

P.C. Watch

by L.H.R., Jr.

How About a Spider for the "Web of Life"?

Amidst Indian chants, a song about the return of the bison, and prayers to "Mother Earth and Father Sky," Trishuwa leads the pipe ceremony. And she, and the 40 other people sitting cross-legged in a circle, are white.

"This is the final phase of genocide," said John Lavelle, a Sioux. "First, whites took the land and all that was physical. Now they're going after what is intangible." The National Congress of American Indians has "declared war" on "non-Indian 'wannabes.'" Ed McGaa, a Sioux and author of *Mother Earth Spirituality*, praises white participation in Indian religion, but Levelle calls him a "disgrace to his tribe."

Trishuwa and company are members of the Church of Gaia's Council of the Six Directions in Boulder, Col., which Stephen Buhner, a founder, calls a "blend of mysticism and ecology," which "allows you to reestablish your harmony and proper relationship with the web of life."

Buhner had a "spiritual rev-

elation" at a 1969 Jefferson Airplane concert in San Francisco and decided to start an "earth-centered religion."

He and his wife, Trishuwa—who refuses to use a last name—live in a solar home and sponsor "vision quests and the rites of the sweat lodge" for \$20 per hour per student. Critics of his

church are "Indian fundamentalists," he says.

The Buhners were trained by Sun Bear, an Indian named Vince LaDuke who founded the "Medicine Bear Tribe" for whites. A former tv actor, he is known for his claim that Indian religion would help you win at craps. (David Johnston, *New York Times*, 12/27/93)

A Good Square Meal

In discussing the Gatt talks, Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D.-S.C.) said that "potentates from down in Africa," instead of "eating each other," came up to "get a good square meal in Geneva."

"The man is mentally sick," said William Gibson, the South Carolina dentist who is chairman of the NAACP. "As an African-American, I condemn him for making those kinds of accusations against leaders of African nations."

Hollings once also got in trouble for referring to Howard Metzenbaum (D.-Ohio) as "the

senator from B'nai B'rith." (NYT, 12/16/93)

The Next Frontier

The Advocate, a homosexual magazine, has called for formation of a gay "national religious council" to "fight monotheism." (Washington Times, 12/9/93)

Gun Control

Christine Schweiger, a 35-year-old mother of three, took her 10-year-old daughter into a Popeye's Fried Chicken in Milwaukee to pick up dinner. As she headed back to her car, two boys, 15 and 16 years old, stopped her, pulled out a sawed-off shotgun, and told her to drop to her knees. When they demanded money and she said she had none, the 16-year-old blew her head off.

When the boys were arrested, they said they picked Schweiger because she was one of the few whites in the restaurant, and as such, would be much less likely to be carrying a gun than a black. (Chicago Tribune, 12/9/93)

The Times's Prince of Peace

The *New York Times* is always full of anti-Christian needles just before Christmas. One example: the headline on a large photo (12/20/93) read: "Thousands Honor Prince of Peace." The caption, underneath an Indian woman praying to a giant stone statue, read: "Marking one of India's most elaborate ceremonies, pilgrims gathered around" the "58-foot statue of a naked prince in Shravana-belogola, India." The "prince, Buhabali," is naked to symbolize

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"peace," a tenet of a pacifist Hindu sect.

"Why I Believe in Drug Legalization"

Kevin Elders, the 28-year-old son of Joycelyn Elders, the condomaniacal surgeon general, was arrested by the Little Rock police for drugs. Her husband, Oliver, is suspected by the police of owning a gang-run crack house in that same city. (NYT, 12/19/93)

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"Mothers use it to call their children," and rappers "bestow it like a title." It's "nigger," says an AP dispatch in the *Grand Rapids Press* (12/9/93). "These days," the word "thrives among many blacks as an expression of affection and family."

"I use it" around "my home-boys," says Yale English professor Robert Steptoe. But rappers are starting to advise against it. "Public Enemy" has a song on its new album called "I Don't Wanna Be Called Yo Nigga." This hit home for rap fan Mtu Pugh, a chemical engineer at Procter & Gamble. "Using that word is like oppressing myself. White folks have done a good enough job of oppressing people. The last thing I'm going to do is help them." The rap group "Niggas Wit' Attitude" is not changing its name, however.

The most common argument against using the word is that whites will too. When Central Michigan University's white basketball coach Keith Dambrot told his 80% black team, "We need some more niggers on this team," he was fired.

Using the word is "entirely opposite what people are trying to do in perpetuating the heritage of Africa," says Vivian Buffington of New Detroit, Inc. "There ain't no niggers in Africa," adds comedian Richard Pryor.

Racy Clothing

"A nearly all-white rural school has been rife with tension over white girls wearing baggy clothes, braids, and other so-called black fashions." The girls are accused of "acting black," and some have dropped out of North Newton Junior-Senior High in Morocco, Indiana, after being "verbally harassed" for "sporting a hip-hop look."

"This is a white community," said a 16-year-old student, Brandon Belt. "If they don't want to be white, they should leave." (GRP, 12/9/93)

New York Times Recommends Abolition of Christmas

The anti-Christian *Times* not only wants to get rid of Christmas, it even suggests a substitute: the winter solstice (NYT, 12/19/93). The celebration of the "return of light after the longest night of the year"—on December 21st last year—is "just the ticket for those whose seasonal sentiment runs towards the ecological, feminist, noncommercial, and slightly pagan."

"I belong to a Christian church, but the winter solstice has more meaning to me and my family than Christmas," said Ron Basto, a former professor and real estate salesman. It's "more universal" and "inclusive."

Solstice celebrants "draw from a panoply of folk traditions." Devotees of witchcraft or "Wicca," the "ancient cult of goddesses," celebrate the solstice as "the birthday of a cosmic mother." Environmentalists "celebrate the solstice as a sort of hyper Earth Awareness Day." The Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City has had massive solstice celebrations for the last 14 years. Its "rituals celebrate the connection with the earth," and more than 3,000 attend.

"For mixed-faith families, the winter solstice can be a celestial compromise. 'I'm Jewish, my husband is Catholic, and solstice saves a lot of argument,' says Marian Acker, a San Francisco social worker."

"Donna Henes, who lives in Brooklyn and calls herself an 'urban Shaman,' leads seminars about 'earth-based' religion in public schools," where Christianity is banned. "Solstice is like a big umbrella," she says. It reminds us "that we're all a bunch of primates scared that the sun is going to disappear." The American Atheist Association endorses the holiday as well.

"I'm Christian," said computer programmer Steven Lore, "but personally, I find this music more moving than 'The Messiah,' and the spectacle sure beats those manger pageants."

"It's an evening of shivers and tingles and awe," says the *Times*. "Just like Christmas used to be."

Signs of the Times

In American Sign Language, signs are "often a visual representation of the ugly meta-

phors we have about people," says Professor Elissa Newport of the University of Rochester. But that is changing, reports the *New York Times* (1/3/94).

The sign for "Japanese," formerly a twist of the little finger next to the eye to indicate the epicanthic fold, "a stereotypical physical feature," is being replaced with a representation of the shape of the Japanese islands. Also on the way out are the signs for "Korean" and "Chinese," forming a K or a C next to the eye.

A new sign for "African-American" replaces "flattening the nose to indicate 'Negro'" with a representation of the shape of Africa. The old sign for "homosexual," a "swish of the wrist," is being replaced with the sign for q, for "queer," a "term formerly rejected by homosexuals but now in vogue among them.

"And one sign for 'stingy,' derived from the sign for 'Jewish' (stroking an imaginary beard), has recently stimulated

discussions among deaf Jews around the country, though no new sign has actually shown up in its stead. The sign adds a clenched or tight fist to the imaginary beard."

The Cakewalk

This is how "thousands of victims of apartheid" greeted the New Year in South Africa, according to the *NYT* (1/3/94): "They dressed themselves in bright satin suits and bow ties and cheap Panama hats. They painted their faces minstrel-style in black and white. Clutching little umbrellas," and "innocently" calling themselves "coons," they sang such songs as "Old Folks at Home."

"The Coon Carnival" is the annual New Year's "celebration of identity for Capetown's mixed-race South Africans known as 'coloreds.'" "They can't take this away," said Marawaan Giergo. "It's in us. It's in our veins." And it was copied more than 100 years ago from such visiting minstrel

shows as the "Mississippi Darkies."

Make Mine Bandido

The Clearwater, Florida, rock band "Deicide," announces a press release from Roadrunner Records, "embraces the same Satanic ideology as their death metal peers, but Deicide (which means the 'killing of god'), takes it to the extreme."

"All of us are into Satanism," says guitarist Eric Hoffman. "We're into it every day—it's not just a show. You'd have to be serious about it to burn an upside-down cross into your head. It shows you're totally Satanic."

"With each Deicide member boasting a heartfelt passion for Satanic arts," one would think they would be personally close. Not so. "The Satanism doesn't bond us personally as much as it does musically," explains Eric. "We're usually at each other's throat, threatening to kill each other." (*Harper's* 1/94) ■

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