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167 I need help... we need help

The earth is doomed to desintegration, obviously because its pollution and waste ... the poorer get poorer or must arise themselves overcome difficulties and ordeals ... there is God, he create us to be living joy, would be angel. A choice if we want to be a schmuck, addict or alky, matter of fact if we think money would solve problems then how about create more problems. Money is a drug. Be content: appreciate the flower like the cow Bonbel, take easy as the Monarch; chasing the rainbow is possible by the mind! Take care, live by the Big Book and all is OK. Duke

Merry Christmas
A Homeless Family’s Story

Being homeless has been very much a stressful experience. We have been homeless for nearly seven months now. We haven’t been able to find a house or even an apartment because of the high rents or landlords who ask for a deposit including first and last month’s rent. We only have an income of $541 a month. There are five of us and we can’t do anything unless…. (cont. page 4)

Jimmy’s Gift

During the Thanksgiving appeal, a small boy came in with his father. The boy’s name was Jimmy. Jimmy was six years old. He said he wanted to help. It wasn’t much, but he saw us on the TV. He wanted to bring us something special. It was a dollar that he had earned all by himself. He wanted to make sure that someone had a good Thanksgiving and he wanted his money to go towards helping someone else. The Emmaus Center was touched by Jimmy’s generosity. We want to thank Jimmy; and his father for bringing him down.

Port in a Storm

I’ve been searching for affordable housing since I moved back here. When I first came to Maine in 1973 my rent was $80 per month. But today, nearly thirty years later more than half of my income has been going to renting a room and it is even getting very hard to find a room. Due to unfortunate circumstances I have ended up at the Emmaus Center but luckily for me the folks here are very nice and helpful and treat me with respect. It is an oasis. I have found peace and direction here as well and want to thank all the staff, volunteers and donors who have made this place a true “port in a storm” for all the homeless who have nowhere else. M.A

Affordable Housing

As you may know the bond issue regarding affordable housing and domestic violence was passed in November. This Affordable Housing Bond was sponsored in part by the Maine Coalition for the Homeless, a group of homeless shelter providers.

The widespread housing crunch, which has driven up rental prices by more than 25% in Maine in the past couple of years has caused a dramatic increase in homelessness. The bond issue is a beginning at addressing this serious issue and will help mitigate the problems to some extent. At present, according to a study recently released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Maine ranks 25th in affordability of apartments at Fair Market Rents (FMR). In order to afford a two-bedroom house or apartment a family has to earn $11.80 per hour. For those who work at minimum wage jobs this is an impossible sum unless there are two wage earners in the family. The study mentioned above indicates that there has been a 10% increase over the past year of the number of households with two wage earners. If the household has only a single parent working for minimum wage there is a dilemma. Sometimes a section 8 voucher, to help subsidize rent, may be made available.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has set forth a plan for 2002 to expand the use of Section 8 vouchers for home-ownership. Also a bill providing $1.7 billion in tax credits for developers of affordable single-family housing may be enacted. HUD is also attempting to implement a Pilot Program for Section 8 Homeownership Assistance for Disabled Families. Hopefully these laudable efforts will be enacted in such a way that they do not transfer funds from desperately needed Sec. 8 rental vouchers.

Emmaus Center
PO Box 811
Ellsworth, ME 04605
(207) 667-3962

Sr. Barbara Hance Home
PO Box 5559
Ellsworth, ME 04605
(207) 667-9167
BERN PORTER INTERNATIONAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

December 19, 2001

from Carolyn Chute
2nd Maine Militia

Dear Sheila,

I'd be honored if you reprinted my card. People forget what
Jesus is about, and about what Christmas is about.

Concerning consumption:
I believe high consumption wouldn't exist so widespread if
economies were all local, that there was very little import and
export, that people directly used the resources of their own local
areas. Then we could SEE THE LIMITS. And the labor involved would be
OURS. And we can see our "brothers" and "sisters."

The Suheir Hammad piece is powerful.

As Ever,
C.

BOBOLINK. The male, entirely black below, is easy to
identify. But the female and the male in winter are very
sparrowlike in appearance, with buff breasts and black
and buff stripes on the crown. In the South, the Bobolink,
known as the Reedbird, may do serious damage to the
rice crop. The other grains it eats are
of negligible value. The melodic
song aids identification when the
birds are hidden in tall marsh
grasses.—Length: 6¼-8 in. Female
and male in fall are sparrow-like.

submitted by BOBOLINK BOB

ARTISTS' RESPONSE TO SEPTEMBER 11

Bern Porter, at 92, is venerated by
many artists throughout his native
Maine. On Dec. 21, 2001 he was in­
vited to attend a group meeting on
the theme, "Artists Respond to
Sept. 11." I accompanied him to the
home of painter/sculptor Carlo
Pittore, in Bowdinham, where the
meeting was held.

In attendance, in addition to
Carlo, Bern and myself were:
Stephen Petroff, Wally Warren, Lihua
Lei, Lynn Harwood, Curtis Gilbert,
Mark Melnicove, Marianne Serena
Marrone, Abby Shahn and Natasha
Mayers, as well as Kendall and
Phyllis Merriam.

Stephen Petroff favored us with
a reading from the chilling book,
Reading the section on the develop­
ment of napalm, quite by accident,
at Du Pont laboratories in Japan.

Conversations ensued on what a
concrete "response" by Maine artists
might be to the current state of the
world. We decided to start a "Peace
Ministry." Bern and Wally decided to
build a "Temple to Art." Mark took
sample copies of BERN PORTER INTL. &
said he would discuss the matter with
his high school English students.
We all agreed to meet again soon.

Report from Bowdinham, S. Holtz
Allen Ginsberg's *HOWL AND OTHER POEMS* was originally published by City Lights Books in the Fall of 1956. Subsequently seized by U.S. Customs and the San Francisco police, it was the subject of a long court trial at which a series of poets and professors persuaded the court that the book was not obscene. Over 220,000 copies have been sold and the present printing contains the full text, exactly as it appeared in the original manuscript.

Allen Ginsberg was born June 3, 1926, the son of Naomi Ginsberg, Russian émigré, and Louis Ginsberg, lyric poet and schoolteacher, in Paterson, N.J. To these facts, Ginsberg adds: "High school in Paterson till 17, Columbia College, merchant marine, Texas and Denver, copyboy, Times Square, amigos in jail, dishwashing, book reviews, Mexico City, market research, Satori in Harlem, Yucatan and Chiapas 1954, West Coast 3 years. Later Arctic Sea trip, Tangier, Venice, Amsterdam, Paris, read at Oxford Harvard Columbia Chicago, quit, wrote Kaddish 1959, made tape to leave behind & fade in Orient awhile. Carl Solomon, to whom *HOWL* is addressed, is an intuitive Bronx dadaist and prose-poet."

Later books by Allen Ginsberg in the Pocket Poet Series: *KADDISH AND OTHER POEMS, REALITY SANDWICHES & PLANET NEWS.*

**AMERICA**

America I've given you all and now I'm nothing.  
America two dollars and twentyseven cents January 17, 1956.  
I can't stand my own mind.  
America when will we end the human war?  
Go fuck yourself with your atom bomb.  
I don't feel good don't bother me.  
I won't write my poem till I'm in my right mind.

Asia is rising against me.  
I haven't got a chinaman's chance.  
I'd better consider my national resources.  
My national resources consist of two joints of marijuana millions of genitals an unpublishable private literature that goes 1400 miles an hour and twentyfive-thousand mental institutions.  
I say nothing about my prisons nor the millions of underprivileged who live in my flowerpots under the light of five hundred suns.
When will you take off your clothes?
When will you look at yourself through the grave?
When will you be worthy of your million Trotskyites?
America why are your libraries full of tears?
America when will you send your eggs to India?
I'm sick of your insane demands.
When can I go into the supermarket and buy what I need with my good looks?
America after all it is you and I who are perfect not the next world.
Your machinery is too much for me.
You made me want to be a saint.
There must be some other way to settle this argument.
Burroughs is in Tangiers I don't think he'll come back it's sinister.
Are you being sinister or is this some form of practical joke?
I'm trying to come to the point.
I refuse to give up my obsession.
America stop pushing I know what I'm doing.
America the plum blossoms are falling.
I haven't read the newspapers for months, everyday somebody goes on trial for murder.
America I feel sentimental about the Wobblies.
America I used to be a communist when I was a kid I'm not sorry.

I smoke marijuana every chance I get.
I sit in my house for days on end and stare at the roses in the closet.
When I go to Chinatown I get drunk and never get laid.
My mind is made up there's going to be trouble.
You should have seen me reading Marx.
My psychoanalyst thinks I'm perfectly right.
I don't say the Lord's Prayer.
I have mystical visions and cosmic vibrations.
America I still haven't told you what you did to Uncle Max after he came over from Russia.

I'm addressing you.
Are you going to let your emotional life be run by Time Magazine?
I'm obsessed by Time Magazine.
I read it every week.
Its cover stares at me every time I slink past the corner candy store.
I read it in the basement of the Berkeley Public Library.
It's always telling me about responsibility. Businessmen are serious.
Movie producers are serious. Everybody's serious but me.
It occurs to me that I am America.
I am talking to myself again.

I have abolished the whorehouses of France, Tangiers is the next to go.
My ambition is to be President despite the fact that I'm a Catholic.

America how can I write a holy litany in your silly mood?
I will continue like Henry Ford my strophes are as individual as his automobiles more so they're all different sexes.
America I will sell you strophes $2500 apiece $500 down on your old strophe
America free Tom Mooney
America save the Spanish Loyalists
America Sacco & Vanzetti must not die
America I am the Scottsboro boys.
America when I was seven momma took me to Communist Cell meetings they sold us garbanzos a handful per ticket a ticket costs a nickel and the speeches were free everybody was angelic and sentimental about the workers it was all so sincere you have no idea what a good thing the party was in 1835 Scott Nearing was a grand old man a real mensch Mother Bloor made me cry I once saw Israel Amter plain. Everybody must have been a spy.
America you don't really want to go to war.
America it's them bad Russians.
Them Russians them Russians and them Chinamen. And them Russians.
The Russia wants to eat us alive. The Russia's power mad. She wants to take our cars from out our garages.
Her wants to grab Chicago. Her needs a Red Readers' Digest.
Her wants our auto plants in Siberia. Him big bureaucracy running our filling stations.

That no good. Ugh. Him make Indians learn read. Him need big black niggers. Hah. Her make us all work sixteen hours a day. Help,
America this is quite serious.
America this is the impression I get from looking in the television set.
America is this correct?
I'd better get right down to the job.
It's true I don't want to join the Army or turn lathes in precision parts factories, I'm nearsighted and psychopathic anyway.
America I'm putting my queer shoulder to the wheel.
Your freedom is a casualty of the War on Terrorism!

The USA Patriot Act, recently signed into law, has effectively destroyed the protections guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It is touted by politicians and the network media as a measure to protect Americans from terrorism, but what it really does is turn our democratic country into a police state where nobody is safe or free.

It permits police to obtain court orders to conduct secret searches of Americans’ homes and offices, browse medical and financial records without showing evidence of a crime and monitor Web activity without a judge’s approval in some circumstances.

Non-citizens who are not terrorists can be detained on minor visa violations if they cannot be deported because they are stateless, their country of origin refuses to accept them or because they would face torture in their country of origin. The Attorney General and the Secretary of State now have the power to designate domestic groups as terrorist organizations and deport any non-citizen who belongs to them.

The USA Patriot Act makes the CIA able to spy on American citizens, and has the power to make anyone who voices dissent (including those of us marching on the street today) into a “terrorist,” susceptible to all the draconian measures in this act.

Police now have the permanent ability to conduct Internet surveillance without a court order in some circumstances, secretly sneak into someone’s house or office, search the contents, and leave without ever telling the owner. This would be super-vised by a court, and the notification of the surreptitious search “may be delayed” indefinitely. (Section 213)

· Any U.S. attorney or state attorney general can order the installation of the FBI’s Carnivore surveillance system and record addresses of Web pages visited and e-mail correspondents — without going to a judge. Previously, there were stiffer legal restrictions on Carni-vore and other Internet surveillance techniques. (Section 216)

· Any American “with intent to defraud” who scans in an image of a foreign currency note or e-mails or transmits such an image will go to jail for up to 20 years. (Section 375)

· An accused terrorist who is a foreign citizen and who cannot be deported can be held for an unspecified series of “periods of up to six months” with the attorney general’s approval. (Section 412)

· Biometric technology, such as fingerprint readers or iris scanners, will become part of an “integrated entry and exit data system” with the identities of visa holders who hope to enter the U.S. (Section 414)

· Any Internet provider or telephone company must turn over customer information, including phone numbers called — no court order required — if the FBI claims the “records sought are relevant to an authorized investigation to protect against international terrorism.” The company contacted may not “disclose to any person” that the FBI is doing an investigation. (Section 505)

· Credit reporting firms like Equifax must disclose to the FBI any information that agents request in connection with a terrorist investigation — without police needing to seek a court order first.

Current law permits this only in espionage cases. (Section 505)

· The current definition of terrorism is radically expanded to include biochemical attacks and computer hacking. Some current computer crimes — such as hacking a U.S. government system or breaking into and damaging any Internet-connected computer — are covered. (Section 808)

· New computer forensics labs will be created to inspect “seized or intercepted computer evidence relating to criminal activity (including cyberterrorism)” and to train federal agents. (Section 816)

From Wired News and the American Civil Liberties Union

What Can You Do?
First, remember, it’s not hopeless. You can do something! Here are some places to start:

Get informed and stay informed!
1. Visit the Senate website (www.senate.gov) and read and download the final version of the USA Patriot Act (HR 3162).
2. Listen to programs like Democracy Now, Free Speech Radio News, and CounterSpin, which can be heard on WERU-FM (89.9 in eastern and coastal Maine, 102.9 in Bangor) or WMPG (90.9, Portland area).
3. Visit independent and alternative media websites and find out what the networks aren’t telling you. Here are a few to get you started: Democracy Now (www.democracynow.org), Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (www.fair.org), the Independent Media Center (www.indymedia.org, maine.indymedia.org).
4. See what the ACLU has to say about the USA Patriot Act and other elements of the “war on terrorism” (www.aclu.org).

Keep your big mouth open!
1. Write letters to the editor of your local paper.
2. Speak out, hold a sign, march, talk to your friends.
3. Contact your Senator and Congresspeople and urge them to work for the repeal of the USA Patriot Act. Their addresses are easily available, as are their phone numbers.
4. Call in to talk radio shows.

Get active!
1. Visit websites where civil liberties campaigns are going on—the ACLU, In Defense of Freedom (www.indefenseoffreedom.org), MoveOn (www.moveon.org), Stop Carnivore (www.stopcarnivore.org).
2. Participate in teach-ins, protests, and vigils.
3. Hook up with a local activist group and give your energy and time, and if you can, give them some money.

Act with courage, overcome your fear!
You are not alone! The more people who speak out, the less likely it is that the government can silence all of us.
Report: affordable housing is a

By Toni Mailloux
A recently released draft report of the Belfast Housing Assessment Project reveals that, as many have suggested over the past few years, there needs to be a meaningful public discussion and setting of goals to resolve severe housing problems in Belfast.

The data in the report suggests that 70 percent of Belfast's households cannot afford to purchase a median-priced home in Belfast. According to the Maine State Housing Authority, Belfast is the third "most unaffordable" community in Maine in terms of the ability of its residents to purchase a median-priced home. The median income in Belfast is listed at $22,942, while the median home price is $119,750. To purchase a home at that price, an annual income of $38,606 is needed, according to the Maine State Housing Authority.

Renters aren't making out much better. According to the report, the monthly rental rate for a decent, two-bedroom apartment in Belfast has risen from the $350 range to more than $700 in the past five years.

And if that isn't enough, the report states that 345 residential units are located in structures considered to be severely substandard. That is 10.8 percent of the city's housing stock.

Mobile homes account for 13.3 percent of Belfast's total housing stock, but also for a majority of the severely substandard housing in the city. According to the report, 60 percent of Belfast's mobile homes are likely to be pre-1976 units. The report identifies a number of issues that are impacting the availability of affordable housing in Belfast.

They include:

- gentrification of some portion of Belfast's downtown housing stock, resulting in the elimination of some rental units;
- renovation of formerly subsidized apartments, which have been taken out of subsidy programs and rented at market rates;
- dramatic increase in apartment rental rates over the past six years;
- dramatic increase in median price of home purchases, reaching $125,000 by early 2001; and
- diminished number of apartments for rent and homes for sale in Belfast.

In another section of the report, the consultant stated that developers of recent projects in Belfast have commented on the difficulty of "jumping through all the expensive hoops" required by Belfast ordinances. The consultant wrote, "Belfast is attempting to balance good land use planning and necessary controls with the necessity to create incentives for developers to increase the housing supply. The city council, the planning board and the comprehensive planning committee, with the technical assistance of the talented city planner are committed to addressing the issues related to how to encourage and stimulate additional housing growth in Belfast while also maintaining strong land use planning and ordinances."

- dramatic employment growth since approximately 1995, relating primarily to the location of MBNA and the rapid expansion of its labor force;
- significant increase in demand for housing coming from a portion of the approximate 2,400 people employed at MBNA;
- movement to Belfast by middle-aged professionals, early retirees, and elderly persons seeking high-quality housing;

SEE HOUSING PAGE 9

Huge problem in city

A Resident's Story
I, a homeless man, am at the Shelter with a limit of 30 days and I wish it were just as simple to put a time limit on life. Yes, there are rules and regulations to being a homeless person like myself, but they're mostly unspoken, so even if you should say I am good or bad, I have to have a place to rest my head. Does a roof over my head tell the world I am not homeless? The true reality of homelessness cannot be put into print. You can't take a week out of your life and sleep in the streets and play homeless knowing you can go back home. I am a 17-year veteran of the streets, real homelessness is not an act. You have to live it to understand it. Shelters must have their rules and guidelines but in all honesty there are no rules on being homeless.

Lots of homeless people are honest law abiders because they refuse to engage in crime so as to afford a roof over their heads. I, for one, am living proof that there is a homeless cancer existing in America. I am a homeless victim that refuses to resort to crime. I've seen a lot and lived too long not to know some of the worst realities. I am a disabled person but it's not my fault. It is does not make one a criminal if one has to live in a prison of poverty and homelessness...

The Emmaus Center is the only Shelter I know that offers help with housing and counseling and even gives medical help by way of the Ellsworth Free Medical Clinic. All of you are very dear and sweet to me. If I don't see you soon please know my love for you is real. I wish someday we can dwell in the House of the Lord together. There are so many dear people who are homeless who are in such sad pain. I know that I am only one person among many that pass through the Shelter but I will remember it with love. I owe you for the micro-loan, please know every penny will be repaid. ... Jeffrey
This Christmas season is an especially busy one for Ellsworth’s Loaves and Fishes. The food bank, which serves all of Hancock County, supplies food for hundreds of area families. Here, Manager Judith Guildford arranges a box of locally donated food in preparation for Wednesday morning’s opening.

**Homeless Shelter, Food Pantry Hard Pressed to Meet Need**

**BY JENNIFER OSBORN**

ELLSWORTH—The holidays are proving especially difficult for the poor and sick this year. Requests to the Emmaus Center for help have more than tripled.

“What we normally do is about 60 families,” said Cynthia Booker-Bingler, the center’s codirector. But this season, the center has helped more than 190 families and calls are still coming in, she said.

“People are having trouble getting jobs that pay enough for their rents, electricity and Christmas,” Booker-Bingler said. The center helps by matching individuals and organizations with families in need of “adoption.”

The center gives donors a list of items needed for each family. “We even go shopping if someone just wants to make a donation,” Booker-Bingler said.

The parties involved are anonymous—unless each party wants to meet.

“We ask the family that wishes to be adopted to give us two items they would like for Christmas,” said Booker-Bingler. “We ask for clothing sizes and shoe sizes.”

**Continued from Page 1**

Booker-Bingler said she had one family call for help outfitting the husband with warm clothing. He works outside and does not have long underwear, gloves or hats.

Monetary donations are always needed.

While toy donations for younger children are needed so are gifts for older people. Booker-Bingler said she had a lot of requests for gift certificates to local music stores.

Booker-Bingler said that about 75 percent of the people who have called for help with the holiday have mental health or physical health issues.

“If one partner gets ill, they just can’t make it because of the loss of income,” Booker-Bingler said.

“We’ve had a wonderful response this year,” Booker-Bingler said. “And we’d just like to get these last few families adopted.”

If you would like to help, call the center at 667-3962.

Other organizations need more help than usual, in part because people sent donations out-of-state this year.

The center gives this information to individuals and organizations adopting a family.

“We also ask that if they can budget it in, they supply the Christmas dinner,” Booker-Bingler said.

These families don’t ask for much, just the basics that many people take for granted.

“Most of the parents are calling for their kids,” Booker-Bingler said. “I have families where the children only have three pair of underwear and two pair of pants,” she said.

**Continued on Page 10**

Loaves and Fishes Food pantry is in need of donations—particularly money.

“We’re going to be hurting in terms of our budget for the year,” said the Rev. Jack Maxim, coordinator of the pantry. Maxim said the pantry did not raise as much money as it usually does through the annual Maine Ending Hunger week fund-raiser.

While donations of food are appreciated, cash donations are even more appreciated. Because the pantry purchases food from a larger food pantry, it can purchase about $5 worth of food for $1.

“If they’re going to go out and spend money to bring a box of food by, it’s better to send the money,” he said.

People probably feel better dropping off a basket of food but in terms of helping the hungry in the community, the pantry can do more with the money, Maxim said.

“But, either way is fine,” he said.

People can send checks to Loaves and Fishes P.O. Box 5504 Ellsworth 04605. Food donations can be dropped off at the pantry—19 Bucksport Road—anytime. The pantry is next to the Unitarian Universalist Church.

**A Christmas Wish**

*Peace to the world and plenty to the poor.*

Bernstein & Holtz, eds.
BERN PORTER INTERNATIONAL
50 Salmond Street
Belfast, Maine 04915

**THE ELLSWORTH AMERICAN,**

Thursday, December 20, 2001