

# A PERSONAL WORD FOR YOU from Mack McCarter

January 1997-Volume 2 Issue 1

This issue of *Renewal News* has a unique emphasis. We are beginning a new year for our work, and we want to begin it by clearly showing the concepts and structures we are developing to be effective instruments in the transformation process of one American city. The reasons for this decision are two-fold.

First of all, the growth which we have seen over the past year has been phenomenal, so it is incumbent upon us to explain the foundations upon which we are building. We always need to keep our vision simple and clear. And secondly, it is always good for those of us involved on a day-to-day basis to go back and "re-dig old wells" by restating the fundamentals of our work. A psychological principle teaches us that "Expression always deepens impression." As we tell the story, the story becomes a part of us; it gets in our bones and in our blood.

So on the front page, you have seen a short explanation and diagram of our structure. In the middle insert section (to pull and share with your friends), is the philosophical and strategic "concept" paper written by Tricia Tooke, our Executive Director. And I am concluding this emphasis by providing an outline of our work expressed through an analogy which I began in our October issue.

In this analogy I have taken William James □ great dictum, "What we must have  
the *moral equivalent of war* if we are to mobilize men and women to rebuild true civilization." What James, who was one of the keenest minds ever produced in this land, declared at the *beginning* of the twentieth century, we must radically apply to the *end* of this century, if we are to march triumphantly into the twenty-first century with all of our banners flying.

If we can coalesce our goal and vision with fulfilling the principles necessary to win any war, then, I believe, we will have found an effective way to fight and win this ferocious battle in which we find ourselves engaged. For we are in a real war; let there be no mistake about that. And each of us is inextricably bound in this struggle.

We are in a battle against a new barbarism which threatens to devour all that we hold dear. The future is grave for our children and for their children. We must fight against the forces which would make us less than what God has intended. We must build communities of devoted, caring, and therefore "other-centered" persons. We must replicate the process that can make and keep us living on the high plane of self-giving rather than in a ditch of self centeredness.

To this end, I have said that we must meet and fulfill the conditions necessary to win any war:

We must have a *clear understanding* of what "victory" really means. Our goal is to rebuild the system of caring human relationships necessary for a redemptive human society to exist, thus restoring "community."

We must have a *simple strategy* to achieve that victory. Our process calls for a three-pronged approach: First, enlist a group of *ordinary people who will be involved and committed to caring for others*. This is called our Mission Team. Second, develop a plan to rebuild the system of caring relationships city-wide by using a block-by-block approach to train persons *to build friendships on the block in which they live*. This is called our Haven House Plan. And finally, *enlist, train, and send persons to live in our*

*neighborhoods which need allies in the struggle, living with them and being among them in love. This is called our Internal Care Unit or ICU Plan.*

We must have ***definable steps*** to take in order to follow the strategy. We have a set of very measurable goals for each of the components of our strategy. We also have timetables to accomplish each of the tasks which will result in our reaching those goals. Within the next two months we will see the birth of our "Planning Team" headed by Bob Honig, our Director of Strategic Planning.

We must have ***trained and equipped "soldiers"*** who can effectively take those steps. We are in the process of retooling our Haven House Leaders □ training process, with an emphasis on their responsibilities in this struggle for goodness. We are also instituting a training program of six months apprenticeship for our ICU Leaders and an ongoing three year ICU Leader □s Academy, consisting of eighteen courses which will provide both practical and academic training, thereby equipping our ICU Leaders with the tools necessary to be effective. Continuous training and accountability are critical elements in this process.

We must be armed with ***adequate weaponry*** with which to "fight." We are armed with nothing less than the Love of God which is more than adequate to tear down the strongholds of self-centeredness in our lives and in our land. We go armed to serve.

We must have the unqualified and sacrificial ***support of the "home front."*** Perhaps the greatest joy that we are experiencing is to see the absolute explosion of support from every quarter of our community!! We have over five hundred persons involved now in various capacities in this challenging mission of rebuilding and renewal!! We have seen the financial support necessary coming forth to underwrite the effort! This is most heartening!

There you have it. I know that as you review the basics and keep this issue of *Renewal News* for reference, you will be continually filled with hope and with a growing conviction that we are going to take this city back and there will be no doubt about the outcome! I want each of you to consider getting involved with us if you have not already. Call us and come by to visit the "Strategy Center" to see the vision for yourself. And I also pledge to speak to any group, any where, any size, and any time on the "Strategy for Community Renewal." God bless you each and all. And may this New Year be our best year!