

CONVERGENCE

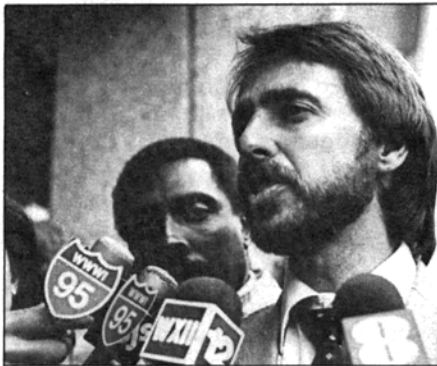
REPORT FROM THE CHRISTIC INSTITUTE

Fall 1985

Washington, D.C.

Sanctuary on trial in Tucson

INSIDE



Greensboro attorney Pitts

*Civil jury
hands down
Greensboro verdict
Page 7*

*Ronald Reagan,
the Bible,
and nuclear war
Page 3*

*N.R.C. moves
to overturn
Silkwood victory
Page 4*

As 12 religious sanctuary workers go on trial in Tucson, the Christic Institute is asking Congress to investigate the illegal deportation of asylum seekers to war zones in Guatemala and El Salvador.

At stake is the future of the sanctuary movement, which now numbers more than 250 churches and synagogues where refugees have found a haven from the war in Central America.

Leaders of the sanctuary movement expect new Government raids on sanctuary churches if the 12 defendants are convicted.

On trial are three ministers, a Roman Catholic nun and eight lay workers. They were arrested in January and charged with conspiracy to shelter illegal aliens. The arrests followed an unprecedented Government investigation of churches, including the electronic surveillance of religious conversations and the infiltration of church meetings by paid informers.

But the thousands of Christians and Jews active in the sanctuary movement believe their actions conform to a Federal law which the Reagan Administration refuses to enforce. They point to the 1980 Refugee Act, which grants refugee status to any person who is unable or unwilling to return to a country because of "persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution." The act requires the Administration to apply a consistent standard to all applicants for political asylum.

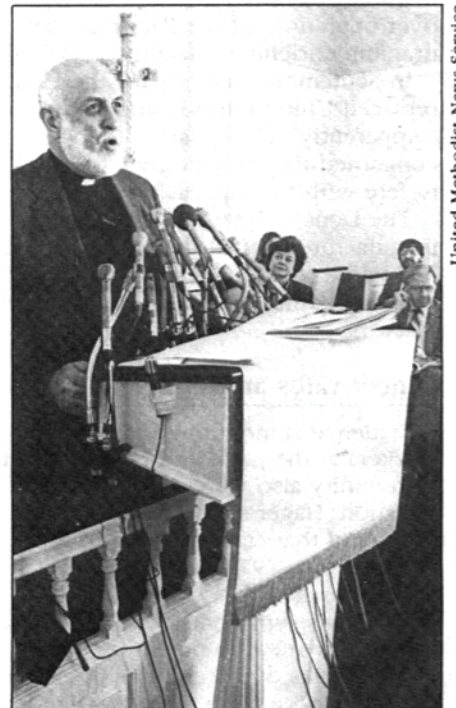
Since 1981, the Government has forced more than 50,000 refugee seekers to return to Central American countries convulsed by civil war and political terror. Asylum has been granted to less than three percent of the Salvadorans and less than one percent of the Guatemalans who have applied for temporary

refuge in the United States.

In some cases, immigration agents have seized the children of refugee families, then told parents they would never see their children again unless they waived their right to apply for political asylum. In other cases, authorities have simply refused to accept asylum applications from Central American refugees.

However, prominent religious Americans are now demanding a Congressional investigation of the Government's systematic deportation of *bona fide* refugees. In a protest organized earlier this year by the Christic Institute, more than 300

Turn to page 6 ■



The Rev. Jim Andrews, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), protests sanctuary arrests at press conference organized by the Institute.

United Methodist News Service

Widow fights Union Carbide

Radiation kills nuclear worker, compensation denied

By Sylvia Tognetti

Joe Harding, a nuclear worker killed by radiation exposure at a uranium enrichment facility operated by the Union Carbide Corporation, was denied medical compensation during his long illness. Today, the corporation still denies responsibility for his death.

The Christic Institute is representing Harding's widow, Clara, in one of the most important tests since *Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee* of the nuclear industry's refusal to acknowledge responsibility for radiation injuries on the job. The Kentucky Workmen's Compensation Board is hearing the case.

"Union Carbide and the other nuclear weapon contractors should not be permitted to kill their workers with impunity," said Rob Hager, the Institute's legal director. "Clara Harding and the many other men and women who have been left bereaved or severely injured by radiation have a right to compensation for their loss."

Harding, an employee for almost 20 years at the Union Carbide plant in Paducah, Ky., died of abdominal cancer in 1980. (The Martin Marietta Corporation has since taken over operations at the Paducah plant and at a second uranium enrichment facility in Oak Ridge, Tenn.)

In September, lawyers for the Department of Energy replaced Union Carbide attorneys in the Harding case. "Apparently" Hager said, "the Federal Government is concerned that radiation-victim cases like this one will interfere with the nuclear weapons program."

The Department of Energy is responsible for the manufacture of nuclear warheads. Uranium enriched at the plant is shipped to Oak Ridge and other facilities to produce bomb-grade material and fuel for nuclear reactors.

Cancer rates are higher

Evidence is mounting that many of Harding's co-workers at the plant and residents of the surrounding community also were injured by excessive exposure to radiation, Hager said. The Council on Economic Priorities has found that cancer deaths in three nearby counties from 1970 to 1979 were significantly higher than the national average.

Harding's symptoms, which appeared shortly after he began to work at the uranium plant, included tumors, frequent attacks of pneumonia, open sores, and growths on his knuckles, elbows, shoulders and kneecaps.

But Harding was never able to collect medical compensation from Union Carbide. According to the company's medical records, his exposure to radiation was within Federal limits for nuclear workers.

After his dismissal in 1971 for a knee injury, Harding

became an outspoken critic of radiation hazards at the plant. Tracking the fate of 200 co-workers exposed to the same environment, Harding found that 50 had died of leukemia, cancer or some undiagnosed illness. Ten became seriously ill.

The Christic Institute obtained permission to exhume and examine Harding's body shortly after his death. Laboratory analysis of the remains revealed deposits of radioactive uranium in his bone tissue up to 1,700 times the level expected in a nuclear worker.

The Institute asked Dr. Karl Morgan, the nation's leading health physicist, to examine the lab results. They indicated an exposure to uranium as high as 57 rems a day, he concluded. But the maximum internal dose permitted for nuclear workers under Federal standards is 30 rems *a year*. (The rem—"radiation exposure in man"—shows how much radiation has been absorbed in body tissue.)

Exposure records maintained by Union Carbide were either falsified or in error, Dr. Morgan said. According to company records, Harding's internal organs had absorbed less than one rem a year.

Faking radiation records

Harding himself maintained that Union Carbide was faking its records of radiation exposure. To test the company's procedures, workers would drop uranium into their urine samples or leave their film badges for hours on a smoking chunk of uranium before turning them in. But the company's records still showed a safe level of exposure, Harding said.

Another expert consulted by the Institute was Dr. Alice Stewart, a specialist at Oxford University on radiation injury. She concluded that the uranium found in Harding's body was "clearly the result of ingestion and inhalation of the enriched uranium produced" at the Union Carbide plant.

Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee was the first decision forcing a nuclear corporation to pay massive punitive damages for an employee's exposure to a radioactive substance. By establishing the right to collect medical compensation for radiation injuries, the Harding case may become an equally significant milestone.

"Until now, nuclear corporations have largely escaped liability for radiation injuries and death," Hager said. "It has been virtually impossible to prove that exposure to radiation caused a victim's specific injury. And the industry itself controls the exposure records for all of its employees."

"We want to establish the precedent that internal concentrations of radioactive materials—not just the exposure records controlled by the nuclear industry—constitute a basis for proving radiation injury." □

Union Carbide's disregard for human life is worldwide. See story on the Bhopal gas disaster, pages 13, 14 and 15.

The politics of Armageddon

Reagan links Bible prophecy with nuclear war

By Andrew Lang

In the last issue of Convergence, we described the religious doctrine—openly preached by Jerry Falwell and other key personalities in the New Christian Right—that nuclear war with the Soviet Union is imminent and inevitable. Using the Bible as an infallible almanac to predict humanity's future, Dr. Falwell and his supporters believe that the "Tribulation," the final violent stage of human history, will begin within the next 50 years.

In the ideology of the New Christian Right, the Tribulation is a seven-year crisis of nuclear warfare and global chaos. It ends with the war of Armageddon: a military campaign against God's enemies fought by an army of born-again Christians under the leadership of Jesus Christ.

Long before this battle begins, however, the Soviet Union will lie in ashes. According to Falwell, the destruction of Soviet power was predicted centuries ago by the Hebrew prophet Ezekiel.

The conviction that nuclear Armageddon is inevitable provides a decisive motivation for supporters of the New Christian Right, not only in their personal lives (as an "aid to holiness," Falwell explains) but for their political agenda. Thus, Dr. Falwell's support for President Reagan's "Star Wars" program as "our last and final hope" is predicated on the belief that the United States and the Soviet "evil empire" are destined to collide.

The New Christian Right is a dynamic and influential movement in American politics. Its doctrine of nuclear Armageddon is gaining wide acceptance in our society. A report published last year by pollster Daniel Yankelovich showed that almost four out of ten Americans believe that "when the Bible predicts that the earth will be destroyed by fire, it's telling us about a nuclear war."

The leading proponent of Armageddon ideology in the Reagan Administration is... Ronald Reagan. As Governor of California, as a private citizen, as a Presidential candidate and as Commander in Chief, he has publicly and privately speculated that "Armageddon" may happen in this generation.

The following article examines the President's views.

"Armageddon" was unexpectedly thrust into the 1984 Presidential campaign on Oct. 21, the morning of the second debate between President Reagan and Walter Mondale. Acting on information supplied by the Christic Institute, both *The New York Times* and United Press International reported that Ronald Reagan, on several occasions, has speculated that this generation might see the



Photo by Pete Souza

fulfillment of Bible prophecies concerning Armageddon.

Prompted by the stories, journalists on the debate panel asked Reagan to explain. While reporters overheard Nancy Reagan gasp "Oh, no!" the President replied that "no one knows whether those prophecies mean that Armageddon is a thousand years away or the day after tomorrow." "So," he added, "I have never seriously warned and said we must plan according to Armageddon."

What did the President mean? Some reporters concluded that the Commander in Chief's interest in "Armageddon" was a private religious hobby unrelated to his views about nuclear weapons and the Soviet Union. Others were not so easily reassured.

"The President's remarks," wrote Hendrick Herzberg in *The New Republic*, "established beyond doubt that he believes that Armageddon is inevitable. The only question is whether the end will come before or after the election."

"It is hard to believe that the President actually allows Armageddon ideology to shape his policies toward the Soviet Union," *The New York Times* editorialized. "Yet it was he who first portrayed the Russians as satanic and who keeps on talking about the final battle."

The reports that the President may share the Religious Right's perspective on Bible prophecy are not, of course, the only evidence that he remains committed to the right-wing dream of total victory over Soviet power. But Armageddon is an important piece of the puzzle that, once assembled, may explain Ronald Reagan's vision of America's role in a nuclear age.

During the President's first year in office, key personalities in his Administration spoke freely and often

Turn to page 12 ■

IN THE NEWS

N.R.C. moves to overturn Silkwood victory

By Sylvia Tognetti

The Supreme Court decision in *Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee* established the right of citizens to punish a reckless nuclear corporation under the laws of their own state. But now the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is drafting a proposal for legislation that will nullify this legal victory and leave citizens with almost no legal protection from radiation hazards.

In 1984, the Supreme Court ruled that punitive damages imposed against a nuclear corporation under state law do not violate the Atomic Energy Act. Thus, although Federal regulation of the nuclear industry is notoriously haphazard, nuclear corporations still can be deterred from reckless behavior by the threat of costly lawsuits in state courts.



Shortly before her death in 1974, Silkwood discovered that she had been severely contaminated by radioactive plutonium found in her bedroom, bathroom and kitchen. The radioactive metal was later traced to the Kerr-McGee plant in Oklahoma where she worked.

To this day, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission has not imposed a single fine to punish Kerr-McGee for Karen Silkwood's contamination. Instead, Silkwood's family asked an Oklahoma jury to punish the corporation under a provision in state civil law protecting citizens from reckless conduct.

The family was represented by lawyers and investigators who went on to organize the Christic Institute. The jury awarded \$10 million in punitive damages to

the family. In 1984, the Supreme Court upheld the decision.

But early this year, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission ordered its staff to draft a proposal for legislation that would, in effect, nullify *Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee*. The Supreme Court's ruling, complained N.R.C. Commissioner Frederick Bernthal, "makes every jury a local N.R.C."

Congress will probably consider the proposed changes during debate on reauthorization of the Price-Anderson Act, a 1957 amendment to the Atomic Energy Act. Due to expire in 1987, the act severely limits the compensatory damages citizens can collect from a nuclear corporation under their state laws.

Under Price-Anderson, fines against a nuclear corporation cannot exceed \$560 million. But in 1964 the Atomic Energy Commission (predecessor of the N.R.C.) conservatively estimated that a single nuclear accident could cause \$17 billion to \$280 billion in property damage. That figure does not include claims for an estimated 27,000 fatalities and 73,000 injuries.

The act makes no provision for punitive damages, additional fines that can be imposed on industries to discourage reckless and criminal behavior. If Congress adopts the changes proposed by the N.R.C., punitive damages will be automatically ruled out in most cases. □

F.B.I. informer drops lawsuit against Howard Kohn

Jacque Srouji—an F.B.I. informer who used her credentials as a reporter to collect intelligence on civil rights and antiwar groups—has abandoned her \$1.1-million libel lawsuit against investigative journalist Howard Kohn.

Kohn, a former editor of *Rolling Stone* magazine and author of *Who Killed Karen Silkwood?*, was represented by Christic Institute Legal Director Rob Hager.

Kohn's discussion in his book of Srouji's "special relationship" with the F.B.I. and one of its agents, Lawrence Olson, was one of the issues in the lawsuit. Olson was Srouji's control agent in the mid-1960's. He figured prominently in the Karen Silkwood case as the agent who supervised the bureau's investigation into Silkwood's death.

"Srouji's lawsuit was one of many in which libel actions have been brought simply to harass and intimidate aggressive investigative journalists," Hager said. "We must expect that in the future the Radical Right will continue to use libel laws as an instrument to bring the media under its control. It is imperative for public-interest groups like the Christic Institute to defend reporters and writers from these attacks."

Kohn's book is one of the authoritative accounts of Karen Silkwood's death and her family's subsequent

Turn to page 16 ■

Court okays T.M.I. restart

Six-year battle revealed industry's corruption, misconduct

By Mark Levey

On March 28, 1979, the enriched uranium fuel rods crisscrossing the reactor core of Three Mile Island Unit 2 burned an iridescent white-blue as the rods reached a temperature of over 5,200 degrees Fahrenheit.

At temperatures nearly as hot as the surface of the sun, thousands of degrees hotter than the reactor was designed to withstand, the steel-reinforced uranium rods twisted and fused like a pot of overcooked spaghetti.

Minutes later, operating personnel in a nearby control room finally realized that there was a serious problem and hit a switch flooding the reactor's containment vessel with an emergency water supply. By then, however, the reactor had become so hot that this water immediately turned into super-heated steam.

Some of the steam, formed under extreme pressure and temperature, was subsequently vented out of the containment building, releasing a cloud of radioactive gas over the surrounding highly-populated area of Harrisburg, Penn.

In the nuclear industry's technical terminology, which would overnight become part of everyday language in America, this accident—actually the result of a long series of engineering mistakes, mechanical malfunctions and errors in judgment by managers and technicians—was the "partial meltdown" that the nuclear industry had long assured the public could never happen.

During the accident—while T.M.I. officials knew the reactor was out of control and suspected a meltdown—the company withheld accurate information about the crisis from the state and Federal governments. As a result, a general evacuation of the neighboring communities was never ordered.

More than six years later, a nuclear reactor is again operational at Three Mile Island. In May, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission voted to permit the restart of Unit 1, the twin of the reactor that failed in 1979.

Lawyers for the Christic Institute and Three Mile Island Alert, a citizens' group in Pennsylvania opposed to restart, appealed the N.R.C.'s decision to the Supreme Court. The court overruled the appeal on Oct. 2. Unit 1 was reactivated the following day.

Unit 1 had been shut down for routine refueling at the time of the 1979 accident.

Contrary to many press accounts, Unit 1 is not "undamaged." Corrosive sulfur-bearing fluids were introduced into the unit's primary cooling system last year, eroding the walls of the finger-thin, 56-foot-long tubes that conduct radioactive water through the system.

Hundreds of these tubes had to be removed or blocked off. However, a large number of corroded tubes are still

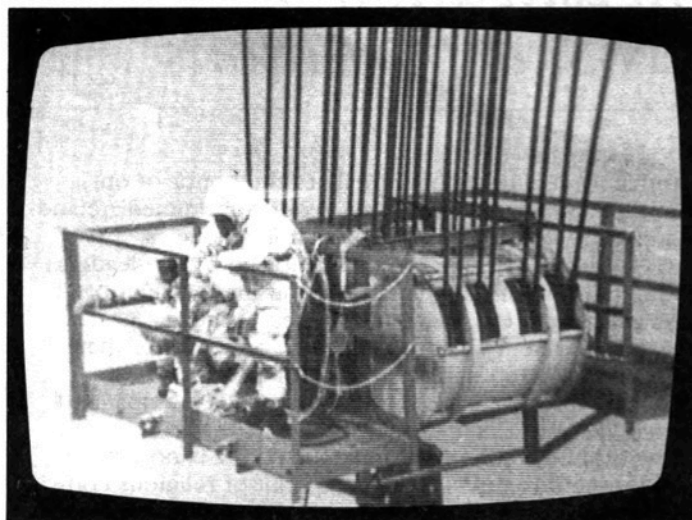


Photo by Chuck Isaacs

Workers inside damaged reactor

in place. The tubes carry radioactive water which keeps the reactor's uranium rods from overheating. If these tubes—their walls only one-thirtieth of an inch thick—were to burst inside the reactor's steam generator, radioactive steam could escape directly into the environment.

On the Monday following the N.R.C.'s decision to re-activate the plant, attorneys filed an injunction in Federal court to reverse the action. One of the lawyers was the Christic Institute's Joanne Doroshow.

A series of legal maneuvers during the summer prevented restart for four months. On Sept. 24, Doroshow asked Supreme Court Justice William Brennan to keep the reactor shut down. Reactivation of the plant was illegal, she argued, and would cause irreparable psychological and physical harm to the public.

Brennan agreed. But eight days later, the full court reversed his decision and voted to allow restart to proceed.

"The efforts of those concerned about the public's health and safety have prevented the resumption of operations at T.M.I. for the more than six years since the Unit 2 accident," Doroshow said. "Given the odds we faced, that alone was a considerable achievement."

Allied with the citizens' effort to prevent the plant's reopening was Pennsylvania Governor Richard Thornburgh, both of the state's Senators in Washington, several members of Congress, and almost all elected officials in the towns and counties surrounding the plant. In 1982, voters in three local counties voted 2-to-1 in a non-binding referendum against reopening the plant.

Public officials opposed to restart have questioned whether General Public Utilities (G.P.U.), the parent corporation of T.M.I.'s owner, has the competence and integrity to supervise operation of a nuclear power plant.

Since the accident, the public has learned that G.P.U. and its subsidiaries criminally violated Federal safety laws and fired workers who reported safety violations. Litigation also revealed widespread cheating on qualifying exams by T.M.I.'s managers and technicians. □

Leaders demand investigation of I.N.S. deportations

■ From page 1

spiritual leaders told Congress that "the honor of our country and respect for the law require an immediate and thorough review of the Administration's policies."

The petition to Congress was endorsed by the leaders of nine Protestant denominations, the former chief of chaplains of the U.S. Army, the Greek Orthodox primate of North and South America, and the president of the Rabbinical Assembly. Also signing the petition were bishops in the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal and United Methodist churches.

The Administration's "scandalous policy is now beginning to interfere directly with the right of religious congregations to provide humanitarian aid to refugees," the spiritual leaders said.

"Since last year, and with increasing frequency in the past several weeks, the Federal Government has investigated, intimidated, indicted and arrested religious workers for the 'crime' of sheltering refugees according to the basic standards of international law."

According to Rabbi Irwin Blank of Washington, "the law is on the side of the sanctuary congregations." Rabbi Blank, former president of the Synagogue Council of America, spoke at a press conference organized by the Institute immediately after the Government raids.

The sanctuary movement is "upholding the spirit of the 1980 Refugee Act and the letter of international law," he said. "Congress must stop the persecution of these religious Americans and take steps to assure that the Federal Government enforces both domestic and international law."

The Geneva Convention of 1949 protects the right of refugees to apply to private humanitarian agencies, including churches and synagogues, for shelter and food. No government may interfere with this right, even if that government refuses to obey international law governing the humane treatment of refuge seekers.

Supreme law of the land

The United States is a party to the Geneva Conventions. Under our Constitution, treaties signed by the Government and ratified by the Senate are "the supreme law of the land."

After the Government raids, the House subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights agreed to conduct hearings on the use of paid informants and hidden microphones to investigate churches in the sanctuary movement. But the hearings were preempted by Representative Peter Rodino, Democrat of New Jersey. Rodino is chair of the House Judiciary Committee.

However, other avenues of Congressional action are still open. Several members of the House immigration subcommittee have begun to inquire into improper actions by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Rodino has formally questioned the infiltration and surveillance of churches by Federal agents.

The Institute has been active in other strategems to defend the sanctuary movement from Government harassment. Last year, Institute attorneys represented Stacey Merkt, the first sanctuary worker arrested by Federal agents, and formulated the legal argument that secured Merkt's acquittal and is now the basis for the defense of the 12 defendants in Phoenix.

Merkt was convicted by a Federal jury in Texas on charges of transporting illegal aliens. The conviction was overturned by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. The appeals court agreed with the Christic Institute that a sanctuary worker cannot be convicted for transporting or sheltering an undocumented alien if the nearest I.N.S. office refuses to respect the legal right of refugees to apply for asylum.

I.N.S. violated the law

At the Merkt trial, the Institute's general counsel, Daniel Sheehan, proved that Merkt was unable to drive refugees to the nearest I.N.S. office because that office—in violation of the 1980 Refugee Act—summarily refused to accept asylum applications from any Salvadoran refugee.

The office, along with several others in Texas, was "functionally closed" to Central American asylum seekers, Sheehan argued in court. Merkt was therefore well within her rights to avoid this office as she transported refugees to safety.

**Rabbi
Irwin Blank:**
*'The law is on
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congregations.'*



United Methodist News Service

Another Institute court action promises to halt a number of serious abuses against Central American refugees. Final proceedings have begun in California in the case of *Crosby Orantes-Hernandez v. I.N.S.*, a class action suit on behalf of Salvadorans held at I.N.S. detention camps.

Filed by Institute Legal Director Rob Hager and a team of refugee lawyers, the suit has already resulted in a preliminary injunction against several methods routinely used by the I.N.S. to intimidate refugees.

The Federal court hearing the case enjoined Federal agents from attempts to coerce refugees into signing forms for "voluntary departure" to El Salvador. Also prohibited is the refusal of I.N.S. agents to inform Salvadoran refugees of their right to apply for political asylum, a standard practice.

Some of the prohibited abuses continue, however. □

GREENSBORO SPECIAL REPORT

The story of a death squad

Was Greensboro a foretaste of things to come?

By Mark Levey and Andrew Lang

November 3, 1979

11:22.02 a.m.

Detective Jerry "Rooster" Cooper, 38, a special intelligence officer of the Greensboro Police Department, sits in his unmarked Buick, the microphone of the crackling Motorola police radio in his hand.

He and his partner, a police photographer, squint out the corner of the windshield. It is a sunny, humid fall day in North Carolina as the two plainclothes officers watch a caravan of nine vehicles move slowly through the predominantly black neighborhood of Morningside.

Cooper knows that the approximately 35 men and four women in the convoy are members of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party. He also knows the convoy's destination: a legal demonstration against the Klan led by members of the Communist Workers Party.

The Klansmen and Nazis are heavily armed with ax handles, brass knuckles, chains, knives, more than a dozen guns—including a semiautomatic assault rifle—and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

The detective speaks through his microphone: "Okay," he says slowly, "we got about eight or nine cars of the opposite side...."

With Cooper's car trailing a block behind, the Klan-Nazi convoy moves slowly into the intersection. The assailants know exactly where the demonstrators will be found. They have a copy of the official parade permit, provided by the Greensboro Police Department, showing where and when the legal march will begin.

The gunmen also know the faces of their victims. One of the armed Klansmen will later admit that the assailants used photos of participants at an earlier anti-Klan rally to select and identify their targets.

About 100 people, mostly black residents from the neighborhood, mill around the parade site. Some have joined C.W.P. demonstrators in singing protest songs. Small children run up and down the pavement along the narrow streets, shouting and laughing. Most of the adults are simply watching quietly. Four television crews capture the scene.

Apart from Cooper in the unnoticed Buick, there is not a single police officer in sight. Only a few minutes before the attack, Police Officer April Wise was investigating an unrelated domestic disturbance nearby. She will later testify that headquarters instructed her by radio to leave the area as soon as possible.

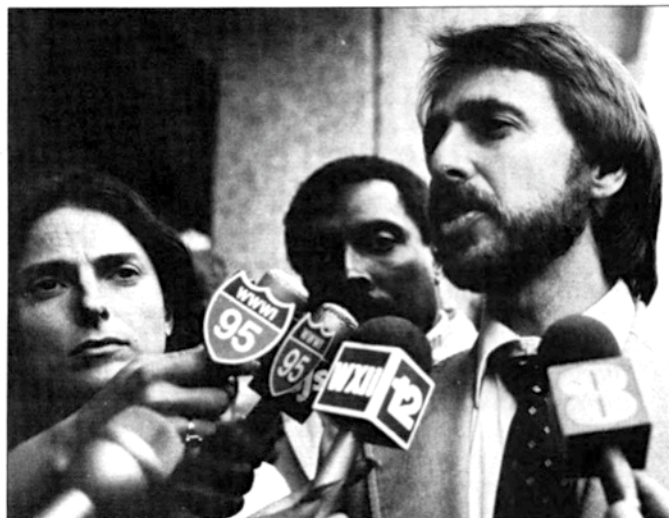


Photo by David Rolfe

Greensboro attorney Lewis Pitts, director of Christic Institute South, with reporters after the verdict is announced.

Demonstrators are handing out picket signs as the first vehicle in the Klan-Nazi convoy—a beige pickup truck—rolls by. A gaunt-faced white man in his 50s leans out the window, shouting at rally organizer Dr. Paul Berman-zohn: "You Communist sonofabitch! You asked for the Klan! Well, here we are!"

The heckler's voice is nasal and raspy. There is no trace of a North Carolina accent. This is the voice of Eddie "Yankee" Dawson, native of New Jersey, small-time hustler, veteran Klan leader, and since 1967, both chief of security for the North Carolina Klan and an informant for the F.B.I. More recently, he has signed on as an informant for the Greensboro Police Department. In that capacity, he has been paid to gather political intelligence on the Klan and its plans to mobilize for this march. He also reports on left-wing radicals and anti-Klan organizers in the Greensboro area.

Leads assault convoy

Dawson has led the assault convoy to the parade site. Two days earlier, Dawson's "control agent," the same Detective Cooper who is now shadowing the convoy, told him how to obtain a copy of the parade permit. Printed plainly on the document was the Police Department's order that the anti-Klan demonstrators could "carry no weapons open or concealed."

Such a restriction has never before appeared on a parade permit in Greensboro. In the state of North Carolina it is still legal to carry weapons openly.

But Greensboro police have taken no steps to impose a similar prohibition on the well-armed Klansmen and Nazis, although Police Chief William Swing will later admit that he expected violence on Nov. 3.

Turn to page 9 ■

GREENSBORO SPECIAL REPORT

THE VERDICT IN NORTH CAROLINA

In June, a civil jury convicted members of the Ku Klux Klan and the American Nazi Party for the 1979 killings of five demonstrators in Greensboro, N.C.

The civil lawsuit was filed by survivors of the attack and the families of the slain demonstrators. They were represented by attorneys for the Christic Institute and the Greensboro Civil Rights Fund.

It was the first time a jury has punished the assailants, who shot down leaders of the Communist Workers Party during a legal demonstration against the Klan. In earlier trials, two all-white juries in North Carolina refused to convict members of the death squad on state and Federal criminal charges.

Also found liable in the deaths were Ed Dawson, an informant for both the F.B.I. and the Greensboro Police Department, and two Greensboro police officers. Dawson, a Klansman, led the assailants to the demonstration site.

All of the defendants were charged with a conspiracy to violate the constitutional rights of the demonstrators to free speech and lawful assembly.

Marty Nathan, the widow of one of the slain demonstrators, was awarded \$351,000 in damages. The jury also awarded \$38,000 to Dr. Paul Berman-zohn and \$1,500 to Tom Clarke, who were wounded in the attack.

Nathan will divide her award among the other widows and survivors of the assault.

The Greensboro Civil Rights Fund was organized in 1983 by the Christic Institute.

Lewis Pitts, director of Christic Institute South, was chief counsel in the civil lawsuit. Also playing key roles in the trial were Daniel Sheehan, the Institute's general counsel, and attorneys Flint Taylor and Carolyn McAllaster.

Hailing the verdict as "a major civil liberties vic-

tory," *Washington Post* columnist Colman McCarthy wrote on July 7 that the decision affirms "that constitutional rights exist for citizens who meet in a peaceful rally, regardless of their politics."

The Institute's attorneys went to court with a strong case that Federal law enforcement agencies and local police knew that Klan and Nazi organizations in North Carolina were planning an armed assault, but refused to protect the demonstrators.

Although the assault was witnessed by reporters and taped by television crews from four local stations, the assailants have never been convicted of criminal charges under state and Federal law. Six Klansmen and Nazis were cleared in 1980 of state murder charges. Last year, a Federal jury found nine members of the death squad not guilty of violating the constitutional rights of the slain demonstrators.

There were no black jurors in the previous state and Federal trials. In the civil trial, the jury foreman was black.

"The verdict showed that a right-wing death squad cannot murder legal demonstrators from a small political party and escape punishment," Pitts said after the trial. "And the United Racist Front *was* a death squad, organized for the purpose of killing political enemies with the help of a police informer and the knowledge of Federal agents."

"Since the Administration refuses to take action against right-wing terrorism in the United States, citizens must be doubly vigilant to protect their freedoms in the courts," Pitts said.

"The Christic Institute will continue to play a critical role with other public-interest law firms in maintaining this vigilance."

The case was tried by a Federal court in Winston-Salem, N.C. □

GREENSBORO SPECIAL REPORT

Greensboro police knew in advance of assault plans

■ From page 7

On this morning, in fact, Greensboro police are very well informed about the assailants' plans. They know, based on information supplied by Dawson a few hours earlier, that the Klansmen have brought at least six guns to the assembly point for the convoy. They know that Klansmen in Winston-Salem have been shopping for a machine gun and were planning—in the words of one police officer—to “shoot up the place.”

Absent from the assault convoy that morning is Bernard Butkovich. He is an agent of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (B.A.T.F.), a division of the United States Treasury Department. Butkovich arrived in North Carolina the previous July, claiming to be a truckdriver and white supremacist with specialized knowledge in weapons and explosives.

Butkovich began to attend Nazi meetings. He supported plans to form a “United Racist Front,” a coalition of the American Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan in North Carolina. On Nov. 1, he participated in the final planning session for the attack. The next day, it was Butkovich who told one of the Nazi triggermen to “bring your gun” to the anti-Klan march.

Also absent from the scene is the tactical unit of the Greensboro Police Department. They are assigned to protect the marchers. Sgt. Tracy Burke and Sgt. Jim Hightower command the tactical squads. They have already been informed at their morning briefing that armed Klansmen and Nazis are planning to disrupt the demonstration.

But as the armed convoy nears the parade site, Burke, Hightower and most of their men are eating a late breakfast at two fast food restaurants on the other side of town.

Performed their duty

While the police officers wait, Detective Cooper is keeping Burke informed by radio of the convoy's movements. At 11:06 a.m. he tells Burke that the vehicles are parked on an entrance ramp to the interstate highway, less than ten minutes from the demonstrators.

Three weeks later, Greensboro police will issue their report on the department's handling of “the incident.” The report will conclude that “the police officers assigned to the march performed their duty in a professional and reasonable manner.” Another part of the text will state, “There was insufficient probable cause to stop and/or arrest the members of the caravan.”

To back up their interpretation of events, the Police Department will request an advisory opinion from the office of the North Carolina Attorney General. The opinion

is written by Lester Chalmers. Chalmers is an attorney with a long history as a lawyer for Klan defendants. In 1967, he represented police informant Eddie Dawson after a Klan attack on blacks celebrating the Fourth of July. When the Grand Dragon of the North Carolina Klan testified at Congressional hearings, the counsel sitting at his side was Lester Chalmers. Now he is Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of North Carolina.

Chalmers' written opinion supports the police claim that there was “insufficient probable cause” to prevent the assault.

At 11:13 a.m., Cooper informs Sgt. Burke by radio that the convoy was now rolling “your way,” that is, toward the staging area for the anti-Klan march.

Too late to reach site

It is now too late for the tactical squads to reach the demonstration site ahead of the assault convoy. Police headquarters orders the men to “rush it up.” They are *not* instructed to go to the demonstration site, but to “observation points” several blocks away.

11:22 a.m.

The armed convoy has arrived. A Klansman leans out of a pickup truck window and fires one shot in the air. He soon fires two more and shouts: “Kill the commies! Get your guns! Kill the goddam niggers! Show me a nigger with guts and I'll show you a Klansman with a gun!”

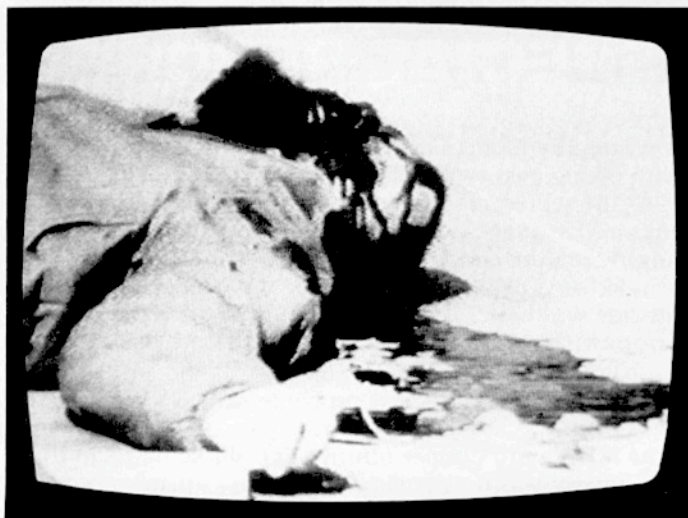
The convoy stops and a dozen Klansmen and Nazis pour out of their cars. They rush the demonstrators' pickup truck, grab picket signs and use the wooden sticks to club fleeing demonstrators. At the sound of another shot fired by a Klansman, the assailants break off this attack and return to their vehicles. Six of them drive away. The remaining six pull out their guns, advance on the demonstrators and open fire.

Cooper radios headquarters and all who are listening: “. . . has now arrived at the formation point for the

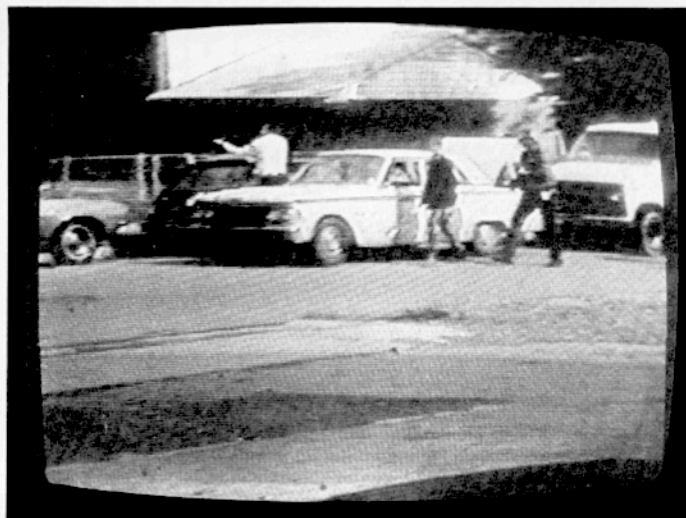
Turn to page 10 ■



The attack began when a dozen assailants used wooden sticks to club fleeing demonstrators.



Five demonstrators were killed, several wounded in the Klan-Nazi assault.



Television footage shows assailants shooting down anti-Klan demonstrators.

GREENSBORO SPECIAL REPORT

■ From page 9

parade and it appears that they're heckling at this time, driving on by, uh, they're definitely creating attention and some of the parade members are, huh (break in transmission) . . . ten-four, they're scattering, stand by, one."

Cooper returns to the air. "Sounds like gunfire," he says.

The shooting continues for 88 seconds. One victim is shot in the back. Another is clubbed to the ground and shot at point-blank range. When it is over, five anti-Klan demonstrators lay dead or fatally wounded.

Four of the demonstrators are armed. One of their weapons is a tiny, two-shot Derringer. These guns are discharged only after the assailants have opened fire, killing one demonstrator immediately and wounding several others. But this attempt at self-defense is in vain. The assailants finish their job and drive away, unharmed. The attack was not a "shoot-out," but an ambush.

11:23 a.m.

As Cooper reports "gunfire" and "heavy gunfire," Lieut. P.W. Spoon, in command of all police operations connected with the demonstration, tells the radio dispatcher, "Move (all available units) into the area . . ." For a moment he hesitates. Spoon then orders the dispatcher to direct the units to the Windsor Community Center.

The community center is not the site of the shooting. It is three quarters of a mile from the housing project where five people are now bleeding to death.

Sgt. Burke finally arrives on the scene and observes the convoy speeding away. He makes no attempt to intercept the fleeing vehicles. He calls headquarters on the radio, "You want to try to stop these other cars that are leaving, the other members?" There is no response to this question. With the exception of one yellow van still on the scene, Burke and his men allow the convoy to escape. The occupants of the van are arrested.

Five citizens are now dead. City and Federal law enforcement authorities have failed to protect the demonstrators. Now it is time for local and state prosecutors to take action against the murderers.

But although the entire assault has been taped by four television crews, most of the Klansmen and Nazis involved in the assault will never face a trial on criminal charges. Of those indicted, state and Federal juries will acquit them all.

One of the most prominent figures in "the incident" is Virgil Griffin, Grand Dragon of the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan. Shortly after the massacre, he meets with Dawson and some of the other assailants. Then he goes into hiding in a South Carolina swamp. The night before, he had urged his men to make a "show of force" at the anti-Klan rally.

But Michael Schlosser, the Greensboro District Attorney, declines to charge Griffin for his prominent role in organizing and inciting the assailants.

Schlosser also drops charges against Nazi leader Raeford Caudle, who was present at the shootings and all of the Nazi planning sessions leading up to the attack. Caudle's automobile and guns were used in the assault. "No evidence of conspiracy," says the D.A.

Jack Fowler, a Nazi who fired a semiautomatic rifle during the attack, flees from North Carolina. He is not charged with the felony of interstate flight to avoid prosecution.

Some 25 other riders in the assault convoy also escape arrest or indictment, even though their identities are well known to the police.

Roland Wayne Wood is the only Nazi arrested on Nov. 3. Under police questioning he discloses the names of three fugitive Nazis, including Fowler. Warrants are finally issued for their arrest.

When Bernard Butkovich's role in planning the assault is revealed in court several months later, the Treasury

GREENSBORO SPECIAL REPORT

Department will refuse to release its own report on their agent's activities in North Carolina. But the department reveals the report's conclusion: "Butkovich acted within the guidelines" set by the department for the undercover operation.

Two all-white juries refuse to convict the assailants on state or Federal charges. A year after the attack, a state jury acquits six Klan and Nazi defendants of murder charges. Among the jurors are known Klan sympathizers. Under questioning, one describes the Klan as "a patriotic American citizens' group." His selection is not challenged by the state prosecutor.

Four years later, a Federal jury finds nine Klansmen and Nazis not guilty of violating the constitutional rights of the slain demonstrators.

At the second trial, Federal attorneys prosecute the gunmen under a narrow statute requiring the Government to prove "substantial racial motivation." Because four of the five victims were members of the Communist Workers Party, the defendants are able to convince the jury that their motive for murder was not racial but political.

Officials deeply involved

The Christic Institute's investigation of the Greensboro massacre revealed how deeply Federal and local law enforcement officials were involved in "the incident."

- Eddie Dawson, an informant for both the F.B.I. and Greensboro police, played a leading role in planning the attack. Dawson led the assault convoy to the demonstration site.

- Three weeks before the demonstration, Dawson informed Greensboro police that the Klan was planning to confront the demonstrators.

- Almost two weeks before the demonstration, Dawson told Greensboro police that Klansmen were asking him whether they should bring weapons. At about the same time, the police learned that members of the Klan in Winston-Salem were shopping for a machine gun.

- On the morning of Nov. 3, Dawson told Detective Cooper that the Klan had six to eight guns at the assembly point for their convoy. Later that morning, according to a statement by a Greensboro police officer, weapons were loaded into the convoy vehicles while Cooper watched.

- Despite this information, police made no attempt to disarm the Klan-Nazi convoy, nor did they warn the organizers of the legal demonstration. Instead, they issued an unprecedented order that the demonstrators could carry no weapons.

- Undercover operatives inside the United Racist Front reported continuously to two Federal agencies—the F.B.I. and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The conspiracy to assault the demonstrators was a Federal offense. But the two agencies took no action.

- Greensboro police released a copy of the parade permit to Dawson—information that showed the date, time and route of the march. Dawson later told the police that Grand Dragon Virgil Griffin was looking over the permit

to find a suitable site for the confrontation.

- A Greensboro police officer shadowed the armed convoy and reported frequently by radio as the vehicles approached the parade site. But no attempt was made to protect the demonstrators. The officers assigned to keep the peace sat in restaurants until the last minute. The only police officers near the scene were instructed to leave the area.

Recognizable pattern

A recognizable pattern emerged from this investigation: the formation of a right-wing death squad with the active participation of Government agents, the preparation of an armed assault on legal demonstrators as Federal agencies and the local police kept fully abreast of the plans, and the final execution of the assault while police stood back from the scene.

The pattern is a familiar one in Central America, but has been almost unknown in the United States since the days when police refused to protect Freedom Riders from Klan attacks.

The events in Greensboro are not the only warning that political terrorism has returned to the United States. In paramilitary training camps in Arkansas, Georgia, Alabama, Texas and Illinois, neo-Nazi and Klan organizations are preparing for the "coming race war."

At these camps, white supremacists are trained in guerrilla tactics, marksmanship and counter-intelligence. Their drill instructors often are veterans of the U.S. Army, embittered by the lost war in Vietnam and skilled in "special warfare."

Klan and Nazi leaders have made no secret of their purpose in arming and training their followers: to create the guerrilla forces needed to fight and win a future civil war in North America. In the speeches of white supremacist leaders and the publications of various Klan and neo-Nazi factions, the enemies in this future war are openly proclaimed: Jews, blacks, liberals and leftists.

Terrorism from the Right

But the Reagan Administration, obsessed by the non-existent threat of domestic terrorism from the Left, refuses to acknowledge the actual threat of terrorism from the Right. Federal authorities seem to act only when neo-Nazi terrorists attack armored cars, banks or Federal agents.

The refusal of two all-white juries to convict the Greensboro gunmen raises the disturbing possibility that right-wing terrorists will face little opposition from local police, the F.B.I., prosecutors or juries. Even the decision by a civil jury, more than five years after the crime, to award \$400,000 in damages to one of the Greensboro widows and two of the survivors may not be severe enough to deter right-wing death squads from future armed attacks.

Was Greensboro an isolated tragedy or a foretaste of things to come? Does it belong to the past, or to the future? □

Reagan believes Israel is site for Armageddon

■ From page 3

recklessly of their conviction that nuclear war with the Soviet Union might be inevitable but probably could be survived. Views like those expressed by Defense Undersecretary T.K. Jones, who told a reporter that everyone would survive a nuclear war if there were "enough shovels to go around," caused a sensation in the press and threatened enormous political damage to the President's image.

These statements demonstrated the prevalence of two right-wing views in the Administration:

- the theory of "protracted conflict" with the Soviet Union, first formulated by Robert Strausz-Hupé in the 1950s, which precludes virtually any possibility of détente or serious movement towards nuclear arms control.

- the belief that a limited nuclear war would not destroy American society and, after a relatively brief period of rebuilding, might permit the United States to reemerge as the dominant world power.

After 1982, the White House took steps to suppress frank public discussion of these views. The last official expression of extremist ideology was the President's famous "evil empire" speech to the National Association of Evangelicals in October, 1983, in which he characterized the Soviet Union as the "focus of evil in the modern world" and Communism as "another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written."

Dramatic offers to negotiate

Since then, the President's political strategists have carefully projected a new image of Ronald Reagan as a peace President. Through a series of symbolic gestures and dramatic offers to negotiate, the President has reassured public opinion—here and in Western Europe—that he believes the United States and the Soviet Union can manage their differences without resort to nuclear warfare. Extremist talk about the inevitability of war with Communism has generally disappeared from public view.

But Ronald Reagan has speculated privately and publicly that "Bible prophecies" concerning "Armageddon" are "coming together" in modern history. Beginning during his first term as Governor of California and continuing until 1984, the record of these statements should be read as a warning that the right-wing vision of apocalyptic struggle with Soviet power has deep roots in the President's personality.

Most of the evidence linking Reagan with nuclear Armageddon doctrine has been assembled by two investigative journalists: publisher Ronnie Dugger of the *Texas Observer* and independent radio producer Joe Cuomo. Dugger's findings were published in April, 1984, by *The Washington Post*. Cuomo's documentary, "Ronald Reagan and the Prophecy of Armageddon," was broadcast

on 175 public radio stations later that year.

On the set of the Jim Bakker show during the 1980 campaign, candidate Reagan speculated that "we may be the generation that sees Armageddon." In a statement to Jewish leaders during the same campaign, Reagan said that "Israel is the only stable democracy we can rely on in a spot where Armageddon could come."

In 1981, the President told Senator Howell Heflin of Alabama that "Russia is going to get involved in it [Armageddon]." In October, 1983, he told Tom Dine of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee that Bible prophecies concerning Armageddon might be coming true. "You know," he said, "I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if—if we're the generation that's going to see that come about. I don't know if you've noted any of those prophecies lately, but believe me, they certainly describe the times we're going through."

The end of the world

Finally, in an interview with *People* magazine on December 6, 1983, the President described Armageddon as "the end of the world." He said: "[T]heologians had been studying the ancient prophecies—what would portend the coming of Armageddon?—and have said that never, in the time between the prophecies up until now, has there ever been a time in which so many of the prophecies are coming together. There have been times in the past when people thought the end of the world was coming, and so forth, but never anything like this."

Dugger and Cuomo are not the only sources for evidence that the President reads the Bible for predictions of nuclear war. Writing in the August issue of *San Diego* magazine, former State Senator James Mills of California revealed that Reagan, then Governor of California, told him in 1971 that a biblical prophecy of "fire and brimstone" means that "the enemies of God's people" will be "destroyed by nuclear weapons."

The setting for this conversation was a banquet in Sacramento. Mills, as the new President pro tem of the California State Senate, was the guest of honor. As dessert was served, Reagan began to interpret chapters 38 and 39 of the book of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel, Reagan told the startled State Senator, predicted a future invasion of Israel "by the armies of the ungodly nations." The invaders would be led by "Gog," a northern power.

"Biblical scholars have been saying for generations that Gog must be Russia," Reagan continued. "What other powerful nation is to the north of Israel? None. But it didn't seem to make sense before the Russian revolution, when Russia was a Christian country. Now it does, now that Russia has become communistic and atheistic, now that Russia has set itself against God. Now it fits the description of Gog perfectly."

Most of the prophecies "that had to be fulfilled before Armageddon have come to pass," Reagan said. "Everything is falling into place. It can't be long now. Ezekiel says that fire and brimstone will be rained upon the enemies of God's people. That must mean that they'll be destroyed by nuclear weapons."

These statements, and many others attributed to Ronald

Turn to page 16 ■

Bhopal: India's night of fear

Bhopal was worst industrial accident in history

By Arun Subramaniam

Arun Subramaniam is an investigative reporter with Business India magazine. He recently returned to India after a two-month trip in the United States to organize support for the victims of Bhopal. He was a guest of the Christic Institute during his stay in this country.

On the night of Dec. 2, final preparations were underway to reopen the Union Carbide pesticides factory in Bhopal, which had been shut down during the previous month for maintenance. At about 9:30 p.m., workers were cleaning out four branches of a safety line leading from three tanks storing MIC (methyl isocyanate), a highly volatile compound used in the manufacture of herbicides and pesticides.

As water was pumped under high pressure into the pipes, the same amount of water was supposed to flow out of four bleeder valves. But an operator noticed that the valves were not releasing enough water. Two were completely blocked and the others were only partly clear. The operator halted the procedure and reported the problem to his superior.

Fifteen minutes later, the operation was resumed under the supervisor's orders. The bleeder valves remained obstructed. Soon water accumulated in the pipes and backed up into the system.

Almost 200 liters escaped into an interconnecting line. At the other end of the line was tank E610. It held approximately 42 tons of methyl isocyanate.

MIC is a highly unstable and volatile compound. It is stored under a light blanket of nitrogen to prevent contact with moisture. As water flowed into the tank, a complex chain reaction was set into motion, producing heat and carbon dioxide in large quantities. The rapid buildup of pressure ruptured a safety barrier on a relief line. A torrent of heated gas escaped from the tank.

Two safety systems should have intervened at this stage, neutralizing or incinerating the gas. Both systems were out of order. An eight-inch pipeline leading to the atmosphere was open, however, allowing the gas to flow directly into the night.

Workers sounded the toxic gas alarm at 12:50 a.m., setting off a loud public siren. But the siren was immediately silenced. This was standard procedure. Management had decided two years earlier to switch off the public siren during "routine" gas leaks.

At first, the plume of gas travelled westward at a considerable height. Then the wind changed direction. The cloud drifted south toward the heart of the city. Cooled by the night air, it began to precipitate rapidly, descending in a heavy mist upon the shantytowns that lay to the south and southeast of the city.



Disaster blinded 2,000 survivors.

At about 12:45 a.m. the residents of Jayaprakash Nagar, a slum which lies barely 100 yards south of the plant, woke up with a choking sensation. Their eyes and throats stinging, they rushed into the streets but found the air outside even more suffocating. The panic-stricken crowds started running away from the factory—but in the same direction as the drifting cloud of gas. Soon there were thousands on the road, blinded and gasping for breath. Within minutes, people began to collapse. Some died instantly while others, overcome by nausea and fatigue, fell down unconscious.

No matter how fast they ran, the fleeing residents of Bhopal were unable to escape the cloud—which by now covered an area of about 16 square miles.

Union Carbide never warned authorities that a poisonous mist was descending on Bhopal. At 1:15 a.m., when police received the first reports of a major gas leak in the north of the city, officials immediately contacted the plant. A manager on duty told them the entire factory had been shut down and therefore could not be the source of the gas. That was 45 minutes after methyl isocyanate had begun to pour into the atmosphere.

Police called Union Carbide several times during the next hour but were given the same story. At 2:15 a.m.—one hour after almost the entire contents of tank E610 had escaped—the factory's public siren finally sounded.

Turn to page 14 ■

Union Carbide never warned Bhopal officials

■ From page 13

Carbide's failure to warn the city is incomprehensible. As early as 12:30 a.m., workers were ordered to evacuate the plant. When the facility's windsock indicated that the wind was shifting westward, they were instructed to move east of the plant. But the police, who could have warned communities that lay in the path of the cloud, were never notified.

The decision to evacuate the city was delayed until 2:30 a.m. City officials knew nothing about the extreme toxicity of the gas or the direction of the spreading cloud. *Union Carbide withheld information that could have saved thousands of lives.*

At about 3 a.m., the first deaths were reported. Authorities finally realized that the gas was lethal. But it was already too late. By morning, thousands lay dead, their bodies strewn across the city. Many who lived in the slums nearest the plant died in their sleep. Others, fleeing the city in terror, died in the forests and fields surrounding Bhopal. Still others managed to escape from the city but inhaled lethal doses of the gas as they fled. They died in towns as distant as 25 miles from Bhopal.

Chaotic aftermath

We may never know for certain just how many people died in Bhopal on that fearful night and the days that followed. But the toll was far greater than the Indian Government's official estimate of 2,500. In the chaotic aftermath of the disaster, thousands of fatalities were never registered at hospitals, crematoria and burial grounds. Even the Government admits that hundreds of homeless people vanished without a trace. There was no way to count these victims.

Other estimates conservatively place the death toll closer to 10,000. They were based on the number of burial shrouds sold in Bhopal in the days following the catastrophe (7,000 by one count) or by extrapolating the casualty figures from smaller neighborhoods where it was possible to verify the number of dead.

Some of the victims died in silence. A doctor in the Railway Colony, one of Bhopal's most destitute neighborhoods, said after the disaster that "most dying persons were not noticed to have shouted or become violent." He added: "It appeared that their power of voice or limbs had greatly weakened. People had died quietly, in awkward positions, unable to protest."

In cases of acute exposure, the gas perforated lung tissue. Almost every case showed severe damage to the mucous membrane and inflammation of the respiratory tract. Some of the most severely stricken victims were those who ran great distances to escape the cloud. Breathing deeply as they ran, they inhaled greater quantities of the gas.

About 2,000 survivors were permanently blinded. Almost 10,000 others still face the possibility of losing their sight.

After the third day, most of the recorded fatalities were caused by collapse of the central nervous system. Patients suffered from convulsions or paralysis, then lapsed into a coma and died.

Exposure to the gas also damaged the immunological system. Within barely two weeks of the disaster, the city faced a jaundice epidemic among the weakened survivors. Many of those who did not succumb immediately to their injuries are today falling victim to secondary infections of the lungs and respiratory tracts.

Among the survivors are several thousand pregnant women. Many of them miscarried in the weeks following the disaster. Hospitals have reported a high number of stillbirths. No one knows how many deformed babies were born several months after the disaster.

Evidence is mounting that many of the victims were killed by cyanide poisoning. But Union Carbide insisted there was no relationship between methyl isocyanate and hydrogen cyanide. The company also claimed that since MIC rapidly decomposes in reaction to water, the chemical would be neutralized by moisture in the lungs and could not possibly penetrate further into the body.

Acting on this advice, doctors refused to administer antidotes for cyanide poisoning. The results were fatal for hundreds of victims.

One of Union Carbide's internal publications tells the true story: "Thermal decomposition (of methyl isocyanate) may produce *hydrogen cyanide* . . ." □

BHOPAL

By Alfred De Grazia

The city of Bhopal is situated upon the banks of two artificial lakes, created many centuries ago. It stands amidst the farms of a verdant plateau. It is the capital of the largest and centermost state of the Republic of India, Madhya Pradesh, whose population of some 55 million contains a disproportionately large number of Moslems (there being 500 mosques in Bhopal alone), and also some ten million people still organized tribally. Per capita income in the state came to about \$100 in 1981, one of the lowest averages in India.

The city consists of a million persons—or at least did so before the tragedy. Its industries are few, the 60-acre pesticides factory standing out for its size and modernity. The city supports a medical school and a technical college.

Despite a number of elegant mosques and old houses, most of them in disrepair, the total aspect of the city is unlikely to impress a stranger favorably. Actually, there are few strangers, except visitors from the surrounding villages and those who come to do business with the state Government or to seek medical care at the free hospitals. There is one hospital bed in the state for every 4,000 inhabitants. □

Excerpted from A Cloud Over Bhopal by Alfred de Grazia.

Union Carbide fights in court

Proposed settlement would not prevent future Bhopal tragedies

As the clocks of the central Indian city of Bhopal struck midnight on Dec. 3, 1984, pressure was building rapidly in a gas storage tank on the site of a Union Carbide pesticides factory. The molecular structure of 42 tons of methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas was changing in a complex chain reaction, liberating large quantities of carbon dioxide and heat. As safety systems failed, a torrent of heated gas flowed directly into the night air.

The Bhopal gas disaster killed several thousand people and injured thousands more. The toxic cloud that fell on this city of one million claimed more lives than any other industrial accident in history.

The Union Carbide Corporation of Danbury, Conn., is now fighting a legal battle to preserve its corporate assets from Bhopal's blinded and disabled survivors.

Thousands of lawsuits have been consolidated before Judge John Keenan of New York, a Reagan appointee to the Federal bench. The dead were hardly buried when Union Carbide announced a plan to settle future lawsuits quickly. But they warned that, if necessary, the corporation would fight the Bhopal survivors in court, and win.

Some of the American lawyers representing the victims are willing to cooperate with Union Carbide. They have publicly suggested a negotiated settlement, mentioning figures between \$200 million and \$600 million.

But a settlement in this range would represent only a fraction of the total damage inflicted on the people of Bhopal. This is the view of attorney Rob Hager, the Christic Institute's legal director, who spent two months in India earlier this year consulting with public interest groups on legal strategies to help the victims.

Hager believes that hazardous industries will be deterred from reckless conduct only if they are forced to pay full compensation for the injuries and deaths caused by their operations. He has joined with Indian activists to oppose the limited settlement proposed by American lawyers. Hager predicts that if the lawsuits go to trial before an American jury, the final award to the victims would probably exceed the corporation's total value. In that case, the victims would become the new owners of Union Carbide.

"The question before the courts," Hager said, "is this: is it right to permit a transnational corporation, which is directly responsible for the deaths of thousands and the injury of tens of thousands, to survive the worst industrial accident in history without making full compensation to the victims? If Union Carbide is compelled to pay just compensation for its reckless conduct, that lesson will deter other hazardous industries from decisions that endanger human life."

Because the Indian subsidiary of Union Carbide



The victims died in silence.

operated the Bhopal plant, the parent corporation in the United States has blamed Indian workers and managers for the disaster. But the burden of responsibility lies not in Bhopal but in Danbury, Hager said.

- The parent corporation owned more than 50 percent of the subsidiary's equity capital and closely supervised the management of the Bhopal plant.

- Construction of the pesticides factory was a decision made in Danbury, not in India.

- Overruling the objections of its subsidiary, the parent corporation insisted on large-scale storage of methyl isocyanate at the Bhopal site.

- The factory was designed by the corporation's engineering department in the United States. The same department drafted the manuals and diagrams for the plant's construction and operation.

- The parent corporation conducted all safety checks and reserved the right to approve changes in the plant's operating procedures and design.

- The disaster itself was caused by two decisions made in the United States: a gross underdesign of the plant's safety system and a design change that allowed water to flow from safety lines directly into the MIC storage tank.

In July, Union Carbide asked Judge Keenan to dismiss all of the cases pending against the corporation. Hoping to avoid the large judgment an American jury probably would award, the corporation's lawyers want the suits transferred to Indian courts.

Keenan will hear arguments on the motion in early December.

But the interests of the victims will be better served if an American jury hears their claims, Hager believes. Most of the evidence concerning the parent corporation's liability is in the United States, not in India. Even if Indian courts agreed to award full compensation, the survivors would still have to persuade U.S. courts to enforce any judgment against Carbide's assets in this country. Finally, it is important that American courts take responsibility for judging the wrongs of an American corporation. □

Reagan statements mirror Falwell's Armageddon views

■ From page 12

Reagan over a period of 17 years, show that Armageddon is very much on the President's mind. His use of the term has not been imprecise. "Ancient prophecies," the President has speculated, are "coming together" in modern history. These prophecies point to Armageddon, which the President understands as "the end of the world." The Middle East is the "spot where Armageddon could come," and "Russia" will be one of the protagonists.

The President believes that "Gog"—the shadowy northern power described by the prophet Ezekiel—is the Soviet Union, which will lead a coalition of armies against Israel. God will pour "fire and brimstone" on his enemies, a metaphor for God's judgment which the President interprets as a prophecy of nuclear war.

These statements mirror the Armageddon theology of Jerry Falwell and his allies in the New Christian Right. Sometime within the next 50 years, Falwell believes, Soviet forces will invade the Middle East and meet their doom "on the mountains of Israel." This holocaust, Falwell writes, will "purge" Israel. The surviving Jews will convert *en masse* to Christianity. The Soviet Union will be "totally destroyed," either by nuclear weapons or by a miraculous manifestation of God's power. Armageddon will be the final catastrophe of this period—a war between Christ and Antichrist fought on the Israeli plain of Jezreel.

Srouji drops lawsuit

■ From page 4

lawsuit against the Kerr-McGee Corporation. The suit and the family's appeal to the Supreme Court were organized by lawyers who founded the Christic Institute in 1980.

Srouji was the first American journalist formally identified in court proceedings as an operative for United States intelligence agencies. As a reporter for the Nashville *Banner* from 1963 to 1967, she reported on civil rights and antiwar groups, then filed additional reports with the F.B.I. Later she became active in political organizations while still meeting regularly with F.B.I. agents.

In his book, Kohn cites the allegation of Daniel Sheehan, the Christic Institute's policy director and an attorney for the Silkwood family, that Srouji perjured herself when she denied under oath having received F.B.I. documents on the Silkwood case.

The first judge appointed to hear the lawsuit withdrew after his background as a former F.B.I. agent became known. "When our motion to dismiss was reargued before Judge Thomas Higgins," Hager said, "It became clear that Srouji lacked any factual basis for her libel claims." After Hager threatened to countersue for malicious prosecution, Srouji agreed to withdraw her suit. □

Does Ronald Reagan seriously accept this world view? It has been suggested that the President, when he speaks of Bible prophecy and the end of the world, is merely "pandering" to his supporters in the New Christian Right. But this is unlikely. Reagan's documented statements on the subject of Armageddon begin during his first term as Governor of California—long before the New Christian Right became an organized force in American politics. Moreover, the President's alliance with this movement is based on his support for a specific political agenda centering on abortion, school prayer and other issues. He does not need to profess a belief in Armageddon doctrine to win fundamentalist support.

Thus, we are faced with clear evidence that President Reagan is one of millions of Americans who read the Bible as a sourcebook for predictions of global conflict. How this would affect his performance in office is not an easy question to answer. The doctrine of nuclear Armageddon cannot explain the totality of foreign and defense policy in the Reagan Administration. But it raises the disturbing possibility that our President will be unable to act rationally in a nuclear crisis. It suggests that the prevailing motive for Reagan's crash program to install a new generation of "strategic defenses" against Soviet missiles—along with the Administration's revival of discredited plans to evacuate our cities before a nuclear attack—is not the desire to *prevent* but to *survive* a nuclear war. And it indicates a religious justification for his vision of the Soviet Union as a demonic force, an "evil empire" doomed to disappear from history.

When and how the President expects Soviet power to collapse is not an idle question. In the mind of a leader who can order the use of our strategic nuclear weapons, the prophecy of Armageddon could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. □

CONVERGENCE

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