

ELLEN GOODMAN



Drug war stresses enemies, not allies

BOSTON — War-talk again. This time it's the war on drugs, inanimate chemicals that have acquired the human characteristics of an insidious enemy. Fighting words fill the air now like bugle sounds.

The president calls for an "assault on every front." A Democratic critic, Joe Biden, says we need "another D-day, not another Vietnam." A Republican supporter, Bob Dole, says: "It's a war on drugs, not a war on the American taxpayer."

The great massing of the metaphors has begun anew. We hear about attacks and weapons, front lines and battle plans. Even the media "mobilizes" their "arsenal" of war rhetoric to fill the headlines and leads.

What was it last time? The War on Poverty. The War on Waste. The moral equivalent of war. We leap to this language. Nothing but war seems to have the same power to mobilize, to engage people in some communal effort against a perceived enemy, a named threat. Only a declaration of war stirs the juices enough to call us to sacrifice, to get civilians to join up.

THE POWER of the military image remains so enormous in our minds that even pacifists are trapped by its vocabulary. Martin Luther King Jr. used to talk about the army of non-violence, Gandhi about his soldiers. Religious leaders talk about holy crusades as if the model had been a moral mission and not a bloody mess.

To the American ear, surely to the veteran-president, the war on drugs is meant to conjure up that good war, World War II. A war that we were forced into by tyranny, a war that we won while remaining good guys. In our image-making we have expunged the firestorms and atom bombs and nisei internment, so we also have a war as cleansed of moral ambiguity as it is of mud.

What would happen to the power of the metaphor if we were to accept the message of someone like Paul Fussell, whose new book on World War II, "Wartime," opens with the hard thought that ultimately, at the daily troops' eye level, even the "just" war "was a war and nothing else and thus stupid and sadistic." Would we so easily adopt the war cry?

IF THE martial sounds of this past week sounded false to my ear, it was not just a matter of linguistics. War is just the wrong metaphor for the drug problems of this country and this hemisphere.

War simplifies the complex. It draws sides, us and them, good and evil. War demands a

human enemy, people that in time become dehumanized. It eventually wipes out the differences between the coca farmer and the drug baron, the street dealer and the user. The pregnant woman and the pusher can lose their distinction in the process of becoming simply enemies.

War has only one set of responses to a myriad number of situations: violence. It has only one approved pattern of behavior: power. Once begun it can only respond with more.

And, of course, war, especially a "just war," demands sacrifice, even of our liberties. The one end it can see or accept without humiliation is total victory — zero tolerance — or abject surrender.

WHERE IMAGERY leads, policy follows. And the way we label things, talk and think about them, inevitably has an effect on how we behave. So the military cast to this declared War on Drugs easily becomes a disastrous way of thinking and planning. A variation of the old oxymoron of Military Intelligence. A one-dimensional fight.

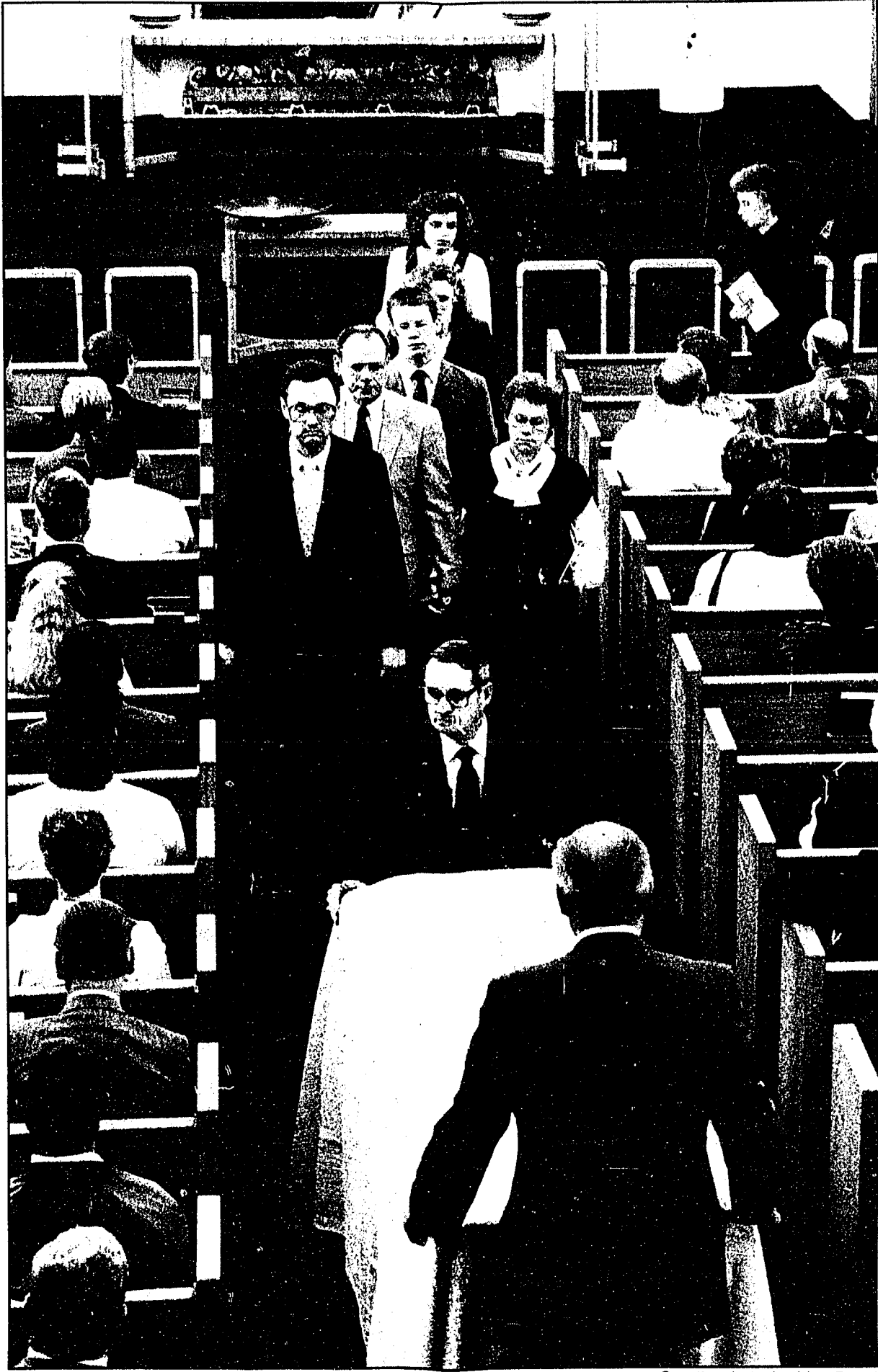
This is the likely outcome of this military strategy, not only because an overwhelming proportion of the money goes to making prisoners of war. Not only because "ultimate victory," a Victory Over Drugs Day, is an impossible goal. But because this war, like most, offers the least to the poor. It emphasizes enemies and not allies, combatants and not civilians, aggression and not protection, destruction over building.

THE CREATURES of the drug culture — drug lords, entrepreneurs, addicts — have indeed taken over great hunks of the inner cities. If there were a military term to describe this reality, it wouldn't be war, but what Arizona political scientist Peter Goudinoff calls an "insurgency."

We don't know how to solve the many problems that collect under the label "drugs." Problems of crime, despair, self-destruction. We do know something about the vulnerability of the poor and hopeless who join this insurgency. We know that hope, a sense of life's possibilities, is the best protection.

What is needed is less of an assault mentality and more of a healing one. But metaphor makes the mind-set, and so it appears that, once again, it's off to war we go. Too bad that this time we didn't skip the war and go directly to the Marshall Plan.

Ellen Goodman's syndicated column appears Tuesdays and Fridays in The Gazette.



Services for Brian Lee Schappert, slain in a convenience store robbery Friday, were Monday at First Lutheran Church. Walking behind the casket at the end of services at the church were Brian's father, Arnold, in light suit; Brian's mother, Laura, next to her husband; and Brian's brother, Darrin, behind the parents.

Slain C.R. store clerk buried

By Dale Kueter
Gazette staff writer

"Lost is a Starting Place." The title of Sunday's sermon at Cedar Rapids' First Lutheran Church was still on the church message board Monday as mourners gathered for the funeral of 22-year-old Brian Lee Schappert.

The words seemed relevant as family and friends, lost in grief, struggled to understand Schappert's death at the hands of a robber last Friday.

"We come as people who have hope, people who mourn, but still have hope," prayed the Rev. Richard Jessen, pastor of First Lutheran, as the service began. "Twenty-two years is such a short time," Jessen told the funeral congregation.

"We feel robbed. We feel loss at Brian's death because we have known Brian's life. Twenty-two years is such a short time."

Schappert was a senior at Coe College, where he was majoring in history and political science. He was stabbed to death in the early morning hours last Friday at the Kum & Go convenience store on Mount Vernon Road SE, where he worked the overnight shift.

Schappert, son of Laura and Arnold Schappert, 1715 Memorial Dr. SE, had lived at home, seven blocks from the murder scene.

FIRST LUTHERAN was nearly

filled with family and friends, including large groups from Kum & Go and Coe College.

Jessen consoled the parents by noting how many friends and relatives had called at their home. "Many were friends of Brian's who you perhaps did not know, and that may have been most consoling of all."

"Friday morning the world fell apart for those whose lives were touched by Brian," Jessen continued. "It's been a nightmare. Why has it happened?"

He said young Schappert was the victim "not of just one individual, but of a lot of what is wrong with our society. We've been crying and continue to cry because it is so senseless and seemingly hopeless."

Jessen said the death of a young person is always difficult for other young people. "You are not yet familiar with death," he told the many young adults at the funeral. Brian Schappert, said Jessen, "was discovering that there is more to life than a paycheck."

HE TOLD of Schappert's love of politics and the way he liked to discuss issues with his dad and go fishing with his brother.

"Twenty-two years is so short, and yet long enough to grow up and go through adolescence, and then on that last night before going to work, to give your

parents for their anniversary some glasses — for what he called the greatest parents in the world.

"And to tell Mom to be sure to tell Dad the glasses are for him, too."

Jessen shared a comment from one of his parishioners indicating just how shaken the city is over Schappert's murder.

"I had a call from one of our church members Saturday morning," he said. "She is also a clerk at a convenience store. She wanted me to know that at least 10 friends had already stopped by where she works, just checking to see if I was OK."

Judge cuts jury award to \$250,000

By Dick Hogan
Gazette courts reporter

A \$1.8 million jury award to a Central City family has been pared to \$250,000 by Linn District Judge L. Vern Robinson.

The jury verdict Aug. 17 found in favor of Wayne and Nancy Dirks and their children, Crystal and Amber, against Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co.

Following the verdicts, the insurer asked the court to set aside the verdicts and order a new trial.

Judge Robinson said Monday that, after his examining the record and motions filed, the Dirkses are entitled to only \$250,000, the limit of their underinsured motorist coverage with Farm Bureau. He set aside the remainder of the jury's verdicts and awards.

THE CASE involves underinsured motorist coverage in a May 2, 1986, accident on Linn County Road E-16 in which Dirks' motorcycle and a car driven by Brian Comley collided. Dirks lost his leg in the accident and received \$20,000 from Comley's bodily liability insurance coverage.

The Dirks family claimed Farm Bureau told them they had no underinsured motorist coverage on the motorcycle when Nancy called the company to report the accident. The company contended the Dirkses made no claim.

Robinson's ruling said it was "ultimately determined" Dirks was covered under the underinsured motorist provision of his automobile policy with Farm Bureau, and that the company acknowledged the Dirkses are entitled to that coverage, which is \$250,000.

BUT THE jury found that Dirks was 20 percent responsible and Comley 80 percent responsible for the accident and awarded Dirks \$1,027,000.

Robinson ruled the Dirkses are entitled to only the \$250,000 underinsured motorist coverage limit under their auto policy, plus interest and costs.

The jury had also found that Farm Bureau acted in bad faith in not paying the underinsured motorist claim and awarded the Dirkses \$700,000 punitive damages.

Judge Robinson said he concluded there was no substantial evidence to support such a finding and set aside the verdict and punitive damage award.

Robinson said it's "fairly debatable . . . that a claim was even made" in this case. Because of the confusion over motorcycle coverage, Robinson wrote, "there was never a demand for underinsured coverage" until shortly before the lawsuit was filed. "The court finds the defendant's failure to pay the plaintiffs' underinsured motorist coverage under the auto policy (the record is devoid of any 'refusal' or 'denial' of a claim) was fairly debatable as a matter of law."

Robinson also voided "bad faith" jury awards of \$30,000 to each child and \$15,000 to Nancy Dirks.

Political Notes runs Sundays

RECYCLE Commitment to the future
The Gazette promotes agriculture by printing with soybean ink. The Gazette often prints on recycled newsprint and encourages readers to recycle their newspapers.

PRINTED WITH SOY INK

The Cedar Rapids Gazette (USPS 095680)
Established in 1883 by The Gazette Company and published daily and Sunday at 300 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401. Second Class postage paid at Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
Subscription rates by Carrier \$2.85 per week. Motor Route delivery \$3.35 per week. By mail: Morning Editions and Sunday, 7 issues, \$12.80 for 4 weeks; \$141.40 for 52 weeks. Other States and U.S. Territories, \$197.60 for 52 weeks. No mail subscriptions accepted in areas having Gazette carrier service.
The Associated Press is entitled exclusively to the use for republication of all the local news printed in this newspaper as well as all AP news dispatches.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to CEDAR RAPIDS GAZETTE, INC., P.O. Box 511, Cedar Rapids, Ia. 52406.

TAKE THE TEST THAT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE
CHOLESTEROL SCREENING

Wednesday, September 13th
and
Thursday, September 14th
10 a.m.-6 p.m.

\$2.00 Off Any Prescription And Free Video Rental With Each Completed Test

No Fasting Necessary
3 Minute Test Results
\$.50 Service Charge

1400 Twixt Town Rd.
Marion
373-0562

POWER PHARM BUYING

2 MEMBERSHIPS FOR 1
and receive a FREE designer T-shirt

OR 50% OFF!!

FINAL WEEK! A Club of Excellence You Must See!

Our new management team stands ready to provide you superior service for all your fitness needs.

New Life Fitness World

CEDAR RAPIDS WEST 396-1000
CEDAR RAPIDS EAST 377-2000
IOWA CITY 351-1000
DOWNTOWN 362-2000

"POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT"

VOTE TODAY

- Attorney
- Former high school mathematics teacher
- Cedar Rapids school skills volunteer
- Advocate to School Board for Excellence

SCHOOL BOARD AT LARGE

ROGOFF

A VOTE FOR EXCELLENCE

Rogoff for School Board Committee
John Kratchmer, Treasurer 2011 Buckingham Drive, N.W. Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52405