

The following is a transcription of some tapes that were made sometime in September of 1977. It was late at night and a few of us were sitting around, talking. Jim rarely talks about himself in a personal sense, but that night he started talking, and continued for several hours. We were fortunate enough to get it down on tape. In transcribing the material, I've left it pretty much unedited, except to try to indicate topics or clarify transitions in subject matter etc. I left Jim's syntax, language etc. as is, and I hope that these pages will help convey some idea, or better yet, some "feel" for Jim as a person.

He began, without introduction, by talking about some of his experiences as an orderly at Reid Memorial Hospital in Richmond, Indiana. He was about 16 at the time so it must have been around 1947. From there he went on to talk about some of his high school and childhood experiences, and then his introduction to the church, the McCarthy period etc. .

REID MEMORIAL

"In that hospital I did more shit than you'll ever know.. I stole rich people's medicine and gave it to poor people. You had to charge people for the medicine back then. I worked myself to death trying to be an egalitarian in that place. People would go broke, lose their homes, and insurance was very rare. So I'd take the fucking rich people's stuff... I'd run three floors to get some kind of heart medicine for somebody on the first floor so I didn't have to put it on his bill. Then catch hell from the head nurse for not giving him his medicine. Because if the chart said I gave him his medicine they'd charge. I took risks. I took risks that were formidable for a kid of sixteen. Must have done enough in diligence and good work, must have done enough to let me get by with some of the shit. Of course, they didn't have a good record keeping system, that got more intricate as time went on. I was the cause of it! They couldn't find out what the hell was going on in Ward B. Ward B was the poor peoples ward.

"What the hell is this that there's no more medicine cost in Ward B than this? There ought to be more cost than this..."

So they started putting a charge for every goddamn thing. They'd charge for everything. Catheterization-you had to charge them, tube-you had to charge them, even fucking tape you had to charge. Ah, shit—I never charged them for a fucking thing. The poor never got charged. And I'd double the rich.

I think the head nurse finally caught on to me. But she covered.

"The books are balancing" she'd say. "he projected income figures for March (I remember the month was March) are the same." And she'd look over at me. A great big, old catholic woman. She tried hard to convert me. she must've been a lesbian too. the time she said to me: "I hate men. I hope you don't grow up to be like other men." but she was good to me, and I liked her. She was a nice gal. Bigger than a goddamn tank, she was a bull. People were scared to death of that woman. When she walked, she walked like a goddamn tank. And there was such prejudice against Catholics, do you know, that I got condemned for associating with that woman. Narrow fucking world I lived in. MASF. You can't know what it's like to grow up in Waspville. Goddamn it's awful. Hated Catholics, hated Jews, hated Blacks, and I associated with everyone. People just didn't know what the hell to do with me.

But this woman, she was good to me. She recommended me, and I became head orderly of oxygen therapy because of her. I went to Catholic Mass because of her. I thought, "this woman's got something." She was good. I don't remember all she did, mostly cover for me was what the hell I remember of her goodness. She covered for me. And she knew I was doing that shit. Obviously she knew I wasn't getting anything out of it. She said, "well, you ought to be a Christian." I said, "I am." She said, "You don't belong to the universal Church." She was talking about the Catholic church of course but I didn't know the goddamn word "catholic" meant "universal".

.. So I went to Mass. And that fucking priest was so fucking cruel. I went about two or three times for her, and I got tired of that priest. He was cruel. Ever been to a Catholic Mass? Cold fucking place, no warmth at all. Like zombies walking in a row.

I got tired of him. I went back to that corner-- Saint Mary's church-- and pissed in a flower jar and poured it into the holy water. Well, they got ritualized with my piss that night. I just sat in the back and snickered. Whoever it was, the sexton or somebody, came by and said "You'll have to quit this."

I said, "If you knew what I was laughing about, you'd laugh too." That was so fucking funny. Must've been fifty of them, dipping in my piss. I thought, "God, if you ever did exist, you really are dead, or certainly out of touch with Your People or you'd surely reveal it to these people that they were being anointed with my piss."

HIGH SCHOOL

My high school... Goddamn principal. Mr. Price, I think. A goddamn bigot. One horse school, Lynn High School. He did something, I can't remember... I put a goddamn donkey in the assembly. I run a donkey up the stairs. We had a public assembly where all the students had their desks together, ninth through twelfth. And that goddamn donkey and a whole herd of goats, I brought my whole herd of goats in there. Loosed them in that fucking assembly, and they ate the books, shit on the desks. It was Bedlam. That son of a bitch, he did something, but I don't remember what he did to cause that.

Then finally one teacher who wasn't so--humane--centered more on me. A teacher who made fun of my inability to write well. I couldn't write fast enough. No, the workbook wasn't great enough, that was it. So then she started on this little girl back there, behind me, who wore long wool socks. She turned on that girl, said "Don't you have any new socks to wear? You don't wash them enough." And that was it. She went too far. It started with me, but when she picked on that poor girl, I got incensed with her. And then she bragged on this prissy assed Charles Wesley, a rich kid who couldn't tie his own shoe laces. "His workbook's so neat..." And then she said, "These workbooks all have to be in, because I cannot grade you without them."

I thought, "Oh bitch, you sure done told too much now." So I stayed in school and hid out in the clothes closet. I waited until there were no more sounds and I went out and stole every goddamn workbook I could find.

The next day: "thirteen workbooks missing! What's going on here!"

The place was in an uproar. People were crying and all. And I figure I got to get them all, so I kept it up for five nights till I got the last fucking workbook. Devastated her. She was just sick. She was frenzied. She called the principal and he said "I'll have a lie detector test on this! I'll bring in the police! I'm going to find out who this thief is, this is ridiculous. You can't disrupt a school like this!"

I just loved it. Fucking shit didn't mean nothing to me.

"One of you did this" he said, and he looked at me because he was always looking at me.

I said, "Mine's gone too so don't look my way." The bitch had a wary eye on me too. But that son of a bitch principal he brought in somebody with a uniform-- I don't know who the son of a bitch was--and I was a little nervous. All those goddamn workbooks gone, tenth grade workbooks. They said, "It's somebody in the tenth grade!" So I stole all the eleventh grade workbooks...

The grading system was horrible. It correlated with the class system. They flunked the poor and the rich got by. That's what made a Communist out of me-- you grow into it by little things. So I stole the tenth and eleventh grade workbooks, and they brought in this fucking constable. And he shows this contraption and says, "This is a test up here." This goddamn thing, got wires all over it... "You won't pass the test if you're lying."

I thought, "Oh shit. This is it."

I got in the goddamn line, and for some reason-- it must've been all phoney bullshit-- because they quit about the eighth or ninth one. I guess they were just playing games, testing us. That principal like to died-- he was fit to be tied.

I walked through the school-- whistling. Mrs. MacFarland called me over.

I said, "what you want?"

She said, "Jin Jones, there is only one person in this entire school with the intelligence to cause this kind of confusion." And she winked at me, and went on down the hall.

That principal had told me I was too dumb to go to college too. It was sheer cruelty. He called me into his office and said, "Jinny, I see you have written down here that you want to go to college. You're not college material." Christ that crushed me. Its awful to feel dumb. And he about persuaded me for a moment there.

Mrs. MacFarland, she showed me the first kindness, the first tenderness. She asked,

"Are you planning on going to college?"

"I don't know what you're talking about" I said.

She said, "You Jin, you should go to college. Anybody bright enough to throw the entire school into such pandemonium -- you should go to college."

She was against the system. I don't know to what extent, but she was a maverick. She wore pant suits. They fired her. In those days in Lynn a woman teacher did not get married and did not date. I came up under a rigid system. If a woman teacher got married or was caught dating, she was finished.

I went into her class and made an A. Finished the course in two, three weeks. Typing. I typed so fucking fast, just because of her faith in me. After a few weeks she said, "You're finished." I'd run through all the goddamn books. Went after hours. She was the first one to turn me on to education. Then they fired her, and I cried and I cried and I cried... So I put gravel in Price's gas tank. The old son of a bitch ruined his car. It's a wonder he didn't die of a stroke. Gravel and salt. I know he wished Jin Jones had never been born. He never of course figured out it was me, but the inkling was there, the inkling was there.

He fired her and I laid out of school. I wouldn't study for anybody, I don't know how long. It so killed me. I loved that woman. I admired her. I think I had a crush on her, because she was good to me. There were very few people who were good to me, goodness was not very much known to the poor. Soon after I transferred to Richmond. It was all seditious and I wanted out of there.

I dated the girl who was the school whore. Always called her that: "whore, whore..." Girls always wanted to go out and make it with me, but they didn't want to be seen in public with me. Poor boy. Nobody ever dates Jim Jones. But they were all ashamed of her, being a whore. Well, by that time I'd gotten a job, that was the last semester. I got a job during the year in Richmond Hospital. Hitchhiked back and forth for about five months, and then I'd saved enough to buy an old car. All of a sudden I became celebrated. Money, you know. I hadn't dated one of those bitches, not since the one who'd hurt me so bad by fucking a friend of mine... So I thought, well-- they all said she was a whore and nobody would go with her to the , what is that thing? The Senior Prom. I took her. I took that girl-- and I never had so much joy in all my life. I took her out there and we were dancing around-- all by ourselves. They all got off the floor. We danced around and around... I wasn't all that sad about her, you know, but goddamn it to hell, those miserable pukes-- they were all a bunch of sneak shits, hypocrites.

All through the 1941-1945 era I instinctively identified with the Soviets. The Soviets are what turned me on. In the snow, when I was ten or eleven, I'd always be a Soviet soldier. I'd get my gun, an old shot gun, no longer workable. and I'd be rushing through, defending Russia from invasion. That would be my play. I was nine or ten years old when the war started. I identified strongly with the Soviets. Stalingrad became my ideal. I knew more about what was going on than my folks. The Battle of Stalingrad became intensely important to me. When the Soviets were under siege, it was intensely personal to me. That's where my interest in the Soviet Union started. So that led to Communism. I got out of school, the war's over, church bells are ringing, and they started knocking the Russians. This is one loyal fucker. You don't twist me and turn me like that. Never has been that way. Always, if I'd made a commitment to some people, made a commitment to anybody, I'd stand behind that commitment. Now, all of a sudden, the Russians are sons of bitches. I couldn't buy that. So, the more I heard it, the more I studied what the hell this was all about. Communism. I didn't even know what it meant. I began to read about Russia. In the school books I read something, and then they'd change the school books. Pull out one text, I remember , and put another passage in. And I read in there about Communism, and even the way they painted it, I said " Sounds mighty good to me. Sounds mighty good to me."

By the time I got to Richmond, the last year of high school, I was a Communist. The Progressive Party I knew was for Communism. Wallace in my opinion was a Communist. We were disillusioned, of course, to find out later that he was not. I supported him on the basis of his being a Communist. Tramping through the neighborhood in Richmond, Indiana, trying to get people to vote the Progressive ticket. I graduated from high school at seventeen. I was getting greatly ridiculed by that time for my beliefs. I had one teacher who must've been a Communist--there were a lot of closet Communists in those days. She'd always let me talk my views-- she wouldn't say a fucking word, but let me defend Progressive Party views. We had a mock campaign. I'd represent the Progressive Party candidate. Don't remember what the issues were, hell I couldn't tell you what the issues were then. Egalitarian concerns. Racism. Feeding the oppressed. I got on my soap box for Marx, more Lenin than Marx, I didn't know that much about Marx at that age. Hell Das Kapital always was tough for me. I had to get my Communism by other means.

One of my schoolteachers accused me of being a Communist. I was talking about it in English class. She gave me a low grade. This other teacher said " Forget it. I think you can pass an equivalency test." So I took this test and it qualified me so I could get into college. So I entered Indiana University, and immediately became an activist. Party organizer. Didn't belong to the Party but I organized people to join the Party. Did a lot of work for the Party. It was decided, I guess by Party leadership that I was not to join the Party. I went to a Communist Party meeting, and I don't remember who it was in the cell organization that suggested that I not join the Party, that I could do more good by not joining. Hell, I was more ready to bring a revolution any fucking way I could do it. The guy, whoever he was, must've had some character or I wouldn't have taken his advice. Its very vague in my mind, why I didn't sign the roll. Alacet signed it, but he said no. Don't become a member of the Party, work for the Party. And I did. Got a hell of a lot of people to join the CP. Got people to sign-- what the hell was the big petition at that time? Stockholm petition maybe. All those things. I'd champion every goddamn one of them. Talked Communism all the time. In class, out of class-- everywhere.

The thing that stuck out in my mind more than anything in college was this class I had with a professor Minton. He was, I later learned, a conservative, who was trying to teach political science objectively. And he would come into class and say "Greetings students, and to the FBI." Electronic surveillance was not very sensitive in those days.

Two fuckers in his class were FBI. I thought, "this is too much." It made me project my views even more forcefully. Right in the goddamn class. And I was followed. So they must have a file. Undoubtedly they have a hell of a file. They followed me through the campus, until I guess they got tired of following... Followed me one time to the old house that I lived in. Run down tenement section where Marcie and I lived. I believe they also called her job, and told her-- you know the tactic they used, "Do you know she's married to a Communist?" Marcie didn't know politics. Shit, in that stage she didn't know where the hell I stood-- she thought I was going crazy, I think. She came from a straight, middle class upbringing. Racist family. Not mean racist, but they were racist.

I believe they called her job and said I was a Communist. They called her in and gave her a bunch of shit and she came home and asked me. I said, "Tell them I'm not." She said, "I don't know, I don't know." We had some helluva rows over my ideology. Hellish rows. She believed in God and I started devastating him. I tore that motherfucker to shreds, and laid him out to rest. She just cried, and we'd fight, and she'd cry. We were washing dishes. One time and she said "I love you, but you don't say anything about the Lord anymore."

I said, "Fuck the Lord." I don't remember, we ended up in some goddamn scarp and she threw a glass at me. I said, "You get awfully worked up over the Lord."

She kept ding-donging me, trying to get me religious. So I thought, "Oh, goddamn it I'll go to church with you, woman." She was a Methodist. We clombered into this fucking church. She pointed out this paper on the bulletin board, something about integration. She pointed to it and said, "See, he's talking about integration, you see there on the bulletin board." I said, "Okay, okay, we'll go to church."

I got into this fucking church, and we get up in the balcony, and the goddamn place is packed. And he starts some bullshit, and about midway he says something nasty about Communism. I get up and yell out,

"Fascist!"

Marcie pulled on me. She said, "Jinny please, Jinny please don't do this."

First thing he shouts back,

"Communist!"

"Fascist!"

"Communist" This time his tone was cold, deadly. God it was an awful time. Berie period. Anyway, there was a hell of a commotion. I don't know what happened. I cursed out God and he kept shouting Communist... We barely got out of there, just got away. The police came and we just got away. New minister. He didn't know who the hell I was. He was supposed to be the best methodism had to offer. Shit.

Berie time... I hunted for Communists and I couldn't find them. Only on campus, a few.

Finally one day I was out in the farm area, trying to get some apples. I said, "Anybody know any Communists out here, must be some Communists somewhere-- don't somebody like Russia around here?" Goddamn some of those people. I guess they thought I was FBI. So, I remember, I started playing the role, thinking that some good old American bastard would point me in the right direction that way; I thought surely there must be some goddamn Communist somewhere. Now in the hell could all of a sudden everybody turn against Russia after the alliance we'd had?

I ran into this old man, trying to buy apples. I said, "Anybody in the world know a Communist around here?"

He said, "Why do you ask that?"

"Because I'd just like to know and talk to somebody that's a Communist."

He took me in, gave me an apple, brought his son out. They were colorful people. After a while, after he'd tested me and tested me, boy he brought out more pictures... I never got to see so many beautiful pictures in all my life. All about the Soviet Union. He had all the goddamn Communist papers--you couldn't hardly buy them--all the periodical whisked away, nothing anywhere. He showed me papers about Russia, pictures of Lenin. That man, he got called before the state version of HUAC, and he moved away. So I didn't have his friendship anymore.

I don't remember a lot of shit. It's so repressed. It was the goddamndest mess.

Marceline said "you're gonna have to quit talking about this stuff(meaning Communism.)" She was about to lose her job. She worked in a hospital, must've been General Hospital. I worked weekends. But she was such a fucking good nurse. I got a job because of her. I worked one week and they fired my ass. One week. I was talking Communism everywhere in that hospital, bed to bed, all the patients. Poor Marcie. She was like to go crazy. She thought Communism was the anti-Christ, and here she was, married to the anti-Christ-- personified.

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One time we were driving in a car and got into an argument. About politics of course. She said, "I can't take this anymore. You either change your ideology or get out of this car." We were in the middle of nowhere.

I said, "Stop the car." I got out and that was it as far as I was concerned. Walked down the street. Walked and walked. Don't know where the hell I went. Don't know what I did. I walked and walked, and she finally came back, drove, and got me. She was the one to bend. Because I was determined that I wouldn't bend. That was it. That was the end of the marriage. When I stepped out of the car, I said to myself "This marriage is broken. I'm not giving up my ideology for you or nobody else."

So I walked and walked and walked endlessly. She showed more resistance than she usually did. Two or three hours I walked. Whatever the hell road I was on, I kept walking because there was nowhere else to walk to.

But another time I was at her mother's house and her mother made some remark about "niggers" and then about Communists.

"To think my daughter is married to one" she said.

"Well, you won't have to look at me anymore," I said. "I've had enough of your damn religious hypocrisy, and I'm sick of you. You won't have to have me eat at your table. Don't worry, I'll never eat at your table as long as I live, and you'll never see me again as long as I live."

And I whipped out of that goddamn house. Poor old Charlotte, she was so shook up. I told Marcie, "You're gonna choose between me and that bitch, because I'm not gonna be around that bitch." We were home from school. Poor dear woman, I'd like to kill that bitch.

Another time, we decided to go to a rally for Paul Robeson, and I took her. And they raided the place.

Charlotte: "My husband's the President of the City Council!"

I said, "Oh man, go down the street for Chrissakes..." And I got out and they arrested several of us. I don't know what the hell went on in that place, I can't remember. But they arrested us and threw us into the back of this fucking paddy wagon, and my father in law—Walter—was supposed to pick us up and he's waiting down the street. President of the City Council and he's about to have apoplexy. Charlotte's running around, chattering "What am I going to do if I get arrested at this Communist meeting?" She was frantic. I drug her ass in there. I don't know how I did it. Chicago, it was. On Lake Street, I think. Great big auditorium. They put us in a fucking paddy wagon, and we was sitting there, riding along, and the goddamn paddy wagon door swung open. Everybody looked at everybody, but nobody moved. I thought, "What the hell is everybody sitting here for?" And I got up and jumped out. And nobody followed me. I'll never forget that. Six, could've been eight people and I'm the only one who jumped out of that car. It wasn't going that fast. I think I fell, so maybe it was going faster than I remember. But nobody jumped out but me. The goddamn door opened to the paddy wagon and they were just stupified, just stupified. Just set there. Defeatists. Frightening commentary on human society. This consciousness that you've got to abide by the law even if the law is on the wrong side.

I was about to be drug up before the Indiana Committee on Subversive Activities—I think that was the name—my name was supposed to come up, but about that time McCarthy got sick I think, or maybe it was that thing in San Francisco, I don't recall, but they cancelled me. I had been told that I was named on the list that was coming down because of Party connections. And those people still exist—the rank and file that never formally joined the Party but were active in the Party, went to Party meetings. Those Communists no doubt are still out there, but I lost contact with them, shit, years ago. That particular branch I lost contact with. Another group I did not, but some of this shit I can't tell. Because I don't know where those people are; some still active. Don't want to jeopardize them.

Somewhere along the line, Mao became influential in my life, and I don't know where in the hell that was. But when Mao turned against the Soviets, I had troubles with that. Even though I idolized him for what he did in the Long March—I thought that was tremendous—I still had trouble, real trouble. Because Mao at first was a lover of the Soviets, he loved Stalin. And I loved Stalin. I never would accept that Stalin was as bad as he was portrayed. I think I began to lean more heavily to the Maoist line when the American CP broke with Stalin. That's when I broke with the CP, the American CP. I broke all my connections and went with the Maoists. Because of loyalties again. Deep seated loyalties. I don't switch in the middle of the stream. Stalin, who I'd read of and heard reports of that he stood on the outskirts of Moscow... who lived in humble surroundings. Purged. Yeah, sure he purged. The goddamned Allies had infitrated his high command. And all of a sudden along comes Krushchev and Stalin is a son of a bitch. I didn't dislike Krushchev, I was always enchanted with some of his style. I remember enjoying it so much when he just took his shoes off and beat them on the table at the U.N. I just loved this man of the people, but I couldn't accept what the hell they would want to discredit Marshall Stalin for. I know I wasn't there, I wasn't there, but to me it was too instilled, loyalties instilled, and I just could not reconcile that break. That loyalty is still deep down in me today. Stalin did great things for the Soviet Union. If it hadn't been for Stalin, Russia would never have won that fucking war. The Man of Steel persevered. Leningrad and Stalingrad. That's where the war turned. One hundred or eleven hundred goddamn days at Leningrad, eating dead flesh. And then Stalingrad, by God, that's where the thing turned. That battle lives in my mind.

I met a guy at the University, a former Nazi, who was there. He said he saw that board coming up, and at first he just continued making cigarettes. He saw that nigger—it actually dimmed the rising of the sun. He thought, "What the hell is going on?"

All this was coming... They were singing, singing the Internationale. Old people. He thought, "This is laughable." But by God, he looked at that shit more and more, and they kept coming on and on. They ordered to fire. Bodies splintering in the sky. And the people kept on coming. He said, "Fuck this." Climbed under a goddamn tank, as they marched on through that division. Couldn't stop them. Mowed down bodies. And in the end, after the pitchforks, here come the young... He was a Nazi. He was telling me this shit at Indiana University. I was wondering, "What the hell is this fucker doing here?" A Nazi at the University. Somebody who fought in the Panzer division against the Soviets was at Indiana University along about 1949-1950. Boy, I'm telling you, you couldn't get into this goddamn country unless you were a Nazi in those days. And if you had any Communist connections, your grandpa or your cousin, or trade union, your ass wouldn't get into this country. Immigration barriers were horrible, but Nazis kept coming by the up teen thousands...

CHILDHOOD

I recall in the first grade there was this little girl that I got the hots for—bad. I went into the bathroom and I was jacking off to beat hell in the rest room, and this first grade teacher of mine came in and said I was a deviate. She said, "Nobody in the first grade should be doing this kind of stuff." It was the first grade. This teacher had a red blotch on the side of her face and it grew redder and redder, clear up as she was raging at me. And hell, I liked that little girl Mildred. Jesus Christ, shit, I wanted to fuck her bad. I remember I angled around till I got a chance to look under her dress, and she didn't have any panties on. And I saw IT—THE REAL MCGGY. I was going to the rest room several times. I don't know what the hell was the result of the masturbation. I mean, I was only six or seven years old, but I was sure trying like hell.

That teacher was furious. Said I was a deviate, or something like that because I remember I asked what the damn word meant. Abnormal. That's what it was. She said, "Jia Jones, you're abnormal." Old lady Mitchell. Old Maid. Shit, all the teachers back then were old maids, it's a wonder anyone ever grew up normal. If you got married you were fired. Poor old Miss Mitchell. She made the connection with my jacking off and Mildred because she said "That's what you're doing underneath that desk." And then she punished Mildred for it and poor Mildred didn't know shit from apple butter about what was going on. I did something to her because I ended up in the principals office, Chick Moore, and I got a beating from him. Threw me out of school for three whole days.

First grade. Shit, the whole goddamn school staff had a meeting about my coming back in. I can't remember what all I'd done, but it seemed to me I threw a stapler at her...

It took me until the third grade to get Mildred alone. I got her in this fucking house. Everybody was gone, and I leaped on the bed and the bed fell down...

Fourth grade. Mrs. Moore. The only "Mrs." in the school—the wife of the principal. Now that woman—she rewarded me. She was a wise teacher. She must've been a very conscientious teacher. I blotted her out of my memory and well do I know why. She died of cancer, and they took me to the funeral parlor and made me look at her. They held me up and made me look at her in the casket.

She said to me something, well I don't know the words exactly. We were beating out erasers. God, it comes back to me and I remember it like yesterday. Beating out erasers. She said, "If anybody can be a leader, you must be. A teacher feels like much of what they do is wasted, but you're kind to me. You make my day worthwhile and I know you won't disappoint me." She developed cancer. She appealed to that sense in me "I can't let her down." I was an atheist even then, and at that funeral parlor they held me up to look at her, and when I got down, I was bitter. So bitter that I went into the funeral parlor later, stole a casket from the warehouse and a whole bunch of wreaths, and I put a wreath on the door of every fucker I thought should be dead in the community. I think I got about six or seven wreaths. In those days, a wreath on the door panicked the whole community. Everybody went ape-shit. I put one on my own dad's door. But, I set the casket up in my room and I got in it. I wanted to die I guess. It's funny that I blocked a very good person totally out of my memory. 't was sad, it was sad.

I didn't have any love given to me; I didn't know what the hell love was. It was rough. And if I didn't think I was unimportant, I'd cry right now. She was the only teacher who didn't embarrass me. They were always embarrassing me. No tolerance at all for my aggressiveness. I had a lot of good points. I'd help the underdog. I'd help people.

I was ready to kill by the end of the third grade. I mean, I was so fucking aggressive and hostile, I was ready to kill. Nobody give me any love, any understanding. In those days a parent was supposed to go with a child to school functions. If your parent didn't go you were an outcast, that's all. I was a fairly good singer. There was some kind of school performance and everybody's fucking parent was there but mine. I'm standing there. Alone. Always was alone. Everybody else'd have their families, their cousins, their aunts and uncles— not Jones.

So anyway, when I went into the fourth grade I was ready for murder. I walked through that door, and I thought "I can't go through another one of these years." I was late. As always. I hated school with a passion. I was late. And I thought, "Okay bitch, do what all the rest of them do, make an ass out of me." And she said, "Jia, where would you like to sit?" And there was wrath in her voice. Oh. No teacher had ever asked me where I would like to sit. It was always "You sit here." And they'd put my ass on the front row so they could watch me.

She said, "Where would you like to sit?"
Where would I like to sit? I tried her out.

"Back row, back seat."

She said, "Fins. Only don't let that affect your education because you've got a good mind."

And that was the first time anybody had told me I had a good mind. Funny how I blocked her out of my mind. I remember beating those erasers with her. She cried. Her husband was cruel to her. That's why I hated the principal so. And he hated me. He began to hate me because his wife and I began to spend too much time together. She never had a child and I became her child. She said "I wish I had a kid like you."

I'll be goddamned if the next thing I remember is being held up, looking into her casket, looking at her body. And Chick, that fucking principal, how I hated him. He's standing in the next room talking to everyone, chattering away like nothing's happened, like nobody's dead. And she's in the front room— all alone. All alone. And I want to cry. The pain and the hostility of it... because her life was unfulfilled. And that's a bad pattern I have, not crying. Because some people need to cry— but its dangerous to get a whole collective crying, the leader can't afford to cry.

Mrs. Moore. She sure shaped up in me what was considered to be fair play. I don't think the teacher can put into a person a whole set of values, or deep seated feeling of loyalty, but she must've acted as a kind of catalyst for a sense of loyalty that was already there.

Anyway, when I got back to school they'd put in this bitch called Shafer. I've got a bizarre thing there, at least I think it's bizarre. All I can remember about that bitch is her hands. She rubbed my arms and said something about an older woman could have feelings for a young student. I don't quite remember all she said, but it was implicitly sexual, that's for certain. She tried to choke me somewhere. In a fucking goddamn closet. Long corridor... I see coats hanging on both sides, with hooks. She tried to choke me. I was afraid of that woman. All I remember is her fucking hands. I used to go around and imitate the way she held her hands. I cannot see that bitch in my mind. All I can see is her goddamn hands. What would that mean? Is there a sexual thing about being attracted to hands? Rubbing my arms... she was making a deal with me about that exam ... and I backed out of the door to get away from her. She repulsed me. I recall they feeling of revulsion.

The next day I came back into the classroom to take the fucking exam and she accused me of cheating. Not only did she accuse me of it, she made me stand up right in front of the whole goddamn class and accused me of it. She shamed me, berated me, and shamed me. Until everybody in the room was petrified. They were quiet, very quiet. Son of a bitch, what a time I had... people would never believe it.

Sixth grade. I got the meanest fucking goddamn teacher that ever lived on earth. A man. First male teacher I had, and he was a fucking outrage. He tried to throw me out of the upstairs assembly room window. He shoved me up, and had me half out of the assembly room window. I kicked him in the balls, and got run down to the principals office, and got my ass beat. I got a whaling.

I got so fed up that I ended up leaving. I ran away. I run off. I got me a rich kid's son, a horse's ass in town, and I said "We're gonna be like Huckleberry Finn, we're gonna go down the Mississippi. I talked that silly assed kid into going down the Mississippi. Shit, we'd have to go five hundred miles to find the Mississippi. So we loaded our asses on a freight car. We went ninety-one miles and ended up in Logansport, Indiana at my aunts house. And my aunt was such a bitch, such a dear, sweet bitch. We only stopped in there to get some sandwiches cause we'd run out. I was going somewhere and I wasn't going to fuck around in Logansport.

She called the goddamn police on us. Scared the living shit out of us— said they were going to send us to reform school. I begin to really hate the police then. They were nasty sons of bitches. And they took this kid with me... you know, that's a strange thing about character, who knows what makes a revolutionary... I hated those cops, but what I hated them for the most is they took this kid with me... Elliot... parents were raising hell. Now here's this family, well-to-do, and do you know they turned that kid over to the juvenile authorities? Their own kid. And I had that on my conscience. They shipped him away, over to some uncle. He wrote me later and said things were O.K. So I said to ther "I'm not going back to Lynn. I won't go back there." So I stayed with my aunt. Finally she got sick in the fucking hospital and she was tired of me, so she sent me on a bus, back to Lynn. My mother never came, and my dad wouldn't come. he tried to kill me you know, threw me off a bridge, trying to drown me...

So I'm back in Lynn and it's still the sixth grade. I was considered the big, bad, mean motherfucker. I'd damn near killed another rich kid-- almost drowned him, and the reputation of that followed me for a long time. A kid named Mitchell. I held him down under water, and damned near drowned him. He was a mean fucker, a bully. He'd hold peoples heads under water. He made a mistake when he tried it with me. I got free and went right for his throat. They had to get me off of him because he was sure as hell gonna be one drowned fucker. I was going to kill him. Life was miserable anyway, so I thought why not kill this son of a bitch? A miserable prick.

It's hard for me to remember a lot of this shit--it's so repressed, and it's so long ago. If you asked me to repeat it tomorrow I couldn't do it. I'm not sure even now I'm being entirely accurate about some of the details, some of the grades. Very, very difficult.

Seventh grade. Tuffy Hunt drowns. Principal steps over by the window in the snow, and says "He fell." Tuffy and I, we'd always go swimming in the cold. I told the crazy fucker never to go alone, because he wasn't as good a swimmer as me. And those kids got him to dare and do it. And then, left him there to drown. A lot of murder goes on beneath the surface. It's a matter of getting by with it, a matter of who gets killed and who does the killing. They come telling me, and they were actually gleeful. They wanted to break us up, break the two of us up.

Overall, people were glad Tuffy was dead. Because Tuffy and me-- we may not have been respectable, but we could run the streets. We had the gangs and even our own baseball team. I felt sorry for Tuffy. He was a terribly, terribly ugly kid. Fat, too. Fat as could be. But if we'd get into a fight we could whip fifteen. We were bitter enemies for the first few years. Until I whipped him-- the law of the jungle you know. And then Tuffy liked me. I was the leader of the gang, but he was a close helper. I was really weakened when I lost him. I saw early, that if you want to help people, you've got to keep together as a group-- ain't no other way, because the world is a goddam jungle. I suppose that's why that carried on over. Shit, I took care of my gang. "Ad parties for them. We were never invited to any of the socialite affairs-- we were excluded from even school parties. That's how class structured it was-- you didn't go to certain things if you were poor. So we'd have our own parties, and with my clever stealing I put all my gang in style. And they were the motliest crew in the fucking town. I mean they were some bunch. I had the sickest ones, the craziest ones. I mean I had crazies.

One chap, a rich kid named Peters, we got into our gang because people considered him crazy. Now Peter was not, he was not loyal though. One time, the whole town was going crazy over werewolves. Crazy, superstitious town. There was this boyscout meeting being held, and of course we weren't in anything as square as the boy scouts. So I got Peter aside and I trained him and I groomed him. There was a full moon out, just right, and Peter had his hair combed wild, down onto his face. All the boyscouts were there, and he snuck up to the window, and let out the most goddamful, eerie, unreal howl. The meeting was reduced to a shambles in seconds.

I was deeply, deeply alienated as a child. I was considered the trash of the neighborhood. I fell into the category of white trash because my parent's were ostensibly light skinned. My mother was, anyway. They liked my mother less though than my dad because she was so unconventional, and not religious. So the fact that I sought approval so damn much and couldn't get it enabled me to work through that need at a very young age. Finally decided to be true to my own conscience because the frustrations of trying to be accepted, meet the norms, and still not being accepted, going to all the churches and still not being accepted, relieved me at an early age of a lot of the pressures that a lot of people still have to deal with.

MCCARTHY ERA/BEGINNING OF CHURCH CAREER

I was very pro-Jewish because the strongest on the side of Communism were Jews. And then, when the Jews turned against the Soviets, I didn't know what the fuck was going on. Rosenbergs... I was in a coma when the Rosenbergs were being executed. I was ready to die. Infectious hepatitis. My mind was so dia... It was in the summer. Marcie was standing behind a screened partition. Jesus Christ. I kept thinking, "They can't kill these people, they can't kill these people." I'd marched till there were holes in my shoes trying to get petitions. The fucking Pope, we even got the Pope. And their children came up and kissed them through the screen. Oh God, I just died a thousand deaths. I wish I could've died then. Hell you can only have so many revolutionary deaths-- you care for people, you die, you die. So hell, death ain't any problem for me anymore. I was in this goddam miserable coma. I'd drift in and out, and look up at the clock as it ticked away.

"Say, Marcie, are the Rosenbergs dead yet, are they dead yet?"
at "So dear, not yet..."

And I'd drift back... I got so weak. And then, I came out of the last coma, and they'd been executed. I really don't understand why I lived. I really don't honestly know why I lived. I thought, "It's futile." An inhumane system that kills people based on a bunch of scrap paper. Just because they had Communist affiliations. No more had given atomic "secrets" than I had. I hated that system. I wept when I got out of that coma. I wished I had died. I wept till those goddam sheets were just soaked. So someplace along the line I quit crying. Don't cry anymore.

I'm wandering down the street, stopped at a used car lot, and I meet a man. And I find out he's a Methodist Superintendent. And I think, "Oh shit, a religious nut." So I started knocking the church, just raising hell. He said, "Why don't you come to my office?" Here I am, raving against the church, knocking the church, ridiculing God, all this shit and he says "why don't you come to my office?" I thought, "You fucker. I'm not coming to your goddamn office." But I did. For some instinctive reason I did. He said, "I want you to take a church." I said, "You giving me a church? I don't believe in anything. I'm a revolutionarily." He said, "Why don't you take a church, why don't you take a church?" And he appointed me, a fucking Communist to a goddamn church. And I didn't even meet his through the Party. I met him in a fucking used car lot.

This was 1953 I think. Mc Carthyism... Whatever, I took this goddamn church as a Communist who believed in nothing—that's how religious I was (and still am). And I preached to Marcelaine. I said, "What am I going to do with this goddamn thing? This guy, he's obviously, obviously a Communist or at least sympathetic and he wants me to do something with this goddamn church." That's how the church wandered onto it. The church fell in my lap. He's the one who started it. I hope he's dead. Martin was his name. He did die, yeah, he died.

I took this church. I remember I thought I was going to die a thousand deaths when I got up in that pulpit. Preaching the first day, I had the people in turmoil. Integration. The first day I had this little old lady, always one little old lady who runs things. I can't remember her name, but she was all upset with me and she complained to Martin and Martin upheld me. On it went. I finally brought Blacks into the church. Martin backed me up, and then, suddenly, he was removed. His successor was C.T. Alexander. He was much the—uh—opposite of Martin. Like night from day. And I'm going on with this bullshit, bringing all these people in—and losing all the old timers, except that one old bitch who's still hanging in there.

And finally I thought, "I've got to get rid of these old prude headed bastards." So I toyed with Pentacostalist. They seemed to be more accepting of Blacks you know; at least I could get them to accept integration. Integration was a big, big issue with me. An inclusive congregation, that was the first big issue. What a hell of a battle that was. I thought, "I'll never make a revolution—I can't even get these fuckers to sit together, much less get to any Communist philosophy. There's no way I'm going to politicize these fuckers if I can't get them to sit together." And it was a hell of a job. I'd get these Pentacostals in and the Methodists would leave. C.T. Alexander said, "What is going on over there?" Called me and asked me. I thought, "Piss on you man. You didn't put me into this church, and I'm not about to let me put you out." So I conspired with the whole goddamn church to withdraw from the Methodist denomination, which had never been done in the Methodist church, at least not in Indiana. I got a whole bunch of people together to vote the goddamn church out of the conference and named it another church. They gave me two weeks notice that this church is owned by the denomination and I'd have to vacate. And we gave them a petition back saying "Get Lost." And it was a stand-off. First time in history, Methodist denomination. They had to sign the goddamn paragonage over to me because I'd bought it out from under them. Church was nothing, a handful of old bigots until I brought in some Blacks.

And that's how the goddamn religious career got rolling. I was preaching integration, against war, mixing in a little Pentacostal crap—they're all shouting and hollering and raising hell—and I'm preaching integration, against war, and throwing in some Communist philosophy. Got a bunch of Pentacostals in there and they were going crazy—because they hated integration, Communism, and people who preached against war. It was a circus. So the Methodists saw it as a weak moment and they told us to get our ass out. So I pulled out the song books, and damn near had the benches out, when the police came and said "You can't take this." I said, "I paid for it, goddamn it!" They wouldn't let me take the organ. Nearly got away with it, though.

So I moved up to a Seventh Day Baptist Church. And there I heard all these healers, and I thought, "If these sons of bitches can do it, then I can do it too." And I tried my first feat of healing. I don't remember how. Didn't work out too well. But I kept watching those healers. I thought, "These assholes. Doing nothing with this thing." I couldn't see nobody healed. But crowds coming... So I thought that there must be a way that you could do this for good, that you can get the crowd, get some money, and do some good with it.

Ended up in Columbus, Indiana, trying my best to get started along those lines and I wasn't getting very far. I recall a little old lady, she was in white, one service, all in white—that's the way those Holiness people dressed in those days. She called me up to her and said, "I perceive that you are a prophet that shall go around the world, you shall be heard around the world. And tonight ye shall begin your ministry."

I thought, "Okay honey, you said it." I didn't know what the fuck she was talking about. I got up there that night in the pulpit, because, you know, she said that night I was gonna begin my ministry. I got up in that damn pulpit, and my mouth wouldn't open.

I closed my eyes. And all this shit flies through my mind and I call it out. And I had people coming up—screaming and hollering. The first time (Laura McQueen was there, she could tell you about it) I had people screaming and hollering, and the second night—you couldn't get in the goddamn building. And I'd just call people out and they'd get healed of everything. Much like I do now, with help, but then I didn't have no help. Really. Nothing. Just close my eyes... and call. Such a drain. It got so heavy. Jesus Christ. I thought, "I can't stand this." Wasn't too long before I started taking little notes. For years and years it was me, and my gift, and whatever I could take down. Until Patty came along. That was , hell, twelve, thirteen years ago. From 1954 til Patty came, about eleven years, eleven solid years of that shit, I carried it. And I carried it alright. Facked the biggest auditoriums in Indiana and Ohio. I should've left it that way. But I'd've been dead. People pass growths and then by aught of hand I started doing it— and that would trigger others to get healed. It was a kind of catalyst process, to build faith. But I never had anybody help me. Not even Harrie. "Harrie never knew there was one thing but pure reality." Carried it entirely by myself. Should've kept it that way. Didn't trust people. It wasn't days before people were saying "You're Jesus Christ." Hell, it didn't make me believe in a loving Deity anymore than before, I can tell you that. But people gave me more bullshit. "You're Jesus Christ." Hell, it didn't make any difference to me, one way or the other. I didn't know how to explain how people got healed of every goddamn thing under the sun, that's for sure. Or apparently got healed. How long it lasted I don't know. But shit, there are people with me right now who got healed fifteen, twenty years ago, and are still O.K. So I can't explain it. I can heal, I know that. But how it works, shit, I don't know. But some of it wouldn't be by any psychic thing—I'd say "Get out of that wheelchair." I was a dogged person; I'd fight every goddamn case. I was different from every other healer because I wouldn't ignore the hardship cases. I'd fill the goddamn places. Places would be packed. Be so stacked you couldn't get in, climbing in the windows. You've never seen crowds like it in our day. Be a thousand outside. Crawling through the window. One woman climbed through a window to be healed. Crippled woman.

But you see, nobody gives a shit as long as you don't become political. And I could get the crowds together, but I couldn't get them politicized. Could not get the cadre of people together politically. Never misused the money. Money always went for good causes. Went for some fucking strange causes too. Very early. I had treasurers channel money to places where they didn't know what the hell they were doing. I personally always kept out of that money business. Never had a thing to do with the money. Sent money through a church foundation and then on to help some of the people on trial for political reasons. I got money to them. And unknowns—I messed with the unknowns who were being persecuted. I'd go through intricate kind of ways to do it. Always had an ability to get money together. I remember one time I was buying a church—a synagogue really.

I said, "How about if I can pay this off in a year, you don't charge any interest?" They laughed. "Don't think you could do that sir." But they agreed to it, as a kind of joke. Thought I was crazy, I guess. So I paid the goddamn thing off— one day before the year was up. They weren't aggravated. On the contrary, I think they kind of admired it. I paid the thing off, and I beat the goddamn roads to do it. Held meetings in every goddamn place under the sun. I'd hold meetings in every goddamn place under the sun. I'd hold a meeting in Ohio, travel to some other town, and hold one at night. Three meetings a day in some places. Three meetings on Sunday and beat the roads Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Get home; I'd drag ass home about nine o'clock Sunday. Sometimes it got so bad on me physically that I'd strap my wrist to the side of a car door, and Jack Bea would drive the car at a running pace, so I'd be forced to run along side the car—to get my system back in balance, get me going again. I'm amazed I'm alive today.

STEPHANIE'S DEATH

When I lost my child, when I lost Stephanie— and no child could be more dear to me than she was... its very painful to recall this. I think she felt there was something very, very limited in her existence because the day she died, her last day, she kept saying, "Ok- Bok needs a Mommy and Daddy" and she'd never once mentioned her sister Ok-Bok before. I didn't know anything about Ok-bok. I didn't know a fucking thing about Ok-bok.

"Ok-bok needs a Mommy and Daddy". Persisted and persisted... Stephanie. Don-Sou-na. We were very close, very close. She'd lost everyone else in her young life. When I'd go on a speaking tour I'd have to call her every night, let her know I'd be back, talk to her. Anyway, that night we'd taken a group of children to the zoo, and that night we were staying for a meeting where I would speak. A nightmare, a nightmare...

.. Ecstic service. The whole goddamn service was ecstic. Habel asked for a song. Howabel never asked for a song, never. She was a fine woman—my right arm in those days. Nineteen fifty-nine. So that night she said, "I want to sing 'On up the Road'".

So we sang the song:
 "On up the road
 Far in the distance
 I saw a light, shining in the night...
 Then I knew..."

And the last lines were something about God or Jesus, but utterly final—like the end of everything. Okay. Then a weird thing happened. I stopped at the end of the song, and I called out Habel's name. Habel, instead of doing what she always does, just rushes on and rushes out the door. She didn't respond to my call, she seemed almost moody, which was unlike her. And as she was leaving, I shouted out the name of a town, a name that meant nothing to me. It turned out to be the name of the town where the death case...

The most tragic automobile accident. Horrible, tragic accident. Of all the sad part, a young man, a social activist seminarian, he's picked up just a few hundred yards down the road by this drunk and this drunk goes on the wrong side of the road and hits Habel head on and scatters my people all over the highway. Killed Habel instantly. Killed Dallas who was another strong Black woman, and it was so hard to get Blacks to join back then. And then there was a young woman who taught Sunday school and she gets wiped out. Her child is alive and I tried to take care of her but the family came and took her away—primarily because of prejudice.

And my Con-Sou-na...

I had exchanged pulpits with a man named Wilson. He went on and I stayed at the church that night. The minister's wife came to me in the middle of the night and said she'd got a call that "people were dead and dying" out there in the middle of the highway. That was it. No further explanation. Just "people were dead and dying." In the middle of nowhere, almost a hundred miles away. Get in a car.

Another strange thing. You know, Marcie is not given to psychic experiences, not at all. But that night she awakened sharply, in the middle of the night, and the rain was falling down hard, and Stephanie was beating at the summer porch window... She swore it was Stephanie, but of course it couldn't have been. We figured out later that it happened at the same time the accident was taking place, almost a hundred miles away.

Marcie is not given to that shit. "Marcie would always play it straight—she was never given to embellishment, even for the sake of dynamism. Anything "Marcie would tell you—it happened that way. Especially in these days—straight as a die.

So I get this message and I try to find a car. No one would give me a car, but finally I get this fucking beat up old car. The gears wouldn't work right, wouldn't hardly shift. I'm rolling down the road, a wooded area, one of the lesser travelled parts of the highway. I wouldn't have taken that road, but that was the road they had taken, and I figure I've got to go that way, because I don't know if they're laying in a ditch or what the hell has happened. And up comes by the side of my car a man, driving a car, and here he is... wait. I beg your pardon, I wasn't driving the car, the minister's wife was driving the car, and I was trying to lay back. On god, life is like a torture chamber... I look over and I see this guy in the car next to us with his dick out the window. And they pull up closer, and try to bump us off the road. My daughter Agnes is up too, and I think "Uh-oh. Two women..." They pull in front of us, and I see—no license plate. I thought "We're up shit creek. These fuckers mean business."

Some way I shifted myself under this minister's wife, and shifted her over, and I took over this goddamn car. And for forty fucking miles those miserable fuckers tried to drive me off the road, into a ditch, side by side, running ninety miles an hour, trying to get to people who were lying out dead on a road. I thought, this is the meanest crassest goddamn universe... and then a voice kind of passed through my mind, sounded a bit like Habel's voice: "There are things worse than dying, aren't there, Jim." I remember that, most distinctly, and I remember reflecting, in the middle of this hell: "Well, yeah. That's right. There are things a lot worse than just dying..."

These pricks beat the side of the car, kept it up and kept it up. Finally though, they get in front of me and I think I can't fight anymore. They were determined to rape those women, and probably kill them and me as well. It was obvious. No license plate. They finally get in front of me, pull their car sideways, and block the road in front. And I don't know what the fuck I am to do. We're in the middle of nowhere, so I yanked that car in reverse and I must've gone a fucking mile, then chasing right after me... I get to this little gravel road, I don't know where it goes, shit, anywhere, anywhere to get off that road... I turned up that road and just at that time the car was coming towards me. There must've been four or five of them, weird pricks, have their dicks hanging out with hard-ons, out the car window.

Well, I run up that fucking goddamn road, and I think I'm never gonna get out of this, and finally up on my right I see a little house. No lights, but I see a car. So I run up behind that car, and a couple of kids are there, petting. I figure I got to get in there, I got to do something or those weirdos are gonna find us sure as hell in the middle of nowhere. I told the girls to run, and hide nearby, and keep silent.

These two kids. I'm telling them as fast as I can blurt it out that these guys behind us are killers, that they're gonna rape these two women and I got to get in that house

"Mother'll be upset if we let you in."

I said, "I don't give a goddamn if you're mother will be upset. I don't give a fuck. I am going into that house. I ring the doorbell and the bitch wouldn't let me in. And so I stood there, close to the shadows, and I figure, if I stay here long enough— because the bitch had lit up the house— and if I stood like paste to the door, in the shadow, those pricks just maybe could not see me from the driveway, and they'd think I was in the house. They pulled away, backed up for a while down the road— hesitating. I stayed there interminably. They backed up more and more, until I saw them finally make a turn down the road to the main highway, and drift slowly down that road...

I get in the car with the women and I run that car through the goddamndest series of back roads, dirt roads, that you ever saw, and finally got back to that highway. Fortunately, I'd eluded them. I lived in frenzied fear that when I hit the highway those pricks would be there again— but they weren't.

We drive on and I finally get to the scene of the accident and everyone's gone by now. Just glass and blood, glass and blood all over the road. I go on to the hospital, and this cold, cold bitch of a nurse says, "Your daughter's dead. All dead except one child. But it's not your child. The Oriental child is dead." I raced my ass home, trying to get there before the hospital called to let my wife and mother know. But the fucking hospital had called before I got there...

Then all the fuckers dropping in, dropping in— that's a lifetime story, a lifetime story— so I get there and all the people are coming, saying they're gonna do this and that for us, none of which they ever did of course. And then the question comes up who's going to take care of the remains? I started thinking, and then I remembered that there was a policy that you couldn't bury black people in white cemeteries. So I got to checking it out, and sure as fuck, no cemetery would take Jews or Blacks. That was in 1959. So I said, "well I'm not going with the rest of you folk. You can have your damn funeral but I'm not going. I'm going someplace where people of any race can be buried." So I went to a Black mortician and I'll be goddamned if he wouldn't handle it. Didn't take whites or Asians. I went from place to place. No one would do it.

I said, "Jesus Christ, what am I going to do?"

"Well you're going to bury her that's what you're going to do" one of them said, "that's the law."

I said, "Well, that may be, but I'm not going to bury her until I can bury her by my principles."

My wife was sure having a hard time with all of this. I felt all this pull, you know, of what I was putting my wife through. But she backed me, she finally saw the crassness, the crudeness of it all. Cemetery after motherfucking cemetery. Never could find a fucking cemetery. All we found finally was a low part of a hill, half underwater. I was so fucking mad, I wasn't going to bury the child. I was furious. I was ready to do the whole fucking system in. I finally said, "O.K. I'm Black." They said, "You can't do that." I said, "Well goddamnit you're gonna bury my child there, and you're gonna give me all the plots there, because if that's where you put minority people and Jews, if that's where you put them then that's where we all go— down at the bottom of the hill. And luck would have it that the day of the burial its raining cats and dogs and the fucking cemetery is half-flooded. We lowered her into a goddamn hole that looked like a pool. Couldn't even get her in properly. Oh shit, it was cruel, cruel. That fucking vault, the water half-filling it. I pulled Marceline back because I knew there was no use to stand there and watch that. There was no way they were ever gonna get the water out of that mess. The whole graveyard was standing in water.

And then at the funeral, all these vultures came running through. People who hated me but who had just come to see my pain. I expect they didn't come to the funeral parlor because it was in a Black neighborhood. I had to find the poorest damn Black mortician, because he was the only one who would take the child. Some of them, in all fairness, were not prejudiced, but they were fearful of crossing that color line. That unseen line... they were afraid, afraid they'd lose their business.

But these white religious folk come ripping in there and my wife is half-dead. She's laying out there herself practically. And this minister's wife says to her, "how don't worry, you can always have another." I guess she was trying to be comforting, but Jesus, it was so cold. Like you could exchange your child like an item on a shelf. Lose one, buy another... I thought, "I'm gonna kill her." But then I remembered On-on-na had said, "Ok-bok needs a Mommy and Daddy." So I went to the goddamn old pay phone in the hall and I get a hold of the radio-gran office, and they give me all kinds of shit and I raise hell.

"What's this Ok-Bok? How do you spell Ok-bok?"

"I don't know how to spell it, goddamn it."

But I sent the thing to the orphanage in Korea and finally I got an answer, and that's how I got Susanne. The last thing my child said to me, the last thing, "Ok-bok needs

a Mommy and Daddy." I'd spent the day shopping with her, and she kept telling me, over and over, all the goddamn day... She had never mentioned it before, and of course she never could after that night.

That's just one, one little episode in my life. And goddamn it, these bastards that are after us now, they must know it. They must know I'm decent. Shit that's probably why they want to kill me. They see I've got all these people here, pretty well organized, and I won't bend. We all won't.

A lot of little incidents. The time I walk into the Hawthorne restaurant with my family, my interracial family, and we wait and wait, and I think—"ah-ha." So I raised hell, and we get a table and they salt our fucking food until we can't hardly eat it. I called a demonstration and said, on T.V., that I was going to fast until that place started serving food to everyone. Three days later, the place was integrated.

Black policeman once harassed me when I was on the Human Rights Commission. I was at the intersection of 38th and Meridian. Turning on a yellow light. And this cop pulls up, sirens screaming. He said, "Oh, it's Rev. Jones." Nasty, abusive tone. Started really being nasty. I said, "You are outrageous. Why do you let yourself play a role for the system like this?" he calls in so many goddamn... I mean I never seen so many goddamn police cars come screeching in from everywhere in all my life. He said I was threatening an officer. I never said shit to him but that one statement. I finally raised so much hell that they dropped that thing and I didn't have to even pay the ticket.

DECEMBER 9 1977. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS WERE MADE TO THE ENTIRE JONESTOWN COMMUNITY A FEW HOURS AFTER THE DEATH OF LYNETTA JONES, JIM'S MOTHER.

I don't expect you to feel towards my mother as I did. It's not sentimental because of her being my mother, because the fact that she's dead doesn't change that I resent her for bringing me into the world. But back in 1952 or so, when I was working with the Communist Party in Indiana, she stood up so bravely, without any political awareness, when the FBI had three guys standing, hovering over her, firing questions at her for hours about me and my activities. One question after another. And each and every time she'd answer: "I refuse to answer on the grounds that it might tend to incriminate me."

But I know Lynetta. She wasn't thinking about the grounds that might tend to incriminate her—she was scared shitless that it might incriminate her son. I guess some way she knew from the time I was very young that I was, well, —different. Outspoken. Honest, if it doesn't sound too egotistical to say it. Even though I overthrew God, overthrew religion, denounced the bible, cursed the old traditions, said the United States was rotten, fascist. God how much of a weight that was on a woman who always believed in standing and saluting the flag. She knew that Jim Jones was decent. She followed me in spite of the fact that it cost her her job, her prestige. She followed me in spite of the fact that I went against everything she ever knew. But at that moment, she knew Jim Jones was right and the FBI was wrong. Even though she didn't understand a word of what Jim Jones was saying or what he was standing for.

It was hours they kept at her, berating her in front of all her fellow employees..

"You're a Commie. That's Commie talk." In those days no one dared use the Fifth Amendment, because to use the Fifth Amendment was tantamount to an admission that you were a Communist. You couldn't use the Constitution. If you talked about the Bill of Rights, if you talked about civil rights you were a Communist. And that dark era is re-appearing again. Over and over again our friends, our supporters say that it's all happening over again. It was certainly said by Lt. Governor Dymally. He's another strange guy. He doesn't know Marxias, he doesn't know Leninias— but he sure as hell knows something about loyalty. He's facing an election year, too. He certainly is a brave man, a man of character. In his way, maybe he knows he's going to be run out of the country someday. Whatever, he's shown the most support, the deepest kind of loyalty of all. Even some of the Communists—they're careful. But not Nerv Dymally. He's a good man.

Anyway, all through that interrogation, Lynetta just kept it up. Wouldn't answer anything. I remember when I saw her that night she was so hoarse, she couldn't even talk. She whispered. She said, "Son, what have you been up to? They've been after me all day long..."

I told her, and she cried. I said, "I'm going to have to leave, because no doubt they'll be looking for me."

So I went away in hiding for several weeks. But what a brave woman she was. And as I looked down on her a moment ago, I don't know that it helps, perhaps it does. Euphysma... From the time I was four or five years of age I can remember telling her "Moa, why don't you quit smoking, it's gonna kill you." But it got a hold of her and she smoked for well over half a century. It's a horrible disease. Never can get enough air. Two nights ago, she had a stroke. Tongue hanging out, saliva flowing down her face. She couldn't move her eye. She couldn't talk, move her side. I remember one thing she said to me: "Oh, God, I hope I never live to be paralysed." And I mustered whatever will I had and she did come out of that stroke. Don't ask me how. I don't have a formula. Sheer will, and maybe something we don't yet understand. I don't know.

I wish you could've known her when she was younger. She would champion every poor

person, Black or white. One time they even accused her of having an affair with a filthy old vagabond. Salina Hutcherson. He was so ugly and dirty, nobody on earth wanted him. They wanted him run out of town. Mom would go by and give him baths--- he was old enough to be her grandfather--- bring him things, take him for walks. She purposely stayed all night with him once, just so they'd tell that rumor about her. One time she put a flower in his lapel, and walked arm in arm with him down the street... She did have that kind of spunk. Distinct contradiction in her personality---not like the usual flag waver, because she could sure break with tradition, with precedent. And she went through many years of it.

It was my own church that finally broke her back. Outgoing she was---she gave of herself. But then I went away to South America to hunt for a place, because years ago I knew there was no place for Third World people, for an interracial organization, in the United States. So I went to Brazil, looking for a place. And while I was there I left a nursing home that I had built and established with my own money---not a dime of church funds. I left it to be managed by my in-laws. My father-in-law was a staunch Republican. Anyway they had this rest home of mine and they ran it almost into financial destruction. From the place where I was in Brazil I finally got the message home by telephone and said, "Look. For God's sake let my mother get involved. She knows how to make a dollar go." I learned that from her too, you can be sure I learned how to make a dollar stretch and it's a damn good thing, or we wouldn't all be eating right now. We have a security that most in the world don't have---we know for a certainty that we all will eat for the next six months, and that's reassuring if you've ever been hungry. Mom taught me, she drilled me on stretching a dollar and I hated it. But it was a valuable lesson to learn. Ever if you hate me, one day, maybe after I'm gone, you'll know how important it is to save to build something worthwhile.

So my mother took a hold of the place and made some money, sent some extra money down to Brazil, where I was looking around for some land where I could build something for my family, and maybe take a few others as well. The seams came over. It looked like even in those days I might get it started, might get it off. Anyway, in the midst of all this, my mother-in-law became jealous. And she took it out, perhaps unconsciously by reporting my mother for some technical infractions--- and put the business under investigation, and tied up all the funds. Damn near starved us out in Brazil. Again my mother fought on, held on, fought the health department, stood her ground, and finally won and kept the place. I got back in time to save the building. Out of that business came some of the money that started the work in California.

I don't glorify her, but still I can see that many in the church were responsible for her because the whole church in Indiana had lined up against her in her fight for her son, and his kids, and the few whom he was trying to keep together. And they discredited her, and put her through hell, and it was hard for her ever to have faith in people after that. She saw people leave me, leave the church, take over the church in Indiana while I was away. I got it back, but with hardly anybody in it. Just a few.

There were little, selfish moments that I would've liked to see differently, but others can tell you how, even at the end, a basic goodness burned in her soul. She turned more money over to this cause than any other human being. All she had. Every dime, her eccentricities I can face, and her strengths I can see. I don't believe in glorifying the dead. But it took a lot out of me. Because you see, she made it possible for you to be here. The ones of you who were brought out of jail, or who had friends, relatives who were brought out of jail--- she made it possible. Because if she hadn't faced up to the FBI that day, when she didn't know Communism from apple cider... They hassled her, and they jeered at her, and they did it in front of the whole shop, just to humiliate her.

"You're a Communist!"

"I refuse to answer..."

She lost her position as a shop stewardess. When they go through with embarrassing her in front of all those people, that was the end of her union career. Never again would anyone trust Lynetta Jones because the FBI had come and asked her questions. And in America, if the FBI asks you questions, or if you are arrested, or if the newspaper attacks you, you are guilty. That's why I'm glad to be out of there, because the same old scenario is starting over again, same old painful scenario. How long she will be laying there, I don't know, but as I said, if you want to, some that knew her, some that liked her, you can go by and take a last look---because she looks very well.

She was all I had... it wasn't much at times, because she was so drained herself, working two jobs, but she was all I had. My dad was drunk most of the time. He was a difficult person, but he had been badly gassed in World War I and it affected him greatly. He was one of the worst gas victims you ever want to see, and it affected him emotionally as well as physically.

In those growing up years my mom was the difference between bread and butter and going hungry. I think we all cry because we wish we could've given more love

to the people that we know we love. She loved the jungle so much, never did get but one time close to it. She loved the jungle; she grew up in a kind of jungle.

But in the end there was too much agony. It was just too much agony, she couldn't get her breath...ob God, you don't know how good somebody is until they're gone. (crying) For that I cry for the human race. I really cry for the human race. We don't know how good people are till they're gone...

What the hell would you have without Communism? I mean, what the fuck would you have? Life is full of pain, and there's only one chance of getting rid of some of the pain; that's through Communist philosophy. I don't know where else the hell you'd go. Sure as hell wouldn't want to end up like some of those selfish pigs I see in the system.

Mom was a leader...you guys would've liked her. People would try to fuck her over and shëld back them off. The horror, the pain of her death. But if out of it I can do something. I sat and talked with Stephan this ^{day} after her death with more depth than ever before. And I thought, "This is very good, to know how he thinks. At least this has come out of the awful agony I feel of missing that sharp mind..." So if you'd like, go by and take a last look. Because she looks very well, very well indeed.

BRAZIL (From some tapes made in Oct. 1977)

I went down to Brazil to look for refuge for some of my people, or a place for people to find refuge to do absolutely revolutionary things. Brazil... One day, we got to go to the beach, and we swam. I had my kids, and we were playing in the water. It was the closest thing to a moment of freedom, sheer freedom from worry. Until I looked up, over Copacabana, and saw the hills. Tier after tier of shanties put together with the barest of wood, cartons, cardboard, that would always wash out at any major rain. I remember at one time there were several thousand washed down that way, many, many to their deaths.

Brazil was a painful chapter in my life. I remember catching Jimmy when he nearly fell out of the seventh floor window. What goes through your head at times like that. I remember thinking, "Well, being Black in America has been so rough on him, and to have to go back there, maybe I'm doing him a disservice..." But grabbed I did, of course, just before he would've fallen seven stories to his death.

Interracial mixture of my family and my church I felt was just fundamentally at odds with the capitalist development in the U.S. The thermonuclear reality was there, too. I thought, "How could people be mad enough to make such weapons and then sane enough not to use them?" I didn't give a damn about living, but I thought children should be given a chance. The hemispheres were somewhat separate in wind currents and in that period there was some chance of more likelihood of survival. And at that time Brazil seemed to be moving on a course of social democracy. Guilar was progressive, but I knew something was up in Brazil, shortly after I was there, because Quadros, who was a people's hero of sorts, resigned without notice and left the country. It was a joint threat from the military and the CIA, and Quadros did not want to see that brutal repression introduced to Brazilians because he did not think there would be any resistance.

While I was in Brazil I did a lot of humanitarian work. Orphanage, two orphanages. I was feeding, getting the food and other supplies to them. Always short of needs and supplies and I had an ability to get that kind of thing together. That led to that awful time when it looked like all my money was cut off. Two interesting happenings at the same time-- my own relatives got into a feud and tied up the finances that belonged to me and my business. And then our savings. A man that we trusted, seemed to be a humanitarian, but when we later found out was a criminal who had escaped from America, had taken our savings as preparation to putting them in some money investments. I got the money back by taking him by the nap of the neck and threatening to throw him out of a fourth story window. Wasn't exactly a legal procedure. I ran into his apartment, grabbed him by the neck and smashed his against the wall and said, "You give me my money back or you go out the fucking window."

But in the meantime, before that, I had to scrape it together. That's where the Ambassador's wife came in. She took a shine to me, and we had all those kids to feed. They were looking forward to it, the food, and there was no money. The Brazilians had tried to make a go of this orphanage and school but they didn't have any resources, and I became the principal resource. So this Ambassador's wife offered me a pile of money if I'd fuck her, so I did.

There is nothing to compare with the kind of revulsion you feel when you're lying next to someone you loathe. And I loathed her, and everything she stood for--the arrogance of wealth, the racism, the cruelty. I puked afterwards, it was that bad, but I got the money and I bought food and took it to these children. Only I made that bitch go with me so she could see the other side of life. And when these half-starved

Black and Brown children reached out to touch her dress to thank her, she snatched her skirt away lest they contaminate her lily white self... I could've choked her.

Anyway, here I was cut off, couldn't hardly feed our own kids. A few envelopes coming in with a few dollars, but that didn't even pay the rent on the apartment. We had a Brazilian lady staying with us because she was not able to work. She wanted to, but there was no work. Misery, misery personified. Two of her sons shot down by the police.

There was nothing more I could do there, nothing more. Brazil was apathetic, the people were apathetic, and the likelihood of the emergence of a military junta was strong. Got out of there just in time. "After, this lady who took care of our cat wrote and said the right wing police came by the school, asking what happened to that missionary Jones. It was the right wing cops who did their own vigilante work. They offed people from the left, hundreds and hundreds. Took justice in their own hands and the people who they felt to meet justice were invariably revolutionaries. And I'd given assistance to various people, underground people. Got them--uh--things, tangible assistance so they could defend themselves, defend their lives. And I preached Communism openly.

I had a colonel whom I was instructing in English, and he wanted to know more and more. He was so bourgeois that I didn't think he was an agent. I think he was enchanted by our family, and he began to do little things for our children, take them out on rides-- we had no car of course. He seemed fascinated by the fact that people would line up at my door for food, we had a food line a block long. We'd get the food, and some we'd take to people, and some they'd line up for. He seemed to be turned on to that, so I began to preach his Communism. As far as I know, he never turned me in unless it was when the military dictatorship took over. At that point maybe he felt so much pressure that he had to. It was never easy for him to accept Communism, needless to say, he put up every kind of argument, but eventually he admitted that it was the humane solution but that he himself couldn't live under it, you know how that goes... He seemed at the bottom a basically decent human soul so I kind of doubt that he ever turned me in.

It was getting more and more right wing all the time in the military. It was obvious. I was called one time by a businessman that I knew and he said, "Come over here, I want you to see what's going on at the Embassy." So I went over to the U.S. Embassy, and stood a ways off where I had a good view of one of the entrances, and the Brazilian military leaders were coming and going, coming and going in a steady stream. The junta was gathering... The man I was with said, "Dark clouds are gathering over Brazil. There's a real takeover to be made shortly." He sure as hell knew what he was talking about... And I got out of there just in time. I remember leaving, at the airport, wondering whether I would get in trouble for what I'd been doing, revolutionary-wise, in Brazil, when I got back to the States. The indecision of deciding whether to go or whether to stay had me so traumatized that I thought my health would be seriously affected. It was awful. Duty calling me to stay--maybe. Yet, I'm a foreigner, little I could do, Brazilians beginning to become apologists, saying they were afraid or didn't want to get involved. Kennedy was just murdered, and it looked to me like fascism might be about to take over the country. And it would be better for me to fight fascism in my own country, rather than Brazil, where my roots were not that well established, and my following wasn't that extensive. It was a mess. But that was the decision. And I remember the anxiety when we were about to land in the U.S., and I thought I would be framed, because, you know, I didn't just hand out food in Brazil.

I was clearly aware that agencies of the U.S. government followed and pursued your activities. One thing stands out clearly, although I know it's easy to get caught up in phantasms. Questions were asked at places I had visited, and one Brazilian family was questioned extensively about my activities by AID officials. AID must've played a significant role in CIA activities.

Brazil was a place of such desperate poverty, but it was a strange thing for fascists to take over in Brazil, fascism of such a brutal nature. People themselves had a streak of real kindness. Kidnappers would invariably be caught because they'd always be calling up the families of the victims, asking what to feed the kid and at what time. And if a fight would break out in the street, a whole crowd would rush in to break it up. Fighting seemed to be deeply offensive. Never had had a violent revolution. They had Vargas who was considered a dictator, but a great friend of the people, and he did some benevolent things for people in terms of sanctuary. But in all those changeovers there never was a bloodbath. So the Brazilians just had to be trained from the outside, from the U.S., to become so brutal in their torture methodology. It was obviously imported.

And then there was one guy that I knew growing up in Richmond, a cruel, cruel person, even as a kid, a vicious racist--Dan Mitrone. I'd heard of his nefarious activities in Bella Horosonte, and I thought "I'll case this man out." I wasn't really inclined to do him in, not me, personally, but I certainly was inclined to inform on his activities to everybody on the left.

But he wouldn't see me. I saw his family and they were arrogantly anti-Brazilian; nasty reactions of the children towards Brazilians, blacks etc. he was supposed to be a traffic advisor. He was known in Bella Horizonte by everybody to be something other than a mere traffic advisor. There were rumors that he participated with the military even then, doing strange things to dissenters. These military people, police people who had their after hours vigilantes-- people disappeared and were killed, tortured. Kitzlone's name would come up frequently. Later he appeared in Uruguay. The Tupacambos claimed he was an advisor on torture and I sure can find that conceivable, although I have no proof of it.

Right after I came back from Brazil, the IRS began hounding me. Rapped on my ass about taxes. Put me through four months of bullshit. Do you know that while I was gone ministers circulated the rumor, and a cheap shit Black paper even printed it--that I had been in an insane asylum for two years! Somebody really ought to write a goddamn book, but I like to be honest in a goddamn book. You see all this cheap shit where people make themselves out to be Saint Jerome or Pope Pius.

You know, I have anxieties about being caught in a bind. My life is not my own. But having been cruelly let down by my own dad-- when I needed things, basic, elementary things, and they were not provided-- I made a covenant that as long as it appeared someone needed me, I wouldn't let them down. I certainly wasn't going to go out of the way to encourage people to need me, but the need from the beginning was very heavy. I hope this doesn't sound, presumptuous. I used to resent it as a youngster because I was always the guy who got the kids together, and I didn't like it because I had to assume so much of the planning. So I died very early to the need for reinforcement from people. I can't even remember when I had a real need for people.

Yeah. It wasn't a matter of whether people appreciated it or whether, when they got through with you they tossed you aside like an orange with all the juice squeezed out. I expected that, but I thought, "I may not be a person of great talent, but one thing I could give was loyalty."

I don't see how you can build a society, in a world with all the warfare-state, I don't see how you can build anything without loyalty, commitment. It's easy to talk about great Marxist ideas but unless they're implemented by basic loyalties to family, an extended family, (and, unfortunately I can see how a person would sell out more extended commitments because of fear for one's own children) unless that's the case, all those theories aren't worth shit. My achilles heel is seeing my stands causing more pain for people after I'm gone. Obviously that's why I came here-- not to start a guerilla war like some of these idiots are suggesting back in the U.S. According to some folks I'm supposed to be a Che Guevara on the South American continent. Shit. I mean, I know something of street warfare, I could've made... I mean I can think of a number of simple little devices that could throw a city into havoc. I could've tore up San Francisco, if I'd wanted to give myself to a futile guerilla activity. Anyway, I came here to give these people some order to their lives. Surely not expecting that there would be total peace. But at least here there are options. In the U.S. racism was very apparently coming to a head-- even back in the early sixties, it was obvious the system wasn't working. America was losing. Not a land of opportunity but just the opposite and getting worse everyday. So that's why I went to Brazil, why I visited Guyana back then too--looking for options.

For years I've felt that the only way you could function in the U.S. was to be compromised. Sellout. And I don't like the way some euphemize "sellout" and call it expediency of the moment or "revolutionary strategy". I found so many people who say, "Well such and such is not opportune for the present, but later it will be..." and I find out soon that they've lost all their principles. I didn't want to risk that happening to those around me. And I certainly didn't see how violence was going to be productive. Revolutionary change was not ready in the United States, and I did not believe the last vestige of monopoly capitalism was going to give up its seat easily. Violence doesn't come easy for me anyway-- I've seen violence misused by all sides of the political spectrum, and by nature I'm non-violent. I'm a reasoning animal. But it's hard to reconcile the duties of a leader or a revolutionary with your own physical and emotional make-up.

Particularly I find not so much the emotional--by nature I'm a depressed person. I've lived with depression for many, many, many years. The problem I find is the simple clinical thing of keeping the body functioning amidst all the tension. Yesterday, when someone poisoned our pigs and I ran down to the piggery, and wrestled with those pigs to hold them down, to get the antidote down their throats, that helped reduce some of the tension. In that moment of crisis, there was a lot of strenuous physical involvement which relieves a lot of tensions and gives the mind a respite. I got my first real, solid rest in a long while, after that, lying, as you know, on the bed in here. Took off the pressure of thinking. Damn conscientious in my thinking. Analyze all the time. If I don't momentarily, I will later reflect, analyze. Leader can't be trusted if he (or she) doesn't know what he's thinking all the damn time, and why...

0-1-B-17

"Before we left Indiana we were getting ourselves--I think we were being targeted back then by some form of organized harassment. IRS bothered us for months, FBI interrogated me. And then we got shot at regularly.

One night there was a regular battle around our home. We were getting shot at and a couple of us were firing back. This was in Indiana just after I resigned as Director of the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights. I had a radio program at the time and I was denouncing the Bible. Got hate calls all the time, threats. This night it went further and our home was being shot at, Molotov cocktails thrown on the roof. The police didn't come. Shooting going on in the inner city, and all this hell raising commotion going on and no cops. It seemed mighty weird at the time. It was a regular battle, and it went on for hours.

Then this Black man comes up on me and tries to stab me. He must've been high because he just grazed my shoulder. Said he was paid five dollars. I thought this is fucking weird. All this shit going on and no cops.

"Get out of here, man" I said. "I'm not going to press charges. Get out of here."

People came out of the house and hustled him into the back. Hardly got the guy in the weeds, hid out, when up screams the cop cars.

One of the pigs says, "I here there's been an attempted murder here. A Black man reported it."

I said, "That's mighty interesting." It was-- we'd just gotten the fucker hid. The timing was too fucking close...

So I think there was some kind of conspiracy there, maybe just police level. It seemed awfully, awfully odd that for all those hours all that shooting was going on-- and not a fucking cop in sight. Called the police and they didn't come. And then, within minutes of this poor bastard's attempt on me, up come the cops--so efficient, so concerned. Shit.

That was a wild night. Patty come up to the door, and no more than got "hi" out of her mouth when--zing! This bullet flies by her head. Phone ringing all night with people talking in tongues, doing what they call reading the devil out of you. And then they'd say "We're gonna kill you." Nice Christians.

I had this broadcast at ten o'clock that night. Came out of the building and a car chased me down the street, tried to run me down. Somebody was after our ass, that's for sure. And just around the same time some preacher stole one of our member's deeds and stirred up some shit trying to get her declared insane so they could take her property--because she was going to sell her property and move with me to California. Had to drag her to three different psychiatrists so her folks wouldn't have her locked up. And the preacher who stole her deeds and engineered that shit had been picked up for sexually violating a three year old. All the charges dropped of course, because he was a good capitalist Christian. So you see, I've been through this shit before. This is like a re-run of Indiana only on a much bigger scale.

Why did we move to California? I guess it had something to do with the syndrome of "Go West." I figured it was the furthest point I could go from Indiana before I fell off into the ocean. There was hope, but there certainly wasn't a blind pollyannishness. I'd heard there was more acceptance there. California was supposed to be more liberal. So we had to go. Things in Indiana were getting too bad. We were painted in a corner. Harassing the hell out of us. Radio station I was on being threatened in all kinds of ways. Bible belt people put such a pressure that advertisers absolutely were going to quit advertising if I were not removed. Until finally the station manager had to say "I'm sorry, but I just have to cancel your program." WBIC I think. I'd been on there for years, but I was getting too political, too much against the Bible. There were some interracial relationships in the church, adoptions, marriages. I really wanted out--bad. But when people showed interest, I couldn't ignore them and go off on my own. I did want to try life for myself and my family---there was a part of me that wanted to do that very, very badly. But no way. It ended up this and that, and I looked around and saw that they were all my family. Humanity is my family. Whatever compells one. And it isn't all guilt. I talk about guilt because Americans won't relate to guilt, have been conditioned to feel no guilt for anything. But there is a profound sense of concern and care for people that I do have, for people that had nobody.

That's the biggest thing that obsesses me about being human-- to be able to cope with loving people and know you can't love them in terms of fulfilling their needs. And if love isn't demonstrated it isn't worth a shit. So there are always needs, problems that are not being met. You can never fully meet people's needs. The people who are helping you are in misery-- so everything is pain to me. If your associates approach your standard of caring, that agonizes you because you know the burden that means for them. And then the people who are so caught up in themselves, well, nothing satisfies them, so they are never happy. People are such strange creatures. You've got to have an air of mystery. Honesty, concern, gentleness, doesn't seem to move them. Most people show their natural self when they're near death. And, as I don't see a long range future, I can be myself. I take it one day at a time.

Anyway, we moved to California, and it wasn't shit time before I felt guilty about it, because there were still kids in the ghetto. The guilt came almost immediately, and I felt out of place almost immediately. I got more and more into metropolitan concerns. It wasn't to whip up money like these pricks are saying in the newspapers. Grace Stoen saying I said "The big money's in town." I could kill her. I never made a statement like that, I never made a statement anything like that. I probably said something like "There's more we can do, and there may be some people who will come and give offerings even if they don't give anything else of their time." But that cold goddamn way she puts stuff. Please, please if you ever write anything about my life at all, please include how much I hate that bitch, how I've always hated her-- the sight of her was sickening to me from the beginning. God how I hated her and her stupid, destructive, juvenile ways. Please include that, though I don't suppose anyone will ever understand it. I hated that bitch from the start. So fucking arrogant and insensitive. She's sat in service, combing her hair in front of her face while Black people poured their hearts out about suffering... I know I will never give her that kid--my kid. I can't let my John go back to her. It would be the grossest of inhumanity.

It wasn't long before I was in the city. Church was going on, people lived their little agrarian lives, but I was involved in the City. I think we'd just barely built our building when I went down to S.F. and held a meeting in Macedonia Baptist Church. But even before Macedonia we were going to Oakland, trying to get in touch with the city. Crowds didn't start coming till I went to Macedonia and tore up that playhouse. I hoped that I could build up in the Redwood Valley are so that seniors and children could come up there. There was always the object of course of bringing in more people so we'd have a larger number and maybe wouldn't get harassed as much. I wanted to get older people and children out of the City-- bring them up every week so they could swim in the pool, get some fresh air. It wasn't mercenary like that bitch says. I figured if we were going to be in the country we could at least share it. I had guests in my home all the time. Children that were there from the city. All through the whole fucking Valley our people did that. And then they began to come up there to live and go to school, even if their families didn't come. All those people without guardianships at first. Shit, it's a lucky thing we made it. So much of our operation was just trust.

But Redwood Valley in its bigotry was almost like a repeat of what we went through in Indiana. Until the very trees in that Valley, and there could be nothing more gorgeous than that Valley, except, perhaps, this jungle, the very trees, everything I looked at, gave me pain. Every tree, every flower. Pain. People coming up behind the property. Caught one of them once. Sneaking up, had a gun. People don't believe any of this shit ever happened.

It's amazing to me that any one who's ever set in my organization can paint me as such a bad guy when I've always talked about my guilt-- where I missed, where I failed. Worried if I missed one person's hand when going down the aisle. If I went to visit one person who was sick, I had to visit them all. I did that for years until I just had to quit it, I couldn't take it. Those people saw that. How can they rationalize that away?

I'd often stressed publicly that I wished I'd never been born. I deeply appreciate those who intellectually reassure me, but sure there are things I would've done over, a lot of things. But I never could live by any other

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guidelines, follow a different political ideal. It's just not right for babies to go to bed hungry. That's unacceptable. And in spite of the factionalism of Communism, and I'm no messianic worshipper-- I don't worship at the altar of any rigid dogmas I believe every society has to find its own solutions--its own socialism. But whatever difficulty we may face with nationalism, with race, in the liberation of oppressed peoples, its better to try for a right goal than to see the selfishness that those who, once believing, have turned their backs on their ideals. And I've never met such cowards and hollow, conniving people, as exemplified by some who have left and who have become so belligerent.