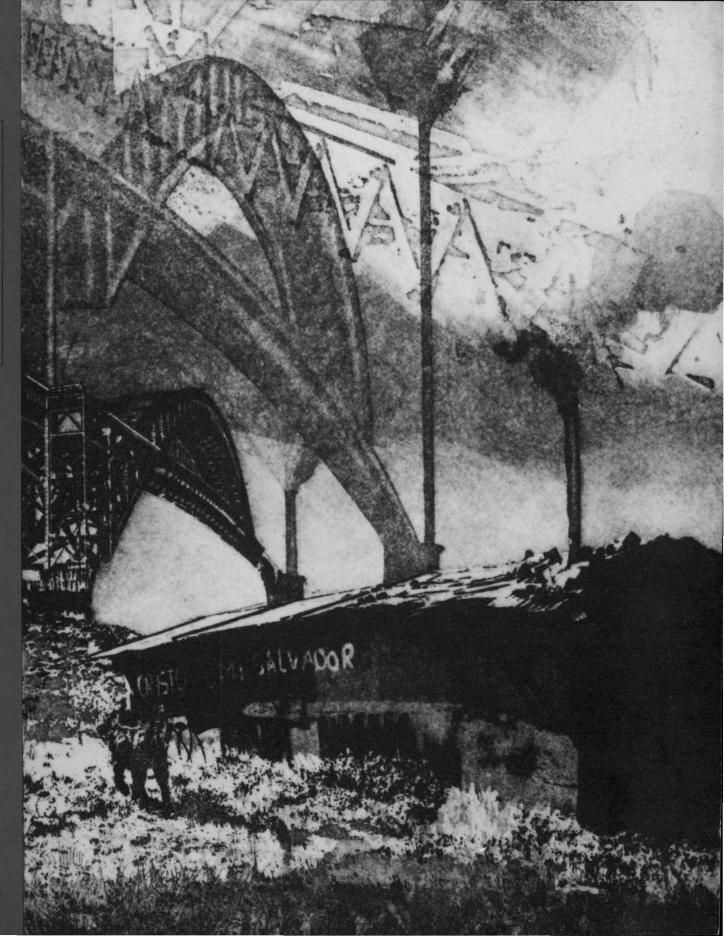
The Municipal

/olume 77 • Number 3 • March 1994



The Sixties

I VERY MUCH ENJOYED your sixties issue — almost as much as I enjoyed the letters responding to your subscription solicitation. My spiritual life began in the sixties when I began taking psychedelic drugs. Until that time I hadn't a clue. It was also where I got my first notions of communal possibilities, and came to a useful understanding of peace and justice.

I can vividly recall going into any of a number of mainline denominational churches and the reaction that I got from the clergy who quickly and correctly assessed I was not a pledging-unit candidate. I did discover that Anglicans had a very polite way of giving the bums rush. They had no time for foolish questions about God, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, or the Maharishi Yogi. Any one of your vitriolic responders could have been the guardians of those doors. Well, time has passed and, fortunately for me, the Amazing Grace of our Lord does not depend on such as those; and somehow I have been restored to sanity, productivity, and good health.

Keep up the good work. You are as a voice crying in the wilderness.

Quinton A. Kruse Santa Rosa, CA

Keeping watch

I WAS FEELING COMPLETELY UNDONE about the massacre on the Long Island Railroad, on which I was a commuter for many years, when I read "Short Takes" about creative nonviolence in your December issue.

Talk about light shining through in the darkness! It seems to me that the stories of nonviolent actions over the decades are strong symbols of the Holy and human spirit bubbling up in the midst of bleak times.

One need only read Gene Sharp's "The Politics of Nonviolent Action" to realize the extent to which this kind of action has broken

social barriers, dissolved dictatorships, paralyzed invaders and changed social and economic conditions.

Pray we con-

tinue to find new ways to meet the challenges before us today.

> Pat Roberts Lawrenceville, NJ

I LIKED HOLLY BRIDGES ELLIOTT'S article on the eucharist a very great deal indeed. The truth of the matter is that some of us, for whatever reasons, have not held much truck with Anglo-Catholic eucharistic practice just because it did not seem to be about Bill Teska's "subversive" view. That was, of course, full of prejudice and unfair, but such simple-minded stuff has long made the Episcopal way go round. So it was a special pleasure to be set right in spite of myself.

On the other hand I have shared the same conviction without any particular political ideology attached. It just seems the "rulers and authorities and the cosmic powers" are about power and the eucharist, whether or not one waves one's hands like an Orthodox priest, is about powerlessness, or something like that.

Douglas Evett Ann Arbor, MI

I WISH TO COMMENT ON THE WORD "outside" in the January letter from "unsigned" regarding the Church and salvation.

With me at Sunday Mass are Arians, Nestorians, Patripassians, Docetists and countless others hurled into the outer darkness years ago. An Ultramontanist deacon proclaims the gospel. A sometime Pantheist, former Deist, priest delivers a good sermon sprinkled with Modernist errors and a conclusion anathematized by Trent. My observations cease before the steady gaze of an usher who lets the basket hesitate, then droop, weighed down by my crumpled dollar. He, by the way, is a Gnostic.

None of us got directions on where "outside" is. Nor about what all goes on there.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Unsigned

IN RESPONSE TO JULIE WORTMAN'S article on coming out: I believe gay persons come out mainly because they crave approval (especially from church people) of a lifestyle about which they themselves feel guilt and shame. Coming out is a manipulative tech-

nique which forces others to say what the gay person wants to hear: "We love you, regardless of your sexual preferences." It is manipulative in that it forces non-gays into saying things they may not mean in order to avoid being judged as homophobic and un-Christian. It forces non-gays to find ways to prove to gays that their homosexuality doesn't matter. Suddenly what wasn't relevant before, now hovers over the friendship, always the dominant reality. What was perhaps genuine friendship is now compromised with performance and effort.

It is fine to applaud the courage of gays who risk rejection in their search for openness and honesty in relationships. But the person who speaks against homosexual behavior in his desire to be honest and open with others is not applauded, although such persons also run the risk of rejection for their opinions.

People should be valued for their friendliness, their moral character, their job performance, their gifts and talents, not for whom they like to have sex with. One's sexual preferences are between oneself and God. Since Episcopalians are utterly confused as to what God's opinion is in this matter, we should not be pressured into forming and expressing opinions on the subject by gay friends who come out.

Michael Davis Sanford, FL

"ON BEING OUT THERE" in the December issue did a good job of focussing on the dilemma millions of gay and lesbian persons face in an institution that encourages dissembling and hiding. As a gay priest who recently left a parish after 14 years as its rector, I am acutely aware that a dominant message to me was, "We will continue to support you as our rector as long as you continue to hide who you are sexually."

In December 1991 I had a frank discussion with the vestry. I told them that out of respect for them, for myself and for my partner I would no longer live a double life, and my partner and I would no longer keep our life strictly outside the parish. Two months later the officers asked me to resign.

For years I had walked the tightrope of being out to some, closeted to others. For years I had rationalized that it really wasn't



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helpful to "force" others to deal with my sexuality. For years I had believed that I was being sensitive to people who shouldn't have to deal with my sexuality and that I was avoiding making myself an unnecessary focus in the parish.

Today I am in a position I never expected to find myself in, nearing 50 and without a job. But I would not go back. Being in the closet is indeed spiritual suicide. What it avoids is not only "hurting" others or focussing attention on oneself. More important, what the closet avoids is a transforming encounter with the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. It robs the whole church of what the church exists to celebrate and to proclaim.

Recently I was called to a new position. Then the offer was withdrawn when a fundamentalist managed to stir up fear of the consequences of having an open homosexual heading the organization. Still, I am clearer than ever that change will come only when we are willing to risk. I can be sympathetic with those who stay in the closet for fear of losing their jobs; but I hope we can become honest enough to admit that this is the reason we stay closeted, rather than believing that the closet is serving some greater good.

S. James Steen Washington, D.C.

I CONGRATULATE YOU for the excellent December issue of *The Witness*. It has been one of the best. Keep up the good work.

Herbert Arrunategui Staff Officer for Hispanic Ministry The Episcopal Church Center New York, NY

Communion of saints

I EXTEND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU to you for dedicating the November issue to the spiritual significance of death and ancestry. I am happy my artwork is a part of that reality. As I've read through the pages of the magazine I've been enlightened and informed of the diverse cultural perspectives on this subject.

Carolyn Warfield Indianapolis, IN

Classifieds

Opportunities

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RHODE ISLAND WITNESS READERS: The Episcopal Church of the Messiah, Olneyville Square, Providence, seeks to build an inclusive witnessing community in and with the inner city. Join us! Sunday worship: 10:30 a.m. 401-351-2144.

Fundraising

TWENTY-THREE OF 31 PERSONS listed on the masthead did not contribute financially to *The Witness* in 1993. On this, I sided with the majority.

Ralph D. Cushing Grosse Pointe, MI

[See the addendum on page 31. Those who made contributions in mid-December are listed there. In addition, seven of the 23 you mention made their contribution to *The Witness* by giving multiple gift subscriptions.]

Witness praise

AS A LONG TIME SUPPORTER of *Christianity and Crisis* I look forward to receiving *The Witness*. Missed others' perception and interpretation of the day through a broad faith position. **Birger T. Johnson**

Birger T. Johnson State House of Representatives Augusta, ME

I USED TO SUBSCRIBE in the early 60s under previous management.

Please find that part of your being a Christian that expresses you are Easter People — forgiven sinners and tell us about it; even the

The Teleios Foundation

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"joy" of being crucified now!

Robert G. Browning, Jr. Ft. Myers, FL

Witness criticism

I THINK THAT "RADICAL LEFT" is far too mild a description for your publication — "heretical left" would be more appropriate, or perhaps "lunatic fringe." I would not, under any circumstances support your work with a subscription.

E. James Quinn

San Diego, CA

THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Jennifer Atlee

'Something like the church'

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Given the economic situation, it would seem to be a propitious moment for the left, the progressive movement, to come forward with some concrete proposals. Yet the left seems to be either bogged down in internecine warfare or in a reactive mode. It's not proactive.

What people call the "left" (the peace and justice movements, whatever they are) has expanded a lot over the years. They tend to be very localized. On particular issues they focus and achieve things.

But there's not much of a broader vision, or of institutional structure. The left can't coalesce around unions because the unions are essentially gone. To the extent that there's any formal structure, it's usually something like the church.

— Noam Chomsky, *The Prosperous*Few and the Restless Many,
Odonian Press, 1993

he left has lost its bearings. Reactionaries are screaming that the socialist dream has collapsed with the failure of the Soviet bloc.

Analysts for *Christian Century* are saying it's time for those of us in the church who embraced socialism to apologize and to acknowledge that the invisible hand of capitalism is in control and rightly so. Max L. Stackhouse and Dennis P. McCann suggest that corporate America is exemplary in having "leaped cultural and social boundaries and broken down the walls that divide people. It has found a home in countries far from its roots." Of course, they add, "businesses

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

need all the spiritual and moral guidance they can get."

It is exactly the analysis Stackhouse and McCann want us to apologize for that

izing."He adds that while most of the "moral infrastructure of modern capitalist society" — like unions, credit unions, child-labor laws, the right to conscientious objection — are the work of socialists, for "those intending to confront the contradictions of capitalism unhandicapped, there will be a novel requisite: Forget socialism, now. It's going



Felicia Santizo Brigade: "Insurrection at the Barricades", a Nicaraguan mural destroyed in 1988.

could help them understand the nature of the fallen powers and principalities which seek above all else their own survival and profit. Moral guidance, under such circumstances, is only welcome when it offers sufficient public relations value to benefit the bottom line.

Norman Rush, in *The Nation*, has pronounced socialism's death. He writes, "It really is over for socialism. I don't take any pleasure in it, but for a long time, my attitude toward socialism has been something like Houdini's toward spiritualism. He wanted the afterlife to be real and he wanted mediums to be what they said they were. But the more he probed and tested, the more disenchanted he became ... I feel close to him."

Rush notes that "Guerrilla socialism in Latin America is aggressively de-Marxifying itself" and that for young people "Socialism is rapidly receding into the category of anciently powerful social concepts now needing a lot of contextual-

to be very postmodern in the terrain where socialists used to browse."

Maybe so. Maybe not.

Personally I'm glad to see big, stateowned-and-operated societies go by the board because they are no less corrupt, though perhaps less competent, than multinationals.

But the dream of socialism is entirely contrary to that of capitalism. The dream of socialism is equality — equal access, equal income. That's a dream Christians share. The analysis Marxism offers removes the gloss of goodwill in corporate America, exposing instead its drive to exploit. This is an analysis we can't afford to dismiss. It's the antidote to the continued on page 28

editor's note

Left without Marx

by Erika Meyer

turned 30 a few months back; I was three days old the day JFK was shot. Although I have vivid memories of the sixties, I came of age in the 1980s. When I started college in 1981, the two sides of the fashion coin for the white middle-class college student were

preppy or punk. Drugs were out (but not alcohol) and we danced to songs of despair with a beat. "There is no love in this world anymore," we chanted on the dance floor. One of the most popular party tunes in 1981, "Rock Lobster," can only be described as meaningless and silly. Signifi-

cantly, it was performed by a band with a name antithetical to any sense of idealism: the B-52's.

This was in marked contrast to the world of the church that I had grown up in. As a teenager in Detroit I was part of a church community whose members pooled their incomes, lived communally and bought and rehabbed apartment buildings as a housing ministry. I knew religious folk traveling to El Salvador and Nicaragua, and I saw friends arrested for symbolic trespass at nuclear weapons facilities. As far as I was concerned this is

what Christians did; faith meant witnessing against the powers and principalities.

This is the

church I left behind for college in the early eighties. It was in college that I found the secular left. This meant politics with no God. I didn't have to deal with

Does grace have a role to

play in the conversion of

systems as well as people?

Erika Meyer is a contributing editor to *The Witness* and a seminarian at Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

scripture, or sin, or Jesus — any of those things which I didn't quite understand but which made me uneasy. I could hold onto a familiar-sounding critique of the world minus any religious baggage. This suited me just fine. It was one thing to be politically active, there was a certain bra-



Helen Siegl

vado in that, but to be religious too would have been social suicide!

For several years I worked in and around leftist politics: on the Harold Washington mayoral campaign in Chicago, on Central America and labor committees, in the youth section of the Democratic Socialists of America. Feminism also made a big splash during this time. But there was something missing in my life; that something was church people. I missed the quality of the relationships and commitments that I had witnessed as a teenager in the church; people laying

down their lives for one another, being accountable to one another, in a way that I did not see on the left.

I also was not sure that politics could truly inspire people the way that religion could; at least I had to admit that I did not feel very inspired by my own activism. I wanted, or needed, a sense of the holy, to believe that God's activity was not reducible to what we humans did or did not

manage to accomplish. It would take me several more years to understand that I might locate some of that holiness in the stuff of my own life.

So began a bumpy ride back into the church. Along the way there was a formative excursion into the recovery movement. So many of my friends have participated in Twelve-Step groups that I suspect that these support groups have influenced the way we look at activism.

By way of illustration, I have a friend

who remembers wanting to be a missionary since she was a little girl. In college she studied liberation theology and traveled overseas to prepare herself. This same friend stunned me one day with the revelation of her addiction to alcohol. Her involvement in AA postponed her plans. After sev-

eral years of hard work on her sobriety, she made different choices about how she was going to be a missionary. She picked a community to join which offered communal support and a daily prayer life over one with a more activist reputation but less support for its volunteers.

As for myself, "the steps" were the occasion of my introduction to grace. I had heard the word all my life, but it wasn't until one night sitting around a table at a local YMCA, that I experienced, in an almost physical way, a feeling of profound acceptance. In a flash, I said to myself. "Oh, so this is grace." This was a missing piece for me, not only in the secular left but in much of what I remember about the activist church as well.

What is the relationship of my deeply personal experience of grace and the call to witness against the powers and principalities of this world? Does grace have a role to play in the conversion of systems as well as people? I don't believe we can sustain works of goodwill in the world without it.

To Cipriano, in the Wind

by Philip Levine

Where did your words go, Cipriano, spoken to me 38 years ago in the back of Peerless Cleaners, where raised on a little wooden platform you bowed to the hissing press and under the glaring bulb the scars across your shoulders - "a gift of my country" - gleamed like old wood. "Dignidad," you said into my boy's wide eyes, "without is no riches." And Ferrente, the dapper Sicilian coatmaker, laughed. What could a pants presser know of dignity? That was the winter of '41, it would take my brother off to war, where you had come from, it would bring great snowfalls, graying in the streets, and the news of death racing through the halls of my school. I was growing. Soon I would be your height, and you'd tell me eye to eye, "Some day the world is ours, some day you will see." And your eyes burned in your fine white face until I thought you would burn. That was the winter of '41, Bataan would fall to the Japanese and Sam Baghosian would make the long march



with bayonet wounds in both legs, and somehow in spite of burning acids splashed across his chest and the acids of his own anger rising toward his heart he would return to us and eat the stale bread of victory. Cipriano, do you remember what followed the worst snow? It rained all night and in the dawn the streets gleamed, and within a week wild phlox leaped in the open fields. I told you our word for it, "Spring," and you said, "Spring, spring, it always come after." Soon the Germans rolled east into Russia and my cousins died. I walked alone in the warm spring winds of evening and said, "Dignity." I said your words, Cipriano, into the winds. I said, "Someday this will all be ours." Come back, Cipriano Mera, step out of the wind and dressed in the robe of your pain tell me again world will be ours. Enter my dreams or my life, Cipriano, come back out of the wind.

- from One for the Rose by Philip Levine, Atheneum, N.Y., 1981

Fifty years on the left

by Grace Lee Boggs

hat role can/should human values and conscious choice play in how we make our livings? Must we accept and adapt to rapidly developing high technology which makes people expendable and a global economy which pits us in competition with superexploited workers all over the world? Or can/should we create a more community-based, human-scale economy which is more susceptible to human control? What is a good job? Is it a job with a large corporation where you make or hope to make a lot of money? Or is it one which, even though it pays less, helps to strengthen our families and communities and enhances the way we live with one another and in nature?

When Jimmy and I became movement activists more than 50 years ago no one we knew was asking questions like these. Conventional wisdom viewed the marriage between industry and science as an unmitigated blessing, making possible the material abundance which would eventually eliminate hunger and homelessness along with rural backwardness and superstitions. The capitalist claim, which most Americans accepted, was that the benefits of economic expansion would eventually trickle down to the workers. On the other hand, radicals insisted, as Karl Marx put it so eloquently, that under capitalism "the advantages of modern industry are usurped and mo-

Grace Lee Boggs is a movement activist and theoretician who has lived in Detroit since 1953. With her husband James Boggs, she coauthored Revolution and Evolution, (Monthly Review Press, 1974). Raised in New England by immigrant Chinese parents, Boggs has a PhD from Bryn Mawr. She edits the SOSAD (Save Our Sons and Daughters) newsletter and is active in Detroit Summer.

nopolized by a constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital," while the great majority suffer "misery, oppression, slavery, degradation and exploitation." But industrial expansion, Marx said, also creates the basis for a new society because, along with the degradation, "grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself."

The Great Depression and the organization of the CIO in the 1930s brought these words to life, giving radicals the confidence that as industry continued to expand, the growing militancy of the always increasing working class would lead to the overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by socialism. We were pretty vague about what socialism would look like in the United States. But in general we envisaged it as a society which would

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industrialization.

be more just, more cooperative and less competitive because there would be a more equitable distribution of the abundance made possible by industrialization.

Meanwhile radicals were in the forefront of struggles for freedom, justice and equality. In 1931 the nine "Scottsboro Boys" accused of raping two white

women in Alabama would have been legally or illegally lynched like thousands before them, had it not been for the national and international demonstrations organized by the Communist-led ILD (International Labor Defense). Communists, Trotskyites and Musteites played a pivotal role in organizing the CIO in the 1930s.

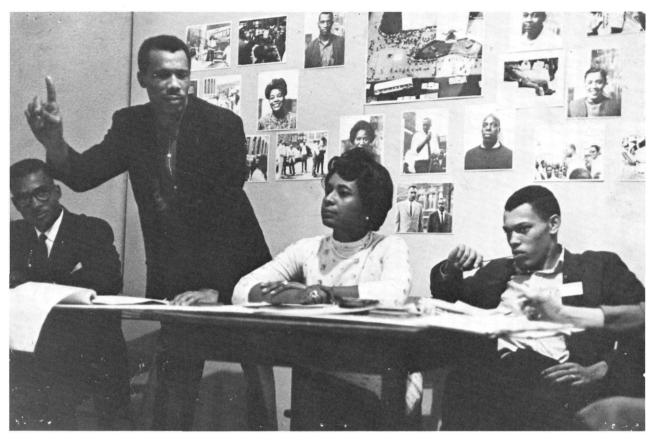
The first serious challenge to the prevailing faith in value-free science came in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "Physicists have known sin," confessed J.Robert Oppenheimer, the director at Los Alamos. "When we split the atom we changed everything but the human mind," Einstein warned, adding that if he had his life to live over again he would have been a plumber. But few radicals paid any heed to this warning. Before World War II the great majority of Americans had lacked the elementary necessities of food, clothing and shelter. Therefore it seemed only right that after the war the newly organized unions should use their clout to wrest from corporations a more equitable share of the profits of expanding production.

Being "left" meant challenging unions to be more militant in their economic demands on corporations. It did not mean

> explaining that a higher standard of living for American workers was coming from U.S. domination of the world market, war production and advanced technology which would eventually displace workers. Nor did it mean challenging workers to reflect on the social, moral and environmental costs of pursuing an ever-

higher standard of living.

The 1950s was a decade of expanding consumerism during which American workers became increasingly individual-



James Boggs rises to make a point at the Grassroots Leadership Conference, November, 1963. (A photo of Grace Boggs—then Grace Lee—hangs on the wall at the far right.)

istic and materialistic. The GI Bill of Rights enabled millions of working-class Americans to go to college and become technicians and administrators. So people began to define individual upward mobility as the main purpose of education. Pursuing an ever-higher standard of living meant more jobs producing new appliances, new cars and new homes in the suburbs for technicians, managers and unionized workers who were beginning to see themselves as middle-class. So Americans began identifying American freedom and the purpose of America with the opportunity to acquire more things.

The Cold War against the Soviet Union created millions of jobs in defense plants. So the great majority of workers went their merry and not-so-merry way, ignoring the fact that unions had become an integral part of the military-industrial-university complex, red-baiting and purg-

ing the radicals who had helped organize the labor movement. The more Americans demonized the Soviet Union for its materialism, militarism, bureaucracy and "end justifies the means" philosophy, the more materialistic and militaristic we ourselves became, accepting as normal and natural the way that our own government was systematically feeding us

The 1950s was a decade of

expanding consumerism during

came increasingly individualis-

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tic and materialistic.

disinformation and piling up nuclear weapons to kill millions of Soviet citizens and poison our planet ("better dead than red"). Only a few people, mainly in the anti-nuclear

movement, had the courage to speak up.

Fortunately, beginning in 1955 with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the moral descent of our country was checked by, first, the civil rights movement and, then, the anti-Vietnam-War movement. The struggle against racism here at home and peasant resistance to the U.S. hi-tech war machine in Southeast Asia forced Americans in all walks of life to struggle with one another over what it means to be a human being. Young whites, accusing their parents and teachers of tolerating

racism and supporting the napalming of Vietnamese women and children because of their preoccupation with material comforts and their worship of science and

technology, explored simpler, more cooperative ways of living. "We have met the enemy — and he is us," said Pogo.

"Our material power has outrun our

spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men," said Martin Luther King Jr. and urged the organizing of "self-transforming and structure-transforming" activities for young people to address the plight of "our dying cities."

Since the early 1970s a significant minority of Americans has been doing the patient theoretical and practical work necessary to create a new paradigm for fundamental social change in this country, a paradigm which combines internal and external transformation, fuses ethics with economics, strengthens families and communities, and protects the earth. Ecofeminist writers like Starhawk have exposed the historical origins of the rationalist philosophy which made possible the rise of modern science and industry. Our objective value-free approach to reality, our belief that only the quantifiable is real, our acceptance of a rigid separation between the body and the spirit, we have learned, was the creation of a male professional elite whose power was established through witchhunts which drove the intuitive knowledge and healing culture of women underground.

E.F.Schumacher challenged technological determinism or the theory that rapidly advancing people-displacing technology is inevitable. If we decide that we want a more human-scale society, he said, we can develop intermediate technologies which eliminate backbreaking labor but preserve skills and community. The New Alchemy Institute, founded by John and Nancy Todd, uses life sciences like biology to create new ethical and ecological ways to generate energy, construct dwellings and grow food, e.g. integrating gardening with fish farms.

In the last few years people in small towns and urban neighborhoods abandoned by multinational corporations all across the country have learned through painful experiences that we cannot depend upon outside corporations for reindustrialization. So grassroots organizations are taking a new look at the reservoir of human potential in our communities and struggling to create processes which involve the entire community in planning local economic development.

Up to now labor organizations have shown no interest in this still embryonic movement to rebuild and respirit our communities and cities from the ground up. Unions played at best a peripheral role in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam-War movements because the leadership was reluctant to confront the racism of rankand-file white workers. These "hardhats" helped put Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and George Bush in the White House. Seduced by promises of "lower taxes and less government" (code words for cutting welfare and other social programs which these workers saw as subsidizing blacks), they did not realize that Reagan's "magic of the marketplace" was a cover-up for the ruthlessness with which multinational corporations would eliminate millions of jobs through high tech and export overseas during the 1980s. They did not anticipate that by the end of the decade most of

the gains in wealth and income would have gone to the top one percent of the population (millionaires jumped from 374,000 in 1980 to 1.3 million in 1988), while the income of the average family declined.

In the 1970s and early 1980s high tech and export of jobs overseas had mainly hit the unskilled and unorganized, especially young people in the inner city who had once been able to drop out of school and get a job in the factory making enough money to get married and raise a family. People were told that if they stayed in school there

would be plenty of jobs in the service and information industries. However, by the early 1990s, corporations like IBM, Xerox, and Kodak had begun laying off technicians and management personnel by the tens of thousands. Between 1979 and 1992 4.4 million employees of Fortune 500 companies received pink slips, at a rate of about 340,000 a year.

That is why the mood in this country was not celebratory when Soviet Communism collapsed and the Cold War came to an end. By 1990 the post-World War II American Dream of unlimited prosperity had been replaced by the nightmare of spreading layoffs, crime, drugs, violence, homelessness, family breakdown and a \$4 trillion national debt — all of which people sense are connected, although they are not sure how. Behind the bitter opposition of labor to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is the deepest distrust of U.S. capitalism since the Great Depression. Clinton won the Congressional battle for approval of NAFTA, but he has not convinced American workers that an increasingly hi-tech global economy which pits them against

> low-wage, overworked workers in Third World countries is in their interests or that producing for a growing world market will necessarily mean more jobs. (Between 1979 and 1992 output increased 35 percent while man-

ufacturing jobs declined by 15 percent).

Labor's anti-NAFTA campaign went beyond purely economic issues to include concern for the environment and alliances with independent unions and community organizations in Mexico. NAFTA, said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, is "an agreement that steers the

Fortunately, beginning in 1955 with the Montgomery Bus
Boycott, the moral descent of
our country was checked by,
first, the civil rights movement
and, then, the anti-Vietnam-War
movement.

power to shape society away from communities of people and toward the untender mercies of the unregulated marketplace." The debate over NAFTA, he said, is about "the basic rights of men and women to stand on their own two feet and control their own political and economic destinies." It is about "whether the American people are going to retain their ability to shape change and to have a say in creating the world of tomorrow."

Kirkland's statement is only the tip of the iceberg. All over the country ordinary Americans are raising new questions about what kind of an economy will work for people. Inner city residents as well as university graduates are wondering why we can't start our own businesses and create our own jobs, now that we can no longer depend upon GM or Ford to provide them for us. Middle managers who have been laid off after years of working for IBM et al. are wondering whether it was a mistake in the first place to commit a lifetime to corporations who have no loyalty to this country, let alone to a city, community or individual.

Early on in our development as movement activists and theoreticians, Jimmy and I rejected the leftist paradigm as too economist and too determinist. An African American born and raised in the South and an auto worker for 28 years, Jimmy knew that poor whites and white workers threatened with layoffs are more likely to vent their frustration on blacks than on their oppressors. So he was very wary of the radical romanticization of the militancy of the oppressed. The African-American culture which he drew on for his politics was that which gave birth to the civil-rights movement in the South: extended families, close-knit communities, making a way out of no way, and the refusal down through the dark past of slavery, Jim Crow and capitalist exploitation to allow the inhumanity of your

oppressors to undermine your own humanity.

Over the years we have tried to project ideas and practical actions which challenge those with real grievances to rise Bomb And Racism, challenging both groups to stretch their humanity.

Jimmy originated the concept of black political power in 1963. However, because he recognized how easily black



Jimmy and Grace Boggs in 1991, two years before his death.

above a victim mentality, to see themselves as citizens rather than subjects, to change themselves as they are changing reality. That is why we have emphasized the fundamental distinction between rebellion, which is usually a spontaneous reaction or protest by the oppressed, and revolution, which advances human beings to a higher level of creativity, consciousness and self-consciousness, and political and social responsibility.

For example, in 1960 the Women Strike for Peace movement against the bomb and the civil rights movement were both gaining momentum. But Women Strike for Peace leaders hesitated to raise civil-rights issues for fear of alienating their white middle-class constituency, while most blacks saw the bomb as a "white issue." So we formed the Independent Negro Committee To Ban The

power could become just a way to replace white faces with black ones, he was always emphasizing how black power could/should revolutionize America for the benefit of all the people.

By the early 1970s crime in the black community was spreading because the 1967-68 rebellions had legitimized looting as a badge of militancy and blackness. So we put out a statement, entitled "Crime Among Our People," calling upon revolutionary leadership to make a clear distinction between criminal acts and political acts and repudiate anti-social behavior against *any* people, regardless of race, class or gender. To show that we "Value People More Than Things," we proposed that community people pledge with one another not to buy stolen or "hot" goods.

In 1988, as members of the Detroit

coalition which came together to defeat the mayor's proposal to create jobs through casino gambling, we emphasized the need to create alternatives. "Our concern," we said, "is with how our city has been disintegrating socially, economically, politically, morally and ethically.

We are convinced that we cannot depend upon one industry or any large corporation to provide us with jobs. It is now up to us — the citizens of Detroit — to put our hearts, our imaginations, our minds and our hands together to create a vision and project

concrete programs for developing the kinds of local enterprises that will provide meaningful jobs and income for all citizens."

In 1992 we initiated Detroit Summer, a multicultural, intergenerational program/ movement bringing youth volunteers in from across the country to work with local youth volunteers and community people on community-building projects: creating community parks out of vacant lots, planting community gardens, rehabbing houses, painting community murals, marching against crackhouses. During Detroit Summer 1994 we hope to sow the seeds of a local economy by organizing a bazaar where neighborhood residents can exchange goods and services [Detroit Summer; 4605 Cass Ave.; Detroit MI 48201; (313) 832 2904]. "Just as in the early 60s," Jimmy wrote two months before his death, "SNCC youth spearheaded a new direction in the struggle for civil rights in the South, so young people today can inspire Detroiters to pioneer in building the city of the 21st Century—as we pioneered in the struggle for the dignity of labor in the 1930s and for black political power in the 1960s and 1970s."

It is an exciting time but it is also a dangerous time because over the years so many layers of Americans have been able to resolve their grievances on an economic basis without stretching their hu-

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causes of youth violence.

manity. Workers were not stretched to deal with questions of race, nuclear war and ecology; blacks to deal with questions of gender and anti-social behavior. Now we face a crisis even deeper than that of the Great Depres-

sion because our families, communities and schools are in shambles. Worldwide, largely because of our addiction to consumerism, we face environmental catastrophe in the form of global warming, deterioration of our forests and arable soil and extinction of species. Because of huge deficits at the national, state and local levels, we must depend upon people power, not government programs. Meanwhile millions of immigrants, mostly people of color, are coming to this country in pursuit of the American Dream. So right-wing groups which encourage us to deal with economic crisis by demonizing other groups flourish because over the years we have been allowed to evade the challenge of respecting diversity.

But it is also an exciting time because we now face both the necessity and the opportunity to build a movement to create new dreams for the 21st century. To rise to this challenge, we need to free ourselves of old ideas and old paradigms and create new ones. Blacks need to recognize that the time has come to move beyond civil rights; e.g., as long as we view crime and violence as civil-rights

issues, we are still making excuses and evading the challenge of organizing the kinds of struggles that will meet the basic economic and human needs of everyone, especially our young people. In the last 20 years this evasion has taken a heavy toll in lives lost to drugs and violence. We cannot afford another year, another month, another hour of excuses.

Today's issues are interconnected. Race, class and gender groups need to go beyond identity struggles to grapple with the question of how we all make our livings. The issue of jobs cannot be separated from that of our relationship with the earth and our social relationships which were deteriorating while we were making what we thought were good livings. Nor can we allow the legitimate concern for jobs to blind us to the reality that global economic war can only end, like the Cold War, with no winners.

The crisis in our schools has to be linked to the crisis in our communities and in our environment. The best way for our children to learn is through a curriculum centered around community-building and the ecology of our communities. The absence of opportunities to be useful and productive is a main cause of youth violence.

Radicals need to stop depending on the struggles of Third World peoples. Maybe the most important contribution we can make to Third World struggles is the creation of working examples of community-based economic development here at home.

All over the country ordinary people are grappling with new questions of economics, ecology, education and how to live in harmony with one another. The place where all these issues come together is in our communities. The time has come to put our buckets down in our communities and begin rebuilding our economy *and* our social ties from the ground up.

Pulling together an agenda

an interview with Manning Marable

Manning Marable, a contributing editor to The Witness, is an unapolegetic socialist who spends much of his time trying to support the fledgling efforts of many groups trying to increase public access to "the levers of power." He is director of the African-American Studies Institute at Columbia University. The Witness reached him recently by telephone (no easy feat during black history month).

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: There's been a flurry of writing about socialism in the last six months. *Christian Century* had an article that you may have seen saying that Christians on the left should apologize for ever having embraced socialism.

Manning Marable: Wow!

J.W-K.: And *The Nation* just did an article that said that socialism is dead and we have to move on. Do you have a definition of socialism?

M.M.: To me, the essence of socialism is the quest for human equality and social justice. At the root is the idea that there should not be arbitrary or oppressive hierarchies which divide human beings, and that everyone should have a social context for development which presumes the inherent equality of all people. That presumes a new social contract between people and the state.

J.W-K.: So is the quest for equality dead? **M.M.:** It can't be. It's immoral and indefensible to have a society as wealthy as ours where 37 million people lack any form of medical care. Or where there are two to three million Americans who are

either homeless or near-homeless. New York has 90 thousand homeless people. Six out of 10 black children under the age of six are not immunized in New York City. There's something inherently wrong when you have a society where the prison population has more than doubled since 1985, so that prisons become a way of warehousing surplus labor.

Now socialism is an approach which



Manning Marable

Courtesy of Columbia University

places humanity at the very center of our collective endeavors. That's why I still am a socialist. We need a new social contract which is democratic — we need the right not to go hungry; the right to affordable shelter; the right to free public education — and not just K through 12, but free or low-cost college education.

J.W-K.: Does this mean we're looking toward a corporate state where there's corporate ownership and corporate management?

M.M.: Oh, no. No, no. The methods with which advocates of socialism have attempted to intervene institutionally for this egalitarian social contract have been

not just flawed, but oftentimes grievously wrong.

J.W-K.: Say a little about that.

M.M.: Well, in terms of authoritarian or totalitarian methods of socialism, these have advocated a social contract where the state and its prerogatives take precedence over humanity. Where that has happened, where people have advocated the idea of a vanguard party or a state over and above the wishes of the people, there have been terrible crimes against humanity. But, by the same token, the crimes of Stalinism or Maoism find parallels in authoritarian and dictatorial capitalism — from Nazi Germany to Chile after Allende's overthrow.

J.W-K.: If not dead, is a socialist spirit alive and well in the United States?

M.M.: No, it's not. As in the 1950s, we in the 1990s have — from the media, the universities and political centers — high hosannas to capitalism.

The fatal flaw in their apologetics is that capitalism is like poker. Somebody wins and many people lose. It's inherent in the structure that people accumulate capital at the expense of others' labor through exploitation.

It is a deliberate process. So it's not surprising that blacks throughout the 20th century had unemployment rates at about two to two-and-a-half times the level of whites. Or that women received something like one-third less of the income they should earn for a comparable job that men do. Or that black families earn only 55 percent of the median income of the typical white family. These are features of capitalism in America.

Socialism is not going to, by itself, transform these class and gender and racial realities. We have to approach this question in a three-tiered way: immediate demands, short-term coalitions and long-term vision.

There are immediate problems of daily life which exist especially in our central

Artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated from Hartford, Conn.

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cities, everything from police brutality to hospitals closing. People who are inspired by socialism mobilize people to defend human rights and to defend the ideals of social justice around day-to-day issues.

In terms of short-term alliances, I'm a democratic socialist, but I'm also a multicultural democrat. I believe deeply in a vision of democracy which is pluralistic, ethnically and culturally. I believe in a democracy which actively deconstructs the idea of race, because race is based on a lie — the idea that some human beings are superior to others. Democratic socialists have a role to play in bridging racial and ethnic divisions.

And then, finally, the long-term vision. You are not going to have an end to racial inequality in the context of capitalism as it exists today.

The idea of race emerged in the context of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the expansion of capitalism and colonialism across the globe from Europe. The idea of whiteness as a racial social construction emerges in the 17th and 18th centuries out of the expansion of capitalism, the forced migration of millions of African laborers to the Western Hemisphere and the elimination of millions of Native American people on this continent. So ideas of racial supremacy and capitalist production are so intertwined that to demolish the concept of racism one has to seriously look at the dynamics of capitalism which give racism life and form. What racism ultimately is, at a dayto-day level, is a tax, a hidden, invisible tax on the productivity, the aspirations, the talents, the energies of people of color.

Now I don't have any illusions about some socialist system which has previously existed addressing problems in this country in any kind of comprehensive way. The big mistake that socialists made in the 20th century was the presumption that there will be one model of social development and transformation, whether it's the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam or Cuba.

J.W-K.: So are we struggling by trial and



error?

M.M.: No, the key is really listening to the people's voice. People in the community understand what is wrong with this society. They understand the homelessness, the violence, the drugs, the prostitu-

The future of left politics

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in a narrow sense, or

tion and the cops who do nothing about it. They see the dynamics of oppression and the consequences of exploitation. The problem is that people don't know what to do.

I didn't become a socialist because I read Karl Marx's Das Kapital. I became a socialist because I was deeply

Margaret's in Dayton, Ohio. What brought me to socialism was this idea that it was morally and ethically indefensible to have a society as wealthy as ours where there were so many people in pain.

J.W-K.: For awhile we had a sense that we knew where we were going because we could look at other societies like Cuba or Nicaragua. We could look to the unions and to the civil-rights movement. How do we recognize our allies now?

M.M.: I would argue that now our allies would be located largely around the problematics of the cities. To me, the future of left politics will not be classbased, in a narrow sense, or race-based; it will be based largely in a redefinition of community in the context of the urban centers of this country.

A huge percentage of people in the United States live in metropolitan areas. What brings them together? What gives them a sense of common purpose? Most people today, unlike in Karl Marx's day, do not spend most of their time at work. They spend most of their time at home. What brings them together in their neighborhoods or communities? The environment, public transportation, health-care delivery systems, public schools, education. So living-space issues are increas-

> ing in significance and providing a framework for an alternative social vision, an alternative social contract between the people and the state.

> J.W-K.: In the past, the left imagined that all social change was going to come through the workforce.

M.M.: That's

right; and now I'm envisioning that the critical cutting edge in the 21st century

active in the Episcopal Youth Movement as the leader of our youth group at St.

country.

will be the urban living space.

I focus on the cities because, ultimately, that's where the contradictions are clearest and most pressing, and because no one — not Clinton, not anybody in Congress —can articulate two words, "urban policy."

We just had the largest racial conflagration in American history a year-anda-half ago in Los Angeles and no one has said anything about this in terms of a domestic urban development agenda in Congress. It didn't go anywhere. We didn't get a summer jobs bill last year or anything. And people wonder why the cities are ablaze?

J.W-K.: What you're saying is pretty radical within socialist thought. At least, my experience of folks in the DSA [Democratic Socialists of Americal in Detroit has been that if you tried to organize around a community in the city, they would tell you that was petty bourgeois — the revolution was going to come from the laborers. I heard somebody say populist struggles have a lot of spark, but always lose and are not going to bring the revolution. What you're talking about sounds like populism to me.

M.M.: Well, it's true that the contradiction that occurs at the point of production is critical. But I am saying that we have to broaden our definition of the character of the struggles. Like environmental racism — two-thirds of all toxic dumps in the United States are within about a 20-mile radius of black or Latino communities across the country. These are issues of legitimate struggle which will redefine the social contract in this country, and ultimately, that's what democratic socialism should be about.

J.W-K.: Is there a role for unions? M.M.: Oh, yes, even though unions now represent less than 15 percent of the U.S. population, the role of the organized working class is still very important.

But we have to approach the question

of the role of unions — and I know you're in Detroit — not as prefiguring or determining all other labor issues. The danger in this is a kind of class reductionism.

J.W-K.: Is it important for us to continue to identify ourselves as socialists? A lot of what you're describing is biblical ... M.M.: Well, you know what? The older I become, the more I realize that there is a happy convergence between my sense of ethics and and my political vision. The strength of a Martin King and a Walter Rodney in the Caribbean, or W. E. B. Dubois, or Fannie Lou Hamer, is this unity between a moral vision and a politi-

cal vision. I believe very deeply that people of a faith perspective within the faith community will provide the type of leadership that is absolutely essential in

redefining the democratic social contract

in this country.

I don't have a fetish about the word "socialism." People don't have to use a word or a label to be a part of the solution.

What has to be done over the next 10 to 20 years is to fight to reverse the impact of Reaganism — the economic austerity, the absence of an urban policy, environmental racism and sexism.

In the long run we have to look at the inherent inequality of our economic order. For democracy to function all people must have true opportunity and access to the levers of power and privilege, to decision-making. So, I continue to use the term democratic socialism, not because I think it's a cure-all, but because, in part, it helps to explain the nature of the social vision I have and the moral imperative I feel. TW

Electoral strategy

The essential socialist project is about equality — efforts promoting the empowerment of working people and other oppressed sectors of society, and the redistribution of power from the few to the many.

And that's no liberalism.

If "equality" and "empowerment" are what socialists should seek - not the "equal opportunities" under capitalism and "greater social fairness" sought by liberals — then we must rethink our interventions within the electoral arena.

My own inside-outside approach is:

- *We must work for and support progressive and liberal Democrats, strengthening the party's liberal wing but making clear distinctions between their politics and ours.
- * We must support nonsectarian, popular third-party efforts, such as the pending formation of the Vermont Progressive Party.

- * We must aggressively work toward structural reforms within the electoral system. These would include fair ballot access for third parties and independent candidates; permitting candidates to have "cross endorsements" or "fusion" between small third parties and the major capitalist parties, as advocated by the New Party; proportional representation in local races and ultimately in Federal elections; and, most importantly, public financing of elections.
- * We must do much more to expand the potential electoral base of the left by engaging in voter education and registration campaigns. Part of the success of the Rainbow Coalition in 1984 and 1988 came from registering hundreds of thousands of new voters, most of whom were African-Americans, Latinos, students, working people and the poor.
- -M.M., excerpted from "A New American Socialism," The Progressive, February, 1993.

n elderly Jewish woman friend in the United States said: "Look: Moses on Sinai, Jesus of Nazareth, and Karl Marx from Trier. There are three Jewish attempts to humanize humanity. Rather futile, it seems to me." This sarcasm came to my mind again when I read the sentence on a building wall in the former East Germany: "Marx is dead and Jesus lives!"

My elderly friend had combined the three Jews from world history because they all formulated the conditions for a more just society at definite historical turning points: Moses, in the transition from a nomadic to agricultural society, designated human rights in the form of the Ten Commandments; Jesus of Nazareth, living under the despotism and militarism of the Roman Empire, proclaimed a nonviolent ethic, the Sermon on the Mount; and Karl Marx, under industrial capitalism, gave the old hopes of people a new form in scientific socialism. Are all three dead? Moses, who deciphered "You shall not murder" as the message of the mysterious God? Jesus, with his absurd idea not to prepare to kill or bomb away one's enemies but to love them? And Karl Marx, who wanted to overturn "all conditions in which people are degraded, abandoned or held in contempt?"

A Christian journal in the United States recently asked me in an interview: "Some read present events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as a triumph of democracy in the best sense. Others see it as a triumph of capitalism and individualism

Dorothee Sölle is a contributing editor to The Witness. These reflections, which she offers from her own context in Germany, are based on a section of her new book, On Earth As In Heaven, Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, Ky., 1993. Moses is a rubber-stamp image from Alice in Rubberland, Los Angeles, Calif. and Jesus by artist Dan Paulos of Albuquerque, N.M.

in the worst sense. How do you understand this turnabout?" With this either-or I could do nothing. I had to condescend to take up an idea that I had avoided for a long time, the idea of "democratic capitalism," about which Christian thinkers in the States speak in beautiful openness. This idea seems clearer to me than the idea of the "social market economy," preferred among us, where I never know exactly how far the adjective social really extends with rents, land prices, unemployment, medical care, and many other questions.

I think these two elements, democracy and capitalism, have won against the bureaucratically centralized coercive organization. The state-socialist attempt at building a solidarity society has failed and not only in Europe.

The reasons for the failure of socialism can be identified in many places: a concentration of political power without opposition, a bureaucracy that left people without rights and apathetic, the command economy without individual incentives, corruption without any democratic controls by the media, extreme militarism, which even today — in Russia still commissions and serves itself. The abolition of private property in the means of production in no way removed the naturally growing interests and inequalities but multiplied them in other forms of the domination of people over people. State-socialist education led to qualities like adaptation, cringing before bosses, and cynicism toward one's own critical convictions. A determinism from the philosophy of history, which asserted the destruction of capitalism and the victory of socialism as scientific predictions, was not disturbed by any sense of reality; it contributed decisively to the dogmatization of specific intellectual positions. A falsely understood materialism did not see human corporeality and our membership in nature. Instead, nature was re-



garded as an object of subjugation under human rule. The fact that we human beings are nature and do not play only the

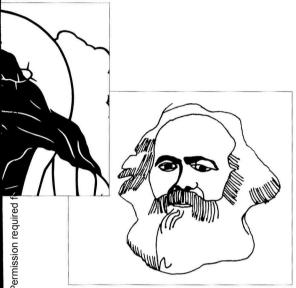
role of exploiter in relation to the natural foundations of life was overlooked in the eastern and western intellectual systems of industrialism.

That the capitalist way brings hunger, misery, and increasing indebtedness for the peoples of the third world has been evident for a long time and, since the debt crisis, can no longer be denied even by the most obstinate defenders of democratic capitalist development. In the last seven years the poor countries have transferred more money to the rich lands than they have received in developmental aid. The question resulting from the analysis of the third world is whether there is any kind of hope any more for the poor under the absolute monarchy of capitalism. Must they play the role of raw material suppliers and cheap work slaves forever? Must they give away their lands for military bases and toxic waste dumps, and their children to prostitution?

The democratic element that makes capitalism tolerable, profitable, and within limits - legally secure at the center fails along the periphery. The most barbaric military dictatorships were supported for decades by the superpowers when they only guaranteed privileges, power, markets, and tax advantages for

ses, Jesus and Marx

rothee Sölle



capital. None of this has been changed by the fetish of free elections. It is part of the nature of democratic capitalism that on the plane of world trade relations, it needs democratic masks not at all or only as an occasional disguise.

Capitalism has won its battle with state socialism and turned out to be more stable and life-enhancing. But the poor — a third here in the West and three-quarters of the whole human family — have lost. Still there will be another victim of free enterprise: our mother the earth.

The North's model of civilization cannot be generalized; it is not even true for the North. A world with three billion autos, 400 million tons of meat, 40 million megawatts of electrical capacity, and 12 billion tons of oil per year is not possible on this planet. Thus the promise of capitalism that everyone can share in the wealth and prosperity cannot be redeemed socially and is also ecologically totally hopeless, without a future. Does capitalism not have the same relation to

nature as state socialism? It treats nature like women, like savages, like objects that have to be investigated and penetrated so they can be controlled and exploited. Capitalism does not have any notion of beauty other than commercialization.

Capitalism can be criticized not only because of the exploitation that it inflicts on the majority but also on account of its destruction of human desires. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt.6:19-21). The ability to desire, to dream, and to yearn is part of human nature. We do not know another person when we do not know her or his vision.

The supposed death of socialism means that capitalism confirms itself as the only possible basis for human existence. The earth has become a colony of capitalism. In all preindustrial societies the individual was not defined exclusively as homo oeconomicus. He and she were beings who also engaged in singing, praying, and playing, creating myths and giving meaning, things now regarded as superfluous, not purposefully rational. Economic instrumental reason clips the wings of the bird so it can no longer fly. A central project of capitalism is to clip the wings of the bird so that the bird reinterprets its desires.

People fall into the traps of working and consuming and ignore the limitations of nature and the limitations of material needs. In a kind of production mania — without limits, without a sabbath, and without a consciousness of death — the material world-culture that appears without alternative is accepted as the only possible culture. That we submit to this false authority is the spiritual death in

which we live.

State socialism is dead, but socialism as a utopia of solidarity is still urgently needed. The state socialism already democratized by Lenin and made into an instrument of terror by Stalin has no chance anymore. However, the poor of the earth have not disappeared, and the problems that need another social order founded on solidarity have not been solved and are not solvable by the enlightened self-interest on which capitalism rests ethically.

If we allow the dream that the hungry will be satisfied to be prohibited, then we have separated ourselves from God, or in any case from the God of the Bible. Capitalism does not forbid this dream, because that is not a modern method, but sees to it that we forget the dream. When that does not work, because of troublesome obstructionists like Isaiah and Jesus, another method is introduced: the dream is made ridiculous. Acceptance of utopias is disappearing; the dream of daily bread for all is not on the agenda of the postmodern consciousness. The thousand children who die of hunger every day in Brazil alone have no news value. Perhaps the mild cynicism of our culture is the best deterrent against this ability to believe and imagine, this loving and acting that seeks more in life than we already have. Nevertheless, this deterrent will not function for everyone and certainly not forever. There is something ineradicable about faith, hope, and love. One may criticize the anthropology of previous socialism for being too optimistic. However, the cynical anthropology of existing capitalism is unbearable for the spiritually gifted. Present reality is not everything! A transcendence stirs within us that cannot be satisfied. Even an economically stable capitalism will not succeed in smothering this stirring. For God wants to believe in us, to hope in us, and to become one with us in love. TW

THE WITNESS

MARCH 1994

On a Highway East of Selma, Alabama, July 1965 by Gregory Orr

As the sheriff remarked: I had no business being there. He was right, but for the wrong reasons. Among that odd crew of volunteers from the North, I was by far the most inept and least effective. I couldn't have inspired or assisted a woodchuck to vote.

In fact, when the sheriff's buddies nabbed me on the highway east of Selma, I'd just been released from ten days of jail in Mississippi. I was fed up and terrified; I was actually fleeing north and glad to go.

In Jackson, they'd been ready for the demonstration. After the peaceful arrests, after the news cameras recorded us being quietly ushered onto trucks, the doors were closed and we headed for the county fairgrounds.

Once we passed its gates, it was a different story: the truck doors opened on a crowd of state troopers waiting to greet us with their nightsticks out. Smiles beneath mirrored sunglasses and blue riot helmets; smiles above badges taped so numbers didn't show.

For the next twenty minutes, they clubbed us, and it kept up at intervals, more or less at random, all that afternoon and into the evening.

Next morning we woke to new guards who did not need to conceal their names or faces. A little later, the FBI arrived to ask if anyone had specific complaints about how they'd been treated and by whom.

But late that first night, as we sat bolt upright in rows on the concrete floor of the cattle barn waiting for mattresses to arrive, one last precise event: a guard stopped in front of the ten-year-old black kid next to me. He pulled a "FREEDOM NOW" pin from the kid's shirt, made him put it in his mouth, then ordered him to swallow.

That stakeout at dusk on route 80 east of Selma was intended for someone else, some imaginary organizer rumored to be headed toward their dismal, Godforsaken town. Why did they stop me?

The New York plates, perhaps, and that little bit of stupidity: the straw hat I wore, a souvenir of Mississippi.

Siren-wail from an unmarked car behind me — why should I think they were cops? I hesitated, then pulled to the shoulder. The two who jumped out waved pistols, but wore no uniforms or badges. By then, my doors were locked, my windows rolled. Absurd sound of a pistol barrel rapping the glass three inches from my face: "Get out, you son of a bitch, or we'll blow your head off."

When they found pamphlets on the back seat they were sure they'd got the right guy. The fat one started poking my stomach with his gun, saving, "Boy we're gonna dump you in the swamp."

It was a long ride through the dark, a ride full of believable threats, before they arrived at that hamlet with its cinderblock jail.

He was very glad to see it, that adolescent I was twenty years ago. For eight days he cowered in his solitary cell, stinking of dirt and fear. He's cowering there still, waiting for me to come back and release him by turning his terror into art. But consciously or not, he made his choice and he's caught in history.

And if I reach back now, it's only to hug him and tell him to be brave, to remember that black kid who sat beside him in the Mississippi darkness. And to remember that silence shared by guards and prisoners alike as they watched in disbelief the darkness deepening around the small shape in his mouth, the taste of metal, the feel of the pin against his tongue.

It's too dark for it to matter what's printed on the pin; it's too dark for anything but the brute fact that someone wants him to choke to death on its hard shape.

And still he refuses to swallow.

[—] from **New and Selected Poems**, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn., 1973. Gregory Orr grew up in the rural Hudson valley and is now a professor of English at the University of Virginia. Orr has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fulbright Program, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Plowshares action

"This is the real world. DEFCOM Charlie. Exercises canceled." So word of a plow-shares action travelled around the Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, North Carolina, at 4:15 a.m. December 7, 1993. The disarmament work was at first seen by airmen and security personnel of the base as some part of the War Games in which they were involved in those early hours. "But you don't understand," one of the airmen said. "These people are hammering on the planes. This is the real world!"

Philip Berrigan, John Dear, S.J., Lynn Fredriksson and Bruce Friedrich, calling themselves the Pax Christi — Spirit of Life Plowshares, hammered on an F15 Eagle — a bomber used against Iraq which costs \$40 million to produce and \$6,000 worth of fuel for every hour in the air. All four were arrested and are being held in the Robeson County Detention Center in Lumberton, N.C. awaiting a grand jury indictment.

Year One, December 1993

A word from jail

The challenge before us, as I reflect on it in jail, is to offer the possibilities of non-violence to humanity. As Bonhoeffer said, we are called to speak the truth and say our prayers. The rest is in God's hands.

Whatever work we are involved in — in churches, soup kitchens, shelters, hospitals or schools — all our efforts can become opportunities to proclaim peace and renounce war. If we pursue the holy spirit of peace, our nonviolent actions can have spiritual ripple effects beyond our imaginings. With that faith, we can go forward to experiment with the gospel right where are.

—John Dear, a Jesuit priest in jail for being part of the Pax Christi Plowshares, faces ten years in prison. His book, Seeds of Nonviolence, is available from Fortkamp.

Coalfield justice

"A tremendous victory has been won for the United Mine Workers of America, their families and communities," says Jim Sessions, of the Religious Leaders for Coalfield Justice.

The seven-month strike of the UMWA against the companies of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association ended on December 14, when rank-and-file miners voted overwhelmingly to accept the settlement negotiated between the union and the BCOA. In seven states, 17,700 miners returned to work under an agreement that provides for an end to double-breasting in the coal industry, greater job security, a better health plan, increased wages, an improved pension plan and company and union bonuses.

Sessions cited contributions by the religious community, among them: visits to the coalfields and picketlines; meetings with CEOs; the engagement of the Church of England and U.S. church leaders with Lord Hanson in London, owner of Peabody; full-page newspaper ads calling for a peaceful and just settlement without the provocation of replacement workers; withstanding the well-financed and sophisticated communications blitz against miners' support; public occasions on which religious leaders called for peaceful and just resolution to the dispute.

Kick ass

"I think you need to protest. That's part of the fun. Instead of sitting around and moaning and bitching and complaining, just say it out loud. You'll feel better." Miyeung Lee, who works at the East By Area Local Development Corporation, is a member of Korean American Sisters in Solidarity or "KICK ASS" — a Korean American women's drumming ensemble with a political perspective. Their music is as rowdy as their name. If the drumming doesn't shatter your eardrums, it definitely shatters the stereotype of Asian women as quiet and reticent.

Talking to the members of Kick ASS, it's easy to get the feeling that their goals are modest, even simplistic. They don't pretend to be involved in some project that is about the change the world, and yet they use their art and culture to support

their political work [they all have political jobs] in ways that other activists might envy.

"Women don't have these grandiose ideas about what the social changes ought to be. We're so sick and tired of that kind of b.s. What we wanted to do was to really connect everything that we do with ourselves and with our lives."

The Kick ASS women have used Korean drumming to learn about their own cultural heritage. "I think in order to successfully involve yourself in community politics, you need a strong sense of self," said Eungie Joo.

"There's something about drumming," adds Helen Kim, "that gets to the core of you."

The kind of music they play is called *mingoon*. It is traditionally a people's music created by Korean peasants. Activists have revitalized *mingoon* to express the "joy, sadness and frustration that we as Korean Americans feel here as one of the minority populations," Lee said.

Ikuko Sato Third Force, August, 1993

Witness for Peace celebrates ten years

Starting in defense of the Nicaraguans, Witness for Peace developed a politics of accompaniment in October, 1983. Citizens from the U.S. visited for two weeks at a time, touring war-torn areas and speaking with *campesinos* and government officials. Witness for Peace is now active in Guatemala and El Salvador as well. Columbia may be added to the list.

Witness for Peace Newsletter 2201 P. St. NW, Room 109, Washington D.C., 20037



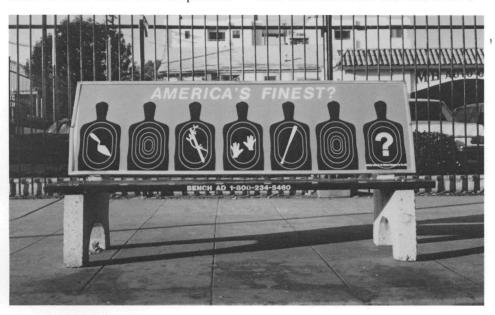
America's finest?

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

ust over a decade ago, one million people marched through the streets of New York City in a massive protest against the world's buildup of nuclear weapons. At every turn, there seemed to be yet another group organizing around a peace or social justice issue. Today, in comparison, progressive coalitions are disbanding and alternative news publications are filing for bankrupcy. A kind of complacency seems to have settled over the political

landscape — especially of the left.

Unfortunately, the disappearance from our mass consciousness of many of the burning topics of the 1980s is more a result of an image projected by the U.S. news media than it is a reflection of the reality of global events. There are still enough nuclear weapons deployed to destroy the earth many times over; the political violence south of our borders continues; poverty and homelessness continue unabated in the U.S. But these is-



"America's Finest?" 1990, Deborah Small, Elizabeth Sisco, Scott Kessler and Louis Hock



Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz, Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness*.

sues are presented only sporadically, and little substantive analysis is done to reveal their histories, underlying foundations and linkages.

Also receiving minimal news coverage are the continuing efforts and achievements of groups that work to correct societal problems. In this sort of political environment it requires great perseverance, or luck, for such a group to attract the media's attention, and a very special kind of savvy to get beyond a soundbite.

One group of artists in California that has done extraordinarily well despite these realities is a group made up of David Avalos, Louis Hock and Elizabeth Sisco, with the participation of Scott Kessler, Carla Kirkwood and Deborah Small. They have been working together for more than six years, with a consistent focus on the problems in and around their home of San Diego. Through the skillful garnering of media attention, they are able to use their art to keep important issues of ecomomic justice, racism and violence alive in the public arena.

In 1988, for example, San Diego was experiencing a peak of civic self-congratulation because of the approaching Super Bowl. That week, the group's posters appeared on the backs of one hundred city buses; instead of carrying the ubiquitous local promotional motto, "America's Finest City," these posters proclaimed "America's Finest Tourist Plantation." The message was intensified by visual images describing the plight of undocumented workers, many of whom provide the foundation for San Diego's vacationbased economy. Individual reactions gave way to a public debate that spread across television, radio and newsprint.

One year later, the group installed a billboard criticizing San Diego's political stalemate in deciding whether or not to name its new convention center after Martin Luther King Jr. Another public uproar ensued. In 1992, a series of billboards, with the letters "NHI," criticized the San Diego police for allegedly using the term "No Humans Involved" in connection with the homicides, during a fouryear period, of 45 women, many of them prostitutes. In a related work, 25 "ads" appeared on bus stop benches throughout the city in the midst of mounting community concern over a number of police shootings of unarmed citizens. The benches depicted silhouetted figures brandishing cement trowels, garden stakes



"Welcome to America's Finest a.) city; b.) tourist plantation; c.) Convention Center," 1989, Deborah Small, Elizabeth Sisco, Louis Hock and David Avalos

and baseball bats —the "weapons" that were being carried by the victims when they were shot.

The intensity of the pros and cons surrounding all of these projects has been

They have been working

on the problems in and

around San Diego.

together for more than six

years, with a consistent focus

further fueled by the artists' use of public grant money to address such controversial issues. Their most recent project, "Arte-Reembolsol Art Rebate."

pushed this debate even further. Rather than spend National Endowment for the Arts funds to produce another billboard, the group decided to use the money *itself* as the artwork — to call into question both the nature of government arts funding and the identity of what both politi-

cians and the media love to call "the American tax-payer." Sisco, Hock and Avalos handed out 450 ten-dollar bills, each one signed by the three artists, to undocu-

mented immigrants who are also workers and taxpayers. As a new controversy de-

veloped — with at least one local congressman demanding that the N.E.A. conduct an audit of the grant — the artists have been able to make their point effectively: that immigrants pay substantially more in taxes than they receive in government benefits, despite the "common wisdom" to the contrary.

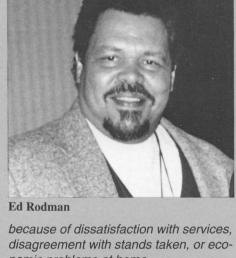
This group of artists have discovered that the ground rules for political activity and media notice have changed in the past half-decade. They have astutely played this new game, however, and in the process have produced a form of art that loudly and consistently engaging social justice concerns.

Indianapolis '94 Restructuring the church for justice

by Ed Rodman

Last summer a national symposium called "Shaping Our Future" held in St. Louis. Mo., raised a call for restructuring the Episcopal Church, Many who participated. including the organizers, appeared to be motivated by a basic dissatisfaction with the church's current national leadership and its so-called liberal, "issues-oriented" agenda. The meeting was dominated by white, mostly ordained, men who fretted a lot about declining membership and the need to make disciples but spoke little about working for justice. In that context, proposals to downsize and diminish the national church's size and role and to proclaim the local congregation (preferably as huge and autonomous as possible) as the most important unit of the church seemed to promote a reactionary parochialism.

Still, the call for restructuring is not coming from just one discontented quarter of the church. Caught up in the economic, social, political, ecological and cultural disarray in this nation and world. concerned Episcopalians everywhere seem to be looking for clarity about the church's mission and the best means of realizing it. At the same time, the Episcopal Church's presiding bishop, Edmond L. Browning, and the church's Executive Council have already moved to downsize and reorganize the church's national operations to reflect the fact that dioceses are not sending the national church as much money as they used to, whether



nomic problems at home.

As the baptized, what's our enterprise. and what sort of organizational structure will help us achieve it? Ed Rodman, canon missioner in the Diocese of Massachusetts, longtime Episcopal Urban Caucus activist and former member of the Standing Commission on Church Structure, offers here an answer worth holding before the church in Indianapolis this August.

Our task in the church is to become dedicated to a spiritual vision and a rule of life which lifts up both the meaning and practice of working for a world in which: justice is the normative goal, leading to a redistribution of the world's resources and holding accountable the greedy; equity is the normative goal of interpersonal and intra-group relations; sustainability is the primary criteria for evaluating any economic or social system which would claim our participation and provide our means of survival; and any system, program, process, community or movement for achieving these goals is accessible to all.

Given this mission, it should be possible to establish appropriate tasks for each level of the church. First, at the local level, we should be developing congregations that have as their primary focus the building-up of community and the providing of alternatives to an individualistically consumer-oriented, lifestyle. The needs of people within a community should be the first priority and the means of meeting these needs should be developed ecumenically. This type of local collaboration is already underway in most major urban areas. If this trend can be built upon and formalized, it will go a long way toward positioning communities of faith to collectively assume their fair share of the increasingly stressed social safety net. It will also create the circumstances in which social advocacy is rooted in the real experience of people and not in theoretical or ideological preferences. Such congregationally-based community building will also require a major retraining of both clergy and laity for the skills and functions needed and will necessarily require a re-examination of ministry with an emphasis on function, rather than title or ordination.

Second, the deanery or regional level within the diocese should be understood to be the place where alternatives to economic disparity (whether between communities or congregations) are explored and developed, such as through implementation of the church's economic justice program. To authentically develop community-based enterprises which materially affect the conditions of a neighborhood or city, a broader base than the neighborhood congregation is required. In many of our dioceses this level of the church has yet to fully discover its function, much less its mission, and to recast it in this light at the same time that the mission of local congregations is being rethought, would open up many new possibilities.

Third, the diocese must be understood to be the primary unit for mission in the sense that it gives priority to the advocacy for just, equitable, sustainable and accessible communities at the state and/ or metropolitan levels. Clearly, it is at the diocesan level that the vision of the church's overall mission, as well as specific priorities and goals, must find expression and where re-training, redeployment, etc., must take place. This is

ital Signs

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also the appropriate level for accountability and from here evaluation and redirection must emanate. In some ways the diocese has the least changing to do in terms of its function, but some diocesan realignments may be required so that major metropolitan areas are coherently organized and resources and goals are not confused by too diverse a geographic constituency.

Fourth, the provincial level of the church (regional groupings of dioceses) should become the place where victories are celebrated, encouragement is given and the building of networks is a functional priority up, down and across the system. Examples of this would include anti-racism programs and other serious interventions to address the divisive problems of sexuality, class consciousness, ethnic division and church maintenance. If this level of the church were to assume the responsibility for addressing this matrix of concerns, it would take the pressure off the diocese and local church, both of which are too easily polarized and hurt by

attempting to resolve these questions unilaterally. It also provides a context for more effective programs to be developed and better resources gathered for response to crises, whether natural disasters or massive economic dislocation.

Finally, the national church should focus on building networks necessary to carry out the major struggles for social justice at the national level of our society, such as in the arenas of health care, military and foreign policy, foreign relations and economic choices. The national level would also be the place were models that prove successful at other levels of the church are shared and promoted. Seeing the national church as a maintainer of networks and communicator of successful strategies as opposed to a full-service. program-delivery system may be the best way to re-envision its function at a more modest and less costly level. It would also permit the provincial level of the church to emerge as the logical place to address regional priorities and concerns, a place closer to the people than any national program could ever be.

Armed with such a vision and focus, the division of labor becomes more realistic and the painful choices for the use of diminishing resources, both human and financial, can be more rationally made and advocated for by the people who do the work and are committed to the mission. In this way we get out of a survival mentality and have a hope of returning to a "movement" psychology where the church is built on the sweat and blood of its witnesses, rather than its potentates. This is liberation theology at work and not a cynical and reactionary exercise in organizational downsizing.

Ed Rodman explores the topic of church restructuring in a longer paper also called "Restructuring the Church for Justice," which he recently delivered to the local Episcopal Urban Caucus in Washington, D.C., and the Province I bishops.

Counting Down to Indianapolis

by Louie Crew

General Convention is much too large and egregiously undemocratic.

I propose that we reduce the domestic representation in the House of Deputies from 792 to 500 (given the prospect of autonomy for almost all Latin American dioceses in the nearfuture, I have chosen in this paper to address only the 99 domestic dioceses). A body of 792+ persons simply cannot do business effectively in the short period assigned every three years. This reduction (37 percent) would keep us large enough to be representative.

I further propose that we restructure General Convention to represent communicants of the Episcopal Church proportionally. To effect this change, we would also need to amend Article I., Section 5. of the Constitution, so that if a vote by orders is required, the affirmative vote of a majority of all of the Deputies

present and voting shall suffice to carry any question.

General Convention was shaped by many of the same persons who shaped the U.S. Congress; but unlike the House of Representatives, the House of Deputies has fixed rather than proportional representation, with four lay and four clergy deputies from each diocese. Yet communicants of the Episcopal Church are not distributed proportionally throughout all dioceses. This discrepancy results in grave injustice.

Currently a deputy represents under 300 communicants if the deputy comes from Northern Michigan, Eau Claire, North Dakota or Western Kansas — our four smallest dioceses; yet a deputy represents over 20 times that many if the deputy comes from Massachusetts, Texas, Long Island, Virginia, Los Angeles, Pennsylvania, or Connecticut — our seven largest dioceses — from which each deputy represents over 6,000 communicants.

Systemic racism

The current House of Deputies discrim-

inates against minority clergy by systematically underrepresenting those provinces where minority clergy live. Most minority clergy who have registered with the Clergy Deployment Office (CDO) live in dioceses that will increase their percentage of the House of Deputies under proportional representation: 54 percent of Native American clergy, 62 percent of Asian and Pacific Island Clergy, 74 percent of Hispanic Clergy, and 85 percent of all black clergy would be affected. Place of residence is available for all black clergy, not just for those registered with the CDO: According to the Directory of Black Clergy in the Episcopal Church 1992, 87 percent live in provinces now underrepresented.

Four states with populations over 10 million — California, New York, Texas and Florida — also have Hispanic populations of over 10 percent.

With proportional deputations, the dioceses in these four states will have 30.4 percent of all deputies, versus the 22.4 percent they now have — dramatically increasing the chances to elect

How Reapportionment Might Affect the 99 Domestic Dioceses

Note: I have several goals:

- a) Reduce the total number of deputies from 792 to 500 (down 37 percent).
- b) Keep an equal number of lay/clergy deputies in each diocese.
- c) Keep a minimum of two deputies from each diocese, regardless of size.
- d) Having met a-c, distribute all other deputies proportionally.

Using the 1990 reports for communicants, after I assigned the minimum of two deputies for each of the smallest dioceses, to the other dioceses I assigned one deputy per 7,023 communicants, rounding to an integer, which I then doubled, to assure an equal number of lay and clergy from each diocese. The resulting apportionment of deputies was as follows:

16 deputies: Massachusetts, Texas, Long Island, Virginia and Los Angeles

14 deputies: Pennsylvania and Connecticut
12 deputies: New York and New Jersey

10 deputies: Michigan, Atlanta, Chicago, North Carolina, Southwest Florida and Maryland

8 deputies: Newark, Southeast Florida, Ohio, Central Florida, Washington, Dallas, Southern Virginia

6 deputies: Colorado, Olympia, California, Alabama, Rhode Island, West Texas, Minnesota, Arizona, Florida, Upper South Carolina, Southern Ohio and South Carolina 4 deputies: Albany, Mississippi, Central New York, San Diego, Oregon, Western New York, Central Gulf Coast, Pittsburgh, Oklahoma, Western Massachusetts, Fort Worth, Louisiana, Central Pennsylvania, Bethlehem, Northern California, East Tennessee, El Camino Real, East Carolina, Georgia, Missouri, Kansas, Western Louisiana, Milwaukee, Rochester and Western Michigan 2 deputies (based on communicants): West Missouri, Arkansas, Western North Carolina, Maine, West Virginia, Rio Grande, Southwestern Virginia, Iowa, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Nebraska, West Tennessee, Indianapolis, Spokane, Kentucky, San Joaquin, Northwest Texas and South Dakota 2 deputies (as minimum): Easton, Hawaii, Lexington, Fond du Lac, Northern Indiana, Vermont, Springfield, Wyoming, Northwest Pennsylvania, Montana, Alaska, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Eastern Oregon, Quincy, Western Kansas, North Dakota, Eau Claire, Northern Michigan, Navajoland

deputies from Hispanic and other minority groups.

Systemic sexism

Sixty-seven percent of all female clergy registered with the CDO live in dioceses that will increase their percentage of deputies under proportional representation — that is, in dioceses currently underrepresented. Although the Episcopal Church began ordaining women two decades ago, five dioceses still refuse to do so: Eau Claire. Fond du Lac. Fort Worth, Quincy, and San Joaquin. Three more dioceses have never ordained women, but are now "receiving candidates." according to the national Office of Women in Mission: Albany, Georgia and Springfield. Each of these eight dioceses now enjoys unfair, disproportionately large deputations.

Female lay deputies were not seated until 1970 and only now, a quarter of a century later, approach being nearly half of the House. We have been ordaining female clergy for 20 years, but they comprise not even one-fifth of the deputies in the clergy order. Currently the number of female clergy deputies increases less than one percent per year; at this rate, ECUSA will have to wait until the year 2021 before female clergy have parity—another 27 years!

Had we instituted proportional representation for the 1994 General Convention, females would have increased their overall share of a much-reduced House, based on votes received by each deputy or alternate (this assumes that those women elected as alternates would have been elected as deputies in the dioceses entitled to larger deputations).

Systemic heterosexism

The House of Deputies discriminates against lesbian and gay people by giving disproportionate representation to dioceses which consistently vote against them. In 1991, for example, Bishops Frey and Howe proposed to canonize heterosexuality. The resolution did not mention lesbians and gays specifically, but most deputies saw through its coy rhetoric: "All members of the clergy of this

church shall abstain from genital sexual relations outside Matrimony" (Resolution B-003). Warner Traynham, a deputy from Los Angeles, called the proposal "a retrograde ecclesiastical equivalent of sodomy laws. In effect it would stigmatize a certain segment of the population." Deputations from three of the four provinces overrepresented were major supporters of B-003.

Three-quarters of the provinces underrepresented in the House of Deputies gave strong support for a resolution to guarantee everyone access to the ordination process, Resolution C-032. As with B-003, Resolution C-032 did not specify lesbigay persons, but the debate made clear that the House intended to address their jeopardy, together with that of women, in seeking access to the process.

When people in the pew claim that the national church does not represent them, they are absolutely right. General Convention disproportionately enfranchises the white heterosexual males who created it.

Evangelize whom?

It is madness for the Episcopal Church to talk about wanting to grow and at the same time systematically to underrepresent groups previously excluded or ignored. Often we seem to long for the keys to the country club again, rather than the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. We rarely adopt the "highways and hedges" as Episcopal venues.

What would the Episcopal Church look like if it began to take this mission more seriously? For example, over ten million black people live in Province 4 — 27 percent of all people in Province 4. Yet only 3.2 percent of the 2,545 clergy in Province 4 are black. Thirty-five percent of all blacks in the nation live in Province 4, yet only 20.49 percent of the black Episcopal clergy do (see Fig. 1).

How long will it take white Episcopalians in Province 4 to love and welcome their varied neighbors as they love and welcome themselves? The U.S. Constitution mandates that the House of Representatives be reapportioned on the basis of population every 10 years, but it

took centuries of litigation to establish one-person-one-vote, in *Baker vs. Carr*, which addressed representation in both houses of state legislatures. Before that decision, state governments were frequently crippled by the same kind of county-unit politics which shackle the House of Deputies. The Episcopal Church might start to welcome diversity if we gave democratic voice to the diversity already in our midst.

Repair the building

At the Symposium "Shaping Our Future," held in St. Louis in August 1993, Jon Shuler, executive director, called for a Constitutional Convention to perform surgery on the structure of the Episcopal Church. He wants a "radically simplified General Convention" meeting once every five years instead of every three. He wants provincial synods to become the "ordinary means" of church government. "Perhaps the Presiding Bishop's job, as currently defined, is unnecessary," touted the press release which Shuler used to promote his ideas.

Provincialism is rightly suspect in our national vocabulary. Shuler is dauntingly silent about structural guarantees to make provincial synods truly representative and democratic, nor has he spelled out

systems to assure welcome to the millions of blacks in his own province.

I propose to restructure the House of Deputies to achieve just such a true representation:

	Proportional	Fixed (Current
(min. o	f 2 deputies per	diocese):
Pv 1	46	56
Pv 2	64	64
Pv 3	78	104
Pv 4	104	160
Pv 5	60	112
Pv 6	24	64
Pv 7	56	96
Pv 8	68	136
		====
	500	792

Jon Shuler's proposal would dismantle General Convention as we know it. My more modest proposal respects General Convention and restructures the House of Deputies to make it more democratic. My proposal maintains clear continuity with our past, and yet serves a future much more culturally diverse. The House of Bishops will continue to be disproportional and thus guard against any tyranny of the majority; and even the smallest of dioceses are guaranteed two deputies.

Notice that under proportional representation the "liberal" Provinces 1 and 2 would have a net gain of seven percent of

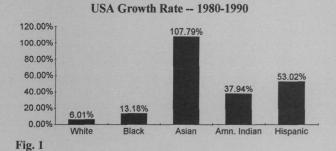
the full House, whereas the "conservative" Provinces 4 and 7 would remain about the same, at 32 percent. It is not surprising that "conservatives" never mention proportional deputations when they talk about restructuring. It is clear whose power and influence they are trying to conserve.

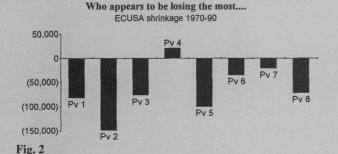
The sheep lost...

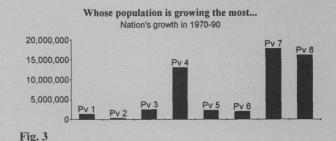
I am concerned about the decline of membership in my beloved Episcopal Church, and I take little comfort that the same fate is happening to all mainline denominations.

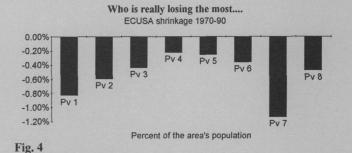
In the two decades from 1970-1990 the country grew by 28.7 percent, but the Episcopal Church shrank by nearly the same amount, 23.1 percent. Yet the Episcopal Church did not shrink equally everywhere. At first glance, at the raw numbers, the hardest hit areas seem to be the so-called "liberal areas" — the Northeast (Provinces 1 and 2) and the West Coast (Province 8). The conservative South (Province 4) and Southwest (Province 7) appear to be hit the least (see Fig. 2).

Reviewing this depressing data, it is tempting to draw the conclusion that if we would all just huddle more closely together with a conservative agenda, we would see out this storm with minimal attrition.









However, looked at more closely, the data suggest that we should resist that huddle! Just as not all provinces of the church have equally declined in membership, so the population of the nation has not grown equally (see Fig. 3).

Enter the Sunbelt! Millions have moved to the South and the Southwest during the last 20 years. How well have conservative Episcopalians fared in welcoming these migrants? Not well at all. The Southwest, which above seemed to have had the largest growth, has in fact, had the greatest decline, when population shifts are factored (see Fig. 4).

Gone, too, is the false appearance of a revival in Province 4. The South simply has not brought in its share of the people moving to it from outside.

From "No Outcasts" to "Welcome to the House"

A major irony of the "Decade of Evangelism" is that Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning has faced a steady stream of vilification for saying, "There will be no outcasts in this church of ours!" The church cannot convince outsiders of God's welcome until the church treats lovingly and justly those already inside. No one in the non-Christian world can afford to believe the thousands of lies we the Episcopal Church have bought and paid for until "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You" means more than "We won't kick you out anymore." Democratic reapportionment of the House of Deputies will dramatically improve the quality of our common life by assuring an equal chance of participation for everyone in the major governance of our lives together.

Louie Crew is the founder of Integrity and co-chair of the diocese of Newark's deputation to the 1994 General Convention. All graphs in this article were prepared by Crew based on data from numerous sources, including the U.S. Censuses for 1970, 1980 and 1990 and the "Table of Statistices of the Episcopal Church" for those years, as printed in The Episcopal Church Annuals for 1972, 1982 and 1992.

Ecutakes: Church Structure

Presbyterian Church, USA

Louise Westfall is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Mich.

Our denomination has reflected what has happened everywhere, which is a downsizing mode due to a crisis of confidence in hierarchies and structures.

At our own General Assembly, our annual denominational meeting, in June of 1993, we moved the church from nine ministry units to three ministry units — congregational ministries, national ministries, and international ministries.

There has been downsizing in terms of numbers of employees. There used to be units like racial/ethnic concerns, women's concerns, social justice and peacemaking. These now have been subsumed under the three units.

People working on racial/ethnic issues are very concerned that by moving away from one central office there may be a diluting of focus.

I think there is a positive side to refocusing on congregations. There are a lot of lively things going on at the grassroots. But a congregational base can fall more quickly into parochialism and narrowness.

There probably will be less attention to justice issues, especially the more controversial ones. The reorganization was a sympton of denominational malaise; our membership has declined and our mission dollar has declined. There is a feeling that we need to downplay justice issues that are conflictual.

American and Southern Baptists

Ken Sehested is Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

The Baptist tradition of church life flows from the dissenting and Separatist movements of 17th-century English life and, to some extent, from the radical reformation on the European continent, tagged "Anabaptist" by detractors. Both streams began as reform movements;

but both eventually outdistanced their initial leaders in the degree of change demanded.

One of the key distinctives that now shows up in modern Baptist life in North America is a radical form of congregationalism. By and large, such decentralized structure is a positive element in the church's pursuit of its mission. Mission enterprises are easily contextualized; decision-making is spread among many; there is free space, allowing those without institutionalized credentials (and, thus, control) to use imagination.

The unfortunate underbelly of radical congregationalism is that it exaggerates the Western cultural tradition of individualism. Baptists have weak connectional instincts, which fosters isolationism — isolation both from contemporaries and from its historical tradition. (This accounts for the fact that there are some 29 separate Baptist bodies in the U.S., though all but a dozen are tiny regional bodies.) As one wag has noted, instead of having one Pope in Rome, we have miniature popes in every pulpit.

Despite these weakness, the Baptist governing tradition is a major asset if one thinks of the "people of God" as including more than the clerical class.

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Luther Wright is pastor of Truth Lutheran Church in Detroit, Mich.

In 1988 there was a merger of three Lutheran denominations into the National Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. In order to do the merger, all kinds of compromises had to be made. People all over the country are dissatisfied with the structure, and there has been all kinds of restructuring going on. I would contend that the principle of that restructuring is driven more by financial concerns, rather than by the principle that the people most affected by decisions should have the most say. For example, the national Division for Outreach used to have a person for city ministries and person for rural ministries. Now they're saying one person can do both.

In the absence of a movement

by David Finkel

here is scarcely any left press in the United States," writes Alexander Cockburn in the January 17, 1994 *Nation*. "There was probably more left-wing analysis in a single issue of *MAD* magazine in the mid-1950s than in the combined output of all left magazines in 1993."

Let me suggest that the left has a twofold problem. First, we are, in "practical political" terms, powerless. Second, choking on our own powerlessness, we forget what we *have* accomplished and *can* accomplish in the real world.

What I mean is this: We cannot by our own resources and efforts shelter the homeless, overturn Clinton's cynical and criminal coddling of the Haitian generals, shut down an arms race that continues even after the ostensible enemy has disappeared, reverse the flight of manufacturing jobs from Manhattan and Detroit and South Central Los Angeles, or force through Congress a universal health care insurance program worthy of a civilized country.

Then, unable to carry out these or any of dozens of other absolutely essential programs, we attach ourselves to electoral charlatans and con men (and occasionally women) whose careers depend on their ability to convince people that voting for them will produce wondrous changes — even though we know that they have in fact neither the desire nor capacity to do anything of the sort.

In the process we tend to lose sight of

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what has been achieved by being genuinely radical—in our own recent history. When tens of thousands of churchgoing Americans, linked to the Central America solidarity movement through the Sanctuary struggle, told their government, "Your immigration laws and your war in Nicaragua and El Salvador are a crime against humanity, and we're going to defy them"— that was *radical*, and it was successful.

When working Teamsters spent 15 years organizing to take their union back from the mobsters and the pro-company goons who ran it and, with the election of Ron Carey, ultimately succeeded — that was *radical*, and it worked.

When African-American students at Wayne State University in Detroit and the Latinos at UCLA took over campus buildings to demand African and Latino studies programs at their universities, they were acting *radically* and effectively.

These things don't add up to "the revolution." They are, however, "revolutionary" in that they enable people to feel the power they have when they organize — the kind of power that official society seeks to convince them they don't have and should never use. It's precisely this power embodied in independent social movements that make "the left"— its analyses, its democratic values, its visions of a just world — meaningful. There simply is no substitute.

In the absence of movements on a massive scale, I have no magic formula for the left today. Each of us needs to find ways to be effectively radical where we are.

A critical project in which we can all engage is to support the Mayan Indian uprising in Chiapas, Mexico. Send letters and faxes to president Salinas in Mexico City demanding an end to repression. Tell your congressperson you want hearings convened on how the North American Free Trade Agreement is completing the destruction of peasant agriculture by turning the peasants' corn plots to beef grazing land. Let's try to make sure that every ordinary U.S. citizen — the majority — understands that the uprising in Chiapas is part of our own confrontation with the multinational corporate colossus.

Isn't that, after all, the left's job? Or do we expect Ross Perot to do it for us?

Let me suggest three current books — with apologies that all three are written by white men.

First: The Year 501, The Conquest Continues, by Noam Chomsky (Boston: South End Press, 1993). Here, as always, Chomsky pulls down the obstacles that prevent us from understanding the world with radical common sense.

Second: The Destruction of New York, by Bob Fitch (New York: Verso Press, 1993). Whether or not you are, or have ever been, a New Yorker, here's a book that stands in the finest American muckraker tradition and explains how a rich, variegated urban economy was systematically and deliberately destroyed to make room for a finance-insurance-real estate (FIRE) economic monoculture, with ruinous results for all of us.

Third: Socialism From Below, by Hal Draper (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1992). In this brilliant collection, the lead essay, "The Two Souls of Socialism," explains the essence and revolutionary relevance of the socialist vision as clearly today as it did in 1965, when it made me an instant convert.

Church and union

ate Theological Union in Berkeley were invited to the AFL-CIO's biennial convention in San Francisco.

The convention last fall opened with a speech by President Bill Clinton which focussed on "rampant insecurity among working people," plus a rapidly growing inequality in the U.S., a \$4 trillion debt, Fortune 500 companies eliminating hundreds of thousands of jobs each year and increasing health care costs.

Paul MacDonald, Labor Council President in Providence, R.I., pointed out that the temporary workforce is a major problem. "You don't put down roots in a parttime job, and it tends to pit workers against each other, vying for what work there is; it drives families apart. The breadwinner travels across the country looking for work, leaving the family behind — it's scary."

Labor Secretary Robert Reich said the Reagan-Bush Administration "had worked labor over," with a hostile Labor Relations Board and by permanent replacement of strikers. To standing applause, Reich promised change.

continued from page 5 illusion of the American dream.

The confusion these days is — now that capitalism has demonstrated its total disregard for labor and parts of the U.S. brink on the realities of the third world — what do we do? What is there to fight against and what do we build in the ruins?

The questions aren't unique to the U.S. In Nicaragua, people who based their lives in a theology that offered Christ as liberator are turning their eyes toward a God of the earth, a God of companionship and endurance. (See page 30.)

Whatever we explore will probably be post-modern, personalist, community-

In the student seminar session which followed, the Religious Outreach Director of the AFL-CIO, Michael Szpak, opened with the same theme: The natural right of workers to freely associate and form unions was being grossly violated. Organized labor stood for inclusiveness and community, said Szpak, as did the churches. Together they had many common core values: every person has worth, intrinsic value, and dignity.

Szpak said collective action in the workplace allows workers to address the unequal balance of power between labor and capital — non-violently. It also provides simple association, a sense of solidarity, the ability of persons to rely on each other.

Harry Coverston, an Episcopalian seminarian, responded that the church had failed the working people when it remained silent in the face of the "dehumanizing" suppression of the PATCO strikers (air controllers). He added that the dominant church view is that if the economy is okay, the working person is okay, ignoring the fact that the working person is viewed impersonally as a commodity fed into an economic machine.

In Orlando, Fla. where he had served as a Public Defender, Coverston said,

and earth-based.

most kids he defended had two parents working, but were still not making it. They couldn't appear in court for fear of job loss. He went into law to effect change in society, but found himself ineffectual. The law only reached people's minds, he said, whereas the church can reach people's hearts, and that was needed to create change.

George Higgins, veteran labor priest and author of *Organized Labor and the Church*, told seminarians to learn the history of the labor movement. Cooperation should start at the local or regional level, he said.

The new frontier is the organization of women workers, he added. Church-related groups should concentrate heavily on women in the workplace, on the protection of their rights. Women make up almost half of all workers, but only a minuscule number are organized into unions. Also important are the immigrant workers, the lowest paid of all. Indeed, without female and immigrant workers, says Higgins, the labor movement has no future in this country.

— Gregory Bergman (Gregory Bergman, 86, lives in Berkeley, Calif., and has written widely for Christian Century and The Nation.)

And maybe as enlightenment thinking gives way, the structure of Marxist thought and prophecy will fade. But regardless of the name by which we know it, Christians who confront structural injustice, who come to know first-hand the character of fallen principalities will acknowledge Marx's observations about capitalist exploitation and the need for solidarity.

The best of the left activity in recent years *has* been in "something like the church."

Christians are refusing to pay wartaxes, breaking the law to offer sanctuary, enduring long jail sentences for anti-nuclear work, exposing the U.S. role in training third-world torturers. They are doing so with a clear intent to confront the abuses of this capitalist empire. For the most part, these Christians have benefitted from Marxist analysis, have learned something of the mechanics of power from the liberation theologians.

Increasingly I think that socialism is not an end in itself for Christians. It is, rather, a political and economic ideology that preached a message close to the heart of the gospel. It pronounced that the rich would be brought low and the hungry would be filled with good things.

By whatever vehicle, may it be so.

Engaging the powers

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination, Walter Wink, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992, 402 pp.

Autumn, 1993

Dear Jeanie

I don't have much response to the projected issue [on the left] ... I thought we were moving beyond the old left-right polarity to a new, confusing, biblical radicalism that is conservative, iconoclastic, prophetic, as alienated from the left's secularism and naive self-confidence as from the right's traditionalism, ideological blindness, and intellectual dishonesty.

All the best, Walter Auburn Seminary, New York City

or Walter Wink the movement "beyond old polarities" has come by way of rediscovering and reappropriating the biblical insight into the "principalities and powers." Engaging the Powers (the final volume of his magnificent trilogy) is the exegetical, sociological, historical and perhaps, above all, spiritual fruit of three decades' work on that topic.

Wink began under the impetus and inspiration of William Stringfellow's work which he recently described as virtually "reinventing Christianity." It may indeed be that which he is carrying forward to fruition.

Among the decisive exegetical conclusions of Wink's early work was to recognize that these structures which

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is book editor of *The Witness* and editor of *Keeper of the Word: a Stringfellow Reader*, Eerdmans, June 1994.

dominate human existence have both an exterior, visible, material character and an invisible, interior, spiritual aspect. The two are inseparable dimensions of the same institutional constructions of power. To make this a grounding assumption in theological and political analysis is itself a challenge to the old polarities. It flies in the face of the materialist vision (more like a one-eyed blindness) to which the Christian left has so readily succumbed. But it also lays bare the spooky abstraction of the Christian right's otherworldly view. And at a moment of historical seachange, it makes discernment a radically political charism.

Another conclusion of his early New Testament exegesis which has been fully developed in this final volume is an innocuous-appearing orthodoxy which proves theologically explosive:

The Powers are good,

The Powers are fallen,

The Powers will be redeemed. (pp.65f.)

The Powers are good (creatures of God, subject to judgement and accountable for their vocations to serve human life); they are fallen (twisted by idolatry and conformed to the domination system which enslaves human life); they will be redeemed (recalled to their created purpose by the "blood of the cross," by the transforming power of non-violence, indeed, by the vocational witness of the church). While there is a certain sequential movement here, Wink describes the insight as a "drama in three simultaneous acts" - in which God at once upholds a power in its vocation, condemns it in its systematic dehumanization, and presses for its transformation, the renewal of its humane vocation. As he puts it, "Conservatives stress the first, revolutionaries the

second, reformers the third. The Christian is expected to hold together all three (p. 67)."

My own bias is to stress the fall perhaps because we are, especially in American christendom, so consistently naive about the bondage of all institutions to the power of death. And make no mistake, Wink spends fully half this book describing and unmasking the Domination System, its methods and means, its hierarchies and history (he flirts with the temptation to locate the fall historically in the rise of an expressly androcratic. male-dominated, order). But there is something wonderfully freeing (and quite radical) about a politics which manages to hold simultaneously to each of the three dramatic movements. Our bearings are no longer kept by the ideological rigidity of either political correctness (so called) or biblical legalism. There cease to be any fixed and set presumptions about how we should engage the powers — ethics become inventive and improvisational, politics a graceful work of imagination.

The second half of Engaging the Powers is about that work of subversion and transformation. Suffice it to say that Walter Wink's work on the principalities has issued in a new and renewed theology of non-violence. He offers us here a practical politics rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Happily, the book is getting a wide reading. I pray it will be hugely influential. I wager it will prove one of the most important books of the decade. May it help us, God help us, bring the Domination System to its knees.



29

enny Atlee, who has called Nicaragua home for eight years, wrote her masters' thesis on liberation theology but now is learning healing, herbs and incantations from a healer in her village. In her shift from a revolutionary theology to an earth-based one, Atlee is following the lead of her Nicaraguan neighbors.

Atlee, the daughter of an Episcopal priest in Philadelphia, says her base community in Achuapa "was guided through a crucial time" by liberation theology.

"Through the whole war there was the feeling if we can just get through this war, then we'll be free. We'll be in the promised land. We can create the new society that we want.

"Then the elections happened [in 1990 and the Sandinistas lost]. There was massive deterioration of social services and any sort of space for doing something different. Now the economy is structured against the *campesinos* and against production. People are very pessimistic about large-scale change happening."

The new situation is challenging theologically.

"People are back under Pharaoh. They're making bricks and their straw is being taken away from them.

"People in base communities are saying, 'We worked with the revolution because the aims of the revolution were compatible with our aims as Christians— in many ways there wasn't even a separation. Now, with the elections, we've seen that governments are going to come

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

"People in base communities are saying, 'We're not going to have the revolution forever, but one ally we will always have is the land.'"



Jennifer Atlee in 1984.

Changes in Nicaragua's left

"My concept of God is very

nine and toward the earth."

much shifting toward the femi-

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

and go. We're not going to have the revolution forever, but one ally we will always have is the land. We know the land. We subsist off the land. We need to learn to care for the land so our children can live off it because the hope of going to university is not an option anymore.'

In the Bloque, where Atlee worships with her husband Tom Loudon and their five-year-old daughter Carmen, the main focus is sustainable agriculture and natural medicine.

Campesinos are discovering there's a blessing hidden in the banks' unwilling-

ness now to advance loans; when they can afford to farm, they no longer have to use the chemical pesticides and fertilizers

that the banks required. They are also eliminating slash-and-burn programs and concentrating on reforestation, water conservation, composting, variation of crops, organic pesticides and herbicides, including chili, garlic and nim.

Likewise, since there are no longer government health clinics and doctors, villages are reclaiming natural medicines, bringing back knowledge about the healing properties of bark and herbs. Community gardens have been established and each community is training healers.

The Marxist analysis inherent in liberation theology is still useful to people. They lean on it for their understanding of whose interests are served by the withdrawal of government services. And they rely on its analysis in trying to fight the erosion of their land base.

"In the town where we work there is a large coo perative. Campesinos in trouble will sell

off their cattle, then sell off their land. The cooperative is saying we've got to hold onto our land. It's trying to buy land and hold it in trust until farmers can buy it back.

"The economic situation is so desper-

ate that it tempts you to say, 'Forget about what we can do for the community — I've got to feed my kids!' It's very much a temptation — it's hard times economically."

It's hard for her family to afford to stay
— they are supported by donations from
the U.S. — but Atlee says they will remain for at least another year.

Her commitments were formed in part by the parish her father served in Baltimore where she was born in 1962.

"It was right on the edge of the white end of town — there was a small black section on the other side of us. I made some friends in the black section. I learned about racism real quick. In fifth grade we moved to a much more upper-class and white area. I had a hard time there and got really disillusioned in the church.

"I found meaning in the church again in Mexico when I was in college. I found people in the church who were really alive. I was introduced to liberation theology and that did make sense to me."

Atlee got a political science degree from the University of Delaware, then worked with the sanctuary movement before going to Nicaragua in 1984 with Witness for Peace.

After years of living in a war zone, and after marrying her husband in 1988 in Rio Blanco, Atlee decided she needed a break. "We had been through a lot of years of incredible destruction of human life and human creativity and human effort to come back despite the trauma. It was weighing on my soul."

She and her family returned to New York so she could get a masters in theology. Her thesis was submitted to Colgate Rochester and a Baptist seminary in Managua.

Soon after the Sadinistas lost the election, she and Loudon decided to return.

"I knew I didn't want to work in theology with the base community — I feel that it is born of them. I didn't have any answers. Then I had this very powerful dream. The spirit told me I needed to learn the ways of the body because the body and the spirit are connected. So I started working with a healer in the village who was crippled — the medical system had written her off — until some Japanese volunteers cured her with acupuncture. Then they trained her.

"It's very much part of my theological journey — I got out of my head and into my body and the earth.

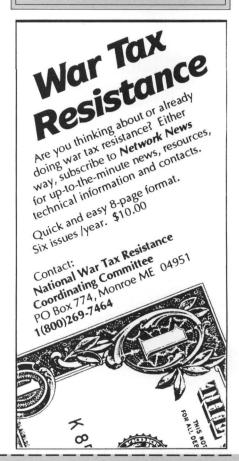
"My concept of God is very much shifting toward the feminine and toward the earth. My own understanding has changed so much that where I get my guidance is not in the traditional way—it's in dreams from spirits, sometimes Native American."

Atlee adds that the base communities are no longer accompanied by Catholic priests as they were during the revolution.

"Most all of us are from Christian backgrounds — we're doing church if you want to call it that. What we're coming up with is very earth-centered and very practical."

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