense, a part of the Whole, the Universe... I see myself in the eyes of everyone. For me, nonviolence has come to mean the demonstration of caring, compassion, love. Small point: the British, from my reading of history, were not "civil and humane."

Thank you again,
Margaret M. Waybur

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you with my new address. I would like to continue receiving DESERT VOICES. I applaud you on your work and I always remember you in prayer. Your newsletter also provides sources of reflection with the groups with whom I work here in the parish.

Rev. Mark Doorley
St. Cecilia's Rectory
NY, NY

READER'S RESPOND

Dear Friends,

All of us engaged in the struggle for peace, to end the Arms Race, are extremely gratified to believe that we have finally built a peace majority in the US. We must now work to see that this majority exerts its strength by electing a Peace President and Congress. Then we'll muster the will to see that promises are kept after the election.

Those of us who began our actions at the Nevada Test Site at the onset of the Soviet Test Moratorium are well aware of your much earlier initiation of action, and we commend you for it. I might add that we all owe an extreme debt of gratitude to the Soviets for their bold initiative, a concrete step that made it possible for all of us to bring the issue of Nuclear Testing to the forefront where it rightfully belongs.

We want you to know how much we all appreciate your commitment to action.

Comradely yours,
Ed Hemmingson, state chair
Communist Party, Albany, Oregon

MORE LETTERS

Dear Mr. Ediger,

My copy of the NDE Newsletter was received with great joy and pleasure for truly I am happy to be associated with this organization. But your article on "Spiritual Weapons" is prompting me to pen this note. The title and phraseology used in the article took me back. Perhaps you should reconsider them. Are we not attempting to do away with weapons and the development, testing and deployment of them? If so, why adopt that terminology to our efforts? While not wanting to be offensive, I must take issue with the angle and analogy your article took. Hopefully we can focus on "our call: to embrace non-violence..., truth...,hope...,love..." without identification with what we strive to eliminate--weapons.

Most sincerely,
Sister Josandra Ciucci
Chester, PA

Dear Folks,

God bless the peacemakers. Your newsletter is great. What a new hope we have for the life on earth.

I work at a Y-12 weapons plant and hate it, but for money.

In love and light,
Walter Marlow, Jr.
Knoxville, TN

THE FRESNO BEE recently paid attention to one of our fellow peacemakers, Bea Whittington, on the occasion of the 50th reunion of her graduating class at Fresno State University:

"You can't help admiring anyone of senior citizen status who invites arrest by mounting the barricades for a cause she holds to be important.... She tells you matter-of-factly that she has been arrested for taking part in anti-nuclear demonstrations and has no intention of stopping. Moreover, says this social activist with a note of pride, her daughter has been arrested in the same cause. The class of 1938 wasn't aware it had spawned a tiger."

Hi Denise,

Hi Peter,

In November of 1968 I turned in my draft card--not as a protest of the Vietnam "conflict" but to protest the growth of the military/industrial complex in this country.

I believe not only in what Gandhi preached, but more in what he practiced.

My faith is satyagraha. I believe that what you do is part of it.

Enclosed is \$100 for maintaining ...whatever.

Respectfully,
Peter Curia
Phoenix, AZ

small voice in the desert

GANDHI

In the winter of the world's
violence a small weaver
threads a cloth
covering all humanity.

--Peter Ediger

When Gandhi is portrayed as a one-dimensional sainted martyr, as beyond our reach as Jesus, non-violence by extension is rendered beyond our reach, inaccessible, unuseable. By making it seem like something only saints have done, the history of nonviolent action has been buried just as surely as women's history and the history of oppressed peoples have. When this happens, all of us are deprived of the tools of liberation.

Pam McAllister
(from You Can't Kill the Spirit)

NDE NEWSLETTER welcomes letters, articles, information, announcements, biographical sketches, poetry and humorous pieces. Send to: NDE Newsletter, Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
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ON THE BEACH

A moth, 4" wing span, brown, tinted pink and orange,
Wind torn, near death and cold
Cradled in a warm and loving hand.

Empty shells, sand dollar, cockle, razor and blue pacific
Broken, grinding, shattering, diminishing
Creating possibilities of new life.

A dead refrigerator, stark white against the sand,
Human created, intricate, mechanical
Perhaps a cross.

Five seagulls feeding on a dead feathered body,
End of life.
But death is feeding life.

Impossibility of creating new life and possibilities
Without death.
Our children, born of our bodies, but new possibilities.

Mary and I, when our bodies return to Mother Earth,
Dead, yet something more than us, alive
Creating more than us, new life.

Elder brother dying on a cross
Was not the CREATOR'S plan,
But forced by humans.

Just as a mother's dying
Was not the CREATOR'S plan
Yet some do.

So our Mother Earth's death
Is not the CREATOR'S plan,
But may be forced.

Perhaps Mother Earth
Too may die. She is so beautiful,
That I reject the possibility.

My mother said, "The body's death is less than soul's."
I found that hard when faced with the planet's death
Yet even that, in the CREATOR'S context, I can perhaps accept.

Strategic civil resistance, challenging systems, healing relationships,
Forging, strengthening old damaged links,
Actualizing of unity, possibilities to save the planet.



Paul E. Libby
April 1988

PRAYER, REFLECTION AND ACTION AT THE NEVADA TEST SITE

A TIME TO BE SILENT TIME TO SPEAK

Join:

*Dan Berrigan
Jim Douglass
Shelley Douglass
Bishop Gumbleton
Liz McAlister
Richard Rohr
Jim Wallis
and many
others...*

Lenten Desert Experience VIII

Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday
February 8 - March 26, 1989

Nevada Desert Experience
Post Office Box 4487
Las Vegas, NV 89127
(702) 646-4814



A NONVIOLENT PROJECT IN NEVADA

by Louie Vitale

During the Dorothy Day celebration a year ago, Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Dom Helder Camara of Brazil remarked that since the Nevada Test Site was the scene of the greatest violence on the earth today, it should also be the scene of the greatest nonviolence.

The nonviolent witness in Nevada has continued to mount, and we rejoice in that. But to be a great witness, we must not only increase in quantity but deepen the quality of nonviolence. For Gandhi, nonviolence was not just a matter of action but an entire approach to life. We hope to create a project in Las Vegas to deepen our understanding of nonviolence, to explore the violence within our culture, and to examine how we, as nonviolent activists, transform society.

At the Nevada Test Site, we often engage in animated discussions of social change, liberation, or the creation of a new society. Rarely do we have the opportunity to develop these conversations--to discuss, debate, cull and collect the best from the wealth of ideas and experiences. We want to create a place for that dialog in Nevada. A place where we can gather resources, study nonviolence, host retreats, share reflections and experiences. We have questions to ask: How do we address the notion of nonviolent transformation within our culture? What connections exist among the various liberation causes we are involved in? How do we immerse ourselves more deeply in what Gandhi called the "soul force"?

The Test Site is an amazing gathering place for people who have undertaken the nonviolent journey. We believe a new vision can emerge from this setting.

We are offering an initial retreat on Thanksgiving weekend, November 25-27, Friday evening to Sunday noon, to explore "Nonviolence and the American Dream." For information call (702) 648-2798 or 646-4814, or write The Nonviolence Project, Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127.

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Lenten Desert Experience VIII

A TIME TO BE SILENT
A TIME TO SPEAK
February 8 - March 26

--Intern needed, Jan. - Apr., during LDE VIII. Write or call.

--Recent NDE actions:
August Desert Witness brought 225 to the Test Site with 85 arrested.
Vigils during joint US/USSR verification tests.
Gandhi Celebration included workshops/presentations on non-violence. 200 at NTS action, 125 arrested.

--In October, Peace Camp celebrated its second anniversary of continuous presence near Mercury Test Site entrance.

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A TIME TO BE SILENT ... A TIME TO SPEAK

Lenten Desert Experience VIII

Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday
February 8 - March 26, 1989

Schedule Confirmed

February 7 - 8	Catholic Bishops	Daniel Berrigan Bishop Thomas Gumbleton
February 10 - 12	Seminarians, Theology Students	
February 17 - 19	Franciscans	Richard Rohr, Allen McCoy
March 16 - 17	Methodists	
March 19 - 26	Holy Week	Workshops on nonviolence with: Jim Wallis, Shelley & Jim Douglass Special Good Friday and Easter Services

(Actions each weekend in Lent are expected. In process: Shoshone and several denominational groups.)



Nevada Desert Experience

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