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ATLANTIC LIFE

MEETS THE PENTAGON

From December 28 to the 31st demonstrators from all over the country gathered at the Pentagon to demand peace. The three day action was organized primarily by the Atlantic Life Community, a radical catholic community founded by the Berrigans, sister Elizabeth McCallister and others. These three days were the culmination of an entire year of vigils, protests etc by various groups from across the country; some from as far away as Canada and the west coast. Each group went to the Pentagon for a week. On December 28-31 these groups all came together for a three day action which climaxed on December 31st with a massive civil disobedience.

On December 28th there was a silent vigil for an hour. As I entered the concourse area from the escalators it was beautiful to see large groups of demonstrators in circles. There were signs, candles and prayers. Then we formed a big circle and sang spiritual/peace songs. The voices of people singing contrasted sharply with the cold walls of the Pentagon and the hard stares of some of the generals. Then I went outside to join the group by the riverside entrance. In the cold demonstrators stood holding upside-down US flags with "disarm for life" written over the stars and stripes.

The second day of the action could have been the day with the most participants. We encircled the Pentagon using only a few banners and scarves and whereas the Washington Post reported about 200 demonstrators there must have been at least 900 of us. We then proceeded to release balloons, sing songs and create a lot of noise. A circle of people affirming life in contrast to the machine of death.

The civil disobedience action on December 31st was really creative. There was excellent guerrilla theatre in the concourse depicting how huge defense companies earn billions of dollars figuring out ways to destroy the earth. Out by the riverside entrance there was more guerrilla theatre.

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