

CATHOLIC WORKER



LIBRARIAN
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF WISCONSIN
MADISON-6 WIS
53702

Vol. XXXV No. 8

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1969

Subscription
25c Per Year

Price 1c

Through Effective Tax Resistance:

A FUND FOR MANKIND

David Mason 1897-1969

By DOROTHY DAY

The story of David Mason begins for us when he began reading the Catholic Worker back in 1937. Some of the Philadelphia readers had already started a House of Hospitality down near the docks. Paul Toner and Dick Ahearn were the two I remember best who started the house, and it was larger than our own accommodations in New York—so commodious in fact that during some of the local strikes of waterfront workers or seamen they used our facilities for meetings or for food and lodging. I cannot remember who painted the murals on the walls—perhaps it was Ade Bethune or perhaps it was one of the men in the house. She was always generous in her praise of self-expression, and many of our houses were colorful with these wall paintings.

Dave was working as a proof reader for one of the Philadelphia newspapers at the time, a member of the union, and getting a good salary which he brought to the house. He worked nights and slept but little, and it seemed to us he was working days, too.

When the workers in Philadelphia clamored for a farm (the yearning for the land began in the spring), Dave underwrote the cost of renting a fine farm in Oxford, New Jersey and helped stock it with sheep and cows and chickens. Dick Ahearn was mad about the land and the farm was run tidily and efficiently by him. I was afraid of the ram which ruled the meadow where the sheep grazed, and through which I had to pass when I stayed overnight in the little guest cottage down by the brook. Good as Dave was he did not have the grace of bi-location, but it certainly seemed to all of us that he was everywhere at once.

Then the War

When the second world war began and we were involved, Dick Ahearn went into service (was drafted), the men were scattered, the house and farm were closed down. David Mason came to us in New York and those who remained went out to western Pennsylvania to work on a farm, the use of which had been given to the group by St. John's Abbey, in Minnesota.

We were a thinned-out crowd in New York, too, during those war years. Dave Mason, Arthur Sheehan, Fr. Clarence Duffy held the fort for a while, and then it got to the point where it was only Smokey Joe and Dave Mason and I. (That is the way Joe tells the story.) David did everything, attended to the mail, the shopping, distributed clothing, cooked the meals, not to speak of getting out the paper. He was a careful and fastidious man about the use of type and loved to make up the paper and proofread it, and he wrote many a story those years. He found time to spend his spare hours on an invention he had long worked on—a Chinese typewriter.

I travelled a great deal, as usual, from one end of the United States to the other, visiting the relocation camps where the Japanese were detained (I was kept on the outside of the barbed wire fences of course), and writing of machine gun nests in the gardens of

(Continued on page 4)



Rita Corbin

ON PILGRIMAGE

By DOROTHY DAY

Visits to Chicago and Milwaukee.

We went to press Thursday September 18th and the next night I took the Penn-Central train to Chicago, coach fare, plus a tiny closet sleeper in which it was all but impossible to undress or dress. The air conditioning failed and it was so hot that the wall along the side was like an oven. Besides having claustrophobia, the car rocked and swayed so that I felt seasick all the way. It was two hours late getting into Chicago and everyone said it was the worst trip they had ever had. So I returned to N.Y. on a nice comfortable bus, where one could stretch one's legs, lean back in the reclining seat and rest. It was a bright moonlit night and it was a joy to see the countryside, the farmlands, the little towns of Indiana and Ohio, as we passed them on the Turnpike. It was light when we bypassed Pittsburgh and all morning there was the delightful mountain scenery of Pennsylvania.

Happenings in Chicago

It was great to see Phil and Cathy Bredine and Brother Paul of the Taizé family waiting for me to drive me out to Evanston where I was going to stay a few nights with Nina Polcyn, head of the St. Benet Book Shop, and formerly of Milwaukee Catholic Worker. As a matter of fact, she and David Host of Marquette both visited us one summer years ago and between the two of them, a group got together when they returned and started a house which went on for ten years. When the group scattered they landed on farms in Aitkin, Minn., and Rhineland, Mo. and to c.o. camps and armies during the second world war, and later in the professions all over the country.

Now the Casa Maria is burgeoning

with Michael Cullen the head of the work, with a fullfledged paper, The Catholic Radical, published every month which shows the Corita touch, not to speak of the inspiration of Fr. Dan Berrigan.

But to begin with my visit to Chicago, we took the shore drive from the loop to Evanston and people were still swimming and sunning themselves on the beaches. It was Saturday. We went through Lincoln Park where my sister and I used to play as children, and later even drove past the house on Webster Avenue where we used to live while I attended high school. When I think of our New York waterfronts I am inclined to find the Chicago waterfront one of the most beautiful in the world.

Nina and several others live on the second floor of a garage and old carriage house and her windows look out over a sea of trees. When the trees are bare, you can see the lake, and twice during the coming week Nina and I sat by the lake and once we ate our lunch there.

Sunday . . . the Shell chapel at Northwestern University, a few blocks away was a good place to remember this Bishop who just died, and who started innumerable projects in Chicago, from the Golden Gloves with their huge gymnasium, the Shell School for the Study of Social Problems, a psychiatric clinic for disturbed children, and many another good work. There was a splendid musical accompaniment to the Mass that morning, guitars and drums and some of the Missa Luba was sung, a glorious shout of triumph. A young priest, Fr. Mueller preached a good sermon es-

(Continued on page 6)

By KARL MEYER

Let us speak of a clearcut solution to two prevailing ethical concerns which are shared by many stable, wage-earning citizens who are in the peace movement today. On the one hand, we see a perverse system of national priorities which devotes most of our federal tax contributions to militaristic purposes which we abhor. We want our money to be used positively to fulfill social needs. On the other hand, we see young men of draft age resisting war and conscription concretely by refusing to participate, and suffering the consequences: imprisonment or exile. We wish to support them and to align ourselves with them in a real way.

Let me affirm that it would be very practicable for us to get together in our own resistance movement to prevent the conscription of our money by the military and to create a Fund for Mankind to support the things we believe in and provide mutual aid in the difficulties that might come as a consequence of our resistance.

The Vietnam War may draw towards a conclusion in the months to come, yet we have already been warned by spokesmen of the government, if not by the history of the last twenty-five years, not to expect huge amounts of money to be freed for the solution of domestic problems. There are plenty of military boondoggles waiting in the wings, promising that military expenditures will command the stage for many years to come. We should either seize our destiny in our own hands or stop crying about our involuntary complicity in the militarization of society.

I promise to show how we can stop paying for militarism and instead pay into an alternative fund and use it according to our own moral and political judgments.

At the outset, we must directly contradict the widespread notion that refusal to pay federal income tax is merely a form of personal witness and a purification of conscience, which because of inherent obstacles cannot emerge as a general action of resistance to the Vietnam War, militarism, and imperialism. Instead, let us affirm that tax resistance can be the most promising basis for a movement of constructive social action, as well as resistance to the evils of war and the wastefulness of the arms race.

Right away we come to the heart of the issue, because people say, "Our taxes are withheld at the source and paid by our employers without our consent." This is the fallacy which must be resolutely laid to rest. Your consent is given whenever you fill out and sign a new W-4 Employees Withholding Exemption Certificate. The proper use of this form and of the early income-tax return are the keys to effective tactics of widespread tax resistance.

Let me therefore outline these tactics (Continued on page 7)

ORDER NOW

CHRISTMAS CARDS

and Envelopes

20c Each

RITA CORBIN, Box 33

Tivoli, New York 12583