

8th Day Center for Justice



CENTERINGS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF 8TH DAY CENTER FOR JUSTICE

The parallels between the election of 2008 and the election of 1932 are often invoked, with good reason. It is not just that Obama's oratory is reminiscent of FDR's oratory, or that both men were brought into office as a result of big electoral shifts, or that both took power at a moment of economic catastrophe. All this is true, of course. But I want to make a different point: FDR became a great president because the mass protests among the unemployed, the aged, farmers and workers forced him to make choices he would otherwise have avoided. He did not set out to initiate big new policies. The Democratic platform of 1932 was not much different from that of 1924 or 1928. But the rise of protest movements forced the new president and the Democratic Congress to become bold reformers.

- Frances Fox Piven -

**OBAMA
NEEDS A
PEOPLE'S
MOVEMENT**

Audacity of Change

BY: KATHLEEN DESAUTELS, SP

In the words of Julia Cameron, “The capacity for delight is the gift of paying attention”. And “delight” is what I read on the faces saw as I arrived in the Santiago, Chile airport terminal the early morning after the November 4, 2008 election of President Obama. As part of a SOAWatch delegation to Chile, our purpose was to urge the Chilean government to commit to join with the five other Latin American countries to stop sending their militaries to the SOA/WHINSEC. Upon my initial arrival to Chile, it became clear how the world beyond the US borders was paying attention to this historic election.

A bit weary from the eight-hour flight from Miami, all I really wanted when I de-planed at 6:30a.m. was a wake-up cup of coffee. However, as I wound my way through the airport terminal there was enough energy and buzz in the air to make up for the lack of caffeine. Everywhere I turned crowds of people were engrossed in watching clips on the TV monitors depicting President-elect Obama, his family and the 100,000 cheering folks from the previous night’s celebration in Chicago’s Grant Park.

Throughout my visit to Chile, from street vendors to government officials, from survivors of torture of the Pinochet dictatorship years to human rights advocates, the Chileans are indeed paying attention. It’s safe to say that they, like we, are yearning for the kind of audaciousness of spirit and action - a shift in ideology that will translate into real global policy changes. As I remember the hope-filled faces of the Chileans I found the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. from years past to ring true today - “Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to

see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”

This issue of CENTERINGS offers some “first steps” toward raising issues of promise needing our attention. Delight in paying attention to: “Transforming A Toxic Economic legacy” by staff member, Liz Deligio, critiquing

the economically unsustainable US reliance on military force; “War Is Not A Game” by Kathy Kelly; co-coordinator of Voices for Creative Nonviolence, warning against the US Air Force developing new systems to wage war against Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq; “Unleashing the Potential” by Ethel Long-Scott; Executive Director of Women’s Economic Agenda Project, urging the need of a Single Payer, not-for-profit health care system; “Nuclear Weapons Abolition” by Carol Gilbert, O.P., and Ardeth Platte, OP, our Dominican friends, who spent 30 – 41 months respectively in Federal Prison for non-violent actions that exposed the hypocrisy of US nuclear weapons policy; and “That Day Scarred My Heart Forever” by Mary McCauley, BVM; pastoral administrator of St. Bridget in Postville, IA, which describes her “embedded memory” of the ICE (Immigration, Customs Enforcement) raid of immigrants at the Agriprocessors meatpacking plant last May.

Delight does not come cheaply. It is not without personal experiences of pain. Perhaps it’s because of such soul-aches one is impelled to get involved, to act. Such seems to be the case with our Centerings writers’. It is 8th Day’s hope that these articles will remind us that real transformation of systems takes more than the simple change of one person at the top, whether that’s the President of the United States, a CEO of a transnational corporation, or even the Pope of the Catholic Church. Transformative change is not merely rearranging chairs on a deck of a ship, its changing the ship’s whole course of direction. That is what was promised. Nothing less is needed. May we renew our own “audacity of hope” as we continue to do all we can to make this transformation a reality. In the words of Ben Hei Hei ...

We are here to do.

And through doing to learn;

And through learning to know;

And through knowing to attain wonder;

And through wonder to attain wisdom;

And through wisdom to find simplicity;

And through simplicity to give attention;

And through attention

To see what needs to be done.

The first step begins now.

Kathleen Desautels, a Sister of Providence, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN, is in her 22nd year at 8th Day.

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That Day Scarred My Heart Forever!

BY: MARY MCCAULEY, BVM

These words spoken by Pedro Lopez, a thirteen year old from Postville, Iowa, best described the immigration raid that took place on Monday, May 12, 2008. Later, I asked him a simple question, “Pedro, how are you,” he responded, “I am sad, very sad because they have taken away my mother.”

With Pedro, I hold May 12, 2008 as one of the most traumatic yet privileged days of my life. On this day ICE (Immigration, Customs Enforcement) came to Agriprocessors, a kosher meatpacking plant that employed workers from Mexico and Guatemala and initiated an immigration raid.

At the time I served as the pastoral administrator of three small parishes in Northeast Iowa, one being, St. Bridget’s in Postville. Embedded in my memory are the sights and sounds, not only of that day, but many days to follow. This is what I heard and saw:

- ⊗ The roar of helicopters flying over the town of 2200.
- ⊗ ICE Officials armed with guns standing guard at all of the gates leading to Agriprocessors.
- ⊗ Sheriff Deputies, State Police, and Local Police surrounding the plant.

And, had I been inside the plant I am told I would have heard people shouting, “La Migra! La Migra! Salvese el que pueda!” *Immigration, save yourself, if you can!* Some ran. Some tried to hide. Others stood paralyzed and followed the harsh directives of ICE. They were searched, shackled, lined up and tied to fences.

After a brief stay at Agriprocessors I returned to our parish church where I saw a few women and children. By 7:00 that evening over 400 people poured into St. Bridget’s to be with friends and family members and gather strength from one another. They came trusting that the Church and the Postville community would help them at this most horrible time in their lives.

To be at St. Bridget’s during this intense time was to witness humanity at its best, as help and assistance came like manna from heaven. To be there was to also see what happens when the law of the land does not match the needs of the land.

To journey with those affected by this raid was to accompany sensitive and concerned people who came to the United States for only one reason. They came, hoping to offer a better future for their families. They came to feed their families. Yet because of this desire they were arrested and given a federal charge of identity theft. They admit they entered the country without proper documentation, but in the deepest part of their hearts they believed they had no other choice. And in the deepest part of my heart I believe our immigration system is broken.



BVM’s join in solidarity with the Postville community in demanding for just immigration reform.

What steps might we take in order to bring about comprehensive immigration reform? The first and most essential step is for us to take a look at our own hearts. Are our hearts open to the strangers among us? Can we name and claim the giftedness of our 21st century immigrants?

Another essential element for immigration reform is to become educated about immigration related issues. We need to be familiar with the complexity of the documentation process and have an awareness of how past U.S. economic and political policies have jeopardized the lives of many people in Mexico and Guatemala. In addition we need to know how our undocumented friends were often exploited in the workplace, suffering one humiliation and injustice after another.

When our hearts are converted, we must then be persistent in our calls to state and federal legislators, insisting that the issue of immigration reform be brought to the table. Without delay, we need to call for an end to raids. The dreadful experience of Postville confirms the fact that raids cause much more harm on individuals, families, and the local school and business community, than they do to address the presence of undocumented persons within the United States.

My final suggestion is to pray for issues of immigration. During our own prayers in Postville we offered a common response to our Scripture verses: “Give us courage... Give us hope... Give us love”. Pray that our legislators will have the courage to bring the issue of comprehensive immigration reform to the table, that those who desire to call America home will never lose hope. Pray that we who are gifted with citizenship in this great country through the courage, sacrifice and struggles of our ancestors, may have hearts open to love strong enough as to bring about justice.

Mary McCauley, BVM, served as pastoral administrator in Postville for six years. Now living in Dubuque, is a past vice president of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Nuclear Weapons Abolition - Join the Urgent Struggle

BY: CAROL GILBERT, O.P. AND ARDETH PLATTE, O.P.

“Yes We Can” and “I need your help” became the mantras during the Barack Obama Campaign. Yes, with our help and people power, our new President for 2009 - 2013 will have four years to change directions. Foreign policy decisions and world security provisions abound with challenging opportunities. The most urgent issues deeply affecting US economics include the need to abolish nuclear weapons, ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and diplomatic alleviation of tensions with Iran, North Korea, and Russia. Changing directions must include a new means to the ends, the way of nonviolence, creating intentional partnerships with nations rather than empire building. The costly military industrial complex must be converted into a civilian, life-giving, peace-making complex.

Barack Obama has made serious promises and set positive goal-oriented statements. Some goals include:

- 1) A world without nuclear weapons by securing all loose nuclear materials and ending global development of nuclear weapons and materials (e.g., no Reliable Replaceable Weapons). This involves ballistic missiles off high trigger alert and expanding the ban on intermediate-range missiles.
- 2) Build bipartisan consensus behind the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).
- 3) Strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).¹ In addition to these goals, we hope the next Administration will develop diplomatic relations with Pakistan and Afghanistan rather than planned escalation of war, and end use of radar systems in the Czech Republic and interceptors in Europe.

The US must work for total disarmament of nuclear weapons as a leadership model for other nuclear weapons nations to follow. We must end US arms sales and funding of military ventures to other nations, and cease continual war making in any nation. Wars, which involve the killing of people and injury to Earth, will never become the way to peace. We must build unity among all peoples and support an economy that provides basic human needs for each individual. All violence is connected to the taproot of nuclear violence. Nuclearism maintains the US superpower status, although, also causes its ongoing deterioration. This is a threat for all peoples throughout the world. Are we not all on nuclear death row? Considering 35 more nations have the capacity, and feel the need, to get involved in the race for self-protection and balance of power, is our path not one of omnicidal self-destruction? WE BELIEVE SO!

Groups including the Blix Commission, Middle Power Initiative Delegates, Canberra Commission all believe so! The Kissinger, Nunn, Perry, Schultz Committees understand this danger. Fr.

Miguel d'Escoto of Nicaragua, now President of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament of the United Nations stated, “General and complete disarmament is one of the ultimate objectives of the U.N.” World Security Institute is calling for “Global Zero” and will lead a campaign to help bring it about. Pope Benedict XVI made a strong plea for a “progressive and mutually agreed dismantling of existing nuclear weapons.” Let us hold the Church accountable!

Australian and Malaysian governments have recorded model treaties and clusters of countries have passed nuclear-free positions. Together, we must create the kind of peace with justice that the world yearns for and future generations deserve. Nobel laureates, mayors, city councils, religious congregations, numerous political leaders, Hibakusha, retired admirals and generals, renowned scientists, Catholic Worker communities, plowshare activists, artisans, poets, musicians, etc. are all active in this struggle. We are all members of this circle in our prayers, research, writing, preaching, fundraising, organizing, coalition-building, internet and web sites, risking imprisonment, and efforts to live more simply. We are the people who help bring about this change and the urgent time is now.

It is an obligation to uphold Article VI of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to decommission, disarm and dismantle all nuclear weapons in all of its aspects. The banning of war forever is a possibility. “Yes We Can.” Let us unite for the causes!



Ardeth and Carol, speaking to a group at the 8th Day Center about their Plowshares Action. For more information please visit www.jonahhouse.org.

Carol Gilbert, O.P. and Ardeth Platte, O.P., are both Dominican sisters and members of the Jonah House Community in Baltimore, Maryland. In 2000, they were involved in a Plowshares action in Colorado where they broke into a missile silo, prayed, and poured their own blood on the silo cover. For this action, Carol served 30 months and Ardeth served 41 months in Federal Prison.

NOTES:

¹Disarmament Times, Fall 2008, pp. 4,5

War Is Not A Game

BY: KATHY KELLY

In August 2008, members of the “Witness Against War” (WAW) walk approached the gates of Ft. McCoy, (WI), with copies of an open letter addressed to soldiers inside the base, urging them not to fight US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thirteen of us were arrested by Military police at Fort McCoy and, because of a 1993 warrant for a similar nonviolent action, I was held in the Monroe County Jail. There, I met Bessie, a most unusual jailer. Bessie appeared to be near retirement age, with thick gray hair, a jovial face wreathed in smiles, and a soft, easily affectionate voice. She didn’t match any stereotyped images of jailers. Guards and prisoners alike seemed fond of Bessie. One evening, she paused to chat with other women prisoners. “Tomorrow night, I’m gonna have me some fun,” she said. “I’m gonna go to Fort McCoy and carry an AK 47 and run through the woods being a bad guy.”

“Ohhh,” said one of the prisoners. “My son works at Fort McCoy, and I hope he can get me a job doing that.”

To train soldiers for combat duty in Iraq, Fort McCoy has constructed a model Iraqi village inside the base. The soldiers practice surrounding the village, while locals are paid \$12 an hour to pretend being “the bad guys” - the Iraqis who would resist the US soldiers.

It seemed pointless to dampen the womens’ enthusiasm over Bessie’s good luck by telling about a woman I met in Jordan who had wept as she recalled a night when US soldiers raided her home in Iraq. The soldiers turned over furniture, ransacked cabinets and drawers, and took her husband away for days of interrogation.

I’m still troubled by my silence that evening, in the Monroe County jail. Bessie’s excitement over participating in a war game that offers a chance to earn some extra income is a sad metaphor for our times.

Ominous games are now being played out as the US Air Force develops a new system to wage war against Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. US military publications celebrate the development of new M-Q 9 unmanned aerial surveillance drones that fire laser guided missiles and are capable of carrying up to 500-pound bombs. At Balad Air Force base in Iraq, the US Air Force is working with UK’s Royal Air Force to develop a sophisticated system required to fly their “hunter-killer” UAVs. Similarly in Nevada, Creech Air Force base pilots working from trailers guide Reaper drones to hit targets in Afghanistan and Pakistan, often killing civilians.

Our collective witness against war faces daunting new tasks, as the US military now prepares to escalate warfare in Afghanistan. Talented scientists whose skills could be used to help with environmental disasters are instead designing combat systems guaranteed to accomplish “hunter-killer” missions at no cost to the lives or safety of the attacking “good guys.”

Bessie’s readiness to show good will and empathy toward other prisoners in the Monroe county jail gives me hope that people can be drawn into informed and empathetic views, audaciously changed views, regarding victims of US foreign policy and the war on terror. At this crucial juncture, the further invention of nonviolence calls us to learn more about the people who bear the brunt of US military invasions, attacks, and detentions while, at the same time, build nonviolent resistance to what Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King described as “the demonic suction cup” of the US military.

Below are listed three campaigns, dedicated to nonviolence, that are welcoming participants in early 2009:

▶ The Witness Against Torture campaign, which 8th Day Center members will join, is organizing opportunities for activists to vigil in Washington, D.C., attend educational events and lobby their elected representatives; they encourage groups to sign up for five day commitments in Washington, D.C.

www.witnesstorture.org

▶ Voices for Creative Nonviolence will go to Washington, D.C. in February 2009 to participate in the WAT campaign and also to lobby elected representatives to introduce legislation that will direct assistance to the millions of Iraqi people displaced by the US war in Iraq. www.vcnv.org

▶ The Nevada Desert Experience is organizing the Sacred Peace Walk, a 63-mile walk from Las Vegas to the Nevada test site, including rituals at Creech Air Force base on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. www.nevadadesertexperience.org

Kathy Kelly co-coordinates *Voices for Creative Nonviolence*, a Chicago-based campaign to end US military and economic wars against Iraq and to nonviolently resist US militarism in the US and abroad. She can be contacted at Kathy@vcnv.org.

Transforming a Toxic Economic Legacy

The United States economy exists in the most precarious position it has held since 1929, when it bottomed out creating the Great Depression. We have an estimated \$21 trillion dollars in debt, the collapse of core banking structures, a freeze on credit, and spiraling job loss.

These factors exist in a relationship with one another, each connected like a fragile web. When one piece of the web breaks the functionality of the whole web is impacted, making each area more vulnerable. We have heard of this crisis mostly in terms of its impact on the United States, but we must imagine this web stretching across the entire world. The fall out of toxic economic policies are just beginning to be felt.

Many pundits have hailed that Obama won due to the current economic crisis. Given the list of problems we face, it seems oversimplified to designate one problem as the issue. However amidst all the issues one thing remains clear; people are calling for change. At times the best way forward is to stop and take stock of what brought you to where you are in the moment, especially if you want the future to be transformative.

Two books published in the last five years, *The End of Poverty* by Jeffrey Sachs and *The Shock Doctrine* by Naomi Klein illuminate both the past and potential futures.

In *The End of Poverty*, Jeffrey Sachs calls on the world to bring countries out of extreme poverty by the year 2025. Sachs rightly names poverty as one of the most destabilizing forces in the world, noting the large amount of US money pouring into the “War on Terror” while little is allowed for humanitarian aid. If these numbers were switched Sachs believes countries existing on the edge could have options without violence.

Sachs believes change is possible within the current market structure, maintaining that the problem is not the structure but how the structure has been applied. Sachs calls for measures to guide the market and balance inequities to create what he calls a “win win.” His example of a “win win” is the presence of foreign companies in poor countries to create jobs. The wages and conditions may be substandard but the point for

Sachs is not the quality of the wage but the existence of any wage as a way out of poverty.

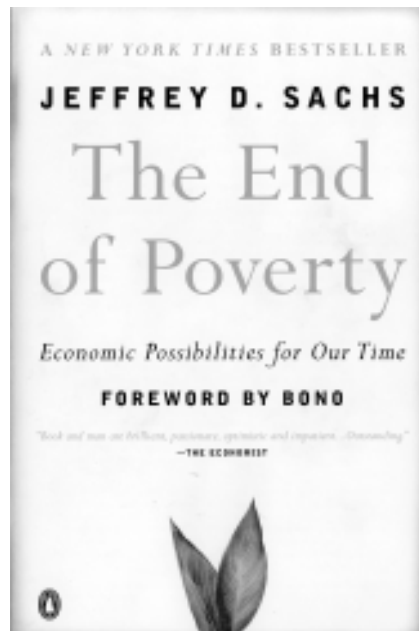
This view does not address several issues: why companies that make huge profits are allowed to pay sub standard wages, the fate of workers who lose those jobs at home, and the fact that there can never be a “win-win” when profit is valued over human dignity. Sachs frames a kinder and gentler market, but avoids mentioning that a market dependent on profit cannot be gentled. This is like believing that a gun is harmless without bullets, whereas the function of a gun is to cause harm, loaded or not. The point of the free market is to create wealth. It is not concerned nor will ever be concerned with how the wealth is distributed. On the contrary, wealth exists to keep the market going. Although Sachs call to end poverty is important, his solution lacks the complexity needed.

In *The Shock Doctrine* Naomi Klein describes the history of Milton Friedman, the father of many of the economic ideas that have led us to our current situation. Friedman was an economics professor at the University of Chicago during a period in the early fifties and

sixties when both the economic and military landscape of the United States changed to respond to the power vacuum that opened up after World War II.

Friedman represented a school of thought that was termed “ultra laissez faire” believing the market needed all controls removed. Controls distorted the market and hampered the ability of the “invisible hand” to move through differing market variables and adjust them back to balance.

Friedman took the concept of the “invisible hand” to its extreme, trusting the “market forces” to create balance without intervention. This was a radical shift from the “Keynesian” form of economics popularized during the Great Depression and applied to industry controls, government participation, and careful monitoring of market variables. The best way to understand this contrast is to think of government programs under FDR and then under George W. Bush, the invisible hand has a cruel tendency to render millions of people invisible too.



Klein furthers her analysis of Friedman's model of economic change by noting how economic policies were almost always attached to military force. The first "lab" for Friedman's economic vision occurred in multiple Latin American countries. The United States used the machinations of political coups, terror, torture, and disappearances to destabilize and then enforce economic policies representing an unregulated free market model.

Understanding this connection is vital towards creating a new way forward and following the change inherent in the promises of President Obama. The market does not exist in a vacuum obeying only the whims of its consumer base. The market is and always has been intimately linked to U.S. global interests. When we have entered different countries we bring complex military and financial interests. In actuality, the "win win" suggested by Sachs is our ability to take control of both a country's governance and its economy.

Klein points to our economic history not simply as a history of our resources but a military history as well. To create change and sustainability Klein insists that we cannot continue to view our economic policies in isolation from the rest of our actions. Instead we must recognize the whole picture by taking into account our impact on the environment and people around the globe. We must look into the future and take responsibility for what seven generations from now will inherit. We must finally separate military might and economic elitism. There is no way to justify destroying a people or a country in pursuit of economic dominance as the war in Iraq has clearly shown. We must develop the mindset of a global commons not a global dominion.

What does this mean for us now? Obama is inheriting a mess that has not finished imploding. His challenges are immense; he must stabilize a faltering economy, create growth that is healthy and sustainable, and address astronomical levels of debt. Obama is embracing familiar ideas of tax cuts and business incentives, bringing back "New Dealisms" like the creation of jobs by federal government, and suggesting new ventures including job programs based on green or at least

"greener industry." The jobs created would not simply rebuild infrastructure but introduce models that employ wind and solar energy.

These ideas have promise and fresh hope. It is important to acknowledge the creativity inherent in these promises. However, there is talk that Obama may increase troop presence in Afghanistan and has appointed former Clinton era advisors who were free trade gurus and crafted NAFTA. These steps contradict Obama's other promises. We must ask, what values will triumph?

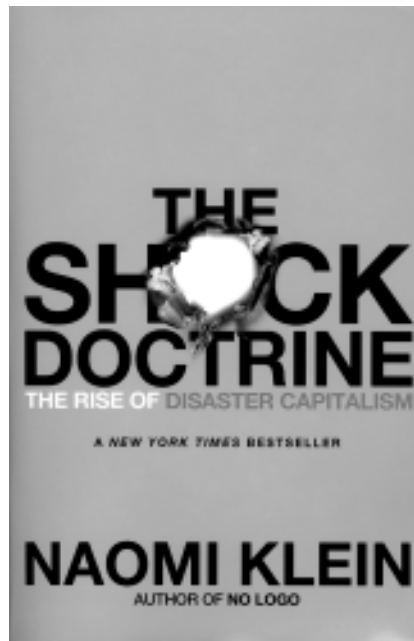
Will we gain a green energy system? Or will we sink billions into Afghanistan while deepening the free trade model? In the past the space we had to experiment and fail is gone. We are on the brink of an economic disaster of massive global impact. Thus, we need to enact transformative change and not just rearrange.

We also exist in a moment of history that has never occurred before. We must balance the seriousness of our economic situation against the raw hope inherent in a person of color occupying the White house, formerly built by slaves. This moment calls for complexity, imagination,

wisdom and risk. Klein and Sachs help us recognize what has not worked in the past and the scars those mistakes have left. Obama and his transition team provide a rough road map into the future. However, to extend this election from a moment in history to a transformation of history, we need to do much more.

We the people, existing in a diverse spectrum across the country, must continue to craft the light that spilled when we actively organized to peacefully bring about new leadership. The engagement of our political system is not a show every four years. It is a way of life that honors all those who struggled before us through vital and creative social movements in order to deepen our democracy. This is our birthright and our responsibility, so as Obama himself says, "I am asking you to not just believe in my ability to bring about real change in Washington... I am asking you to believe in your ability too."

Liz Deligio is staff for the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, La Crosse WI at 8th Day.



Unleashing the Potential

BY: ETHEL LONG-SCOTT

The statistical warnings of a health care system in meltdown are flooding in from all corners of the country. More than 48 million Americans are without healthcare, and that number is exploding upwards as our shrinking economy sheds the jobs that our health care is supposed to be based on – more than half a million in November alone, nearly 2 million in 11 months. As the recession engulfs more and more people, it is increasingly clear that the battle for quality healthcare for all – a human right – cannot be separated from the broader struggle to eliminate poverty. Even as more Americans face homelessness every year, we watch the continuing saga of poor people bailing out the rich through taxpayer-funded government corporate rescue programs. Our healthcare system is telling us, in ever more tragic and costly ways, that people who don't have wealth are not worth keeping healthy – or in many cases even alive.

Across the country in shelters, clinics, universities, and via internet, both community groups and individuals are conducting meetings to discuss how, for all practical purposes, those corporations bringing us near labor-less production have harnessed the power of government to reconstruct society in ways that take care of corporate America first. These corporations don't care whether workers live or die. Their campaign contributions guarantee that corporations end up with the wealth, and we, the people, still scramble to survive. What is going to be done to guarantee that workers receive modern life necessities including food, clothing, housing, health care, energy, education, and transportation, if corporations are no longer willing to hire?

Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign struggles to build a broad base of poor and working people who fight in unison for all of our economic human rights. We see that no progress has ever been made without a concerted and forceful people's movement to win and protect that progress. Working across color lines, poor people's and worker-led organizations join together with trade unions, community groups and people of low or no income to develop diverse and inclusive methods for elevating our cause. Once unleashed, the American people can accomplish great things—abolish slavery, overthrow colonial rule, and win suffrage for women and African Americans. Unleashing that potential is what we all must be about.

An important piece towards developing a solution for the health crisis in America is within universal single-payer not-for-profit health care. The United States National Health Insurance Act, or, H.R. 676, is a pending Federal legislation to enact universal health care for the entire country. Beyond universal health coverage, H.R. 676 would create a single payer,



www.economichumanrights.org/actions.html

not-for-profit health care system that would improve access to care for all and eliminate covered benefit health care costs for individuals. It would provide this much-improved health care for all at less total cost than we pay now for our grievously inadequate health care system.

Unfortunately, we may have to take some interim steps before we can get all the way to H.R. 676. Health care corporations make their money from sick people who have to purchase their expensive products. These corporations will stop at nothing to squeeze more profits out of the health care field—even when this means closing hospitals, raising premiums, pressuring the government for huge tax breaks, pursuing patients well into bankruptcy – or refusing to supply critically needed medicines to people who are not wealthy enough to pay.

California is especially hard hit. The state enters 2009 with a budget that would require destitute Californians to pay premiums for Medi-Cal (California's version of Medicare), and drastically cut money to seniors and CalWORKS recipients. There is also the possibility of another major strike of grocery workers in Northern California attempting to prevent cuts to their healthcare. New Jersey is a state similar to California (and many others) that face huge budget deficits. This is why we also fully support (the successfully passed) One Plan, One Nation legislation from New Jersey¹. The One Plan, One Nation legislation, authored by New Jersey's Industrial Union Council president Ray Stever, calls on Congress and the President to enact H.R. 676, the "United States National Health Insurance Act."

In this context, no issue is more important than the battle for our people's health as an integral part of the fight for poverty elimination. We have to take health care out of the market

economy, because the market economy is destroying itself in its zeal to drive the costs of production, including labor, as low as possible – and it is destroying everything that depends on it. That problem is not going to be fixed by continuing to bail out the speculators.

Too many people suffer every day in this rich, rich nation. We accept no less than a government owning up to a responsibility to its people. Single Payer Universal healthcare for all is a key step toward doing that!

Ethel Long-Scott is Executive Director of Women's Economic Agenda Project. For nearly 40 years, she has been on a mission to increase social and economic justice in jobs including non-profit executive director, grassroots community organizer and political campaign strategist.

NOTES

¹(http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2008/Bills/AR/163_I1.HTM)

The Call to Change

BY: JOAN BROWN, OSF

My mother says, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."

Jesus said in the parable of the sower and the seed, "For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears hardly hear and their eyes do not dare to see." Mt. 13:15

The Torah advises, "Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see! You have seen many things, but have paid no attention; your ears are open, but you hear nothing." (Isaiah 42:18, 20)

The Qur'an offers, "Can you make the dead hear or guide the blind and those who are patently misguided?" (suras az-Zukhruf, 40)

Reflecting is something I do a lot of. I walk and ponder. I meditate and listen. I work and question. In recent years my main question is: Why do intelligent people who see the signs of the times not make choices for the common good? Why do we, people of faith who hear the facts about global warming, in great part caused by human over consumption of resources and fossil fuels, not simplify our lives? Why do good people who work in government and business who see the signs of the times not create policies for renewable energy and green jobs?

Are all of the seeds sown in churches, synagogues, mosques, meeting houses and in various rituals and prayers simply blown into the New Mexico desert wind? Why do we act against life when we want to nurture life and the future? While the current situation of the earth community is new, the question of why humans find it difficult to change is not. But, I do believe we are now faced with a moment when the answers to this question may be vital for survival and thriving on the planet. At a recent meeting the phrase "colonization of the mind" came to me.

Colonization is an extension of political and economic control over an area by certain powers who occupy the area. Colonization may be a policy or project by individuals or groups that initially requires subduing and assimilating a culture. Perhaps colonization of peoples, animals, water, and plants has taken hold more deeply than we imagine. Could it be that our current inability to change stems from a colonization of the human mind, will, heart and even the soul?

I believe Jesus addressed colonization when he walked in solidarity with the economically poor, women, those considered outcasts and those who thought differently than the powers of his time. He challenged the economic, cultural and political powers. Words for equality, justice, care for creation and peace often meet obstacles in prevailing winds of our culture of commodification just as they have through the centuries. A few hear, see and understand. Many do not. This is why all of the spiritual traditions are important. They all call us to be still and listen to the wind, to the beating of the heart to the Holy One. Contemplation is a jewel that we need to string into the strands of our living, if we are to answer the call to change.

I love my mother. I love horses. But, I believe we can learn to drink of the waters of life. There are untold resources we humans are offered by the Holy One that we have yet to uncover. These can guide us to conversion of life and into a sustainable future.

Joan Brown, OSF, is a Franciscan sister working in ecology ministry in New Mexico. She is part of New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light and the Partnership for Earth Spirituality and the Stewards of Creation and may be reached at joankansas@swcp.com.

Expanding 8th Day Partnerships

Through relationships with religious congregations, partner coalitions, individuals and parishes, 8th Day Center for Justice strives to broaden our mission by forming partnerships that deepen the lived experience of our core values and strengthens our collective efforts for justice. From this wisdom, 8th Day Center for Justice initiated a Parish Associate Program, now in its 2nd year, for parish peace and justice committees.

The purpose of this program is to formalize and expand the networks we have developed over nearly 35 years of work for peace and justice. These partnerships open the channels of exchange for information on 8th Day events and provide opportunities to partner where our work coincides.



Vic Doucette (upper left), a member of St. Francis Xavier, Wilmette, IL and on 8th Day Center's Communication and Development Committee. Last year Vic also participated in 8th Day's annual Urban Plunge.

We are happy to welcome our Associate Parishes Program –

- ☞ **St. Francis Xavier, Wilmette, IL and**
- ☞ **St. Thomas the Apostle, Chicago IL**



We are looking for more parishes to partner with us. In doing so, we ask your parish of peace and justice committee:

Is your parish interested in partnering with local, national and international efforts for justice and peace?

Is your parish looking for resources to bring speakers and events to your parish?

Is your parish interested in partnering and networking with progressive Catholic parishes and religious communities to create and deepen a loving response to the needs of our world?

Would your parish or peace and justice committee like to receive 8th Day Centerings magazine, email bulletins and e-zine?

Would your parish members like access to our extensive book and video libraries?

Consider joining our **Parish Associate Program**. We would like to hear from you. Contact Bob Bossie bobbossie@gmail.com or Stephanie Dernek stephid2@gmail.com or fill out the form below.

8TH DAY CENTER FOR JUSTICE ☞ Parish Associate Program

Parish Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____ Web _____

Parish Donation _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

DOVETALES

SSJ-TOSF CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP



After a discernment process the Sisters of St. Joseph – Third Order of St. Francis decided to hire Katie Varatta who has been with 8th Day since August of 2006. Through

this partnership the SSJ-TOSF community hopes to maintain the relationship and work fostered by Dorothy Pagosa for the past twenty-one years. The 8th Day Center is excited to have the opportunity for continued partnership with Katie and the SSJ-TOSF community.

HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

Children's Rights Are Human Rights, an Introductory Handbook for Students and Professionals, has been added to the 8th Day library and is available for check-out. This book is written by Claire Bedard and published from the Center for the Human Rights of Children at Loyola University Chicago. Beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959), the book explores children's rights from various perspectives and includes a case study and suggested readings.

ARE YOU ON 8TH DAY'S EMAIL LISTS?

Join our urgent action bulletins and e-zine lists. Send us your email or join through our website, www.8thdaycenter.org.

NEW SANCTUARY DECLARATION

In December 2008, 8th Day Center publicly declared itself a New Sanctuary Organization and released a Statement of Migration at a formal ceremony held at Loyola University. As a member of Chicago New Sanctuary Coalition and New Sanctuary Movement, we stand in solidarity with our migrant sisters and brothers, the undocumented and recent immigrant communities and are called to an urgent response to the current failures of the immigration system in the United States. To read 8th Day's migration statement and to learn how to become a member of the New Sanctuary

movement, please refer to our website under "8th Day declares sanctuary."

CHILE VISIT

Staff member, Kathleen Desautels, SP, participated last November in a SOAWatch delegation to Chile, S.A. with several other POCs (Prisoners of Conscience). The purpose of the delegation was to ask Chile to stop sending their security forces to SOA/WHINSEC. Chile currently sends the second largest contingent to SOA/WHINSEC, with several hundred soldiers and officers trained at the school each year, second only to Colombia.

In addition to meetings with government officials and the Chilean Human rights Commission the group met with Chilean survivors of torture and detention and family members of the disappeared during the Pinochet regime. They visited former torture centers and museums of memory, as well as dialogued with groups who are working within Chile to bring those responsible for the atrocities of the Pinochet regime to justice. Their host was human rights group, Kamarikun, led by Pablo Ruiz, a former political prisoner and a journalist. Pablo, along with Lisa Sullivan and Fr. Roy Bourgoise make up the staff of the new initiative of the SOAWatch Movement – SOAW Partnership America Latina.

The fruit of the delegation efforts resulted in the Chile's Defense Department announcing the following days of their stay that only 41 Chileans will participate in classes at WHINSEC in 2008. This is a dramatic departure from the 195 Chilean students listed by WHINSEC as attending classes in 2007. The announcement of this drastic reduction of Chilean troops sent to WHINSEC classes comes on the heels of announcements by Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay and Bolivia that they will no longer send their troops to SOA/WHINSEC due to the dismal record of its graduates.

SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS WATCH, NOV. 21-23, 2008

This year marked the 19th of gathering outside of the gates of fort Benning in Columbus, GA. again with 20,000

people calling for the closure of the School of the Americas/Western Hemispheric Institute for Security Cooperation. There was a rousing program from the outdoor main stage, a wide variety of workshops, music/dancing possibilities in the evening, vendors had a large selection of books, posters, t-shirts, music etc available, plus refreshments and Food Not Bombs were there for the first time with their free food.

This year the Puppetistas had a huge puppet with huge shoes! It was 26 feet wide in some places and so tall it had to be slowly maneuvered under telephone wires. The puppet became the symbol of the Winds of Change, and on the final day led some musicians on stilts and 100 dancing persons out through the entrance point, taking the messages and music outside the boundary of our permitted area. All returned safely.



Nine staff from 8th Day Center were there, working mainly with the Peacemaker groups. We had a 8th Day banner there this year, carried by Brian and Beth during the solemn funeral procession. About 50 persons marched behind the banner, including some Assembly members, joined by members and friends of their congregations.

In our tradition of nonviolent resistance, six people crossed on to the base asking for the closure of the School/Institute and were arrested. Their trials are on Jan 26th, and the defendants, relatives, friends and SOAW members will gather several days before that to prepare for the trials and build community. Please check www.soaw.org for results of the trials, and other initiatives going on.

8TH DAY CENTER *for* JUSTICE

35TH ANNIVERSARY



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, September 27th, 2009, 2:00 - 5:30

Catholic Theological Union
5401 South Cornell Ave. - Chicago IL 60615

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