

# CATHOLIC WORKER

VOL. XXXIX No. 4

MAY, 1973

Subscription:  
25c Per Year

Price 1c

## The United Front:

# MAKING NEW ALTERNATIVES

By JAN ADAMS

For four years, the United Front of Cairo, Illinois, an organization of nearly all the town's black residents, has boycotted white businesses, seeking jobs and equal treatment. On April 7, the Front marked the boycott's fourth anniversary with a rally and conference on the theme of building black-community-owned alternatives to the white power structure they have failed so far to break.

The economic boycott's partial effectiveness in this town of 6,000 at the junction of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers is obvious to a visitor. On a Saturday afternoon, the main streets are deserted and storefronts empty. But the tactic has failed so far to improve the lot of poor blacks who make up half the town's population.

In part, this failure arises from the general poverty of the town. Cairo is dying. Its population had declined by one third since 1960. Nearly 80 per cent of the residents are under 18 or over 50 years old. It's feeble economy is further threatened now by a new interstate highway which will bypass it, removing the traffic between Chicago and Kentucky. There is not much of a pie to win a piece of in Cairo, and those who own what there is will struggle fiercely to keep from giving it up.

(Though the town is generally depressed, its black residents have it even worse than the whites. Black income averages \$2,000 a year as opposed to the white's \$3,600. Nearly 50 per cent of the black population is on welfare; nearly 60 per cent of the housing blacks live in is substandard.)

### Reign of Violence

The economic boycott also seems to have faltered because white vigilante violence, countered by black self-defense, has given the Front a militant, crisis-oriented posture which is little-suited to the sustained work of winning justice through peaceful pressure. Racial violence in Cairo has been some of

the most extreme anywhere in the U.S. to date.

Organized by the County State's Attorney and including some of the most prominent local citizens, white vigilantes responded to the black boycott by firing thousands of rounds of gunfire into Pyramid Courts, the segregated black housing project, and into St. Columba's Catholic Church, the Front's headquarters. These attacks continued night after night during the first three years of the boycott. Three blacks have been killed, scores injured and 25 businesses, 43 homes, and 25 cars, all owned by blacks, burned or assaulted.

Given the collusion of local authorities in the vigilante attacks (attackers were even deputized to break up legal demonstrations at stores) and neglect by responsible state officials, it is not surprising that the black community mobilized its own array of defensive weapons. By returning white fire, and demonstrating marvelous solidarity, the Front did weather the period of nightly violence. But the Front's resulting militant style gave it a bad press, robbing it of the outside support needed to put the boycott over.

Not only were State and local officials actively hostile, but the Federal government has also worked against the black community. The I.R.S. gave a tax exemption to a private white academy, subsidizing segregation, while public schools thus lost pupils and hence what state funds they had been receiving. Worse yet, this past fall when many white owned businesses were failing under the pressure of the boycott, the Federal Small Business Administration bailed them out with special loans.

### Building Alternatives

Now Front leaders see their struggle entering a new phase. While not renouncing violence, leader Bobby Lee Williams says of the past: "There was a time when 'picking up the gun' was

(Continued on page 4)



## Peter Maurin's Program:

# THE LAND AS WELL-SPRING

By MIKE KREYCHE

Peter Maurin understood the basic dependence on the earth of human development when he wrote a prescription for the unemployment of the Depression:

The unemployed/need free rent;/ they can have that/on a Farming Commune./The unemployed/need free fuel;/they can cut that/on a Farming Commune./The unemployed/need free food;/they can raise that/on a Farming Commune./The unemployed/need to acquire skill;/they can do that/on a Farming Commune./The unemployed/need to improve their minds;/they can do that/on a Farming Commune./The unemployed/need spiritual guidance;/they can have that/on a Farming Commune.

Food and shelter, the material necessities, can be found on the land, and even for city dwellers must come from it. Occupations for hands and minds and food for the soul—requisites for happiness—are there, too.

I freely admit to being a ruralist and run the risk of being called simple-minded if I suggest that living on the land, or at least living off it more directly, must be the theme of any attempt to create a healthier society. I am convinced that a closeness to nature is essential to man, and while what we admire as civilization in human cultures of the past and present first arose in cities and towns, not from farms, their inhabitants' relations with the land were not mediated by industrial-

ism. Industrialism is not the only cause of man's isolation from nature, but right now it is the greatest.

What is vital about towns and cities is the close association of people and the communication of ideas among them. Peter was conscious of this vitality, and that is why he wanted to see groups of people living together on the land in what he variously named Parish Subsistence Camps, Agronomic Universities, or simply Farming Communes. The three words to remember are Subsistence, University, and Commune. Subsistence is explained in the Essay quoted above, and expanded in the following one:

Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not work/for wages;/they leave that/to the Farming Commune./Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not look/for a bank account;/they leave that/to the Farming Commune./Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not look/for an insurance policy;/they leave that/to the Farming Commune./Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not look/for unemployment insurance;/ they leave that/to the Farming Commune./Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not look/for an old-age pension;/they leave that/to the Farming Commune./Laborers of a Farming Commune/do not look/for economic security;/they leave that/to the Farming Commune.

So we can expect not just subsistence from the land but economic security, (Continued on page 4)

# ON PILGRIMAGE

By DOROTHY DAY

This issue celebrates our fortieth anniversary. And the psalm verse comes to mind, "Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's."

I can apply that to the Catholic Worker which over the years is renewed and revitalized year after year. Peter Maurin said once, quoting Ibsen, "The truth should be restated every twenty years."

That line sticks in my mind, journalist that I am. Christ is our Truth — "True God and true man, like unto us in all things save sin." When I was a little girl I used to wish I'd hurry and grow up so that I'd not "sin" any more. Of course, I did not use that word — probably it was "be bad" — because most children have a keen sense of right and wrong.

"The truth should be restated" — which phrase means, in my mind, that we have to take truths — statements, dogmas — which are old and stale, and develop them in the light of growing

knowledge and understanding which we gain from experience and our contacts with those around us.

The Catholic Worker House of Hospitality and Farm is a school, as well as a flophouse, a soupline, which we sometimes contemplate with despair and think, "Can't we ever get beyond this? Is this all we can do? When are we going to read, study, enrich ourselves with all this stimulating thought Peter Maurin has given us glimpses of? When are we going to get a chance to read *Personalism* by Emmanuel Mounier, that young man who started *Esprit* in Paris the same year the CW started, and the book Peter Maurin was the first to translate into English? Mounier died young, but he lived fully and accomplished much for 'the clarification of thought' that Peter talked of as the first step in 'rebuilding the social order.' When can we read *Fields, Factories and Workshops*, *Mutual Aid*, *Diary*

(Continued on page 8)



Vol. XXXIX No. 4

May, 1973

# CATHOLIC WORKER

Published Monthly (Bi-monthly March-April, July-August, October-November)

ORGAN OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT

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Editorial communications, new subscriptions and change of address:  
36 East First St., New York, N. Y. 10003  
Telephone 254-1640

Subscription United States, 25c Yearly. Canada and Foreign, 30c Yearly. Subscription rate of one cent per copy plus postage applies to bundles of one hundred or more copies each month for one year to be directed to one address.

Reentered as second class matter August 10, 1939, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., Under the Act of March 3, 1879.

## 36 East First

By ANNE MARIE FRASER

Every day hundreds of men come to Saint Joseph's House to eat, receive clothing and rest. For years the Bowery has been filled with homeless, lonely men. The women of the Bowery have gone unnoticed, except to be regarded as a rare spectacle. At Saint Joseph's House we witness the tragedy of their lives. Their needs, unmet, are the most basic—food, clothing, and shelter. In our society, the destitute woman does not exist. She betrays the myth of the romantic heroine, the suburban housewife, or "aggressive" career woman. And if we provide insufficiently for homeless men, even less is provided for homeless women. Almost daily a young woman comes for soup. She is small and childlike and waits quietly with her husband until two chairs are available. He is tall and protective, making requests for food and clothing for both of them. One night we were walking along Bowery and saw this couple sitting beneath a shelter made from large crates.

### Three Women

Elizabeth comes for soup, too. She is quiet, and submissive and sad. Her dark hair is cut close to her head and goes uncovered on the coldest days. Her clothing, including shoes, is often stolen while she sleeps at Grand Central Terminal. All of her possessions are in a shopping bag or two. There is no place for her to bathe or wash in dignity; her dirty clothing must be discarded and replaced each week. After soup, Elizabeth likes to sit by the wall and sleep to make up for her nights spent in the train station.

Two women in a similar situation have become part of our family. Gloria Rose, or Rosie as she has always been called at the Worker, comes to us every night for the evening meal. She wheels her battered shopping cart, cluttered with her world. She is always bundled into a coat, hat and scarf; I have never seen the dress or slacks underneath. When Rosie walks she buries her head in her collar, winks one eye, and imparts the wisdom of the age. She is detached and generous (each night we are flowered with gifts from her day's scavenging), and apparently carefree. One night she was very agitated and sensitive; she began to cry, having taken enough abuse during the day. She was just too tired to be cheerful. Rosie sleeps in someone's cellar.

Eleanor has been coming to the Worker for a few years and has become a regular member of our family. She has beautiful grey hair that is usually caught up in a bun and decorated with plastic flowers or other ornaments she has found during the

day. Her eyes are bright and reflect her sharp intelligence and anger. The first time I saw Eleanor she had a piece of white lace material draped over her coat. Then I knew she loved beautiful things. She loves poetry and literature and enjoys conversing on both. Each night Eleanor leaves the Catholic Worker to walk the streets, or ride the subway, or find someplace to keep warm. Her hands and feet are swollen, and her cheeks are ruddy and chapped. The neighborhood children are often unkind. When Eleanor arrives in the morning she is tired and often angry, with a harsh and justifiable anger. A delightful conversation can quickly become a vehement tirade. A beautiful woman has been forced to masquerade her beauty and intelligence to survive on the street.

### Shelter Needed

A walk through Port Authority, Penn Station, or Grand Central at any time of the day or night reveals the homeless women, shopping bag women who carry their world at their side, and sleep in corners or on benches. Countless are hidden in hallways, and more are right on the street. The City has a Municipal Shelter for women with fewer than fifty beds; there are no Bowery hotels for women (perhaps a blessing); there are few and well hidden private shelters for women. Hospitals call us to request shelter for sick women with no money and no families, but there is so little room on the third floor. Our spare bed is always occupied. Julia, Anna and Mary help us welcome our guests.

To accentuate the suffering of these women does not undermine the tragedy of the men in our neighborhood. They suffer, too, if less dramatically. Our myth has made men more able to tolerate indignity and hardship. It is unfair to all of us. At a recent Friday night meeting we were privileged to hear Barbara Deming speak to us on women's rights and peace. She asked us to recognize the sameness we share and the strength and gentleness of which men and women are both capable. She asked for a breaking of the myths to lead to a realization of our potential for nonviolence. While she spoke, Eleanor slept in the basement and countless other women and men prepared for another night on the street.

There are several women at the Worker. They are poor and gentle and strong. Each is vital and at home at St. Joseph's House. We offer a home in our limited capacity, but a home must be made for the hundreds of other homeless women.

## Tivoli: a Farm With a View

By DEANE MARY MOWRER

It is Holy Thursday. A cardinal heralded the morning with an echo of those glad hosannas of that first Holy Thursday. But it is April, month of change and struggle, month when all Nature seems to be striving to break free from the bonds of winter-death, and struggle upward, sunward, toward the green chlorophyll splendor, the flowering, fruitful beauty of May and later months. April will never let us forget that life and death are part of a single process, that life emerges from suffering. But standing on the brink of May, Our Lady waits with garlands for all who believe, who hope that the world may be saved by beauty.

But tomorrow we commemorate Good Friday, that day when our Lord made the ultimate sacrifice, endured the final suffering that we might emerge from our own suffering and sin into the glory of eternal life. There is much sorrow, much suffering, much discord in our lives. But already the cardinal, robin, song sparrow, and many another songster, and the trillium, meadow rue, and wild violets—which Bill Ragette and Maggie Hennessey found blooming on our woodsy farm—and the wild geese winging overhead, prepare an Easter Sunday Gloria for all the wonder and mystery of God's Creation. In spite of our human failure, our chaos and disorder—"The world is charged with the grandeur of God."

### Forty Years

May is also a great anniversary for the Catholic Worker, the fortieth birthday of the first issue. It is also the month when we commemorate the



Eichenberg

death of Peter Maurin. We have hardly realized his great program, but with all our failures, we have done something. I think Peter Maurin would really be pleased with some of the young people here at the farm today who take such an active interest in organic farming. I think particularly of Mike Kreyche, Bill Ragette, Fr. Andy, Fr. Tony, Dan and Elizabeth Marshall. And as always there are smaller gardens. Chris, Pat Rusk, Anthony Gill and others have started their own plots. As usual, with the help of Elizabeth Marshall, I am planning a garden of herbs and flowers to honor St. Francis. We have hardly built a new order within the shell of the old, but many persons have found here alternate styles of life from the bureaucratized, industrialized, computerized megapolis so many of the rich and powerful seem to be trying to build. St. Francis, pray for us that we remain an island where Peter Maurin's memory will be kept green, where "beauty shall save the world."

We are also glad that Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker, who last November celebrated her seventy-fifth birthday, has received so much recognition and commendation during the past year. She has been faithful through many years and many hard times. It is good that three of her books—*The Long Loneliness*, *Loaves and Fishes*, *On Pilgrimage: The Sixties*

—have been issued in paper back editions, that two television programs have been done about her and her work, that many articles have appeared in newspapers and other periodicals in praise of her work. It is also good that Professor Miller's book—*A Harsh and Dreadful Love: Dorothy Day and the Catholic Workers Movement*—is available to those who want the basic facts and story of this complex work and its principal leader. We thank God for Dorothy's leadership, and hope that God will spare her for more leadership years, though we hope, too, that she will have good helpers to take some of the burden of responsibility so that she will not become so exhausted.

### Hope Amidst Crises

The winds of hope blow strong in Spring. Yet they blow in the midst of many crises, of much sickness and suffering. One day not long ago, a man who had been staying with us for some time—a man civilized, well-educated, who had held good jobs—suddenly went berserk and hurled himself on one of our oldest and most respected members. It was as though this man had suddenly regressed to the state of a small and terrified child hurling himself into the arms of his mother for protection. Since the person so assaulted was one of deep faith and true compassion, she soon persuaded the man to seek the psycho-therapy he needed. On another occasion, a man suffering from epilepsy and other serious maladies suddenly attacked a young mother in consequence of some altercation with her children. On still another occasion a young woman who suffers from serious schizophrenia, alcoholism, and other troubles and who has appeared among us for many years as a kind of harbinger of catastrophe, suddenly descended on Marge Hughes with the request that Marge take care of her baby until she—the mother—could recover from a very heavy cold. Marge, who loves babies and children, was happy to take care of the baby. But the mother, before she left the farm, proceeded to get roaring drunk and provide the liquor for some of our alcoholics to do likewise. The ensuing atmosphere was not exactly conducive to meditation and contemplation. Those who live at East First Street tell us that such altercations and brawling make up the usual pattern of their days. I myself remember how battered I felt after helping in the office at Spring Street some years ago. Here at the farm we do at least have our moments of calm and much beauty, with music and bird-song, the singing wind and the singing river.

Exigencies of space—there is much special material for this May issue—make it impossible for me to speak of all those who keep the routine work going and who really make constructive contributions. But I must mention Florent and his helpers who have done such a superb job cleaning the dining room and kitchen and then re-painting them. Miriam, who is spending a while with us, has also done much cleaning about the place and helped in many other ways. We are especially grateful for her at Compline. I do not think we could long survive without prayer and Mass. Here is where we truly need help.

Tomorrow is Good Friday, when we remember Him Who died, that "dying, we might live." Then there is Holy Saturday, the Easter Vigil, and the great Mass of Easter when the Church reaffirms in liturgy the great Truth of Resurrection.

Then suddenly—like Alice in *Through the Looking Glass*, jumping from square to square across the little brooks, we are in May, the month of Our Lady. And all the song birds are with us once again, singing Mary's praise. And every flower and every opening greening leaf do honor to the Mother of God. *Deo Gratias*.



# Can Unions, Strikes, and Boycotts Be Just?

By JAN ADAMS

RD No. 1  
Narvon, Pa.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
This whole idea of boycotting misses me completely. I don't get it.

Is it returning good for evil? Is it bringing peace or strife? Are the workers forced to work for unjust employers? Can they not leave, shaking the dust from their feet?

As to unions: I believe they can be just as corrupt, just as headstrong, and power hungry, as management.

Besides, are we not trying to move away from commercialism, away from industrialism, away from regimentation? Is that not what the Green Revolution is all about? . . . to deal with people, person to person . . . to reject the whole idea of threats, shunning, punishing and excommunication?

All good things,  
Daniel O'Hagan

Dear Mr. O'Hagan,

I am glad to answer your letter questioning the CW's consistent support of the United Farm Worker's lettuce boycott. It gives me a chance to restate as clearly as possible why support for strikes, boycotts and many kinds of organizing seem so important to us, Christian anarchists and pacifists that we are.

It seems to me that your letter raises most of the concerns which might deter us from involving ourselves in activism, although the way you've put it mixes the various aspects of the problem together. As I see it, your protest involves a misconception, plus confusion about two very real, very thorny, aspects of activism.

## Voluntary Poverty vs. Destitution

The misconception comes in the questions: "Are workers forced to work for unjust employers? Can they not leave, shaking the dust from their feet?"

The Catholic Worker movement has always advocated voluntary poverty, simple living, freely chosen. Peter Maurin said, "Nobody would be poor, if everybody tried to be poorest." But the Worker has never accepted destitution.

And there is such a thing as destitution, grinding, involuntary poverty, whose very mark is that it deprives its victims of the human dignity of making choices about their own lives. Destitution's victims are the unskilled, the uneducated, those discriminated-against, the blacks, the American-Indians, the Spanish-speaking. Above all, the destitute are people who suffer from one or another of these disabilities, and also have families dependent upon them.

We, who can with sufficient effort avoid working for rapacious employers, speak out of luxurious blindness when we tell the destitute to pick up and move on. What choice of jobs is available to the Appalachian coal miner, whose chances of death or disability in a year are one in twelve because greedy coal companies neglect safety precautions? What real options has the urban, black mother, regulated as if she were a machine on her job as a telephone operator? How could the farm laborer, raised in a village of Mexican peasants, find work to support his family in the city?

Even that most dedicated enemy of industrialism, the western Gandhian Lanza del Vasto, recognized the difference between his voluntary poverty and another's need. After journeying around India for months as a penniless pilgrim, he was embarrassed not to have money for tips on a boat passage: "I can go barefoot as much as I like, that's my business: it should not concern servants or harm those who earn their living."

## Fear of Bigness

The first of the very real concerns your letter raises is the anarchist mistrust of big, powerful organizations. "As to unions: 'I believe they can be just as corrupt, just as headstrong, and power

hungry, as management. . . . Are we not trying to move away from . . . regimentation?"

Certainly most American unions today are entrenched, highly-paid bureaucracies which keep a mass of workers pacified with periodic, inadequate wage-booster while ignoring the human realities of work, acquiescing in speed-ups and dangerous, dehumanizing working conditions.

But to reject unions completely because of their failures is to fall into the same cynical inertia which leaves Christianity open to the charge of being "untried." Devoted men and women are working together to build new unions which avoid the pitfalls of the old ones; the UFW is such a union. Others are struggling to reform older unions; we have recently seen such renewal in the United Mine Workers.

Moreover, our anarchist distrust of big organizations often leads us right into the fallacy which anarchism seeks to correct. That is, instead of looking at organizations' meaning to the individuals who make them up, we blindly take in only the size of the whole. The experience of working together for justice can lead to a profound, personal liberation for the individuals who band together, giving them for the first time a sense of having control over their lives and of having worth as individual persons.

Thus, a 23-year-old West Virginian coal miner writes of his work for the recent victory of reformer Arnold Miller in the UMW election: "Things are different at headquarters now; there's so many smiles, it's like we all won. My feeling for the union is different, too. I feel now that I can always be involved in it. . . . What I learned in this campaign will be important to me for a lifetime. So will the friends I've made. Before I had never been out of this area. Now I can go anywhere in southern West Virginia and have dinner with friends. Things have changed a lot for this union and this state. And things have changed a lot for me."

When individuals, through organizing for justice, can see themselves as free agents in this way, the basis is indeed being built for moving away from the cash-nexus of industrialism and com-



Eichenberg

mercialism, and from the dependence on coercion which is government by the State.

## Fear of Violence

The second concern in your letter seems to be the fear that activism will breed violence: "Is it returning good for evil? Is it bringing peace or strife? . . . Are we not trying to reject the whole idea of threats, shunning, punishing and excommunication?"

First, much of this concern again seems to me to spring from our habit of looking at things upside-down: we recoil from the occasional hate-filled explosions of the down-trodden, while we pass over the day-to-day destruc-

tion of human beings which enables the comfortable few in our society to enjoy their wealth.

In factories, human beings are harnessed to the rhythm of the machine, rendered machine-like themselves, for greater productivity and greater profit. In service jobs, such as waiting tables, the server is expected to put up an obsequious front to merit



Eichenberg

that purely monetary sign of approbation, the tip. The poor are expected to live and raise their children in crumbling, filthy, dangerous slums. The unemployed and the unemployable are supposed to be grateful for whatever dole the State may choose to hand out. Daily, millions of people's humanity is warped and crushed—this is violence.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania described the basic nature of this daily violence: "We say men are created in

the image of God. I refuse to imagine a God who is poor, ignorant, superstitious, fearful, oppressed, wretched — which is the lot of the majority of those He created in His own image."

Only when we are fully aware of, and have actively repudiated this enormous daily violence, perpetrated by social institutions and habits which support the greed and arrogance of a few, can we turn to the violence of the oppressed. And when we weigh the response of the powerless against the violence they suffer from, we will be struck, and surprised, by its non-violence — by how disproportionately such peaceful means as petitioning, picketing, and rallies are used to demand justice.

Some of the most significant and successful activism of the poor has come from groups espousing non-violence. In the face of the almost complete lack of any suggestion of the efficacy of non-violence in the American experience to which we have all been exposed, the existence of such groups ought to be thought of as well-nigh miraculous and be embraced as an unmerited gift. The United Farm Workers is such a group. The CW supports the union and its current boycott of iceberg lettuce.

In the UFW, farmworkers are finding they can speak for themselves. A recent issue of *El Malcriado*, the UFW newspaper, reprinted a comical account by a grower's lawyer of negotiating with the union: the UFW brings 50 or 60 people (all the members of ranch committees where the contract will apply) to negotiating meetings, and everything has to be explained in Spanish, and they argue among themselves over points in the contract—this experienced corporate lawyer just didn't know what to do!

As for non-violence, Cesar Chavez, through his insistence on tireless, dedi-

(Continued on page 7)

## Oneita Strike Launched

By PAT JORDAN

Seven hundred workers, black and white, men and women, have struck the Oneita Mills in Lane and Andrews, South Carolina. After fourteen months of delaying tactics by the Oneita management, the workers and their union, the Textile Workers Union of America, walked out on January 15th. The primary battle is over bargaining rights and benefits rather than salary, although the latter is also an issue. Since March 21st TWUA and the striking workers have spearheaded a national boycott of Oneita goods. Workers, management, and the union all see the strike as a significant, perhaps crucial, event in the labor history of the Southern textile industry.

## Wages and Conditions

According to Richard Cook, an Oneita employee for twenty years, working conditions at Oneita are reminiscent of the nineteenth century. Seventeen months ago an NLRB election gave the TWUA rights to act as the bargaining agent for Oneita workers. Cook says that although he has worked for Oneita for twenty years, all he has to show is more bills. The average pay at the Andrews plant is \$2.01 an hour, and at Oneita's Lane plant it is even lower, \$1.63 an hour. It is not uncommon for a worker to take home \$49 a week. One woman, who supports eleven children, nets \$60. Many workers live in shacks where plastic sheets serve as windows, and potbellied stoves are the only source of heat. Williamsburg County, where Lane and Andrews are located, is described as one of the worst poverty-stricken counties in the country.

But work conditions, not wages, are the chief complaint of the strikers.

Carmela McCutchen, a rank and file worker, described the operation to me. There is no seniority, no pension plan, no sick or jury-duty pay. The company indiscriminately changes jobs on workers, hires and fires at will. There is neither nurse nor doctor. Women are made to move fifty pounds at a time. And the company wishes to incorporate a point system in any contract which would subject employees to layoffs and discharge in the event of tardiness or absenteeism, even when permission has been obtained for these. In other words, while conditions are primitive, the company is seeking to perpetuate these conditions in any contract. Negotiations are now at a stalemate.

## Support, Not Time

Cook and McCutchen report that the strikers are in good spirits. Seven hundred of Oneita's thousand workers in the two plants are on strike. The TWUA has given abundant financial aid and moral encouragement to the workers. While the company has tried to divide white against black, and has even attempted to spark violence which would quickly discredit the strike, it has been frustrated by the disciplined picketers. Some scabbing goes on (several ministers among them), but support from other unions has helped to convince some potential strikebreakers not to enter Oneita Mills. For example, steel workers from the Georgetown, S.C. plant and members of the Hospital Workers Union 1199 from Charlestown joined with Oneita workers for a "March for Justice" in Andrews on Feb. 24th. Almost

(Continued on page 4)



# Peter Maurin's "Agronomic Universities"

(Continued from page 1)

and the key to it is community — a group of people working together.

At the end of the 1949 edition of the *Easy Essays*, Catholic Radicalism, there are four interviews with Peter reprinted from 1943 issues of the CW. They are short and somewhat incomplete, but would be worth reprinting again in the

## Notes in Brief

Mike Cullen and his family face deportation hearings before the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service on May 2nd. Having served eleven months in prison for actions protesting the Vietnam War, the government now intends to deport Mike as an "undesirable resident of the U.S." A defense committee has been formed, with Fr. James Groppi as chairman. Funds are needed. Write to: Michael Cullen Defense Committee Fund, 431 N. 27th St., Milwaukee, Wisc. 53233.

The United Farm Workers Union continues its boycott of all iceberg lettuce. The UFW is boycotting the Safeway and A&P chainstores in particular, the largest buyers of non-union lettuce. Aid the Farmworkers by supporting the boycott of A&P, Safeway, and all iceberg lettuce.

The Teamsters Union, by signing sweetheart contracts with forty Coachella Valley grape growers, has, in the words of Msgr. George Higgins, "decided, in flagrant violation of trade union ethics, to destroy the United Farm Workers which alone can legitimately claim to represent workers in the field." We support the conclusion of the inter-faith committee that polled workers in the Coachella Valley on April 10: "It is clear to us that the vast majority of farmworkers in the Coachella Valley want to be represented by Cesar Chavez' UFW. . . . It would be a great injustice to the workers if the grape growers make agreements with the Teamsters against the will of the workers." So it is.

A nation-wide strike by 5,000 oil workers at five Shell Oil refineries begun last January over health, safety and pension issues has led the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union to call for a boycott of all Shell products.

Prisoner's Resurrection of Resistance, a group of prisoners at Danbury Prison, completed a twenty-two day fast on Easter Sunday "for the fate of thousands of men, women, and children still at stake in South Vietnam. . . ."

Devi Prasad, former General Secretary of War Resisters International, recently paid us a visit at First Street. He is now acting as a one-man liaison between peace groups and constructive movements for development throughout the world. He is open to suggestions, comments, people and projects to visit. Write: Devi Prasad, 67 Sutherland Rd., London N9 7QL, England.

This is a time for many anniversaries. We wish to celebrate with Paul Robeson on his 75th birthday, the War Resisters League on their 50th, and the Peacemaker Movement on its 25th anniversary. May your witness continue with song, courage, and prophetic clarity.

During the darkest periods of history, quite often a small number of men and women, scattered throughout the world, have been able to reverse the course of historical evolutions. This was only possible because they hoped beyond all hope. What had been bound for disintegration then entered into the current of a new dynamism.

Roger Schutz, Abbot of Taizé

paper sometime since few readers have access to either source. The first is particularly good; there are some remarks on community life on the land, and then Peter's philosophy of education.

"Education is a life process. People learn by doing. Trouble is, people want blueprints. I don't want to give blueprints. Let them struggle with it. As they face problems they get light."

"The trouble with agricultural colleges is that they prepare people for business farming. Better go out to a farmer to learn."

At an Agronomic University it is different.

Professors of a Farming Commune do not look for endowments; they leave that to the Farming Commune. Professors of a Farming Commune do not tell their students what to do; they show them how to do it. Professors of a Farming Commune do not tell their

students to master subjects; they enable them to master situations. Professors of a Farming Commune do not prepare their students for a position where they will have to play somebody else's game; they train them for a profession where they will be able to play their own game. Professors of a Farming Commune do not teach their students how to make profitable deals; they teach them how to realize worthy ideals.

Hopefully these worthy ideals, which have been around for so long but not so widely practiced, are gaining a stronger hold on people's minds and more and more of today's "down-and-outs" will find their way back to the land.

Someone said that the Catholic Worker is a movement for down-and-outs. And it is a movement for down-and-outs, including down-and-outs

businessmen, down-and-out college graduates, and down-and-out college professors. In the Catholic Worker, besides being fed, clothed and sheltered, people learn to use their hands as well as their heads. And while they learn to use their heads to guide their hands, the use of their hands improves a great deal the working of their heads.



Catherine E. Dolan

## Southern Textile Strike

(Continued from page 3)

a thousand unionists and supporters of the strike joined the march.

Carmela McCutchen believes that such support, not time, is the crucial factor. Mary Lee Middleton, a mother of eight who earns \$1.60 an hour at Oneita, says, "This strike is for my babies, and I'm not going back until we win a decent contract."

### Strike's Significance

Union leaders describe the strike as significant in the movement to organize the Southern textile industry. While only 10% of the textile industry is organized in the country, most of that is in the North East. The South is generally unorganized. With the lack of union resistance and lower wage standards in general, many companies have taken their New England operations South. There, uninhibited, they reap huge profits on the grist of low wages and long hours. Of the 150 factories of the giant Burlington Mills, only one is union-organized.

North and South Carolina account for 50% of Southern textile manufacturing. In recent months, NLRB elections in So. Carolina alone have brought six thousand new workers in

struggle, the Textile Workers Union of America has launched a nationwide boycott of Oneita products. The company produces men's and boys' knitted underwear. Its major customers are K-Mart (Kresge), J. C. Penny, Sears Roebuck and Montgomery Ward, with hundreds of stores all over the country. Each sells Oneita products under its own store label.

"While this boycott has the support of the AFL-CIO and the labor movement in general, it also requires the backing of all socially-conscious organizations. We therefore ask you and your members to support our 'Don't Buy Oneita' campaign by:

1. Endorsing the strike and boycott and making your position known to:

- Robert D. Devereaux, President Oneita Knitting Mills Andrews, S.C. 29510
- W. Batten, President J. C. Penny Co. 1301 Avenue of the Americas New York, N.Y. 10001
- A. M. Woods, President Sears Roebuck & Co. 925 S. Homan Avenue Chicago, Ill. 60607
- E. H. DeWar, President S. S. Kresge Co. 3100 W. Big Beaver Troy, Mich. 48064
- E. S. Donnell, President Montgomery Ward 619 W. Chicago Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60607

2. Cooperating with our union and the Oneita strikers wherever informational demonstrations are held in your community to call public attention to the injustices suffered by Oneita Knitting Mill workers."

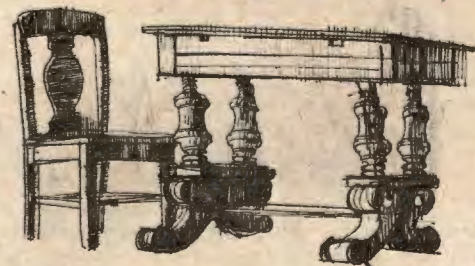
Consumers should be aware that Oneita products do not carry an Oneita but a company label, i.e., "K-Mart," "Sears," "Penny," or "Montgomery Ward." You are encouraged to tell companies which stock Oneita goods why you are not buying their men's and boys' knitted underwear, T-shirts and briefs.

The Oneita strike is another case of David and Goliath. On it may rest the fate of poor factory workers in Southern states, not only in the textile industry but in many other industries, for a decade to come. We must lend our support to these sisters and brothers struggling to bring decent, just, and living conditions to themselves, their families and communities.

### THE WORM

Rabbi Mendel said: "I don't know wherein I could be better than the worm. For see: he does the will of his Maker and destroys nothing."

Tales of the Hasidim



Rita Corbin

nine plants into the TWUA, all within a hundred miles of the Oneita strike. But while union elections are won comparatively easily, decent contracts are not. A decade ago Oneita broke the International Ladies Garment Workers Union's presence at its Lane and Andrews plants when that union was unable to extract a good contract. Union busting is a continual pattern of Southern history. Oneita has the support of larger mills in rebuffing its workers, and claims it will never sign a contract. The eyes of workers and manufacturers alike are on the Oneita strike. Thus, TWUA calls the strike a possible turning point in organizing the textile industry in the South. As a union spokesman put it, "In the South, unions get beat. Winning is an exception, and Oneita is confident of victory. That is why we need national support."

### Boycott

The nature of that national support is described in a recent letter from Sol Stetin, General President of TWUA:

"To assist the Oneita workers in their

## Cairo, Illinois

(Continued from page 1)

good. It brought us together; we learned to survive. But we can't win that way—they have more guns than we will ever have. We have to build new alternatives to the white power structure. I think Cairo can be a model for blacks all over the country."

In some ways, the Front has been building its own alternative structures all along. Cairo was once known as a center of vice, but blacks will no longer tolerate dope or prostitution. And since local businesses are being boycotted and so many blacks are out of work, many families have become dependent on food and clothing collected in mid-western cities for the Front to distribute. (Older black women, "old sisters" told me as they sorted clothing: "Remember, we struggle for poor people, not just black people. Poor whites take these clothes too.")

The Front has also been trying to educate the community. Last summer it ran a Liberation School; it is now collecting books and supplies for an extended program this summer. Every Saturday, the Front holds a "Spiritual Rally." Usually led by Reverend Charles Koen, the Front's director, the rallies teach "Universal Spirituality," the Front's special mixture of bible-thumping religion and black struggle.

The Front is now concentrating on economic alternatives for Cairo. It has already built 18 new pre-fab houses (quite an achievement since only ten other new houses had been built in the town in ten years.) Front leaders believe that the struggle of blacks in town must be connected with rural roots. They are making connections with local farms to supply their own cooperative store. They also have plans for an egg hatchery which would provide jobs to the many unskilled unemployed.

The United Front's struggle has already been a long one, and it shows little sign of reaching a victory in a short time. Black Cairo residents know that if they are to make just lives for themselves, they must experiment, they must learn from wherever they can, and they must persist. But they insist, having lived all their lives in poverty and danger, they can continue to struggle the rest of their lives if necessary.

Donations of food, clothing, school supplies and money are urgently needed in Cairo: United Front, P.O. Box 544, Cairo, Ill. 62914. To receive more information contact: Friends of the United Front, 6244 Delmar, St. Louis, Mo. 63130.





## Money-Lending, Interest, and the Christian

By EILEEN EGAN

The home of the Venezuelan bishop was simple and orderly. Mother Teresa of Calcutta was paying a courtesy call on him since she had just been visiting a nearby jungle area at the invitation of a neighboring bishop. She was considering asking a team of the Missionaries of Charity to work in the area. I was doing the translating.

The bishop turned to me and asked about my work. When he found out that I worked and lived in New York, he asked me if I could do him a favor. He wanted me to make the first contacts with New York banks concerning a loan of up to \$50,000. The plan was to borrow the money from the United States at a rate of interest of about seven percent. The funds would then be deposited with local banks and loaned out at the going rate (about twenty or twenty-two per cent). The difference in interest rates would insure the support of the

### A Conflict in Real Values

seminary and other activities of the diocese. The bishop spoke in simplicity and utter frankness.

I told the bishop that I was not the person to help him. Not only did I lack contacts with New York banks but to help in such an operation would be against my principles.

"How would it be opposed to your principles?" he asked. "Is not the support of a seminary a worthy Catholic work?"

"Of course," I answered. "It is the matter of interest that is against my principles. I do not think demanding of interest is a worthy action for a Christian. I still believe that the Church

was right when it forbade interest. In fact," I added, "to ask for interest of twenty per cent on loans would seem to be what the Church even today would call usury."

We went on to other subjects. I asked Mother Teresa afterwards if I had perhaps been a bit strong in clarifying my stand. "You were not strong enough," she commented.

My only regret about that conversation with a bishop trapped in the mores of his time and place was that I had not given him an example of opposition to interest that had occurred in New York City. In 1960, the Catholic Worker had returned to the City of New York a check for \$3,579.39 because it repre-

sented interest. The check came with the sum of \$68,000, the payment offered by the city for the Catholic Worker house which was demolished for a subway improvement. As the payment had been delayed, the city authorities punctiliously added the amount of interest the money would have earned had it been deposited in a bank. In return, the city received a letter that will probably remain as a unique item in its files.

Dorothy Day explained in the letter accompanying the check that the Catholic Worker movement still took seriously the prohibition of the Church Fathers and Councils on lending money at interest. "In the Christian emphasis on the duty of charity," she wrote, "we are compelled to lend gratuitously, to give freely . . ." Some readers reacted strongly to the return of the money, money which could have gone into feeding the poor, they pointed out. It seemed an outlandish act, in the twenty-

(Continued on following page.)

## Work, Cultivation and the "Green Revolution"

By CHUCK SMITH

Much of what I have to say about Peter's ideas on "cultivation" comes out of my experience of trying to put them into practice. After I read Peter Maurin's *Easy Essays*, I bought a farm and started farming. I had no farming experience or knowledge. In fact, until I read Peter's ideas I had no interest in farming.

Our experience says much about the nature of Peter's program. His "green revolution" has little in common with the green revolution which agricultural technologists are proposing for the third world. They propose to free the world from hunger by transforming fields into factories using the most advanced scientific means. Peter proposed returning to a system of self-reliance based on homesteading, village farming and crafts as a means of realizing a more important freedom.

The program Peter proposed was an undetailed, personalist approach to the problems of economics and politics. It emphasized what we can do in our own lives to meet our needs and those of our immediate neighbors.

In her autobiography, *The Long Loneliness*, Dorothy Day wrote,

"It was hard for me to understand what he meant, thinking as I always had in terms of cities and immediate need of men for their weekly pay check. Now I can see clearly what he was talking about, but I am faced with the problem of making others see it. I can well recognize the fact that people remaining as they are, Peter's program is impossible. But it would become actual, given a people changed in heart and mind, so that they would observe the new commandment of love, or desire to."

Peter left purely theological matters to the teachers of the Church, yet his teachings about the "temporal sphere" were based on a Christian view. He wanted men to dream great dreams and accomplish great things by reaching out to their fellow men. He knew this was the best way of finding God.

Peter's mission was to give men the vision to do this. He was very concerned with the development of a philosophy of work. In order for man to value his work he must understand it. Peter's understanding of work had three basic points. I will examine each of these in the light of our application

of them in the working structure he proposes as ideal, the farming-craft community.

### Work as a Necessity

First of all, Peter, like the English artist-craftsman Eric Gill, saw the need to integrate work with the whole of human activity. He proposed that "the scholars must become workers, so the workers may be scholars." Scholarship should not be used as an excuse for avoiding the necessity of work. The educated should go to the workers with their knowledge of economics and history and show why things are wrong and how to set them right. And the educated in learning to work with their hands can make their "heads function as they should function."

As a practical framework for this integration, Peter proposed "agronomic universities." This phrase, which Peter coined, is more descriptive of what he wanted than the term farming commune, especially today when so many communes have very little in common with his idea. At these centers Peter's synthesis of cult, culture and cultivation could be carried out. He saw each of these areas of human activity as complimentary. And in a craft-farming community the interdependence of these things becomes readily apparent.

On our farm in West Virginia our work gives additional meaning to the liturgy and the liturgy gives a transcendent purpose to our work. Our life style has returned us in some very basic ways to the sources of being, both natural and supernatural. Our search for knowledge and our tastes in literature and art have focused on very basic and human values. Our own cultural expression (our poems and songs, our writing and storytelling, our buildings and furnishings), even the tools we have made and learned to use have found their validity in our life experience—in our work and worship.

### Work as a Gift

"Labor is not a commodity to be bought and sold," Peter taught. "Labor is a means of self-expression, the workers' gift to the common good." In this concept, the Christian character of Peter's philosophy of work is most easily seen. He wanted men to be "givers, not go-getters." In the midst of the acquisitive society of the twentieth century, Peter hoped to form a cadre of Christian workers whose work would

be a service to the community. They would be known and respected by the work they provided. And the workers would see their work materialize as a useful, creative force in the community.

Our experience in making work a gift has been demanding, but rewarding. Visitors to our farm are sometimes frustrated by the great amount of work there is to do. And until we see the

bors. We help each other and share our resources.

Last year, Charlie and Elanore, a young couple from New York, bought a farm across the mountain. Our sharing with them has been much greater than with our other neighbors. Still, rather than actively seeking new people to move here, we see as ideal the development of a giving work community with the people who already live here.

### Work as an Expressive Gift

Peter Maurin was a peasant. He grew up in a village in southern France where hard work was necessary to survive, yet that same work gave freedom. In the village people depend on their work and cooperation with others. Economic decisions are not made by someone outside the community. Each person plans his own work and takes on the responsibility of carrying it out. Seeing his work as a gift, the worker puts some of himself in it. Peter used the cathedrals of France as a grand example of the expressive gift of the worker. These churches were built by the craftsmen-workers of the Middle Ages as a monument to their faith.

But the results don't need to be so overpowering. Last year while hitchhiking I got a ride with a man whose church was being built out of logs by the community. The spirit and understanding of work was the same in that little mountain community in Kanawha County as in the medieval village of Chartres.

Eric Gill accused our century of promoting the notion that leisure time is more desired than work time. Today's workman has been deprived of expressing his own ideas in his work or of receiving any amusement from it. Art and work have been separated.

One of the most exciting aspects in the growth of our farm has been developing our direction, buildings, furnishings, and managing the land in a way that expresses our attitudes. The houses we have built reflect our desire to live in holy poverty and simplicity. The crops we grow, our animals and our management of our woodland reflect our desire for self-reliance. Our friendships with our neighbors speak of our striving for Christian community.

We are still growing in our efforts to combine cult, culture and cultivation.



PETER MAURIN

work as a gift it can be no more than just one more job to get done.

Our hope is to build a community of voluntary interdependence in which we can share our work and its benefits. In the three years we have lived on Mud River, we have been slowly building such a relationship with our neigh-



# The Prophets and the Church...

(Continued from preceding page.)

tieth century, to oppose the system of interest.

I have personally discovered that my nonviolent or pacifist position is considered far less of an aberration than my refusal to condone interest. There have been times when I was forced to pay interest, but I opted out of situations where I would receive interest. My friends have felt they had to remind me that the whole free enterprise system of our country and its unexampled growth depends on the amassing of capital for the establishment of basic industries: that the stimulus for investment is the return on the investment; that in any case the return on invested money is often no more than enough to counteract the loss in the value of money through inflation. There are many more arguments of a technical nature, arguments which I can only counter on an entirely different plane with arguments of a moral nature.

The most telling argument, as far as I am concerned, is the collision of values between the capitalistic idea of

energy resources, the Christian idea of property may emerge as having pragmatic as well as ethical validity. The god of un-controlled economic growth has clearly failed.

The Christian concept of property was unequivocally stated in the 1967 encyclical letter of Pope Paul VI, *The Development of Peoples*. "No one is justified," says the encyclical, "in keeping for his exclusive use what he does not need when others lack necessities. This is a simple rule, and each follower of Jesus can, and must, work it out for himself. Each person's, each family's, needs are different. The point is that a determination of those needs must be made in the light of the needs of others. Those others are not only those whose needs we see around us, but also those whose needs come to our attention."

One of the first signs that Jesus had brought something entirely new to the human community was the collection for the poor and famine-stricken Jewish Christians of Jerusalem by the new Christians of Macedonia and Corinth. In urging donations for the Jerusalem Christians, Paul reminds the people of Corinth that they should see their possessions as did the Israelites who were given manna in the desert. "He that had much had nothing over; and he that had little had no want." It was a reference to the fact that those who gathered the manna were to take only enough for their daily needs. If they took more, the manna became wormy and rotten—except that which was saved for the Sabbath.

The Development Of People is specific in condemning other abuses of capitalism, including the transfer of income abroad, the phenomenon known as "flight capital," the retention of large landed estates against the common good, and the concept that property constitutes "an absolute and unconditioned right." Regrettably, part of the sting of this encyclical was removed for Americans by a disclaimer pasted into the first edition, namely: "This individualistic system of capitalism so strongly condemned by Popes Leo XIII, Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI, involves a type of calloused exploitation which certainly is not descriptive of the prevailing business practices of the United States in 1967."

To the extent that this disclaimer has any weight, it is because unions and governmental regulations have invaded the free-wheeling practices of capitalistic enterprises. Those defenders of American capitalism among workers are precisely those for whom unions have assured some gains and who for the first time are able to own some property, if only a mortgaged home. There is the only true defense of capitalism, since they conceive of the system as the guarantor of private property. Such defenders are not sufficiently aware that in the long run, the capitalistic thrust is for more and more concentrated control, if not ownership, of property. The decision-making becomes limited to fewer and fewer at the top of the capitalistic pyramid, and this control becomes more anonymous and more absolute with the multi-national corporation which reaches its tentacles beyond seas and national borders. At home, the anonymity of ownership is assured when the investor is asked to put his money into conglomerates. In this way, not even his broker can tell by the sweat of whose brow the return on his investment is made possible.

Thus, no matter how many government regulations are developed to control corporations, ways will be found to evade them. When one country makes rules that would lessen profit, the corporation transfers to another. For profit is the only reason for capitalistic investment, and profit has no necessary relationship to morality or to human well-being. Capitalism thus has at its

heart an ethical void.

Peter Maurin, through the pages of the Catholic Worker, reminded us of the tradition of the Old and New Covenants against the taking of interest. "The Prophets of Israel," he wrote in one of his "Easy Essays," "and the Fathers of the Church forbid lending money at interest. Lending money at interest is called usury by the Prophets of Israel and the Fathers of the Church." In another essay he tells us, "Money is by definition a means of exchange and not a means to make money. When money is used as an investment, it does not help to consume

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the goods that have been produced; it helps to produce more goods, to bring over-production and therefore increase unemployment. So much money has been put into business that it has put business out of business. Money given to the poor is functional money, money that fulfills its function. Money used

## Catholic Worker Positions

The general aim of the Catholic Worker Movement is to realize in the individual and in society the expressed and implied teachings of Christ. It must, therefore, begin with an analysis of our present society to determine whether we already have an order that meets with the requirements of justice and charity of Christ.

The society in which we live and which is generally called capitalist (because of its method of producing wealth) and bourgeois (because of the prevalent mentality) is not in accord with justice and charity—

**IN ECONOMICS**—because the guiding principle is production for profit and because production determines needs. A just order would provide the necessities of life for all, and needs would determine what would be produced. From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs. Today we have a non-producing class which is maintained by the labor of others with the consequence that the laborer is systematically robbed of that wealth which he produces over and above what is needed for his bare maintenance.

**IN PSYCHOLOGY**—because capitalist society fails to take in the whole nature of man but rather regards him as an economic factor in production. He is an item in the expense sheet of the employer. Profit determines what type of work he shall do. Hence, the deadly routine of assembly lines and the whole mode of factory production. In a just order the question will be whether a certain type of work is in accord with human values, not whether it will bring a profit to the exploiters of labor.

**IN MORALS**—because capitalism is maintained by class war. Since the aim of the capitalist employer is to obtain labor as cheaply as possible and the aim of labor is to sell itself as dearly as possible and buy the products produced as cheaply as possible there is an inevitable and persistent conflict which can only be overcome when the capitalist ceases to exist as a class. When there is but one class the members perform different functions but there is no longer an employer-wage-earner relationship.

**TO ACHIEVE THIS SOCIETY WE ADVOCATE:**

A complete rejection of the present social order and a non-violent revolution to establish an order more in accord with Christian values. This can only be done by direct action since political means have failed as a method for bringing about this society. Therefore we advocate a personalism which takes on ourselves responsibility for changing conditions to the extent that we are able to do so. By establishing Houses of Hospitality we can take care of as many of those in need as we can rather than turn them over to the impersonal "charity" of the State. We do not do this in order to patch up the wrecks of the capitalist system but rather because there is always a shared responsibility in these things and the call to minister to our brother transcends any consideration of economics. We feel that what anyone possesses beyond basic needs does not belong to him but rather to the poor who are without it.

We believe in a withdrawal from the capitalist system so far as each one is able to do so. Toward this end we favor the establishment of a Distributist economy wherein those who have a vocation to the land will work on the farms surrounding the village and those who have other vocations will work in the village itself. In this way we will have a decentralized economy which will dispense with the State as we know it and will be federationist in character as was society during certain periods that preceded the rise of national states.

We believe in worker-ownership of the means of production and distribution, as distinguished from nationalization. This to be accomplished by decentralized co-operatives and the elimination of a distinct employer class. It is revolution from below and not (as political revolutions are) from above. It calls for widespread and universal ownership by all men of property as a stepping stone to a communism that will be in accord with the Christian teaching of detachment from material goods and which, when realized, will express itself in common ownership. "Property, the more common it is, the more holy it is," St. Gertrude writes.

We believe in the complete equality of all men as brothers under the Fatherhood of God. Racism in any form is blasphemy against God who created all mankind in His image and who offers redemption to all. Man comes to God freely or not at all and it is not the function of any man or institution to force the Faith on anyone. Persecution of any people is therefore a serious sin and denial of free will.

We believe further that the revolution that is to be pursued in ourselves and in society must be pacifist. Otherwise it will proceed by force and use means that are evil and which will never be outgrown, so that they will determine the END of the revolution and that end will again be tyranny. We believe that Christ went beyond natural ethics and the Old Dispensation in this matter of force and war and taught non-violence as a way of life. So that when we fight tyranny and injustice and the class war we must do so by spiritual weapons and by non-cooperation. Refusal to pay taxes, refusal to register for conscription, refusal to take part in civil-defense drills, non-violent strikes, withdrawal from the system are all methods that can be employed in this fight for justice.

We believe that success, as the world determines it, is not the criterion by which a movement should be judged. We must be prepared and ready to face seeming failure. The most important thing is that we adhere to these values which transcend time and for which we will be asked a personal accounting, not as to whether they succeeded (though we should hope that they do) but as to whether we remained true to them even though the whole world go otherwise.



WATER CRESS

Ade Bethune

property and the use of one's surplus property, and the Christian one.

The capitalistic concept of property (according to the proponents but not the critics of capitalism) calls for the accumulation of savings through thrift and their investment at interest. Money thus breeds money. Surpluses are put to use in an unending spiral of gain. No one, no institution, can set a ceiling on this unending spiral. National taxes do not stop its motion. This spiral is accompanied by the spiralling of production and by pressures for ever-greater consumption. If mass production is called for by the spiral of gain, then it becomes the method of production, and there is no question of slowing down to ensure human work for human beings. The rights of the producer are completely lost in the emphasis on supplying the consumer. "Consumerism" is the result, and the word mirrors not only the succumbing of the consumer to the pressures of advertising, but the degradation of the producer.

Since the rise of capitalism, the Christian who does not believe in using his surplus for gain is often considered a troglodyte. For the Christian is expected to direct his surplus funds, not into the nexus of the market, but to meet the need of his near and far neighbor in the human family. His surplus is to bring him no gain but should contribute to the development of his neighbor and society. The collision of values, clear-cut in the early days of capitalism, became foggy as capitalists embraced the globe.

Perhaps today, when spiralling industrial growth and consumption are polluting the planet and depleting its



# CULTURE VATION ::

as an investment is prostituted money, money that does not fulfill its function." Maurin is pithily clear on what we should do with our surpluses. "People who have money should do good with their money, either give it away, as Our Savior advises, or lend it without interest."

Peter Maurin deals often with capitalism and with Marxism. "Modern capitalism," he states, "is based on property without responsibility, while Christian capitalism is based on property with responsibility."

If there is such a thing as Christian capitalism, then Christians who have money to invest could invest in cooperatives for credit and production. It is cooperatives which are among the alternative economic structures of the Third World. The cooperative fosters participation in decision-making and responsibility. A poor man in Latin America would never dare take out a home mortgage if the interest rates would shackle him for the rest of his life. Housing cooperatives provide an answer in Latin America especially.

## EASY ESSAYS

By PETER MAURIN (1877-1949)

### CULT

The central act of devotional life in the Catholic Church is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The Sacrifice of the Mass is the unbloody repetition of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

\* \* \*

On the Cross of Calvary Christ gave His life to redeem the world. The life of Christ was a life of sacrifice. The life of the Christian must be a life of sacrifice.

We cannot imitate the sacrifice of Christ

by trying to get all we can.

We can only imitate the sacrifice of Christ

by trying to give all we can.

### CULTURE

The motto of St. Benedict was Laborare et Orare, Labor and Pray. Labor and prayer ought to be combined;

labor ought to be a prayer.

The liturgy of the Church

is the prayer of the Church.

People ought to pray with the Church

and work with the Church.

The religious life of the people and the economic life of the people ought to be one.

\* \* \*

The Cathedral of Chartres is a real work of art because it is the real expression of the spirit of a united people.

\* \* \*

Eric Gill says: "The notion of work has been separated from the notion of art. The notion of the useful has been separated from the notion of the beautiful. The artist, that is to say, the responsible workman, has been separated

from all other workmen.

The factory hand has no responsibility for what he produces.

He has been reduced

to a sub-human condition of

intellectual irresponsibility.

Industrialism has released the artis-

They provide an answer in the United States where interest has risen alarmingly in the past few years. In the voluntary society to which Maurin's ideas lead, people could exercise their responsibility by changing their resources and surpluses into small industries which produce for peoples' needs, and in which the rights of the worker-producer as well as the consumer are protected.

Regarding Marx, Maurin comments: "Capital," says Karl Marx, "is accumulated labor, not for the benefit of the laborers, but for the benefit of the accumulators." In this essay, Maurin alludes to a Marxist analysis that has more validity to it than other aspects of his critique of capitalism, namely the concept of "surplus value." According to Marx, it is the "surplus value" of the work performed by the worker that accrues to the capitalist and is the basis of his riches.

In a short and succinct way, Peter Maurin gives us a historical view of the rise of capitalism. He reminds us of the crucial relationship between the Calvinistic ethic and the rise of capitalism; and if he is hard on Calvinism, we can read more deeply and decide for ourselves. "When John Calvin legalized money-lending at interest, he made the bank account the standard of values... When people became wealth-producing maniacs they produced too

from the necessity of making anything useful.

Industrialism has also released the workman from making anything amusing."

\* \* \*

People who built the Cathedral of Chartres

knew how to combine cult, that is to say liturgy, with culture, that is to say philosophy, and cultivation, that is to say agriculture.

### CULTIVATION

Andrew Nelson Little says:

"The escape from industrialism is not in Socialism or in Sovietism. The answer lies in a return to a society where agriculture is practiced by most of the people.

It is in fact impossible for any culture to be sound and healthy without a proper respect and proper regard for the soil, no matter how many urban dwellers think that their food comes from groceries and delicatessens or their milk from tin cans. This ignorance does not release them from a final dependence upon the farm."

\* \* \*

Round-Table Discussions to learn from scholars how things would be

if they were as they should be.

Houses of Hospitality

to give the rich the opportunity

to serve the poor.

Farming Communes

where the scholars may become workers

so the workers may become scholars.

### A NEW SOCIETY

To be radically right is to go to the roots

by fostering a society based on creed, systematic unselfishness and gentle personalism.

To foster a society based on creed instead of

greed, on systematic unselfishness instead of

systematic selfishness, on gentle personalism

instead of rugged individualism, is to create

a new society within the shell of the old.

## Forbade Lending at Interest

much wealth... Because John Calvin legalized money-lending at interest, the State has legalized money-lending at interest." Most of us are unaware of how all-pervasive, though attenuated, is the influence of Calvin's teaching that the elect of God are marked by visible success in the world, and that this success includes business success. The sober asceticism that had nourished monastic life now burst into the world in the sober asceticism of the millionaire businessman.

Maurin refers us to such groundbreaking studies as those of R. H. Tawney, who followed Max Weber in the inquiry into why "There is a kind of natural ineptness in the Popish religion to business, whereas on the contrary among the Reformed, the greater their zeal, the greater their inclination to trade and industry, as holding idleness unlawful."

Tawney traces the growth of capitalism from those idle times when in Catholic communities there were 180 days of holiday in a year, days given to celebration of the events of the life of Jesus and of some of his outstanding followers.

"In his book on Religion and the Rise of Capitalism," writes Maurin, "R. H. Tawney points out that at the base of our acquisitive society we find legalized usury, or lending money at interest. To get back to the teachings of the Prophets of Israel and the Fathers of the Church would not do any injustice to the money lenders. Money lenders would get their money back, money borrowers would find their burdens lightened, and the consuming public would not have to pay the bill."

Such thinking may strike many as obsolete. In point of fact, one of the dictionaries I consulted for a current definition of interest, defined, as obsolete, that concept of interest considered as a sum paid or charged for the use of money or for borrowing money.

Yet more and more people are finding that it is not obsolete to insist on personal and institutional responsibility for the ways in which invested money is earning its dividends. Churches are asked to look closely into their "investment portfolios," to check if some of their stocks are not earning income in racist countries and enterprises. It is not considered obsolete by ever-greater numbers of people to insist on an end to the divorce between ethics and economic life. The placid acceptance of capitalism in its worst expressions is over.

In 1972, the Commission of Labor of the French Bishops inquired among Christian workers on the matter of their support of capitalism. The Bishops discovered that most of those approached rejected capitalism. "For them," the Bishops announced, "it is not enough to condemn the abuses of capitalism, it is capitalism itself that must be condemned as it is an inevitable source of injustice." The Bishops of Peru mentioned an alternative when they asked the universal church to search for justice through Christian socialism. They defined Christian socialism as "a community-minded society, in which democracy becomes true participation in political decisions, sharing of economic production, humanitarian working conditions, and the subordination of capital to the needs of society."

Capitalism invites people to earn money through investments in companies for whose practices they take no responsibility. It thus makes it possible for the millions of investors to indulge in complete abdication of conscience. This is the same abdication of conscience which the Christian was supposed to accept during wartime—by putting his conscience in the keeping of the state whose every war was just. The personalism of the Christian message is completely against the abdic-

tion of conscience in any aspect of life. It calls for personal responsibility in every decision, every action.

Capitalism could never have developed along the lines that it did if the financier had to answer the type of question placed before penitents by St. Francis Xavier. "Ask them," he suggests, "what profit they make. How and Whence? What is the system they follow in barter and loans. You will generally find that everything is defiled with usurious contracts. When you have obtained from them the confession of these monopolies, and the like, drawing them out by many and cautious questions, you will be more easily able to settle how much of another person's property they are in possession of, and how much they ought to make restitution of to those they have defrauded, in order to be reconciled to God, than if you should ask them in general whether they have defrauded anyone."

It was R. H. Tawney who described the changes whereby avarice and the taking of interest ceased to be regarded as sinful. He showed that man's avarice, which was somewhat kept in check by moral norms and guidelines, seized society when he could be avaricious with a good conscience. Society then became the acquisitive society.

In its forty years of life, the Catholic Worker has continually put before our minds a doctrine of property much older than the one practiced in our time. It is a doctrine of property which calls for a simple life-style because we cannot amass luxuries or surpluses for ourselves while others lack necessities. This life-style involves the acceptance of poverty—but we cannot repeat often enough that poverty has nothing in common with destitution and misery. Christian poverty means having enough to meet one's needs. The needs of individuals are not identical, and the needs of a family are vastly different from those of an individual without family ties.

Jesus, who wore our flesh and knew



DANDELION

Adé Bethune

our human needs, showed us by deed and word that we must share whatever we possess with any one who is in need. Perhaps one of the clearest applications of the message of Jesus is contained in the injunction of St. Basil the Great. He reminds us of the great injustice we commit by not helping those we can help. This should make us pause when we have surpluses that could be put at the service of human beings in need if we did not put them where they could earn interest. "To the starving belongs the bread that you store away, to the naked belongs the cloak that you keep in your cupboard, to the barefoot the shoes that rot in your possession, to the needy the money you bury away. So you commit as many injustices as there are people you could help."



# A Radical Critique for These Our Times

By ROBERT GILLIAM

Reading and rereading *The Green Revolution* I have begun to appreciate the magnitude of Peter Maurin's vision. Initially, like many others, I imagine, I found the Easy Essays merely charming and eccentric. The problem, of course, was (is) with me. Peter Maurin speaks a different "language." Peter Maurin is not a modern man. He was of neither the bourgeoisie nor the proletariat, he was a peasant, he had roots. The Maurins could trace back the ownership of their small farm in Southeastern France for fifteen hundred years. His key word, as he said, was tradition.

Peter Maurin liked to call himself a radical. A radical, he said, was a person who went to the root of the problem. A radical was not interested in "patching up" the social order, but in "reconstructing" it. He envisioned a new society, within the shell of the old. Peter Maurin was uniquely radical, not given to violent and bitter denunciations. He said there had been enough denouncing already and it was time for some announcing. Dorothy Day said of him, "He aroused in you a sense of your own capacities for work, for accomplishment. He made you feel that you and all men had great and generous hearts with which to love God." He wanted to focus our attention on things as they should be. He hoped that thinking, talking, working, praying we could together find a way from the things as they

are to the things as they should be. For Peter, the beginning of a new order was twofold: to see clearly where we are, and at the same time, realize the richness of the possibilities open to us with the help of God's grace.

## To the Roots

What might be forgotten in all this and what seems to need saying is that implicit in and fundamental to Peter's vision was a radical critique of things as they are. It is always painfully hard to face things as they are, but particularly so for a people, like ourselves, who seem so reluctant, so unwilling to admit the reality and extremity of our own sinfulness, socially and individually.

The state and advancing technology are foundation stones, two roots of the modern world. Peter Maurin unequivocally rejected both. He did not envision a political solution. Catholic action, the Catholic Worker, is, by Peter's definition, not political but personalist. There is no solution in the transfer of state power, but only in a new decentralist order. He did not envision liberation through technology, but hoped that we could finally be freed from technology. "He saw what the Industrial Revolution had done to the common man." When once confronted by a listener convinced that the Green Revolution could not work, Peter asked that man what he suggested. The man responded that industrial society should be reformed, Christianized. Peter answered that the

man should follow his own conviction, but that he preferred to go to the root of the problem, and that he did not believe in baptizing something intrinsically evil. "We are now living in a real Dark Age," he wrote.

## Many people say

that we cannot go back but I say

neither can we go ahead, for we are parked in a blind alley.

And when people are parked in a blind alley

the only thing to do is go back.

Peter did not hope in what we ordinarily like to call "progress," and he saw that the world which was coming to be was still more perverse.

Faced with Peter's lucid radicalism, our instinct is to turn away. We like to call it unrealistic. Our defense is in the mythology of progress. The future is the inevitable extension of the present. What is inevitable must be good. Peter Maurin teaches us that that future which looms on the horizon, the child of the present, is neither good nor inevitable. "The future will be different if we make the present different." We do not need huge numbers or great organizations to make the present different. The present will be made different by more modest means, pure means, spiritual means. The beginning is within each of us. God's grace is inexhaustible. No goodness, however little and anonymous, is without effect in the economy of good that is the Mystical Body of Christ. Peter's model for the Christian "revolution" which he envisioned was that small band of Irish monks who came to Europe in the Dark Ages, who founded schools, hospices, and farming communes, who in poverty and charity laid the foundations for a new order.

## Secularism

Rereading the Easy Essays I am painfully reminded of having read them several years ago, and of my response to them. I remember finding Peter excessively, almost embarrassingly, Catholic. He was not secular

enough. I considered myself a Catholic, but a very "liberal" one. I attributed it all to Peter's being a Catholic of another era—implicitly, a less enlightened era. I wanted to cling to Peter, to some degree, but, at the same time, to set aside, to bracket, his "embarrassing" Catholicism, his "excessive" religiosity. That is, of course, impossible. (I record all this only because I assume it is not uncharacteristic of many readers.) The Catholic tradition suffuses everything he wrote. Central to his vision was the rejection of modern secularism.

## The only way

to go to the roots

is to bring religion

into education

into politics

into business . . .

To take profanity

out of the profane

is to bring sanity

into the profane.

The "great modern error" was to separate the spiritual from the material. Fundamental to that profound social healing of which Peter dreamed was a return to a faith that was truly public and social. A faith which struggled to "translate the spiritual into the material" in the real every day life of people.

Modern secularism privatizes religion, making it a relatively unimportant matter of personal taste. That assumption pervades the world we live in. For Peter Maurin, a Medieval Catholic, religion was of the utmost public importance. It is the ultimate truth about ourselves and the world, and to exclude its truth from public life is to hopelessly impoverish it.

To build up the City of God,

that is to say,

to express the spiritual

in the material,

through the use

of pure means,

such is the task

of professing Christians

in this day and age.

## Work, Society and Culture

By MIKE KIRWAN

The relationship between worker and scholar and society has always been of vital interest to Peter Maurin and the Catholic Worker. Industrialism, mechanization, unproductive labor and the lack of understanding between scholars and workers were often decried by Peter in his Easy Essays. He believed in the importance of physical labor and scholarly activity united to eliminate the alienation inherent in a society that enforces rigid class distinctions between scholars and workers.

**WORK, SOCIETY AND CULTURE.** By Yves Simon. New York: Fordham University Press, 1970.

In his book *Work, Society and Culture*, Yves Simon discusses this alienation between workers, artists, and intellectuals. He explains and elaborates on the reasons for alienation by expounding on the place of work, art, and intellect in society. And he provides an understanding of the nature of work, art, and intellect.

## Work and Society

The first chapter discusses the concept of valid and honorable work, from the age of Aristotle to the present. Simon defines work in terms of legal fulfillment, that is, work that fulfills a predetermined need; and he defines free development as work performed for pure pleasure which fulfills needs. He disputes Marx' and Engels' contention that work in a communist society is an activity of free choice, unregulated by vocation or restriction to one type of activity. He states "Work is not, and it can never be, an activity of free development. Since work is an activity always to a large extent governed by laws which the worker has no power to change, say of hydrodynamics, mechanics, chemistry, biology and so on, we must all admit that there exists in work a permanent foundation for unwilling effort, pain, inconvenience." social classification of social groups,

In the second chapter, Simon discusses work and society. Manual work is seen as the fullest realization of the idea of work. Social consciousness designates the manual worker as the archetype of the working man. In a

social classification of social groups, those engaged in technical, social and purely intellectual work are polar opposites to manual laborers. They are not considered workers in the sociological sense.

The third chapter discusses man at work, and compares the worker as a psychological type with other psychological types. Simon balances work as a socializer with other activities that bring people together; a discussion of alienation arises from this. The manual worker, he notes, is more apt to be sociable since he can always use an extra hand, while the intellectual and the artist can do their work alone.

In the fourth chapter Simon discusses the differences between the social order and the social classes, the historical origins of the working class, and the ideology of the working class. Calling the relation of work to wealth and work to culture the two great theoretical subjects of the socialist and labor movements of the past century, Simon then devotes a chapter to each. Here he considers the aspects of service and profit. Inasmuch as it is destined for human use, wealth produced by work constitutes the service of the work. Either the worker himself is the beneficiary of his service, or he exchanges the service for a theoretically equivalent amount of work as a service, and sees it as a means of exchange, which results in the lack of quantitative proportion between service of work and profit of work.

## Work and Culture

In the final chapter, Simon discusses work and culture. He relates the various ways in which different cultures have accepted or rejected the worker. Aristotle did not esteem manual work, while in America manual work has always been viewed favorably. For here, ordinary people, mainly immigrants without any special skill, were able to make good wages. From these working classes have sprung the most prosperous classes which view the work ethic in a peculiarly modern light. The final chapter discusses in depth man's culture and civilization, his work, art, and leisure.

In his easy essay on "Scholars and

## Love the Enemy, Return Good for Evil

Questioner: What about Christ chasing the money changers out of the Temple? Does this not justify war?



try to exterminate their families or to imprison and kill them. He used no man-made law against them.

The whole essence of the Sermon of the Mount is to love the enemy, to turn the other cheek, and to return good for evil. What aroused His anger was hypocrisy in the Synagogue. Jesus knew that to exchange a Roman despot for a Jewish despot was not worth dying for. He had a better way, which was to overcome the enemy permanently by love.

AMMON HENNACY, 1893-1970

Hennacy: Christ was "true God and true man." He was hungry and thirsty and He hungered and suffered and bled on the Cross. In this He was the man. He saw the Jewish Temple made a den of thieves and evil being done by hypocrites who kept the letter of the law—taking legal advantage of the rate of exchange and of technicalities that the poor and untaught knew little about. As He suffered when scourged, so did He suffer at this blasphemy, and He chased the cattle that would not move without the lash. Whether He actually lashed the money changers or whether their guilt made them flee we do not know. But we do know that He did not

Workers," Peter Maurin discussed the relationship that had to develop between the scholar and the worker in order that one might learn from the other and thereby evolve a more humanistic culture. Yves Simon is equally explicit: "Years ago . . . I suggested that it was up to the manual worker to keep alive among us a certain spirit of honesty and perfection which ought to be carried from level to level up to that supreme sphere of intellectual life where all work comes to an end and

the image of eternal life appears. The good worker and the lover of truth, I wrote, have much in common, and the promotion of their understanding could do a great deal for the reformation of our concept of culture."

Simon's book puts the worker, society and culture in perspective. The work is readable, understandable, and believable, and offers an important blueprint for the future. It is recommended reading for anyone interested in man as worker and scholar.



# A Report from Various Houses of Hospitality

Several months ago, in preparation for this 40th Anniversary issue, we addressed a letter to as many CW houses as we had record of, asking each to let us know what was doing. Our hope was to include a letter from as many as possible in this issue. As was to be expected, not all responded. Happily, a considerable number did. We gratefully include some of them here—in gratitude to God for the work that is being done through these workers, and in gratitude for our communion with them.

The variety of the response will quickly become apparent upon reading these entries. Both the size and the scope of work discussed is as varied as the names of the houses themselves. We are privileged to share these responses, and share in this work to "build the kind of society where it will be easier for people to be good." The Editors.

## Washington, D.C.

Zacchaeus House  
1329 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Fellow Workers,

Zacchaeus House, a four-story structure, is six blocks from the Zacchaeus Community Kitchen, and will be open to serve the same community of people now being served in the Kitchen. (Zacchaeus Community Kitchen and Zacchaeus House are outgrowths of the Community for Creative Nonviolence, a community which has been active in the Washington area since 1971. The Community Kitchen was opened October 16, 1972; the House will open in Spring, 1973). The house was given to us, rent free, by a Lutheran Church which owns the building. The first floor (a walk-in from the street) is being converted into a free medical clinic, which will have two aspects. One would be to act as a screening clinic for the acute medical needs of the people in the Kitchen; as well as acting as a neighborhood medical center (the neighborhood we are in can be described as one in which medical services are marginal).

The floors above will be used for the living arrangement. We have converted two floors into dormitory rooms, and we will be able to offer hospitality to as many as 20 people a night.

We would like to consider Zacchaeus House our home, a home where people would be invited to spend time as a part of our community, where we would share each other's gifts, and experience more fully our relationships with each other. We have tried to create in the Zacchaeus Community Kitchen the old dignity.

We have made the decision to have the Peace Study House classes (the Peace Study House is the educational program that the Community for Creative Non-Violence runs) in the Zacchaeus House. The Peace Study House reaches a large segment of the greater Washington community, and we feel that this location would be good to get people involved directly in the work that we are doing. At the same time, we would like to make the house available to the immediate community we are part of. We are beginning to introduce neighborhood-oriented courses into the Peace Study House, and are setting aside Saturday mornings as a time for the sharing of practical skills (sewing, nutrition, plumbing, carpentry, etc.).

As always, beginnings are exciting. We really can't make any predictions about how the House will develop, or what other things this will lead us to. We would welcome correspondence or visits with people who are doing similar work, and would like to share experiences and ideas, and a way of life that is reconciling and not alienating.

In Peace,  
Rachelle Linner

## Niagara Falls

Maranatha  
2115 Tenth Street  
Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14305

Dear Dorothy,

As the Catholic Worker in New York approaches its 40th anniversary, our Catholic Worker Community in Niagara Falls is preparing to celebrate its first anniversary.

We had our beginnings in the living rooms of friends and parishioners last Spring. Out of these prayerful discussions came Maranatha, our house of hospitality. Maranatha House opened on June 16 with Mike and I moving in the furniture, all of which had been donated. Elaine joined us about ten days later. Our guests began arriving from the very first day.

Our community gradually began to grow. Ray joined us in September. Betsy, Sally and Patrick arrived in January, and Jim plans to join us next month.

With the growth of our community and our extended community of friends and supporters, our directions have broadened. Sally got people together over the idea of a Food Co-Op which quickly became a reality. Betsy is planning to do some farming this spring and summer on some land lent to us by a local community of Sisters. Ray and Elaine are active in local community projects.

Our increase in number also brought us to establish a Catholic Worker Community House a few blocks away from our hospitality house. This enables us to have more room for our sisters and brothers who need a place to stay.

The Lord has blessed us during our first year and we are looking forward to many more years of serving him in the needs of our sisters and brothers.

We wish to invite you and all our brothers and sisters to stop and spend some time with our community if you are in our part of the country.

In Christ, our Peace,  
Fr. Joe Schuster

## Grand Rapids

Ammon Hennacy House  
241 Charles St. S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49503

Dear Worker Family,

The Ammon Hennacy House of Hospitality is starting its fourth year of existence. For a year we had a weekly meal served in a downtown parking lot, and fed as many as two hundred people coming to us from missions, railway cars, and doorsteps of the city. After going through one winter in the open Michigan weather and facing another, part of the group decided to work with the diocese, setting up a nightly meal in a small vacant restaurant, hoping to obtain foundation grants. The rest of us decided against using these means, and moved on to more neighborhood-oriented things.

We are located in a poor area of Grand Rapids where the old beautiful homes have been left by the rush to the suburbs. We have a clothing room in the basement, as well as a laundry owned and used co-operatively among five houses on the street. The first and second floors are family areas for two couples and one small child. The third floor attic room is a dorm-like area for hospitality.

Two houses across the street are rented. One is the home of a woman and three children, who sometimes keep us all busy enough to think not much more can be handled. And the other house shelters a free tutoring program for neighborhood children, with books and supplies made readily available to them. Also, a co-operative bakery has come alive to provide some of us with very small incomes but a good deal of work. We have available

a plot of land to farm, and we're starting our fourth season with some soft little green leaves poking out of our many egg-carton flats.

At this writing we have just ended a week-end tax resistance conference with about twenty-five people from around the state. We have been promoting tax and draft resistance as part of our nonviolence workshop group Life Force. With the beginnings of a tax resisters' fund we are seeking an alternative to the violence and exploitation of banking. Also, we are exploring possibilities of an insurance fund. With four active children, we feel the need to be providing them with some

to our soup kitchen. We also provide shelter at night in a second-floor dormitory that sleeps thirty-five men. Unity Kitchen offers daily transportation to Unity Acres in Orwell, N.Y., a more permanent home for poor and homeless men.

A community of two women, four men and I reside at Simon House. The Simon House community shares each day together serving our Lord Jesus Christ at Unity Kitchen on a full-time, volunteer basis. Our work is centered on prayer as we daily share the Eucharist, morning and evening prayers, and a weekly prayer meeting.

The kitchen has been blessed by the



Rita Corbin

assurance of medical care in emergencies.

The strength of such anarchists as Ammon Hennacy, Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman (who showed with their daily lives the absolute necessity to deny government authority openly and steadfastly and accept the responsibilities of their actions) has caused us to deepen our commitment to the philosophies of personalism, nonviolence, and non-exploitive living. We welcome travellers, guests and any of the C.W. family who happen through.

Love to all,  
Ammon Hennacy House

## Syracuse

Unity Kitchen  
243 W. Adams St.  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13202

Dear Friends:

For three years Unity Kitchen has been serving the poor of Syracuse. The kitchen serves two meals each day to an average of sixty people per meal. Homeless and alcoholic men are in the majority of those who find their way

"Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. Then shall the just answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry and fed thee; thirsty and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and took thee in; or naked and covered thee? Or when did we see thee sick or in prison and came to thee?"

"And the King answering shall say to them: Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me."

constant generosity of the people of Syracuse. Middle-class housewives and working men and women share in prayer, and with the donation of food, cooking, cleaning, driving, building maintenance, hospital and jail visitation.

As we serve our Lord each day at the kitchen, it seems as if He is constantly purifying and training us so that we might bring His healing from alcoholic addiction.

Peace and joy,  
Fr. Dick Keough

## Hubbardston

The House of Ammon  
69 Elm Street, Box 108  
Hubbardston, Mass. 01452

To the Editor,

The House of Ammon is an old fifteen-room farm house on 3½ acres of land. We came here two years ago filled with enthusiasm and started in to make the dream come true. The whole thing: the prayerful community, the organic farm, the evangelical poverty and, of course, the house of hospitality. We even began a newspaper which folded after three issues.

I guess you could say we have been blessed with failure. The guests have been unbelievably destructive, many of the original community left in confusion, and the farm was neglected. But there are a few of us still here and we refuse to quit.

Why? It is largely because we have no place to go and still remain honest. But there's more to it. We have read the Gospel carefully enough to know that it is a call to poverty, humility and the folly of the Cross. After all, we are on pilgrimage.

Clearly we are not making Peter's dream of the agronomic university come true in Hubbardston—but maybe, as God sees things, we are helping a little. At least we are trying.

Best love,  
(Rev.) Bernard E. Gilgun

MORE LETTERS ON PAGE SIX.



# FEED THE HUNGRY—CLOTHE THE

## Troy, N.Y.

Day House  
37 First Street  
Troy, New York 12180

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am grateful for the opportunity to share our program on this 40th Anniversary. We are relatively new and struggling in the CW tradition.

We are modest in program and size and try to implement, in the city, Peter Maurin's three C's. On a regular basis, Mass is offered every Saturday and Sunday evening. We are trying to work for better conditions for inmates in our county jail a few blocks away, support the local A&P Boycott, and recently concluded a series of fasts for the war in Vietnam. We welcome overnight guests and offer whatever facilities are available for whatever use one may wish to make of them. We even have a small city garden where we raise herbs and flowers to enliven our dinner and Eucharistic tables.

We are located in downtown Troy. We thank God for the inspiration given by both Peter and Dorothy, and it is our prayer that we will all continue to support and encourage each other in the way of Jesus the Christ.

Peace be with you,  
John D. Kirwin

## Los Angeles

Ammon Hennacy  
House of Hospitality  
605 N. Cummings St.  
Los Angeles, Ca. 90033

Dear Dorothy and Fellow Workers,

It has been three years since Dan and Chris Delany started the Ammon Hennacy House of Hospitality here in Los Angeles.

In a city which many would call a determined non-community, we have attempted to emphasize and work at the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, voluntary poverty, hospitality, resistance to war, and the fight against the exploitation of the lowliest, all in the setting and building up of a personal community life.

As the federal and state authorities continue to increase the burden they place on the poor, we try in our way to alleviate the desperation. These past few months we have been serving anywhere from 200 to 500 individuals hot meals at our Hospitality Kitchen in downtown L.A. The clothing room has been opened twice a week to serve the need for a heavy sweater or jacket or good "walking" shoes for the uncommonly cool winter we had this year in Southern California. We've been providing shelter at our house in East L.A. to transients and occasionally to families or couples thrown out of their apartments. Also, we have put up men in the hotels in the downtown area.

As we continue the works of mercy, we also continue to fight the works of war. With Ammon Hennacy as example, we openly resist the phone war tax and do not provide any income to be taxed by the federal government. We encourage all to resist the federal income tax.

We have been especially involved in resisting an injustice that has gone on too long in the Skid Row areas of the

nation. We have been picketing and urging the men in L.A. not to sell their blood to those commercial vampires, the blood banks. The price paid a man for a pint of whole blood or plasma in L.A. is \$5, a pittance compared to the value of it. Men from various backgrounds (union men and otherwise) have responded wholeheartedly and have been the ones who have manned the picket line starting at 6 a.m. every morning.

There is much yet to be done. We have a long way to go in non-violence, in opening our hearts and minds, in trusting in God's mercy. With the inspiration which all in the struggle for the good earth provide, we cannot help but continue "to fight like hell for the living."

In Christ,  
Bill Butler

## San Francisco

Martin de Porres House  
2826 23rd St.  
San Francisco, Calif. 94110

Dear Fellow Workers:

Martin de Porres House is almost two years old. We are serving two meals a day—breakfast from 6 to 7:30 a.m. and dinner from 4:30 to 5:30. For breakfast we serve anywhere from 40 to 70 people, and for dinner from 80 to 140. We are closed Saturday, and serve one meal on Sunday from 11:00 to 12:30. We have fed as many as 300 people on Sunday. Meals are served in a homey old bar which we have fixed up, and which can seat about 50 people at a time. Although we are located in a Latino neighborhood, our people come



Eichenberg

from all parts of the city. Many come daily, some occasionally or at the end of the month, and some just while passing through.

What has been most astounding has been the growth of our volunteer community in the two-year period. It began with only a couple of us living on cots in the old bar itself, putting up the clumsy things at night and taking them down in the morning. After six months, we moved our living space from the bar to a flat. Since then, the community has grown from one flat of single people to five family units (three of which are an outgrowth of the original community), and two flats of single volunteers. All of the families have their own places around the neighborhood, and they share in providing hospitality (lodging) and the work of preparing and serving the meals.

All of the families and each of the single houses are expected to be self-sufficient in providing for their own rent. Some people meet the need by part-time work, and others by starting a work co-op. The restaurant is supported by donations. We publish a newsletter called "Gentle Personalism."

(Anyone who would like to receive copies is welcome. Send us your name.)

Our work co-op does odd jobs—painting, hauling, cleaning, minor repairs, etc. The need for work, both for ourselves and for those who come to us, brought the coop into existence. As Peter said, "work is as essential to men as bread." For ourselves, we needed a way to obtain our rent that was in keeping with our ideals. For others, we hoped it could eventually offer an alternative to receiving welfare, but unfortunately that is not yet possible.

Our co-op is just beginning and has not yet achieved some of its ideals. Many of us are not skilled. We are looking for skilled people—carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc., who would be willing to work for a subsistence wage, to teach others who are unskilled. If you are interested, please write. Also, we do not yet have enough work, and find it difficult to make our rents. So, we need work!

Some members of the community are also working in anti-war activities. Most of our involvement has been helping to maintain a three-month continuous peace vigil (now over) at the federal building; and with the Carrier Project, whose purpose is to carry out actions pertaining to the air craft carriers in the Bay Area. Most recently we were involved in a series of walks through Contra Costa County to the Alameda Naval Air Station where the Coral Sea was to sail for S.E. Asia.

Our community is now looking for land. With its recent growth, it has become a more real possibility. We would like to obtain forty acres and up of wooded and cleared area with a sufficient water supply and soil content where we could raise vegetables. Our hope is to be able to live a simple life as self-sufficiently as possible. We would like to establish a community of families and single people there from our city house. It will provide both food and hospitality. Since we do not have the resources to purchase land, we are simply trusting in God that if we find what we need, He will provide the means, or perhaps someone who is generous will give us what we need.

We began the House with the trust that if we sought "first Christ's Kingdom and His Justice, all else would be given to us." Sometimes it is not easy to live. We often fall in love and at times we have crises in the community as a result. With such a rapid growing community, it has often been difficult for us who began the community to be open and loving. Despite our failures, the work goes on. It is His and we are His servants and yours.

Peace,  
Chris Montesano

## Tenn.-Miss.

4385 Given  
Memphis, Tn. 38122

Dear Friends:

In a recent issue of the Catholic Worker, I noticed a small box "Let Us Know" requesting information about Houses of Hospitality and Catholic-Worker-type groups.

May we humbly apply to be considered as such and be placed on your list?

We are a family (husband and wife and three children still at home—four other children have gone on their own) in a small, three-bedroom house. We have shared this house during the past five years with a variety of persons of all colors and all races and faiths, whom God has sent to us. Some have stayed for months (one is still with us after two years), others have stayed for a night or two. At the present time, we are experiencing a lull in visitors. I am sure that God will honor us again, but, on seeing your request, I thought perhaps we could be of help to someone passing this way.

Our daughter and son-in-law, Mary and John Scruggs, 645 Loeb, Memphis, also wish to be included in your listing. He is a teacher in the public school system here and she is still attending Memphis State University, working on a degree in Education.

The rules for our "House of Hospitality" are few—anyone who is working or has the funds, is asked to contribute \$10.00 a week for their food. They are also asked to help with housekeeping duties. If they do not have any money, they are most welcome. There is no drinking, drugs, or smoking (the latter in deference to Betty, who cannot tolerate the smoke). Anyone who cannot give up smoking is asked that they smoke outside the house.

We were telling our friend about writing you. He requested that we give you his name and address—he wishes to be "inundated" by God. He is in a very small town and has a fairly large rectory—in which he already has two rooms designated as dormitories. He has already put up travelers for the night on occasion. His name is Ray Berthlaume and his address is St. Francis of Assissi Church, 310 Cleveland St., New Albany, Miss.

If you want any more information, we will happily supply it. God bless you for the work that you have done for so many years. We are late in life actively seeking this type of Christian community. It is a joy!

Yours in Christ,  
Betty & Charley Gifford

## West Virginia

Catholic Worker Farm  
Rt. 1, Box 308  
West Hamlin, W.Va., 25571

Dear Fellow Workers,

Peter Maurin's Easy Essays first brought me up the hollow to our seventy-acre farm. When I read them in *The Green Revolution*, our farm's CW paper, I was impressed that Chuck Smith and Bill Schmitt were working to create the society that Peter dreamed about where it "would be easier for man to be good."

I totally accepted Peter's ideal of work being a gift, but it took me a couple of months to even begin to see what a true gift it was. Before, giving work had always meant to me that I worked under someone's supervision without asking pay. Pat O'Brian, a priest and fellow guest who had arrived the same day as I, had been waiting eagerly with me for someone to tell us what to do. When we asked what we could do, Bill said that we could build a hearth for the fireplace. I asked how that was to be done. Bill explained that he didn't know. The responsibility was ours, the labor was ours, and the gift was an imitation of God's creation.

That hearth was the first step in fixing up an old house turned tobacco barn which is now our kitchen or main building. The majority of our waking hours are spent outside, but when it is cold, we eat, hold round-table discussions and pray in our kitchen. Our community prayers consist of three psalms in the morning with the Our Father and three more psalms in the evening. We try to keep with the thematic arrangement of Vespers and Lauds. We hope that the loosely structured nature of our "office" will continue to encourage hymns, sentence prayers, and a general spontaneity in our prayers. Someone reads a scripture lesson during lunch.

Just up the hill from the kitchen is Chuck's and my house *Al dente* which is an A-frame built atop a log cabin. The only other house on our farm is Pepper, our guest house—a small 8x8 log cabin with a sleeping loft and a tin roof. It's the second building we've completely built. *Al dente* is the first. Right now we are building a new barn

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# NAKED—SHELTER THE HOMELESS ♦ ♦ ♦

for our goats. After this barn is finished, we don't plan on building any more log structures until someone comes to stay on a permanent basis.

Most of our farm is woods and hillsides, so goats are ideal to keep for milk and meat here. I wrote a lot of this letter while herding our seven Toggenburgs. We are now trying to locate Angora goats so we can use their hair for spinning yarn. Everyone has a turn herding. Being with the goats gives you a chance to take a walk, read, write, pray—almost anything private.



Eichenberg

It's good. Many times we need to be alone to straighten out our feelings. We need to be with God. Herding gives us the time to do this. Sometimes my need to be alone is not realized until I am alone with the goats.

Self-sufficiency has oriented a lot of the emphasis of our farm around meals. Food is a much discussed topic. During the summer, goats and our organic gardens take priority over all other work. Chuck particularly likes to dream about fresh zucchini. Self-sufficiency isn't supreme here, but it is remembered and attempted.

What is supreme is Jesus and His cross which we can accept through voluntary spiritual and material poverty. For Bill, poverty came close to being a possession. Bill seemed to like to acquire things so that he could throw them out. Still, Bill's spirit of wanting

to be close to the Lord's poverty made us all reconsider our every last possession. We found that our attitudes towards our things were not very often in the same spirit as that of Francis who said that being refused comfort for the sake of Christ was perfect joy.

Perhaps the hardest thing for newcomers on our farm to get used to is the "primitive condition." We get our water from a well and have electricity in only the kitchen. We cook on a fireplace and do all our heating with wood. The material poverty that Chuck and I have evolved to slowly thrusts itself on our guests, sometimes a bit too hard.

Living with others, I've found that the most important thing for our farm is perhaps the Fraternal Correction that Jesus taught us. It's much easier to expose our brother's/sister's faults to the entire community and put him/her in a position of being at odds with everyone than to accept the cross and instruction of Jesus and go to your brother/sister alone and subject yourself many times to the realization of your own intolerance.

We encourage everyone to join in the work. We take turns cooking and milking. Most other jobs are done communally and don't require turns for everyone to join in. Guests usually choose jobs they feel are least likely to be messed up by inexperience. Later as they become more a part of the community they accept jobs that require more skill and more responsibility. Needless to say, as people accept the responsibility for their work it seems easier and more enjoyable to them.

As we are better able to accommodate guests, it seems that our guests come to stay for longer periods of time. I'm sure that God will bless our community of two with more permanent members in His magic length of time.

If you are planning to visit our farm, please write for directions first; the farm is very hard to find and the West Hamlin mailing address is very misleading.

Yours in the Green Revolution,  
Sandy Adams

## Colorado Springs

Catholic Peace Center  
Friendship House  
508 South El Paso  
Colorado Springs, Colo. 80903

Dear Friend,

You may put our address in your May publication. We would be able to provide a bed for wanderers but not too much "hospitality" since we are often not here. But they would be welcome to use what we have.

Peace,

Father Stephen L. Handen

## Milwaukee

Casa Maria Hospitality House  
1131 North 21st Street  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

Dear Workers,

Approaching home this afternoon, I noticed a heavy-set woman passing cardboard boxes to her children from a station wagon with Montana license plates. They hauled their belongings into our seven-bedroomed house. That old house on 21st Street, now painted brown with yellow trim, stands winter winds and summer heat; its door always open to transient families, evicted families, skid row men seeking a night's stay, ex-convicts just out of Waupun or halfway houses, and now numbers of mental patients released to the homeless streets by public and private institutions. Something untouchable and miraculous keeps that door open and food on the table. The Mother of God lives somewhere in the house and protects it, always ensuring a refuge from the cold, and lonely streets for her Son, the homeless and

the hungry.

Reminiscing through the past year, I try and think of the close to three hundred people who stayed at Casa Maria for a night or for many weeks.

In the spirit of Peter Maurin, we hold Friday night clarification of thought discussions with the hope of revitalizing the Catholic Worker spirit in Milwaukee. We dream of many people coming to Casa Maria to help out in the spirit of love for their fellow man and the formation of a real community where people rejoice in their common struggles.

Peace forever,  
Dennis Kane

St. Benedict Community Meal  
1027 North Ninth St.  
Milwaukee, Wisc. 53233

Dear Friends,

Dennis Kane from Casa Maria House of Hospitality asked me to write and tell you about our work at St. Benedict Community Meal. We have a daily free meal for the poor of the area every day except Saturday.

The meal was begun by Mike and Nettie Cullen and the Casa Maria Workers about five years ago. The meal passed through two different churches before settling down here in November, 1970. The Capuchin Community here assumed full responsibility for the meal in February of 1971.

We are located to serve those most



Eichenberg

in need of the free meal. The Rescue Mission is about four blocks east of us and Milwaukee's "Skid Row" is just west of us. When the meal first settled here, we were serving about 75 people nightly. Now that average attendance is about 200 nightly. The numbers are not important. They are noted to give an idea of the growth of the attendance, due, no doubt, to the accessibility of the church hall where the meal is served.

The meal is a people-sharing event. We have roughly 400 cooks from Milwaukee, its suburbs, and beyond. These cooks are divided into different groups, and each group is responsible for supplying the meal one night a week. We did not actively solicit cooks—people who saw the sharing wanted to pitch in and help.

Father Alexis Luzi set a tone of hospitality when he became pastor in the summer of 1970, and the rectory has become a hospitality house for many homeless men.

The cooks raise their own funds (usually the food is bought out of their pocketbooks), cook the food in their homes, and bring it here and serve it here.

We have become known for the meal—but it is only part of the work. There is an alcoholic counseling service at the rectory, set up by the Social Development Commission and Milwaukee's Inner City Council on Alcoholism. We have a group of friends who visit the friendless at the County Institutions. Contact is made with prisoners at both the city and county jails and the House of Corrections.

Perhaps some works have been left out. The most important thing, I feel, is to say that we try to "break bread," to share our loaves and fishes, our lives, in whatever way we can. If any of your readers are passing through Milwaukee, we invite them to "break bread" with us.

In the Body of Christ,  
Brother Charles Mueller, OFM Cap.

## East Chicago

Harbor House  
3214 Guthrie Street  
East Chicago, IN 46312

Dear Catholic Workers,

Harbor House is alive and well. Ever since five of us opened our two storefront over-night shelter in 1969, we have never really lacked for anything.

We are located across the street from Inland Steel, in the very pit of the Indiana Harbor section of East Chicago. We are surrounded by bars and live in the belly of pollution. In our early days we were shut down once for health regulations, but that was more of a mistake than an attack. Police used to ridicule us and hassle our men, but regularly for the past several years they have dropped men off at our door rather than bring them to jail. For that to happen in East Chicago is a great grace.

Most of our Board members are the same as we began with in 1969. We felt it necessary to incorporate for a number of reasons, but we still do not feel completely convinced. We celebrate liturgy in our chapel in the basement (really constructed to house an occasional evicted family) every Wednesday night, and have a study-discussion meeting after the liturgy.

At the present time we can sleep nineteen men comfortably in good clean beds and have many couches when there are more than that number. We have good soup served every evening at 6:00, and during the day there is always something around for someone to eat.

We have done a lot of work outside of Harbor House, particularly locating families that come to us and trying to get men jobs and to the proper medical help or other assistance, but mainly our task is to provide an open door for those who would otherwise sleep in the street or in jail.

Recently, one of our workers sent an early begging letter to the Catholic Worker and the letter was printed. The response to that single letter was absolutely beyond belief. We are truly grateful to be entrusted with such complete faith by so many wonderful people.

We have been discussing getting into other areas of work, even of establishing a permanent, core community to dedicate itself completely to the work of the poor in this industrially rich but wretchedly poor section of the country. Only time and prayer will tell.

Our warmest congratulations on the anniversary of the Catholic Worker! Surely, it is marvelous to know that Christ is alive in so many places and in so many ways.

Sincerely,  
Fr. Don Ranly

Three Books by

Dorothy Day

On Pilgrimage—The Sixties

Loaves and Fishes

The Long Loneliness

\$1.25 per copy

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355 Lexington Ave., NYC 10017

## Strikes and Boycotts

(Continued from page 3)

cated work, on subsistence living for union staff including himself, and on fasting in protest of the climate of fear and injustice, has promoted the works of peace with a power approached by no other living American. The development of the boycott, organized abstention from buying the products of companies perpetrating injustice, has shown the power of this peaceful "weapon."

I have perhaps fallen into the trap of writing as if, somehow, by supporting the UFW and similar peaceful activism of the poor, "we" are somehow giving something to "them." We could simply say we are acting in our own interest. Specifically, in the case of the UFW, union contracts protect us, as well as farm workers, from exposure to poisonous pesticides. The recent discovery of thousands of cases of non-union lettuce sprayed with the dangerous Monitor 4 should remind us of our need.

More generally, even if we are not the immediate victims of the systemic injustices which occur daily in our society, none of us can afford to tolerate them. If we are to become truly ourselves in our individual humanity, we need to live among other individuals freely becoming themselves. As Dorothy Day is fond of quoting from the I.W.W.: "An injury to one is an injury to all." Or, from our Christian tradition, we are members of one another: Support for the activism of the poor is not a gift from our benevolence to their need, but an elementary recognition of that brotherhood and sisterhood which you invoked to begin your letter.



# On Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 1)

of a Revolutionist by Kropotkin, the philosophical anarchist? And now there is also Teilhard de Chardin, also a personalist who has much to teach us."

## Souplines, Houses

The books will always be there. If we give up many other distractions, we can turn to them. We can browse among the millions of words written and often just what we need can nourish us, enlighten us, strengthen us—in fact, be our food just as Christ, the Word, is also our food.

It is an amazing thing that the soup line still goes on, that college students, seminarians, nuns, priests have taken to manual work, raising food as at the farm—many for the first time putting their hands in the soil, to the plough, to kneading the dough, reroofing a building, leveling roads, serving tables, washing dishes, "trying to make that sort of society where it is easier for man to be good." (When I say "man," remember St. Paul writes "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female.") We are all one, "members of one another, and when the health of one member suffers, the health of the whole body is lowered." Yet each person is so unique, so loveable. (It is no wonder they don't like to be written about.)

Besides, living as we do with men and women of all ages who "come in"—some staying to help, others moving on—it is not right to discriminate. But of course there are some who come to give their time and talents and stay for longer or shorter periods, as in a school.

## Peter's Recommendations

Certainly it is the first time many young students have become acquainted with the "man in the street"—so much talked of. Peter Maurin quotes Cardinal Newman as saying, "If you wish to reach the man in the street, go to the man in the street."

The first recommendation of Peter Maurin in outlining his program was "round table discussions for clarification of thought." (Of course, he conducted them everywhere—on park benches, in Bowery restaurants, in discussions with professors at Columbia University, and with priests and bishops, not only at social action conferences, but in visits to episcopal residences. I must not forget his calls on John Moody and Thomas Woodlock on Wall Street.)

He would have liked to see in me another Catherine of Siena who would

boldly confront bishops and Wall Street magnates. I disappointed him in that, preferring the second step in his program, reaching the poor through the works of feeding, clothing and sheltering, in what he called "houses of hospitality" (where the works of mercy could be carried out).

Since the works of mercy are the opposite of the works of war (where food supplies are flooded and bombed out, shelters destroyed, and clothing burnt off the backs of men, women and children by napalm), we were almost immediately involved in anti-war work, some of which took us to jail. Going to jail is a spiritual work of mercy—visiting the prisoner on a grass-roots level.

## God's Messengers

George Woodcock in his review in the Nation, March 19, of William Miller's book *A Harsh and Dreadful Love* states that he "cannot think of being at one with a state of mind that can see the



Anna Hogan

Pope as 'Our Dear Sweet Christ on Earth.' (I do not know why he capitalized this phrase except that it makes it look more ridiculous.) Evidently he does not know Catherine of Siena or her times, far worse times than these for popes and the Church. In fact, there were three men contending for that office, and Catherine, backing one of them, who had fled to Avignon, kept urging him by letter and by visits to France (on foot) to return to his job of being head of the Church. She tempered her strong criticisms and rebukes by calling him, at times, "our dear, sweet Christ on earth." In other words, she was trying to seek concordances, and some political and spiritual solution for the troubles of the day. She was trying to make him forgive her effrontery by reminding him of his responsibility as one who sat in the chair of Peter, the same Peter who had denied Christ three times, who had no desire to wash the feet of others. Peter looked for power as James and John did. After the descent of the Dove, he changed. (Many another Pope has reminded us of eagles and vultures rather than the Dove, the symbol of Peace as well as of the Holy Spirit.)

We are all supposed to see Christ in each other. "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least (or worst) of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." It is hard to see the dear sweet Christ in many a pestering drunk that comes in demanding attention. "Love is a harsh and dreadful thing, for Jesus to ask of us." "You love God as much as the one you love the least." These staggering, unlovely, filthy ones who come in waving a bottle at you and cursing you, and saying "Peter Maurin started these places for the likes of us!" are God's messengers. I am reminded of the classic story of St. Teresa of Avila who, when she fell off her stumbling mule into the shallow river and cried out to God in protest, heard Him say, "This is the way I treat my friends" (a sardonic or a humorous God?). And she flung back at him, "That is why you have so few of them." It has the flavor of Hasidism—that tale.

To go on, having been "turned on"

by Mr. Woodcock's review. He takes up, as many have taken up, my oft-quoted statement, perhaps as well remembered by non-Catholic readers as any remark I have ever made, that if the Chancery Office ordered me to stop publishing the Catholic Worker, I would do so.

Such a statement needs clarification, of course. My understanding of the teaching of the Church is that we must follow our conscience, even an erroneous conscience. My reading of Cardinal Newman confirms that. I think it is in Bouyer's life of Newman that he quotes Newman as saying he drank a toast to "conscience first, the Pope second." My conscientious reasoning, if asked to cease publishing, would be this: I may be held responsible for what goes in the paper, but I am a member of an unincorporated association of the Catholic Worker, made up of a very active group

I had only read his "Life of a Revolutionist" which ran in the Atlantic Monthly years ago.) Our anarchism is that of a Lewis Mumford, or a Paul Goodman, a decentralist, personalist point of view. Peter Maurin's function as teacher and leader of the Catholic Worker movement was to translate for us Emmanuel Mounier's "Personalist Manifesto," to talk to us about the Personalist-Communitarian Revolution which Mounier wrote about in *Esprit*. Martin Corbin, who is the scholar in the CW movement, has all Mounier's works in French and is trying to get more of his writings translated. (Mounier's last book, *Personalism*, is in paperback, published by the Notre Dame Press, Indiana. Get it.)

A further note: When I spoke of loving the unloveable and cited the drunk who was abusing us a few paragraphs back, I was also thinking of one who shouted at one of our volunteers—"With all that publicity you got this year on television (Bill Moyers' program) you're taking in millions of dollars and all you give us is a bowl of soup."

But of course, aside from a few bequests of a thousand dollars, we have not been overwhelmed with donations. We've had enough to keep going on. With inflation, increased mailing and printing costs, a staggering increase in rents and food costs, carfares, daily supplies, etc., we just get along.

## Christ-Rooms Needed

We are daily tormented by the need for a woman's shelter. There are so many shopping-bag women sleeping on the streets or in empty buildings. But from sad experience of building codes, fire and health department requirements, we know the costs would be astronomical. The house we are in now cost us \$35,000, \$15,000 down and two mortgages, one of which is now paid off, and the additional costs of architects' plans (according to building code requirements) added \$45,000 for the rebuilding before we got a certificate of occupancy.

What I would like to see is a house for women, with each woman having her separate room with key—an old convent, for instance, with separate cells. The Episcopalian Church used to run a shelter for women, dormitory style with double decker beds, on Stanton Street. They gave it up and the Salvation Army took it over. They charged 45c a night. There is no shelter there for man nor woman now. The Joan of Arc Residence, which I once stayed at between movings, is very good, but packed to the doors. Besides, the kind of women we have will not give up their shopping bags, discarded clothes picked out of trash cans, which they would fight like tigers to hold on to. To keep them they will sleep in doorways and empty buildings. In winter they wear four coats to keep warm, and lug them around all summer in anticipation of the future cold. And we must bear the consequences of our permissiveness in our own house, by periodic outbreaks of cockroaches, head lice, and other kinds, too. Woe is me!

So we will hug our personalist philosophy to us, and go on talking of a Christ-room in every house, and are rewarded most recently by one of our friends taking in one of our guests. Each one takes one. There is always somebody, somewhere, for each one. Let us get them together.

Marge Hughes, with a population at the Farm of one hundred over the Easter holiday and more comings and goings with summer, looks longingly at a neighboring farm where there could be a tent colony and many organic gardens. The beginnings of an agronomic university such as Peter Maurin talked of? Perhaps.

## Friday Night Meetings

The Catholic Worker holds meetings every Friday night at 8:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's House, 36 E. 1st St. After the meetings we converse over Jonas' hot sassafras tea. All are welcome.

Forthcoming meetings include:

May 4—"Catholic Worker Positions": A panel discussion.

May 11—Dolores Huerta: Update on the Farm Workers Union.

May 18—Paul Mwaluko: Tanzania: Development in a Poor Country.

May 25—Jacques Travers: Implications of Mounier's Personalism Today.

June 1—Dennis Leder: Art and Identity.

June 8—Gordon Zahn: Directions for a Catholic Peace Movement.

June 15—To be announced.

June 22—Rev. Ed Guinan: Peace as Witness and Lifestyle.

June 29—"The Trial of the Catonsville Nine": A film.