Title: *The Witness*, January to December, 1978

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THE WITNESS

JANUARY, 1978
$1.00

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PEACE ON THE UNUSED EARTH

Pledges 3% to Maria, Raisa

I have just received, via my parish priest, a flyer from the National Church explaining how my pledge is allocated. It says 3% will go to the National Church: "The National Church, working through the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, does things that cannot be done so well locally; supporting the efforts of minority peoples and the underprivileged in this country, and those dioceses in this country unable to support themselves . . ."

In view of the treatment given to our own Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin by our Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, I'm not so sure I couldn't spend my share better. Therefore, I would like to send my 3% directly to Maria and Raisa since they have been denied their salaries while they bear their witness. How can I get this money to them?

I realize my diminished pledge to my own parish will make things more difficult for my fellow parishioners who are not to blame for this — but there would seem to be no doubt where the greatest need and the most sacrificial witness is presently being manifested.

Mary R. Shepard
St. Paul, Minn.

(As THE WITNESS reported in the December issue, funds for Maria and Raisa as well as for seven others jailed for refusing to testify before Grand Juries in New York and Chicago are being collected in New York. The Board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company joins THE WITNESS in suggesting that contributions for assistance to the families of those imprisoned be sent to: New York Committee Against Grand Jury Repression, Box 268, 161 E. Houston St., New York, N.Y. 10002. Make checks payable to the Committee, earmark "Survivor's Fund.")

'Gays' Impressive, Vulgar

Re the October issue of THE WITNESS, which focused on homosexuals in the Church. I'm trying very hard (and it *is* hard) to approach the subject with an open mind. The articles about Ellen Barrett, and the ones by Malcolm Boyd and Ronald Wesner spoke to me with a note of sincerity and "integrity." I was impressed.

Then I read the article by Sol Gordon, "It's Not OK to Be Anti-Gay," and the wholesome atmosphere vanished. I found this to be smart-alec and vulgar, and of no convincing or positive value. The "Poem" by Louis Crew I found also to be objectionable. I possibly represent a great many people who are trying to find their way through this problem, and I believe these two items have served no useful purpose, if you want to present the matter in a thoughtful and appealing way. Maybe the editor added injury to insult by introducing the Gordon article with the description "delightfully humorous and insightful." Not to me!

The Rev. Howard R. Kunkle
Sedan, Kans.

Will Use in Study Group

Just read the October issue—almost missed it. I thought I'd heard enough from the four pictured on the cover and put my copy aside. Then by Providence I picked it up to read Bishop DeWitt's "Witness to Truth" and Dr. Gordon's "It's Not OK to Be Anti-Gay." Those are two really fine statements. I'm enclosing a check for 10 copies of that issue. I'll hope to get 10 subscribers, but I'll start out by using the magazines in a group discussion and study in the mission here. Meanwhile thank you for one good issue after another.

The Rev. Robert Griswold
Lakeview, Ore.

Issue Forthright

Thank you for your forthright and altogether illuminating to say nothing re courageous, delineation of the gay issue in the church. I am a member of Christ Church Cathedral, which is endeavoring to minister in increasing ways to this diverse community of pilgrims, in these days when many are hurt, disillusioned, and angry about the actions of the church. Thank you for your witness and THE WITNESS.

Marguerite Hyer
St. Louis, Mo.

New Doctrine of Sin?

What was weighed in the balance and found wanting in the liberal movement of the sixties was their doctrine of sin, which was virtually non-existent.

What I suspect you call for in your November editorial is a new doctrine of sin, one which says that it's the greedy old capitalists, and the people who care too much about political freedom, who are the sinners; the proletariat are not similarly afflicted.

Your statement that "the economic and political structures of our society are so constituted that they do not function in the best interests of the people" sounds like the swell slogans which have helped so many people in the world, like the people of Cambodia, for instance. It doesn't sound to me like a good answer to a weak doctrine of sin.

The Rev. Timothy Pickering
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Piccard Adds 'Beware'

The Rev. Dr. Jeannette Piccard forwarded to THE WITNESS a copy of the following letter which she wrote to the Rev. Wendy Raynor of Edenton, N.C.:

Dear Wendy:

Your letter in the August WITNESS in response to Suzanne Hiatt's article "Priests Wanted: No Women need Apply" has just come to my attention. I have been in Switzerland all summer and am just home. In Switzerland, I celebrated the Eucharist in my hotel room or the home of a relative because the Bishop of Fulham and Gibraltar refused to recognize my priesthood. The only *Episcopal* Church in Switzerland is in Geneva where I had no opportunity to go.

I thank God that you are able to fulfill your vocation. How about the young people in your parish? Will they still be able to be ordained 10 years from now? Not if the Commission for an Apostolic Ministry has anything to say about it.

Sue Hiatt was not bemoaning her lack of recognition. She is the most recognized woman priest in the Episcopal Church. She had altars available to her in 1974 and 1975 when none of the rest of us did. In the June WITNESS Sue was issuing a clarion call, a warning of danger.

You say, "The battle has been won!" Very true but the war is not over. CAM has sworn to do *everything* to change the canons again. True, no one can take your priesthood from you. If, however, the

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THE WITNESS

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Dissidents and Diffidence

Robert L. DeWitt

The September gathering of some 1,700 "dissident" Episcopalians in St. Louis has caused much conversation. At least among Episcopalians. The causes of their coming together were both immediate and remote.

The immediate cause was the 1976 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which took carefully considered actions to authenticate the ordination of women, and to revise the *Book of Common Prayer.* On the ordination of women, all the arguments were in long before the convention. The revision of the Prayer Book was the culmination of a painstaking process of scholarship and trial services which had extended over a period of many years. The convention deliberated, then took decisive and affirmative action on both issues. The group which gathered in St. Louis was opposed to these actions.

But there were also long-term causes of that meeting in St. Louis. Some Episcopalians had long opposed the involvement of the church in the affairs of society, especially when that involvement stood for poor and marginalized people, over against the established order of things. The empowerment projects of the General Convention Special Program, and comparable social programs of the National Council of Churches and of the World Council of Churches, had long been the special targets of their disapproval and resentment. Their attitude reflected the attitude of the establishment, of the status quo, of social and economic privilege.

But why the fuss? In any organization there are always people who object to the decisions of the majority. Every presidential election year millions of people in this country support and vote for the candidate who loses. So why *this* demonstration of opposition to the will of a majority?

At the very least, there is a political motivation. Given a small group "outside" who threaten schism if their will is opposed, and a larger group inside who counsel the importance of not offending them, there is the beginning of a base which might at least hope to reverse the actions of the last General Convention at the next. The temporizing and awkward preoccupation of the recent meeting of the House of Bishops with the dissident group would indicate that this political strategem might indeed be proving effective.

Another facet to the St. Louis event, however, is also instructive. It is to see that group of dissidents as a distortion of the Episcopal Church, an exaggeration, a caricature, but one which teaches us something important about ourselves, if we have the humility to see it.

Consider that group: A tiny minority of the larger church of which it is a part; a group which withdraws into its own enclave to maintain "purity of doctrine;" a small body which takes its own liturgies, customs and traditions more seriously than it does its responsibility toward the larger church body, more

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Answers Blowing in Windy City

by Roy Larson

"I congratulate the Episcopal Church for holding these hearings. I'm glad to see you're getting serious about the city again."

With those words, the Rev. Donald Benedict began his testimony Nov. 17 at an open hearing in Chicago conducted by a seven-member panel acting for the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

Mr. Benedict had a slight smile on his face and tone of mild sarcasm in his voice. "I don't often find myself in a position to congratulate the Episcopal Church," he explained.

Since graduating from Union Theological Seminary in New York and spending time in a federal penitentiary for conscientious objection to World War II, Mr. Benedict has devoted his entire ministerial career in the United Church of Christ to the alleviation of urban ills—first in the East Harlem Protestant Parish, next in Cleveland, and for the last 17 years in Chicago as executive director of the Community Renewal Society.

The hearing at the University of Chicago's Center for Continuing Education was the first in a series of five designed to pinpoint those urban problems to which the church is capable of responding. Representatives of 18 Chicago-area organizations appeared before the panel. Twenty-two others submitted written testimony.

The panel was chaired by the Right Rev. John B. Coburn, Bishop of Massachusetts, who, during the last decade, has presided with calm strength and graceful competence at some of the most tumultuous and historic sessions of the Episcopal House of Deputies.

On the panel were the Rev. Daniel Alvarez, director of a social service agency in Chicago's Latino community; Ms. Mattie Hopkins, a black Episcopal laywoman and Chicago public school teacher; the Right Rev. Richard B. Martin, executive for ministries on the staff of the Presiding Bishop; Peter Foote, a Roman Catholic layman who is secretary for ecumenism and human relations for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago; Roy Larson, religion editor of the *Chicago Sun Times*; and the Right Rev. Antonio Ramos, Bishop of Costa Rica.

On the day before the hearings, the panelists were prepped by Byron Rushing, hearings coordinator, the Rev. Hugh White, project director for the Bishop's Coalition, and Stanley Hallett, an urbanologist at Northwestern University, who had been active in the redevelopment of Chicago's South Shore community. The Very Rev. David N. Harris, Canon of the Cathedral of St. James, interpreted the program of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.

"We are in a period," Hallett told the panelists, "when we are aware that many of the old urban programs did not work, but we are not sure what the new ones should be. It's a time for taking fresh soundings, so we can think anew about what can be done."

Hallett urged the church to take on four responsibilities in its urban work: To know and to make public what's going on; to sustain the inquiry, asking questions about what it takes to create healthful, educated and secure communities; to point to right action, and to initiate and sustain communities in development.

During the seven-hour hearings, the panelists asked for and got an earful of advice on how the church can respond to the festering problems of the cities. These are some of the highlights:

- "The church can't do everything. It needs to concentrate on doing one or two things and doing them well. Specifically, I suggest the church focus on the issue of opening up the suburbs to make the whole metropolitan area an inclusive community. Our central cities are now segregated poorhouses." (John McDermott, editor, *Chicago Reporter*)
- "We need support in our struggle to fight mandatory retirement, watch-dog nursing homes, and to keep the

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elderly in the mainstream of society. We need money to publish a monthly newsletter." (Ruth Lind, The Gray Panthers)

• "Our (Indians') main concern is to help our senior citizens get the help they need to break through layers and layers of bureaucracy. Over half the Indians in the country now live in urban areas. Twenty thousand live in Chicago, most of them in Uptown, the most crime-ridden section of the city." (Matthew Pilcher, Native American Committee)

• "Grand juries are being used in unconstitutional ways to attack and harass Puerto Ricans, and the Episcopal Church has acted in concert with these agents of repression." (Steven Guerra, National Committee Against Grand Jury Repression)

• "The church should help in the formation of a new coalition that unites Hispanics, Blacks and poor Whites." (The Rev. Richard West, United Church of Christ)

• "Programs are needed that would make it possible for young people to aid senior citizens who are afraid to go out of their homes to shop, see the doctor and attend church." (Velma Pons, Chicago Welfare Rights Organization)

• "An idea that has come from the churches is causing problems. That is the idea of service. The church should be hesitant about advocating an increase of institutional services. This results in transferring funds from the poor to the middle class, because it is the middle class that gets paid for providing the services. As things are working, our economy needs more broken families and more needy people in order to increase the Gross National Product. The church should direct its attention toward strengthening the primary groups in society—the family, the local community." (Urbanologist John McKnight, Northwestern University)

• "The question of unemployment is THE question of the decade. What's needed is a coalition on the right to earn a living. We need to begin lobbying for each other." (The Rev. Donald Benedict)

• "The church should help destroy stereotypes of homosexuals, combat society's fear of homosexuals, and support legislation protecting our civil rights." (Spokesman, Good Shepherd Parish, congregation for Chicago gays)

• "Programs to aid ex-offenders are crucial. Sixty-eight percent of all crimes are committed by ex-offenders." (Raymond Curran, the Safer Foundation)

• "I'm surprised we are the only organization for handicapped people represented at these hearings." (Anita Ming, from the Red Door, a center for deaf people)

On the day after the hearings the panelists gathered for an evaluation with members of the project staff. The panelists were urged to be as critical as possible because they were told that their critiques of the first hearing would affect planning for the subsequent hearings.

Representatives of the support committee in the host diocese complained that several of the testifiers they had recruited did not have an opportunity to present their cases orally.

Bishop Coburn and others expressed the view that the panel should have heard "not just from the people affected by the decisions made in the city, but by the peole who make the decisions too."

Bishop Robert L. DeWitt observed the hearings would have had greater local impact if arrangements had been made for more members of the Diocese of Chicago to be present as observers.

Bishop James W. Montgomery of Chicago stressed the necessity of providing theological grounding for any new programs developed by the coalition. "Problems arise," he said, "when our altruism gets ahead of our theology."

Other panelists said insufficient attention was given to the special needs of children, to members of the Korean-American and Philippino-American communities who sometimes are harassed by agents of their home countries, and to "cultured despisers of religion" who have become alienated from the church.

Consensus was achieved on one point in particular: Everyone involved stressed the desirability of going forward in ways that make it possible for "the whole church" to move together. As Bishop Coburn put it, "If this just ends up as another national thing, it won't go." ■

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3 Urban Institutes Set

The Coalition of Urban Bishops in cooperation with the Institute for Policy Studies will sponsor three institutes on "Global Dimensions of the Urban Economic Crisis" at the College of Preachers in Washington, D.C., it was announced by the Rev. Charles Rawlings of the staff for public policy programs. Dates have been set as Jan. 24-27, March 29-April 1, and Oct. 10-13.

"Purpose of these three identical institutes is to prepare the leadership of the Church to witness for the Gospel in the many-sided realm of public policy questions affecting human welfare in general and the life of the cities in particular," Rawlings said. "A theologian will be in residence throughout."

Among lecturers scheduled to address the institutes are Ronald Mueller, co-author, *Global Reach;* Gar Alperowitz, Explorative Project on Economic Alternatives; William Goodfellow, Center for International Policy; Iqbal Riza, Overseas Development Council; and Ambassador Neville Kanakartne of Sri Lanka. Lecturers from the IPS staff include Richard Barnet and Robert Borosage, directors; and Isabel Letelier, Michael Moffitt, Derek Shearer, Lee Webb and Howard Wachtel.

"Theological reflection and strategizing will take place throughout the experience," Rawlings said. "The institutes are not so much explorations of economics as explorations of our current moral dilemmas in the urban and world community; dilemmas that make familiar frames of reference such as 'urban' or 'nation' out of date," he added.

Brochures describing the institutes in detail can be obtained from Ms. Suzanne Watson, Registrar, Coalition of Urban Bishops, Church House, 2230 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

AS A MATTER OF FACT . . .

If Christ had been given the $100 billion "Defense" Budget to spend on agricultural improvements, food for the poor, health care and education, he could have spent $100,000 a day from his birth until now and still have 763 years left to spend on alleviating the world's suffering.

— Don Luce, Clergy & Laity Concerned

Continued from page 3

seriously than it does its responsibility toward the society to which it is sent; a dissident group which, with scrupulosity, sets up barriers between itself and others that could and would cooperate with it in carrying out a mission to this world.

Does this characterization of the St. Louis group fit the Episcopal Church as a whole? Are the dissidents proving themselves indeed to be our children? Have they in truth really understood, and are they reflecting what they have learned from the Protestant Episcopal Church, U.S.A.? Let us hope not. Granted, the Episcopal Church corporately from time to time has evidenced those characteristics. But individuals and groups have historically stepped forth, called by God through human circumstance, to save the church from itself, to rescue it from prideful withdrawal from its mission.

And who is being called to that task of leadership today? The House of Bishops? Unlikely, judging from their recent pastoral letter. The next General Convention in 1979? That is more likely to reflect concerns brought to it, rather than ones which are generated there. "All of us?" Everybody's business is nobody's business.

Then who is left? The church. That is to say, the numerous small bodies of believers, the many little communities of the Resurrection, the scattered fellowships of concerned people who care about the mission of the church. Nuclei of people, like you, who will reach out to others and together begin to "prophesy," to make known the will of God for the church and for the world. Groups who will speak the truth to each other, to their bishops, to their diocesan councils, to their standing committees, to their lay and clerical deputies to the next convention. And in so doing they will manifest that the church is far more than a huddled group of frightened people clutching desperately their false securities and proud possessions. ■

CREDITS

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High Noon at Port St. Lucie

by Kenneth A. Briggs

THE WITNESS peeks into the diary of Ken Briggs, religion editor of THE NEW YORK TIMES, to find (re the Episcopal Bishops' meeting in Florida): "It was the worst crisis since the church lay in total disarray following the Revolutionary War . . . No sincere Christian can rejoice over an obviously worsening situation in one of the great branches of the faith."

Dear Diary:

It's been over a week since my last entry, but I've been tied up at a meeting of Episcopal bishops and as a result have been both frazzled and muddled. The meeting took place in the tourist resort of Port St. Lucie, a sprawling seacoast development where fish jump sky high out of the water and alligators lie in dark lagoons around the golf courses. Normally the establishment would be populated by honeymooners and funloving sales representatives, so even among the young staff members this was something of an unusual occasion.

The bishops arrived like a flock of migratory birds descending for a respite from their journey. Many wore the plumage of their office. Others were less visibly marked but generally shared the same form and bearing that befits leaders.

Matters of carriage and deportment are important, but leadership does not depend on style alone, of course, and I began asking myself just whom they represented. The answer is not as easy as it might seem. True, they do hold authority over quite specific chunks of church geography, or assist those in command, but in these troubled times real authority seems to be earned rather than given by the act of consecration.

Such emotional issues have arisen recently in the church that deep fissures have opened up among both the folks back home and the House of Bishops. Individual leaders and special interest coalitions have sprung up on various sides of conflicts over women's ordination, the revision of the prayerbook and homosexuality, to cite just three.

No one quite knows what the invisible masses of parishioners really think about these things, but the factions invariably invoke the name of the "people" to undergird their positions. I notice bishops referring to what their diocesan consensus is "saying" without being sure exactly how much that conclusion would actually hold up. The conservatives, in particular, were likely to back their fight for a "conscience clause" to permit dissent from the approved policy of ordaining women by stating categorically that the church would have a full scale revolt on its hands if such a clause were not adopted.

When I arrived, late at night, the vanguard of bishops was already buzzing about the expected "High Noon" quality of the upcoming sessions. Bishop Paul Moore of New York had ordained a professed lesbian. Bishop Albert A. Chambers had aided and abetted the rebellion by those adamantly opposed to women as priests. Bishop Chambers was specifically charged with invading the territory of other bishops in order to lend a hierarchical hand at getting a new church started. To prevent wholesale defections to this new outfit, the conservatives gravely appealed for the conscience clause so that, in effect, anybody could believe what he wanted about women's ordaination and remain an upright church citizen.

Little did they know who would put the issue on the line. Presiding Bishop John M. Allin came right out and said at the very first hour of the meeting that he had searched his mind and heart and came away convinced women could not legitimately be priests. He would even resign if the brethren thought his conscience had steered him too far from his proper role.

Well, there were some who thought that he had, indeed, talked himself out of a job, but everyone was extremely jittery about saying so. After all, they reasoned, even though ordaining women as priests had been approved by the highest governing body of the church lots of people were angry as hell about it. So why not let them feel accepted even though they don't agree? And some remembered that the late Bishop James Pike, though hauled before the bishops on charges of heresy, had made it through unscathed. Combatting dissent this time by conservatives could lead to future assaults against liberals. So let bygones be bygones. Bishop Allin can have his opinions.

Two things struck me. One was that there was almost no mention of the feelings of the women who had been

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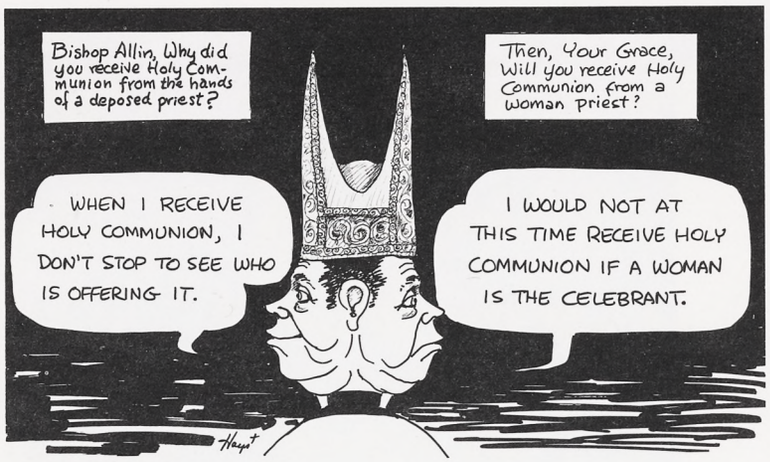

ordained, particularly their expected reaction to being told by the Presiding Bishop that in their roles as priests they were considered non-persons. The other was that it reminded me of possible parallels. What if a presiding bishop said, "It's well known that our church has officially endorsed the concept that all men are created equal but I, for one, don't think black people should be entitled to vote." It's one thing, dear diary, for an individual to be vouchsafed private conscience, but another when that person is entrusted with the implementation of church policy.

So Bishop Allin got his conscience clause and a limp handshake of assurance that his brother bishops affirm his right to stay where he is.

So some felt he got off the hook, just as others thought Bishop Moore deserved harsher treatment for ordaining the Rev. Ellen Barrett. To add fuel to this fire, Bishop Kilmer Myers said flatly that he intended to license Ms. Barrett to perform her duties in his diocese. His was an eloquent appeal for understanding, as was Bishop Moore's. What defused the whole matter was that, under the law, Bishop Moore and Bishop Myers were simon pure. They had followed the rules. The only real debate centered rather voyeuristically on whether Ms. Barrett was known to be a "practicing" homosexual before her ordination. Failing to solve that mystery, the body voted a no-nonsense reaffirmation of the church's moral abhorrence of homosexual activity and attempted to exact a guarantee that nobody else would ordain such a person until the next General Convention when the issue comes up.

If Bishop Moore was the beneficiary of the rules, Bishop Chambers was the loser. By appearing to meddle in the affairs of the dioceses of other bishops, he had broken a clear principle of procedure. He also represented the confederates who had already laid the groundwork for a new church (which, incidentally, promises to revive the "one true church" tradition). Bishop Chambers stated openly that his conscience had led him to break the law but such arguments ran aground in disputes involving rights of turf. He was "deplored and repudiated" though not censured.

The most troublesome aspect of the meeting was not the acrimony which arose around the particular issues. It was rather the pervasive sense of confusion and ambivalence that seemed to bespeak lack of confidence by bishops in their ability to point the way for the church at a time of deepening crisis. Serious membership losses are still taking place, more dioceses are financially hard-pressed and the turmoil in recent years has taken its toll. The "fashionable" church has begun to lose its composure and perhaps in the process has gained a healthy measure of modesty.

It is the worst crisis since the church lay in total disarray following the Revolutionary War. In a sense the church has been long in losing some of its Tory character. While there have been many bishops over the years who exercised great initiative and caring, the House of Bishops generally has not had to risk much. Bishoping has involved long hours of duties but until recent times few anguishing decisions.

It is precisely courage and adventure that seem called for at this time. Firm leadership could pull the church out of its doldrums by giving it a sense of identity and purpose. The overall impression left by the Florida meeting was one of uncertainty and peace-at-the-avoidance-of-conflict. I doubt the peace will last. Bishop Allin has seriously handicapped himself and there are continuing calls for him to step down voluntarily.

Other denominations, particulary Protestants, are saddened by the troubles of Episcopalians but also look upon these difficulties as just deserts for a church that has at times appeared aloof and smug toward other Christians.

Still, no sincere Christian can rejoice over an obviously worsening situation in one of the great branches of the faith.

For all their ambivalence and lack of direction, I deeply sympathize with the bishops' dilemma even from my safe vantage point behind a note pad. As a group, I admire their intelligence, concern and decency. They rightly point to many antidotes to counsels of despair, sketching a larger picture that includes spiritual riches and the strength of tradition. They are caught in circumstances that are hardly all of their making and which they cannot be expected to treat with magic cures.

Their forcing of a semblance of unity drew largely from the recognition that the church badly needs a means of

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resolving disputes. The collegiality of the brotherhood made that possible.

What remained, in my view, between sessions at the typewriter, dips in the pool, and late-night discussions, was for the same body to give the church a sense of vision.

As one of the few journalists who showed up, I was thankful that so many bishops indulged my attempts to meet the requirements of my job and the results that issued from the same. They can have such meetings in such settings any time they want to and I'll sure try to be there.

Church and Society Goes Commercial (TV)

There is probably nothing very remarkable in a small group of people busying themselves in a church kitchen making soup and bread for a church supper. There is probably nothing very unusual about a group arranging a panel discussion in a parish hall for a group of 75-100 people.

But it begins to seem a little out of the ordinary when the topic for discussion is "Who's Unemployed and Who Cares?"; when the panelists include a nationally prominent economist, a national lobbyist of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and a theologian. And it becomes probably *unique* when, following the panel discussion and the soup-and-bread supper, the group moves one block down the street to join a vice-president and a news director of an NBC affiliate, WBRE-TV, where the afternoon's panel discussion is replicated on video-tape for broadcast to thousands of people.

That is a bare-bones scenario of what happened on Oct. 26 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. How come?

The local chapter of the Church and Society Network had been spending time over the previous months wrestling with the Study/Action Guide, ***Struggling With the System/ Probing Alternatives.*** They found the questions bewildering, the answers ambiguous, but the issue itself one of unquestioned central significance. In discussing what action they might take growing out of their study, they hit upon the idea of sponsoring a discussion on the question of unemployment. In northeast Pennsylvania, unemployment has been a chronic problem for years, and the present depressed state of the economy is simply accentuating something which that coal-mining area has been familiar with for longer than the people like to remember.

Ms. Margaret Ferry, national board member of Church and Society, who was a part of that group, was the spark plug for this plan. With a lot of help from her friends, she and the other members of the Church and Society Network secured some matching funds from the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania, and gained the joint endorsement of the project by a number of religious and civic and labor groups in the area, including the TV station itself. The culmination was the event referred to above.

How can small groups of concerned persons share their concerns and some of their insights in a meaningful way? How can a small group of concerned persons count for something in this mass society of which we are a part?

Here is one way. This local chapter of the Church and Society Network has shared some informed insights about one of the most crucial questions in our society today with an estimated 30,000 people in that 17-county area. It took a lot of work. It took quite a bit of imagination. Perhaps it took a little luck. But most of all it took a small group of people sharing together some of their questions and concerns about our society, and asking themselves, *"What can we do about it?"*

As a result, thousands of people will have a little more accurate information, will labor under a smaller number of myths about the economy, and will have a considerably deeper perception of how they, as individuals and small groups, can contribute to the solution of that problem.

Incidentally, this hour program is available on a KC-30 Sony Videotape cassette. It features Dr. Robert Lekachman, economist; Ms. Evelyn Dubrow, legislative director, ILGWU, and the Rev. Norman Faramelli, theologian. For information write Ms. Margaret Ferry, P.O. Box 21, Bear Creek, Pa., 18602.

—R.L.D.

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Investing With a Conscience

by Timothy H. Smith

How can a denomination or religious order which has declared its concern for social justice invest thousands—even millions—in today's stock market in good conscience? How can Christians impact the rights and interests of shareholders as over and against the policies of corporations involved in flagrant acts of discrimination or sizeable payoffs overseas? Tim Smith, director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, discussed these questions in testimony recently before the Subcommittee on Citizen Shareholder Rights and Interests (U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee). His remarks follow.

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility is a working coalition of over 150 Roman Catholic orders, several Roman Catholic dioceses and 14 Protestant denominations in the United States which have come together in an attempt to maximize their impact as socially conscious investors.

With the wide variety of viewpoints represented within this coalition it would be foolish for me to pretend that I am representing *all* of these institutional investors in the name of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. They can and do speak clearly and eloquently for themselves.

What I *can* do is reflect accurately some of the common philosophy, social issues and strategies used by these church investors.

The denominations and orders working through the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility have a variety of portfolios representing billions of dollars of investments. While anxious for a reasonable return to pay pensions, maintain schools, and assist in program costs, these institutional investors are equally concerned about the way in which these dividends are made.

It would be sheer hypocrisy for an order or denomination to have passed resolutions advocating an end to discrimination in employment against women and minorities, or for an end to bribes and political contributions overseas, or resolutions indicating concern for the environmental effects of strip mining, or the role of investments in South Africa, and be an unquestioning investor in corporations involved in flagrant acts of discrimination, sizeable payoffs overseas, disregard for the environment or support for South Africa's racist apartheid system. We believe that investing entails responsibilities as well as rights.

While many churches have traditionally maintained a narrow definition of investor responsibility by refusing to invest in tobacco or liquor stock, during the last decade this definition has widened dramatically. No longer is the Wall Street Rule in effect — that is, sell a company's stock if you don't like what it is doing. Instead, church investors are employing a variety of approaches to impact corporations. These include: Dialogue with management, stockholder resolutions (in 1976-77 approximately 80 resolutions were filed with 60 companies, and 25% withdrawn by the proponents when an agreement was reached with management), letters to corporations, church sponsored public hearings, research and publication of information, legal action.

The issues addressed are also much broader than the narrow morality of owning stock in tobacco and liquor. During the last decade as this movement has blossomed within denominations and orders; we have seen church representatives filing stockholder resolutions, speaking at annual shareholder meetings, holding investigatory hearings, and initiating fact finding trips. The latter included:

1. *Bank loans to South Africa*
2. *The environmental effects of strip mining*
3. *Copper mining in Puerto Rico*
4. *Military contracting*
5. *B-1 bomber*
6. *Foreign military sales*
7. *Military personnel*
8. *Illegal political contributions*
9. *Foreign political contributions*
10. *Equal employment opportunity*
11. *Women and corporations*
12. *Images of women and minorities on television*
13. *Images of women in advertising*
14. *Corporate investment in South Africa*
15. *Corporate investment in Latin America*
16. *Corporate investment in Korea*
17. *Infant formula*
18. *Appropriate agricultural technology*
19. *Cash cropping*
20. *Land ownership and leasing*
21. *Sponsors of violence on television*
22. *Corporate ownership: Top 30 shareholders*
23. *Quality and pricing of drugs*

In reciting the strategies employed and the social issues addressed by the church shareholder I trust I have

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indicated the serious intent of these institutional investors. It is a seriousness which we believe is being mirrored among other institutional investors including major foundations, universities, insurance companies, mutual funds, pension funds, state and city portfolios. A large number of them are corresponding with management, voting on shareholder resolutions, and holding discussions with management on social issues.

That corporations affect our lives every day in a vast number of ways is a reality recognized by all levels of American society. The vast power and influence of U.S. transnational corporations is self-evident. It is expressly because of the influence and power of the U.S. transnational, a wealth and power surpassing that of dozens of nation states, that a meaningful set of checks and balances must be built.

The U.S. government obviously has an essential role in creating these checks and balances as do the governments of other countries. However, this job is so important that there need to be many other actors to insure that the corporation acts as a responsible citizen.

The existence and charter of the corporation have been made legitimate by laws passed by this government, and, I believe, are based on a larger social contract between the institution of the corporation and the society at large. It is necessary to have a wide variety of analysts within the corporation and without it, within the government and without it, to assess whether the corporation is living up to its social contract.

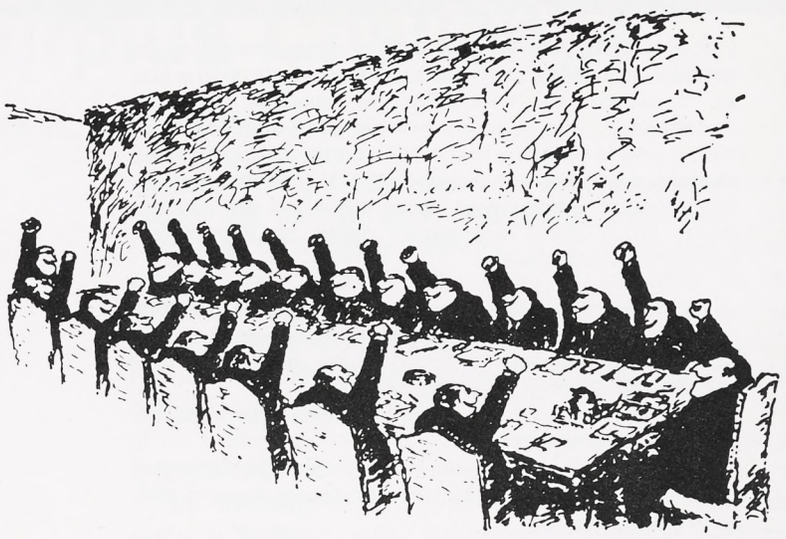
The church investors working through the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility are convinced that individual and institutional shareholders must play a role in building those checks and balances. It is a task that has taken many dollars and the energy of hundreds of persons in the churches over the last decade.

In light of these facts, it might be appropriate to indicate some of the lessons learned as churches have attempted to test the strengths and limits of "corporate democracy."

First, the corporate deck is inevitably stacked in favor of management. "Corporate democracy" is a clear fabrication, a fairy tale bearing little or no relationship to reality.

The conventional wisdom is that a corporation is owned by and operates for the benefit of its shareholders and that the Board of Directors and management exist to direct the affairs of the company and to protect shareholder interests. Supposedly the Board (the legislature) is responsible to the shareholders (the electorate) who have the power to replace them if management or the Board acts irresponsibly. Managements often refer to "your company" when addressing shareholders at annual meetings. The implication is that the annual meeting is a major event in corporate governance.

Another piece of conventional wisdom is that most corporations are owned by thousands of small shareholders. The theory is of course vastly different from the



"All power to the board of directors!"

reality: Corporate management and the Board act as an oligarchy. The rules of the game allow little input, oversight or control by the shareholders. For instance, shareholders have few means available to censure or alter a Board or management which has misused shareholder money by making sizeable domestic or foreign political payments or bribes.

Based on years of frustration with the proxy rules, a number of church investors are filing a major brief with the SEC as it reviews these rules. This brief will call for changes in the present rules to try to bring the concept of shareholder democracy closer to reality.

For instance, who are the real shareholders of American corporations? Much of that information is shrouded in secrecy since voting control and real ownership is often hidden behind nominee names. Many corporate executives state that they, themselves, do not know who their major holders are.

Recent research, however, may show that there is much more concentration in stockholder voting power than we are aware of. The Corporate Data Exchange, a New York based research group, has published a book on the principal stockholders of corporations in the transportation industry. The information on Gulf Oil and Mobil Oil is very revealing. It cites that the top 25 Gulf shareholders vote 22.06% of the stock and the top 25 Mobil shareholders vote 25.15% of Mobil's stock. This is a far cry from the image of a corporation owned by the small shareholder.

The conventional image of a corporation run on behalf of shareholders varies greatly with reality. Some corporate critics even talk about the disenfranchised and powerless shareholder. Moreover, for shareholders concerned about the social performance of their corporation there is

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precious little information. Without information it is virtually impossible to evaluate the social bottom line just as it would be impossible to evaluate financial performance. This is why a number of church investors have joined in petitions to the SEC to require corporations to make disclosures to shareholders of relevant information on equal employment opportunity and the environment. Much more information could be legitimately requested. For instance:

- Should there be extensive additional information required on "questionable payments" overseas? Do shareholders deserve to know more about how their money was spent in such payments?
- Should banks be required to disclose their exposure overseas by country?
- Should major military contractors disclose particulars about their foreign military sales or details on who their subcontractors are?
- Should disclosure of information be required by U.S. transnational corporations regarding wages, benefits and working conditions for subsidiaries overseas?
- Should the activities of corporate lobbyists who are supposedly acting on behalf of the shareholders be fully public?

In many cases, disclosure of information of this type clearly overlaps with the financial interests of the stockholder. Increasingly, patterns of discrimination in employment or disregard for the environment result in costly legal battles, sizeable financial settlements and expensive compensatory programs within the company. The series of corporate scandals over political payoffs at home and abroad have had similar financial repercussions within the corporate community.

The social performance of a company and its financial bottom line are often closely connected. Regrettably, very little of this kind of information is readily available to shareholders or the affected public. There are a few signs of increased corporate disclosure that deserve note: Bank of America adopted a code of voluntary disclosure. General Motors produces an annual booklet for shareholders on issues of corporate responsibility. Chase Manhattan has produced a similar report this year. Over 30 companies we are aware of have made Equal Employment Opportunity reports. Over 25 corporations have produced reports on their South African operations. However, these are still the tip of the iceberg.

Yet, while these issues are clearly part of the roster of shareholder responsibilities, their ability to understand, much less affect, corporate policy is severely limited.

Much more is required besides information if individual or institutional shareholders are to exercise a meaningful role in encouraging socially responsible corporate policies.

The corporate system needs to be opened wide to allow increased participation by the "shareholder citizen," the fractional owner of the corporation. Instead of tightening the proxy rules and making it more difficult for shareholders to communicate to each other, and the management and the Board (a posture taken by many corporate secretaries who have tried to further restrict the SEC rules regarding the filing of shareholder resolutions) the proxy rules should be opened up to facilitate healthy shareholder input on social and financial matters.

For instance, since Boards of Directors are self-selecting and generally members of the corporate network, should not the shareholders have the opportunity to propose alternate candidates who can be voted on by all shareholders?

Shouldn't the proxy rules be rewritten so that shareholders are easily able to file stockholder resolutions requesting information or the redress of a social grievance?

Shouldn't companies be required to meet near concentrations of shareholders instead of retreating to inaccessible spots such as Wilmington, Del., for a closeted and rapid meeting unencumbered by shareholder questions or comments. Some of America's most prominent corporations such as Bristol Myers, American Home Products, Newmont Mining, Coca Cola follow this practice of "if you have to have a shareholder meeting once a year make it impossible for shareholders to come."

Other suggestions for considerations for rule changes might include:

Requiring corporations to include the names of proponents of the resolution in the proxy statement.

Requiring a secret ballot. Presently management often resolicits votes of stockholders voting for certain resolutions.

Allowing adequate time for debate of resolutions at annual meetings.

Requiring cumulative voting.

Allowing ready access to lists of stockholders.

Insuring that unmarked ballots are not automatically voted for management.

Consideration should be given to major revisions of the corporate system to help democratize it. The basic point is this: A new set of rules needs to be formulated to allow and assist shareholders to play a creative role in building checks and balances for U.S. corporations. To ignore this need relegates the shareholder to a position of simply collecting dividend cheques and denies the broadening of both the rights and responsibilities of shareholders.

[*For further information concerning the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, write to Tim Smith, ICCR, Room 566, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027. For a free brochure describing the Corporate Data Exchange's* ***Stock Ownership Directory of the Transportation Industry*** *referred to in this article, write CDE, Room 707, 198 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10038*].

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The Clergy Surplus Challenge

by Jones B. Shannon

Recently the clergy surplus problem began to attract attention as though it were "news." I think there was a surplus even as far back as 1970. At least, so it seemed to those of us who were then serving on the Joint Commission on Deployment of the Clergy.

My own exposure began as early as 1957 when for some 10 years I traveled the country as Executive Director of the Church Society for College Work. Not being part of the bureaucracy, I was no threat, so clergy often confided in me on the difficulty they had in moving from one job to another.

This came as something of a shock. I had entered seminary in 1949 when everyone was bewailing the shortage of clergy. Brochures were published (paid for by concerned laypersons), campuses were canvassed for recruits and the late Leslie Glenn about 1960 founded "More Men for the Ministry," the very title of which caused a few eyebrows to be raised in the later 1960's and 70's.

If the truth would be known, it is doubtful that a real shortage existed, even in those halcyon days. My own awareness of the surplus increased as a result of working for parishes as a consultant to vestries seeking a new rector. Those of us working for Consultation/Search, Inc. were besieged by telephone calls and letters to be followed by resumes from persons seeking a new position.

These experiences proved to me beyond the shadow of a doubt that the church was in real trouble in its deployment situation. In 1970 I began an article on the subject with this paragraph: "Most Episcopal laity still hold to the opinion that there is a shortage of Episcopal clergy. They are surprised when told that far from a shortage, there is definitely a surplus. The question really turns on how *massive* the surplus is. Bishops are under no illusions about a 'job shortage' when faced with the necessity of finding a cure for one of their graduating seminarians or attempting to help a priest who wants to move. . . ."

If it was bad then, one can only say it is much worse now. A few figures will help substantiate the fact. In 1970 there were a little over 11,000 clergy; now there are about 13,000 with approximately the same number of parishes and missions (7,500). Ordinations to the priesthood continue to exceed age and disability retirements each year, and candidates for ordination were 510 in 1970 compared with a reported 669 in 1976. The latter is confused by the elimination of the category "postulant," so that not too much weight should be attached to the higher recent figure. Enrollment in seminaries has remained about constant with perhaps some slight decrease in 1977. It seems to be a fact of life therefore, that the number of clergy will continue to increase each year into the forseeable future.

Yet, the number of baptized members and communicants is decreasing while the general population increases. Furthermore, there are more and more marginal parishes and missions. Practically every diocesan bishop is faced with a growing list of small parishes which face serious budgetary problems, to say nothing of missions whose budgets require larger and larger supplementary payments in order to survive.

Full, Part Time Dilemma

In 1969 a study reported that 25% of parishes and missions were comprised of 90 communicants or less, and these congregations had annual incomes of $9,521 or less, obviously insufficient to support a full-time priest. In some instances two or more churches were served by one priest, and this continues to be the case. However, if one priest did serve only one such small congregation, that priest would be underemployed because his or her full time could not be used creatively in the customary manner of serving a congregation. This leaves a question: In what other ways can time be used creatively?

The same 1969 survey showed that 50% of the parishes and missions had annual incomes of $21,000 or less. Perhaps at that time this amount was about the break-even point for a parish to be self-supporting. However, in the intervening years since 1969, the cost of everything has gone up. Unless marginal parishes have been able to increase their incomes they have now slipped into the not fully self-supporting category. Certainly it becomes harder and harder to keep the doors open in at least half of our parishes and missions, while the clergy serving these churches are in an increasingly precarious position as far as employment is concerned. This conclusion is substantiated by a report circulated by the Clergy Deployment Office at General

The Rev. Jones B. Shannon was in the investment business prior to his preparing for a ministry which began with parish work but led him into many aspects of the problems of clergy deployment.

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Convention in 1976. Among the trends noted from 1970 to 1974 were the following:

- Total number of clergy has increased 7.3%. There is an annual net increase of 200 clergy per year.
- Baptized membership decreased by 11.6%; communicant membership by 6.7%.
- Parochial ministries represent three-fifths of the clergy.
- In parochial ministries 7% of all presbyters in charge, or assisting, are non-stipendiary.
- Non-stipendiary clergy have increased by 70.5% and they are now one-fifth of all clergy.

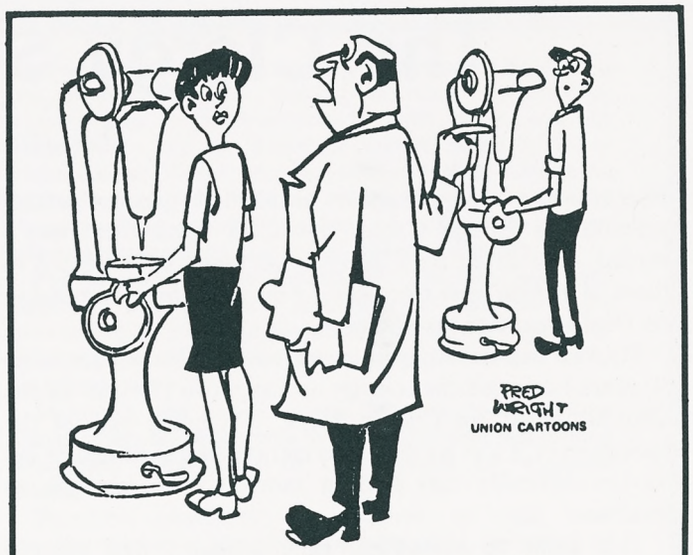
Much has happened since 1974. There are even more clergy, fewer baptized persons and fewer communicants. Instead of 11 fully accredited seminaries we now have 10, as two have merged. (This was the extent of the response to a position taken by the Board of Theological Education that the number of seminaries be reduced to five). As more men and women are ordained they join the ranks of those seeking a position within the system.

'Within System' Key Phrase

Within the system may be the key phrase. As stated earlier, there was a time in the late 1940's and early '50's when the cry, *"more men for the ministry"* was sounded on all sides. When a man enrolled in seminary two things were generally assumed: One, that he would be ordained; and two, that he would be taken care of *within the system* until he died or was retired.

Bishops debated their responsibility to "their" men on the basis that it was their duty to be sure that the priests resident in "their" dioceses had jobs. The sense of responsibility was particularly keen when "their" men entered seminary, and were ordained in "their" dioceses, and were placed by them when the men became deacons. Less responsibility was felt toward men who transferred into the diocese, but not much less. It was recognized that some dioceses sent more men to seminary than they could ordinarily place, so that some dioceses were "exporters" and others "importers" of clergy.

When a man first became interested in going to seminary the first step was to tell his rector or perhaps his college chaplain, who would then tell his bishop. If everything seemed normal, i.e., he had or was about to get his college degree and felt a strong call to the ministry, he became a postulant and was sponsored by his parish. Seminaries did not accept a man unless he intended to become a candidate for ordination. There were other steps such as approval by the Standing Committee and a bill of health from a psychiatrist. Often a part or all of the cost was paid by or through the seminary of his bishop's choice.



"We have adopted a single-rate wage plan. His rate is to be reduced to yours and you are to be fired . . ."

Once in the system, the man tended to look to "mother church" to direct and rule his life. To be sure, he had some choices (although often he had to have his bishop's and seminary dean's permission if he wanted to get married in course). After he was ordained priest he could decide to accept or reject a call from a parish or other approved judicatory. He could "progress" about as far as his talents would allow with little or no worry about having a job.

To say that all this has changed is greatly to understate the situation. An early development was one-year fellowships offered by the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation for outstanding men to test their vocation by spending a year in seminary without any decision prior to admission concerning ordination. This forced the seminaries to modify their policy with respect to ordination.

For the past several years men and women often have entered seminary without any sponsorship by a parish and often without the knowledge, let alone consent, of any bishop. A few years ago women began to enroll for a degree to allow them to become directors of religious education or fill a teaching position. Today, the process of candidacy may be initiated by persons *at any time* during their seminary career. It is not even assumed that a person will even take the General Ordination Examination. Nor do many, if any, seminarians operate under the illusion that "mother church" will look after its graduates.

Dean Harvey Guthrie, Jr., of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge spoke to the problem with admirable

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forthrightness in the Spring, 1977, issue of *E.D.S. News.* Addressing the question, "Why do seminaries keep taking so many people?" he answers that "the church's ministry cannot be equated with *paid* jobs for *ordained* ministers." He goes on to point out that every Christian has a ministry and that "the ministry" is not to be identified only with ordained ministers.

Further, he states that even the need for *ordained* ministers cannot be equated with paid job openings. It seems that bishops and others by implication must find new ways of providing ordained ministers to congregations that cannot finance full-time positions. Dean Guthrie contends that with this caveat seminaries would be "shortsighted, irresponsible, suicidal" to reduce enrollments and "leave the church increasingly undersupplied with educated ministers."

Not everyone will agree with his position nor with his point that in this new situation seminaries must now help seminarians to help themselves and by implication go out and create jobs for themselves as well as raising or causing to be raised the money necessary to fund such a ministry.

This is a far cry from the approach which many in the church have ever thought possible. It certainly means that great care must be exercised in the kinds of persons who are admitted as students. In the not too distant past many who sought ordination tended to be passive, dependent psychological types. Not all, of course, and those that were noticeably so, often experienced difficulties because the jobs they were asked to do involved being a self-starter.

If the previous situation seemed to encourage persons who tended to be passive, the situation which Dean Guthrie sees as the present norm requires persons with resourcefulness, imagination, healthy aggressiveness and considerable courage along with the ever needed qualities of commitment to Christ, love of God and neighbor, and a call to service.

A move in that direction may be underway. I am told that persons entering our seminaries today are of higher caliber and more often than not decide to apply on their own without being "sent" by a bishop. This in itself, if true, is a healthy sign boding well for the future. It also may well be that having women in seminaries will increasingly prove to have a salutary effect on the educational process and will mean that more "whole" (holy) persons will be presented for ordination and/or will find a fruitful ministry.

Women's Issue Not Settled

The times are difficult, trite but true. At the recent meeting of the House of Bishops in Florida it was abundantly clear that the issue of the ordination of women is not finally settled. Furthermore, the bishops considered the ordination of persons without ecclesiastical support or position. This means there will be a review of the canon which forbids the ordering of a priest unless the ordinand has a parochial cure, is a missionary under an ecclesiastical authority, is an officer of some recognized missionary society, is a hospital, welfare or military chaplain, or chaplain or instructor in some college or seminary, "with opportunity for the exercise of his ministry judged sufficient by the bishop."

(One change indicated would be in the personal pronoun, in light of the action of General Convention approving the ordination of women!)

Two things seem to be happening. On the one hand, more and more parishes and missions are in financial difficulties, some being kept afloat by non-stipendiary clergy as attested by the 7% figure given earlier. The percentage is undoubtedly higher now. Nevertheless, at least half of the parishes and missions are in trouble and many will not survive if they hold to the tradition of a full-time paid priest serving only one small congregation.

On the other hand, the increasing number of non-parochial and non-stipendiary clergy may be the "wave of the future" by which the church may be lifted up and carried into new and uncharted places with new and different forms of ministry, along with the modification and renewal of old forms. Thus the "surplus" itself may serve and may be serving as a catalyst by which new beginnings are undertaken through the imagination, resourcefulness and initiative of a new generation of clergy unhampered by the restrictions of past presuppositions.

This is a tall order and will not come to pass without struggle and travail. But it is a hope with signs of fulfillment already present, dependent, as is all Christian hope, on God in Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. ■

NICODEMUS

He is a hollow-headed fool
But is considered bright.
He comes by night
(A damn good thing)
To ask his silly question
Though quite intelligent it seems . . .
To seek salvation requires sincere concern
But offers no pat answer(s).
No wonder
Gentle Jesus calls him
Stupid.

Alyce S. Kyle

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Looking for My Roots

by Mary Lou Suhor

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THE WITNESS from time to time calls an editorial consultation to ask various and assorted folks we feel are representative of our readership to give candid criticisms of the magazine. From our last meeting came the suggestion: "Why don't you let the readers know who you are? The personality of the staff does not emerge sufficiently through the editorial pages."

In a moment of madness, I volunteered to be the first to answer the question, "Who are you?" Flip answers come to mind: THE WITNESS' answer to the Dragon Lady. . . or "I am Mary Lou Suhor, have blue eyes, naturally curly hair, a mole in the middle of my forehead, and am doing pretty good for a person of my age and weight, thanks."

But instead, I'd like to describe how I spent my vacation last autumn in serious pursuit of the question, inspired by Alex Haley's "Roots." In case you've wondered but never dared to ask, Suhor is a Dalmatian name. We're French and Gypsy by heritage. Grandfather Suhor was a bar pilot on the Mississippi River before he died at a very early age. But my father's mother was French, and my mother's parents were French immigrants. So, not being quite courageous enough to pursue the Gypsy strain, I set out for la belle France.

From childhood I had been fascinated by my grandmother's stories of how she, Marie, and her husband, Joanes Porte, had sailed from Bordeaux to New York steerage class. They were in their late 20's, and were accompanied by her young son, Etienne (from my widowed grandmother's first marriage). My grandmother had met my grandfather in a small tobacco shop she was running, and off they went to the New World with only $100 in their pockets. Unable to speak English, they headed straight for the French Quarter in New Orleans, the city where pratically everybody in my family was born. My mother learned English when she went to school.

Life was hard for immigrants in the Promised Land. My grandfather worked most of his life in the *abattoir* or slaughterhouse. My grandmother took charge of the home/work projects — cultivating the vegetable garden and supervising the milking and making of cheese and butter which the children sold, along with chickens, before they went to school in the morning. Etienne died at 14 from scrofula.

There was a concerted effort to "Americanize." The grandchildren, it was decided, would speak only English to facilitate their entrance into the American dream. Thus it was that when I went to France, I launched out unable to speak the language, except for the words of a few lullabies that I remembered plus a number of cuss words us kids seemed to have a knack for picking up. I had studied Spanish in high school; there was no French teacher in our public school.

My parents had visited our cousins in Assat some 15 years earlier when on a tour of Europe, but only had three hours with them before they had to get back on the bus. My mother gave me a photo taken at that time, a letter in French identifying me as a member of the family, and told me to get a cab from Lourdes and ask the driver to find the address.

Easy for her to say; she speaks French perfectly. The day I approached the line of taxi drivers at the train station with my Berlitz book, I struggled with the sentence,

Great-grandfather Pierre & Marie Louise

"Y-a-til quelqu'un qui parle espanol?" "Si, senora." And so it was that I bargained with a driver (in Spanish) to take me to Assat (in a taxi) to find my cousins (in French). As we conversed enroute I discovered it would have been easier to detrain at Pau, but *"c'est la vie."*

Arriving at Assat we stopped at the gas station to ask about my cousins. The driver of a car which had just pulled in knew them and gave directions to their home.

Our arrival, for me, was like watching two foreign movies at once without subtitles. Seven of my cousins were trying to speak to me in French, I was asking the driver in Spanish to tell them that I couldn't understand, and the driver was trying to speak in French and Spanish to communicate with both of us. Suddenly I heard a voice say, "Do you understand?"

It turned out to be my teen-age cousin, Jean-Luc, who was studying English at school and who was to escort me and interpret during most of my stay. Thanks to Jean-Luc, and to my young cousins Evelyne, Agnes, Pascal, Eric and Odile who were also studying English, I was able to trace the history of the family tree with some accuracy. My prized possession is a photo given to me of my great-grandfather, Pierre, with my grandfather's sister, Marie Louise (my name!) when she was in the convent. Our family had never seen this.

My French cousin-hosts, Gerard and Josette Larque, were delighted that the children could communicate with me. Parents frequently are unable to observe such practical results of what their children learn in school, and the children were excited about the new world that had opened up. "I enjoy to speak these words," Jean-Luc told me more than once. To our delight, Josette discovered that she could understand my Spanish (as did others of my cousins, living that close to the Pyrenees). So early on, thanks to the children's English, some French, some Spanish, many gesticulations, and very much love, it became clear that we would be communicating.

Gradually they pieced together the family tree for me—the story of how life was passed down, as Houselander once said, "from generation to generation, kiss

to kiss." I tried to fill in the blanks for them as to what happened after Joanes and Marie arrived in the United States. I was carrying photos of my family taken at my own parents' 50th wedding anniversary in June, and identified all the "American cousins."

My French cousins work the fields in Assat, growing a wide variety of vegetables—lettuce, spinach, onions, cabbage. The children also have a field for which they are responsible.

My cousins would be in the fields by 7 a.m. and by 10 a.m. would "have 1,000 salads cut," Jean-Luc told me. Two helpers would wash the vegetables in the river and crate them. Then Josette would drive the produce to the local co-op for sale, as Gerard returned to the fields.

Dining with them was sheer joy. Madame Penouilh cooked the meals, every one a *cordon bleu* masterpiece, put together from fresh produce from the farm, preceded by an aperitif and accompanied by French wine. Her *garbure* soup was just like my grandmother's.

I was treated to a succession of these gourmet's delights for five days, as I traveled to be introduced at one cousin's home, then another, in Pau, Nay, Jurancon, Assat. The energy of the elderly, especially, amazed me. When I visited my grandmother's cousin, Madame Palengat, the 85-year-old woman was tending the rabbits, and at the same time preparing vegetables for canning.

And for all you sports fans out there, my family tree turned up a national soccer star—Jean Michel Larque, of Bizanos, who starred for and captained the St. Etienne team to national and international victories recently.

There were many touching interludes: The children took me to the parish church to see where they and their parents had been baptized, and to the local town monument where my grandfather had played as a child; Josette accompanied me to bring flowers to the cemetery and to say a prayer at the tombs where our ancestors were buried; then she took me to gather souvenir leaves from the 200-year-old chestnut trees, which were standing even when my great-grandfather cultivated the land.

On the fourth day of my visit, I went downstairs for the lovely breakfast of aromatic, piping hot cafe-au-lait and bread and butter, and was surprised to see a photographer and a young woman in the living room. None of my cousins being around, I ventured, *"Bonjour. Je suis Marie Louise Suhor de los Estados Unidos,"* confusing my French and Spanish. The woman replied in perfect English, "We are looking for the American journalist."

They were from *Sud-Ouest,* (circulation 350,000), published out of Bordeaux, and wanted to interview me about my "Roots" trip. Such turnabouts are a bit jarring, if not unique for a reporter, so after Caroline de Lacoste completed her interview, I asked her questions for an hour:

- On the difficulties of being a woman journalist in a man's world in Europe: They are "formidable" but this brilliant young woman who also holds a law degree and learned English while an exchange student in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1971, is holding her own;
- On the local area: Pau has a Socialist Mayor and the town council of 40 members is comprised of 35 Socialists and 5 Communists; the people are either farmers or industrial workers, the area being rich in natural gas;
- On her own background: She was born in Cameroun and her father decided to leave when the political climate clouded to establish a business in Dax.

Then I took *her* photo. This experience was to give me the first inkling of my French family's politics. When the interview came out the next day, Jean-Luc went out to buy copies of the paper. My cousins, it seems, receive either *L'Eclair* or *La Republique*, the Socialist papers published out of Pau.

Leaving my cousins after five days of eating, drinking, touring and loving exchanges was an emotional disaster. And I was loaded down with gifts: A coffee mug from Nay, souvenir linens from the days of my grandfather, family initials sewn in; photos, leaves. Jean-Luc gave me a necklace he was wearing. I gave Josette a necklace I was wearing.

My farewell dinner was a "con-celebration." The children were all going back to school the next day, some of them to boarding school, so they, too, got a glass of wine at table.

At the end of the meal, they all lined up to say goodbye to the American cousin: Celine, Dominique, Laurent, Jean-Marc, and all of those named before. Said Eric, with a bow and a handshake, "You will *writ* to us?"

Fear not, Eric. I will *writ* to you. Maybe even about you. After I waved "adieu" to all who had come to see me off at the train station, I cried happily and silently all the way to the Spanish border.

Dear Lord, if this be France, what might Dalmatia bring? ■

Mary Lou Suhor, seated center, and French cousins: Clockwise, Gerard, Josette, Jean-Marc, Evelyne, Pascal, Agnes, Marie, and Mme. Penouilh.

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Motion Pending for Release of Women

A motion for the release of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin was taken under advisement by Judge Robert L. Carter in New York Dec. 5, after attorneys for the women argued that further incarceration would be merely punitive and not achieve its intended purpose, to coerce them to testify. As THE WITNESS went to press, no decision had been reached.

Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin, executive director and secretary, respectively, of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, have been in jail since early March for refusing to answer questions before a Grand Jury investigating bombings by a group which calls itself the FALN. The women have contended that answering questions in secret session before a Grand Jury would be a breach of the confidences they shared with Hispanics in their lay ministry, and would have a chilling effect on the social mission of the church, to which they were committed.

Their position was backed by a broad segment of the Christian community, in letters and affidavits presented to the Court. Eugene Scheiman, representing the National Council of Churches of Christ, and Robert S. Potter, representing Bishops Paul Moore, Francisco Reus-Froylan and Robert L. DeWitt, joined Ms. Cueto's and Ms. Nemikin's attorneys in arguments for their release.

The two women have been in jail for more than nine months, and could remain there until May 8. Grand Jury reform bills by Rep. Joshua Eilberg of Pennsylvania and Rep. John Conyers of Michigan currently in Congress, would cut to six months the maximum incarceration period for persons held in contempt.

Ironically, the U.S. District Judge who originally held the women in contempt, Marvin Frankel, says in his book, *The Grand Jury, an Institution on Trial,* "The existing oddity of holding a federal witness in jail for the remaining life of the Grand Jury seems uniquely undesirable, as does any rule that measures imprisonment by some fortuitous irrelevancy."

Seven other persons, in addition to Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin, are being held in contempt of Grand Juries in Chicago and New York. They were all somehow connected with the NCHA. Messages of support and greetings for the New Year can be sent to:

Maria Cueto, 00406-183
Metropolitan Correction Center,
Room L-583
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Raisa Nemikin, 00446-183
Metropolitan Correction Center,
Room M-593
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Julio Rosado, 07163-158
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Andres Rosado, 07164-158
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Luis Rosado, 07165-158
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Pedro Archuleta, 06775-158
Metropolitan Correction Center
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.
Chicago IL 60604

Ricardo Romero
Metropolitan Correction Center
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.
Chicago IL 60604

Jose Lopez
Metrpolitan Correction Center
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.
Chicago IL 60604

Roberto Caldero
Metropolitan Correction Center
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.
Chicago, IL 60604

—M.L.S.

Raisa Nemikin

Maria Cueto

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canons are reversed a bishop can, and probably will, inhibit women priests. When if the canons are reversed, your bishop writes to every priest in the diocese that they are not to permit you to perform any sacerdotal function at any time, anywhere within their cures what will you do? Celebrate in a living room? If you do, the priest in whose cure you are may, if he knows about it, find himself without a cure anywhere ever again. Would you want to do that to your friends?

How under those circumstances will you take communion to the sick, absolve the penitent, bless a marriage, or the poor, or the persecuted? What will you do when women come to you for counsel about their vocations? What will you tell them? Enter a convent? Marry a priest?

You, I and all women priests accept the priesthood of the members of CAM and others who think as they do. There is no need for them to hide in caves or anywhere else but, believe me, they are not willing to let you or me or any woman continue to function as priests if they can stop it. If they get their way, you will find that doors now open to you will be closed, those who smile at you now will turn their backs. God accepts our priesthood but certain rulers of the church do not.

Let us by all means "get on with our ministry" but let us also face reality. I add my voice to Sue's. Beware!

The Rev. Jeannette Piccard
Minneapolis, Minn.

Church Full of Surprises

I've just read Jeffrey Hart's rather amazing syndicated column on the Episcopal Church.

As a recently confirmed Episcopalian whose first interest in the church was faith and not structure or politics, I find myself surprised almost every day by the wide-ranging controversies that have been bursting into print.

So I thought that as long as Mr. Hart was kind enough to tell me where to order "Struggling with the System" and how much to send, I'd buy a copy. A church that fosters so much diversity is a lot more interesting than I dared expect.

Sharon Smith
Hartland, Me.

More Than Toe-Aches

A suggestion: There are various problems of greater significance than the local toe-aches of the Protestant Episcopal babies in the various "Libs"—concentrating on their own navels, in my opinion.

Some better foci are subjects wracking society, to which the old "Church Union," "The Church Militant," "Christians for Socialism," and the Blessed Frank Huntington, OHC gave their strength. Nevertheless, carry on, because we have little else in our denomination.

The Rev. Jack Russell
Boston, Mass.

Sexism Still Major Issue

THE WITNESS received a copy of the following letter from Edna M. Pittenger on behalf of the Los Angeles Chapter of Church and Society:

An open letter to the House of Bishops:

Recent comments by the Presiding Bishop and the subsequent "vote of confidence" you extended to him at Port Saint Lucie clearly indicate that sexism continues to be a major issue for the Episcopal Church.

It is appalling and disturbing to learn that those in positions of power are "above the law". There have been other occasions in the past when the Presiding Bishop has chosen to ignore church law. He had been subpoenaed to appear as a witness in the trial of the Rev. William Wendt in Washington, D.C. in 1975 and refused to do so; recently in St. Louis he received communion from one of the dissident priests who had been deposed by Bishop Rusack of Los Angeles; and now he has ignored a decision by the Church's General Convention to admit women to the priesthood by declaring that he does not believe women can be priests "any more than they can be fathers or husbands." This is a ridiculous statement and leaves little doubt that his opposition to women priests is based purely on the fact that, in his view, they are the wrong sex. The issue should not be a question of sexual preference or biological makeup; the Call has gone out to women, not only from God, but from lay people who yearn for fresh new expressions of ministry from those who have too long been excluded.

Collegiality and abuse of authority prevail in the Church. Affirmation of those priests and bishops who, in opposition to Church law, refuse to ordain women or accept their ministry, is not a decision for John Allin or the House of Bishops to make. The *whole* Church has spoken positively on the issue in its General Convention over a year ago. If the Presiding Bishop's "conscience" will not permit him to ordain women or receive communion from them it is only proper that he *must* step down as the leader of the Episcopal Church!

Los Angeles Chapter
Church & Society

CORRECTION

In the story about Tierra Amarilla in the December issue ("Missing Pedro, But Moving On") THE WITNESS incorrectly identified the Moises Morales infant, who died recently, as a daughter instead of a son.

Since the article appeared, THE WITNESS has also learned that the University of New Mexico Medical School recently evaluated the maternity program at La Clinica, under contract funds from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The study showed that before the program was in full swing, only 20% of the women in the area went through prenatal and postnatal care. Today, because of the influence of La Clinica, nearly 80% of the women utilize prenatal and postnatal care, either at La Clinica or through the public health department, with which La Clinica is in close contact.

This was seen as the biggest factor in the reduction of the infant mortality rate, now down to 17 per 1,000, as over against 36 per 1,000 in the area in 1969.

The NCHA of the Episcopal Church was one of the groups which helped to fund the maternity wing of La Clinica.

COMING UP IN THE WITNESS

Ellen Barrett reports on the Women's Meeting in Houston; Sandy Cutler on the Urban Coalition Hearings in Newark; John Bennett on Urban Theology; James Cone and Howard Dodson on Black Theology... and MORE ...

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Women's Meet/Houston
Ellen Barrett

Abortion
George Barrett
Helen Seager

The Embarrassment Of Being Episcopalian
William Stringfellow

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Objects to ERA Article

I have three strong objections to Dr. Fuller's article in the November number of THE WITNESS, the first applying to this article alone, the others to the matter of women's rights in general:

1. Dr. Fuller uses the rather nasty tactic of guilt by association when she lumps together responsible opponents of the ERA and such groups as the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birch Society. Would Dr. Fuller appreciate opponents of the ERA lumping her together with Stalinist supporters of the amendment? This tactic relieves her of the task of examining responsible opposition to the ERA she must suppose; but in fact it makes her entire article suspect from the start.

2. It is doubtful that defeat of the ERA would spell a substantial setback in the struggle to obtain an equal place for women in American society. The Equal Protection clause of the 14th Amendment, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and other national and local legislation provide essential equality in theory. It is unclear to me how another measure can do more. With or without the ERA unequal treatment will have to be challenged in the courts, and with or without the ERA gross discrimination will violate the law of the land. No one knows in fact what the ERA *would* do. Given the wonders worked upon and by means of the Interstate Commerce clause, reasonable people can suspect that the horrors predicted by hysterical opponents of the ERA are not entirely far-fetched.

3. Finally, it seems to me that the egalitarianism supported by Dr. Fuller (and THE WITNESS) flows more from the early modern natural right philosophers than from Scripture, and that in fact it is a sort of neo-Erastianism. The message of Scripture is that all people are equally bound to hear and obey God. There are no rights beyond the right to become a child of God by grace and free obedience. This right has concrete implications, which very well might be codified by good regimes. I do not see that the ERA provides an example. I do not have room here to explain this view, but I refer your readers to Scripture (e.g. Genesis 1-3 and Ephesians 5) and to Karl Barth's profound and generous treatment of the subject in "Man and Woman," Chapter XII, section 54 of **Church Dogmatics.**

Mark Haverland
Kenyon College
Gambier, Ohio

Dr. Fuller Replies

Mr. Haverland raises three points: Whether there is need for the ERA, guilt by association, and Scriptural witness.

First, the Supreme Court has consistently refused to apply the 14th Amendment to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender as it has on the basis of race, religion and national origin. If we relied on individual laws to provide equality, the legal status of women would vary from issue to issue and locale to locale. After enactment, such laws, unlike a Constitutional amendment, could evaporate when the blush of democracy fades. (In 1776 New Jersey gave women the right to vote — and took it away in 1807!)

Re guilt by association. The Communist Party of the USA *opposes* the ERA. On the far right, Phyllis Schlafly, head of Stop ERA, was a featured speaker at a 1973 John Birch Society national rally and was listed as a member in their 1960 Bulletin. (She now denies membership.) At Schlafly's anti-feminist rally, Texas State Representative Clay Smothers demanded "the right to segregate myself and my family from these misfits and perverts" attending the International Women's Year Conference in Houston. Smothers' audience of 15,000 middle-class Christians cheered wildly. They continued to cheer as "pervert" rhetorically included anyone wanting federally funded day care, the ERA, reproductive choice, or civil rights for homosexuals.

I interviewed rally participants, whom I *do* separate from their right-wing leadership. They came to witness for God, family and country. They acknowledge social problems but sincerely see the causes as legislation and bureaucracy and the solutions as personal morality and private spirituality. This raises the third and most crucial point. Can effective personal witness against today's problems be separated from community witness that entails legislation and administration?

When God's children were inhibited from lives of grace and obedience, Scriptural witnesses reacted publicly, going directly to the cause. When the barrier was idolatry, Moses confronted the established religions. When the barrier was legalism, Jesus broke the established laws. Today many of God's children cannot experience full grace and obedience because of structures, politically maintained, that trap them in poverty and unequal opportunity. In dialogue with the thousands of Christians who witness at anti-ERA rallies we must ask, "Can your personal morality and private spirituality directly challenge the *structural* causes of contemporary discrimination?" I believe they cannot.

Georgia Fuller, NOW Coordinator
Committee on Women and Religion

Pained by Cuba Report

It gives me great pain to read articles supporting the Cuban government, especially when the author (Charles Lawrence) is a fellow Christian, because it demonstrates to what extent the wolf is ravaging the sheep (THE WITNESS, August 1976).

It is not my intention to argue here about the diplomatic relations between U.S. and Cuba nor to refute the monstrous assertment that the Cuban people have progressed under Communism. The first can be a good subject for debate. The second is an untenable proposition in the light of the exodus of about 800,000 or 8% of the Cuban population and the fact that Cubans have long been barred from seeking refuge outside the island.

My interest lies in the advancement of Christianity and the intrinsic internal freedom that this represents. My own escape from Cuba was my family's decision after the advent of Communism eliminated any trace of justice. The International Commission of Jurists published a report in 1962 testifying to this: "Rule of law had disappeared from the island." Christians can continue to assemble inside designated churches but cannot educate their children in their faith. Witnessing and evangelizing outside the church has cost many years of imprisonment. Committed Christians are considered automatically to be "Counter-revolutionary."

Evidently the silence of the opposition gave Mr. Lawrence the impression that

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THE WITNESS

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To Weep Over Jerusalem

Robert L. DeWitt

The bishops of the Episcopal Church have been subjected to heavy criticism of late, and the church they serve has been continually in the news. The news has been not so much sordid as turgid — signs of schism, diatribes about trivia, a preoccupation with internal matters seemingly of only morbid interest and probably of no importance to the world.

For example, much time and attention at their last meeting was devoted to the question of how the bishops should deal with one of their number who had confirmation services in other bishops' jurisdictions without permission — scarcely a matter of great gravity in the eternal scheme of things. And when the issues have been of intrinsic importance to the church and to the world — as the rights of women and of gays — the news has been rather of how the bishops have equivocated or temporized. In short, the present image of the church portrays it as not being devoted with any great seriousness either to its own Gospel, or to the world.

Providing sharp contrast to that image is the recently emerged Urban Bishops' Coalition, a voluntary association of some 50 bishops from across the country who have been brought together by their common concern about, and need for help in facing the crisis of their cities.

The first joint enterprise they have undertaken (they have committed themselves to act, not just to deliberate) is a series of public hearings in five regionally representative cities of the land, focusing on how the church can better minister to the city. As of this writing three hearings have already been held. The bishops have heard testimony on the endless inventory of social ills that afflict both our cities and the people who dwell in them. From all of this data, the bishops intend to devise new and effective strategies for the church in its urban mission.

But it is not easy. After listening all morning, afternoon and evening to the testimony in Birmingham, Bishop Furman Stough of Alabama said that his first reaction was "to weep over Jerusalem." Such a day as he had been through makes for hard, hard listening.

It is hard on the emotions, hard on the mind. One would need to be coldly indifferent not to anguish over the privations of marginalized people, the distortion of young lives, the loneliness of the elderly, the resentment of blacks and women about their unequal treatment. And one would need a wisdom not in evidence either in legislative chambers or in the suites of business management to resolve the dilemmas of inadequate and insufficient housing, of rising inflation and rising unemployment. Like a Lenten litany, one wants to cry out: *"Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy . . ."*

But, as Bishop Stough pointed out at the conclusion of the testimony, we in this church which is predominantly white and middle class, have the deeper identity of being followers of Christ, and we must find ways to live that out. A strategy for living out that discipleship corporately is what these bishops are about. It will require the best thinking that they, and others with them, can do. As Gulliver learned from the Lilliputians, even a giant can be rendered helpless when tied down by a multiplicity of little restrictions. So it is with the innumerable demands of the office of bishop.

To avoid being immobilized by endless administrative details, the bishops will need a lot of

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Abortion

Challenge for New Doctrine of Woman

by Helen Seager

The turmoil about women's rights and responsibility in the church and in society indicates how thoroughly the ancient misogynistic attitude toward women persists, but it is rare that this underlying doctrine of woman is held up for examination in any of the issues.

I believe that misogyny is about to be confronted and overcome, if not destroyed. The resulting challenge to both church and society is to create a new doctrine of woman, which would remove a fundamental source of oppression — the sexual domination of man over woman.

Typically, in the abortion debate, it is not the doctrine of woman that is discussed, but rather the legal rights of fetuses, adoption policies, use of tax money, freedom of conscience, population projections, etc. These issues, important though they are, plus abortion itself, are only the warp and woof of the last but heavy veil over a misogyny which has always been part of our collective unconscious. It is the last veil because at issue is the real difference between men and women, with the focus on an experience that only a woman can have.

That we are close to the truth is indicated by the ferocity of the debate (one Baptist clergy member has characterized a public presentation on abortion as "two self-righteous people who go for the jugular").

A chronology of positions and opinions about women's issues in the church and society shows inconsistency regarding the morality and legality of abortion. In the 10th century Holy Roman Empire, a woman who miscarried even accidentally could be condemned to the stake. In the 11th century, Pope Innocent held that abortion before "animation" (40 days for a male and 80 days for a female) was not "irregular." In the 14th century, it was established in English common law that abortion could be induced at any time during pregnancy. In 1588, Pope Sixtus forbade all abortion, a principle rescinded by Pope Gregory only three years later.

It was not until the 19th century that the British Parliament passed a restrictive abortion statute, followed across the ocean by New York State, on the grounds that abortion, in those days without antiseptics, threatened the life of the woman. By 1900, even with antiseptics, most American doctors had become anti-abortion — some suggest in an effort to lend dignity to their practice.

The only Old Testament reference which might indicate values assigned to the loss of a fetus occurs in *Exodus 21:22.* In this passage it is recommended that, if a pregnant woman miscarries as a result of trying to break up a fight between two men, but is not injured otherwise, the judge shall award as much money to her husband as he demands. The loss of the fetus is repaid with money. If the woman suffers additional injury, her injury is to be repaid (to the husband, of course) "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth . . . ." Although the Old Testament doctrine of woman treats a woman as part of a man's goods and chattel rather than as a person in her own right (see the Tenth Commandment, for example) and despite her principal value as a producer of many children, her loss of life was to be repaid with another life, not with money. One must infer that today's hardline anti-abortion people who grudgingly grant abortion only if the woman is in danger of death would gather small support in Old Testament times. As little as a woman was worth in those days, her life was worth more than a fetus.

The first century Palestinian doctrine of woman, as manifested in the scriptural and religious laws of the day, treated woman as the source of male contamination, to be confined to and through her reproductive role (a doctrine on which Christian saints and patriarchs of a later era did not improve). Strict and particular rules assured the separation of the sexes in order to protect a man's ritual cleanliness and to protect him from "sinning." A man was not to speak to a woman in public, not even his wife or daughter; a man was not to walk behind a woman, lest he become aroused by her shape (Jesus was not the first to recognize adultery in the heart); women were not to be educated lest they associate with men and know what they know; women were considered incapable of ritual cleanliness and transmitted this state to men. Thus, for the sake of righteousness, men learned to hate/fear/shun women.

These practices reflect a Hebrew anxiety about avoiding the debauched behavior of the neighboring Canaanites, but degenerated to serve as fences around the great Commandments, protecting the males of the day from a confrontation with a fundamental divine mandate. At the same time, uniquely female experiences — pregnancy, childbirth, menstruation, abortion, menopause, lactation — were imbued with a meaning suiting the fears of men rather than the needs of women.

The early Christian church and the church of the Middle Ages, even with the example of a Savior who can truly be called a feminist (in that he actively flouted social mores in order to treat women as fully adult human beings), perpetuated the misogynist doctrine of woman which played no small part in the development of vows of chastity and celibacy, and

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Free Choice Involves Theology, Ethics

by George W. Barrett

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Just a little more than five years ago, on Jan. 22, 1973 — a day that will live in the annals of the quest for freedom — the U.S. Supreme Court handed down its decision granting to any woman the right to terminate her pregnancy, at least until its later stages.

Many people disapproved of the decision. However, few could have forseen the bitter battles, the attempts to take away this right by amending the Constitution, the drastic restrictions on the funding of abortions for poor women, the angry, vicious picketing of abortion clinics with harassing of their patients as well as vandalism and arson. And who could have envisaged that the trust and confidence built up in the ecumenical movement would be threatened by the rigid intransigence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy on this issue?

Like all significant human decisions abortion has profound theological implications, raising basic questions about the meaning of life, about the way we make moral choices and about how Christians exert their influence in a pluralistic society. Many excellent things have been written and said on the subject by distinguished people as well as by a number of religious denominations and bodies, including Catholics for Free Choice. I write not only as a bishop and a former professor of pastoral theology but also after five years as a Planned Parenthood executive and from first hand contact with people making personal decisions about abortions, and with their counselors as well. Such a perspective may be more realistic than those of celibate clergy, male politicians and even well-intentioned moralists making judgments about the lives of other people.

Several Christian doctrines bear directly on the abortion issue, although these teachings have much in common with Judaism and even certain types of humanism.

1. **Creation:** All life is a continuing creative process, from the origin of the universe through the evolution of human beings, and whatever similar forms of life may exist elsewhere in space. In the whole process, God is involved as the central creative, integrating force, of whom the word "personal" is a clue to God's nature, and "love" the best definition of God's character. However, within this creative process there exists what might be called chance, autonomy, and freedom. God does not manipulate the way in which people make decisions, the pattern of the weather or the way cells of the body divide. God does not "send" a particular child to a particular home by causing a contraceptive device to fail or visit cancer on a man or woman or decree death by drowning. God does not act as a problem solver, rather expects us to function as co-workers; for example, by matching the birth rate to carrying capacity of the earth.

Human life is a continuum as genes pass from one generation to another in a constant chain. At particular points in the process, called conception, sperm and ova unite to begin development programmed to produce unique persons. Contraception prevents the process from beginning; abortion destroys it after it is under way by killing the fetus.

However, a fetus is not a human *person* anymore than an architect's working drawings of a house are the house itself. Of course no one knows when a fetus becomes a person. The Supreme Court wisely decreed birth to be the time when a fetus becomes a baby, with personal identity and personal rights, that moment when the child breathes on its own and enters an environment larger than its mother's body.

Once, as a part of my responsibility to investigate hospitals to which patients were referred, I witnessed an early abortion. I had many mixed emotions, but never for a moment did I imagine that a human being was being destroyed, simply blood and tissue that might have developed into one. A later abortion is much more traumatic to see or to perform or endure, yet the existence of a human being is not established by the presence of the physical members of a human body.

Still, an abortion is not a procedure to be undertaken lightly. Reverence for life calls for respect for all living things as well as for the environment in which we live and by which we are sustained. It precludes unnecessary killing, and especially the insensitive killing of a creature on the way to becoming a human soul. It is obviously far better to prevent conception than to destroy its result. And an early abortion is infinitely preferable to a late one, both for the health of the patient, the sensitivities of doctors and nurses and respect for the mystery of life itself.

2. Imperfection: For our purpose it is unnecessary to go into the theology of sin and evil. Suffice it to say that we obviously live in an imperfect world, and are seldom confronted with clear, unambiguous choices between right and wrong and usually must make the best possible

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culminated in history's most brutal and obscene document *Malleus Maleficarum* (freely translated: *A Hammer to Smash Witches With*).

The Gospels contain nothing specific about abortion. They do contain evidence that Jesus was less severe with women than with men in matters of sexual conduct (a reversal of the prevailing double standard — history's first experience with Affirmative Action?), pointing his astonished critics to the commandment or principle instead. While Scribes and Pharisees obscured the principles with nit-picking fence laws (and believed themselves righteous in doing so), Jesus re-taught the ancient righteousness which "exceeds that of the Pharisees." He pushed the people of his time to a confrontation with the reality which had been hidden — with the reality of the Sabbath, with the meaning of images, with human relationships beyond human roles, with women as interested, interesting, fully human people. Jesus showed abhorrence of laws which placed a fence between a person and the fundamental reality s/he would confront but for religious laws.

I infer from Jesus' abhorrence of fence laws that he believes that righteousness is not hating and fearing and shunning people to avoid evil influence, but loving people, even those who may be evil, and making tough choices on a fundamental level. One is not really righteous, I believe he would tell us, if one acts in a particular way only because all other ways carry serious threats of, for example, criminal sanctions (fines or imprisonment), loss of livelihood, or ostracism. In addition, I believe he would tell us that one is not really acting righteously if someone else makes the choice for her. Jesus' absolute condemnation of judgment of humans was, I believe, his way of telling us that tough decisions are part of righteous living, of self-determination, of having life "more abundantly."

Abortion is really about that kind of decision, a fundamental decision by a woman which bears on the existence of another. The issue is distilled to disagreement about what laws on the subject are best to have on the books. The abortion debate is *not* about the 'pros' and 'cons' of abortion — there is no one (as there is with childbirth) to argue that abortion is an absolute good which every woman needs for fulfillment, no one is 'pro' abortion. Abortion legislative proposals fall into different categories:

- Punitive legislation, which denies benefits or services (e.g., Medicaid funds) to women who seek or have abortions and to folks who assist them.
- "Reform" legislation, which grants abortion services to women who have been declared worthy under criteria established by outsiders (e.g., if she is lucky enough to be crazy or to have been raped).
- "Letter-from-home" legislation, which grants abortion to a woman if someone else chooses it for her (e.g., a husband or parent).

All three types of legislation enjoy wide support, and the doctrine of woman which each reflects is alive, well, and persistent.

"Today's restrictive abortion laws are a new attempt of a misogynist world to control imagined feminine evil. The challenge to church and society as we influence lawmaking about abortion is to reflect a doctrine of woman consistent with the best understanding of what our Lord would have us proclaim."

The first reflects the assumption that all women seeking abortion are evil, degraded, and must be denied access to the path they have chosen or at least punished for taking it. The second type is paternalistic and assumes that a woman cannot make a tough decision or carry it out without "help;" that is, she is, in one view, child-like, or, in another, stupid. The third reflects the doctrine that a woman belongs to someone else, and her owner controls what happens to her. All three types of legislation — not surprising in a misogynist society, were discussed recently in Congress. Moreover, all three types are society's fence laws for women, to protect women from the "sin" of avoiding women's principal path to righteousness, namely childbirth.

A fourth type of legislation is "repeal" legislation, in which no interference regarding the woman's abortion decision is proposed or tolerated, but rather questions regarding medical conditions, qualifications of practitioners, etc. are addressed. The doctrine of woman reflected in this type of legislation assumes that women can and do make tough decisions, and that a female person is worth medical safeguards, and her safety is in the interest of the state. She is not dispensable as a human being. The Supreme Court decision of January, 1973 comes closest to this type, granting veto power only to the woman's physician, an obvious limitation, but not an insurmountable one.

Abortion is as old as history. People who will never be pregnant, such as men, and people who have never had an unwanted pregnancy, can understand only second hand the compelling depth of the motive of a pregnant woman to end a pregnancy. The message of millions of women through the ages and today who have mutilated or killed themselves rather than continue a distressing pregnancy tells us that, against tremendous pressure, women have never entirely accepted the observances, myths, and practices by which male-dominated society has tried to contain the evil attributed to women.

Today's restrictive abortion laws are a new attempt of a misogynist world to control imagined feminine evil. The challenge to church and society as we influence law-making about abortion is to reflect a doctrine of woman which is consistent with the best understanding we have of what our Lord would have us proclaim. We certainly want to avoid building fences between a woman and truly righteous action; we certainly wish to proclaim to everyone and to history our confidence in woman's capacity of human righteousness. We certainly want to see the validity of a woman's experience for herself. That is the hope that church can offer society.

I wonder: If misogyny had never entered in, if a woman's experience had always been considered valid, might the human model for God's love for us have become that of a mother for her wanted child rather than that of a man for his bride? ■

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choice among imperfect alternatives. For example, killing other people is considered wrong in most situations. Yet most Christians are not pacifists and will fight in — or support, at least — the wars they believe just. Many Christians support capital punishment. Robert Louis Stevenson, writing of his visit to certain Pacific islands a century ago, reported that the people there showed a very tender and loving care for children but at the same time practiced infanticide. They were not inconsistent; rather they accepted the only conditions they thought possible for the care and rearing of at least *some* children.

Any number of situations exist in which abortion may be the lesser evil and the greater good.

There are the cases where continued pregnancy would pose a clear threat to the life of the woman or significant danger to her physical and mental health. There are the cases where there are reliable indications of retardation or defectiveness in the children, a condition that cannot be diagnosed until several months of pregnancy.

There are pregnancies caused by incest or rape.

There is the family living at the poverty level — or slightly above it — for whom another child would mean a plunge into privation and want. There is the couple who look forward to having children sometime in the future but for whom a child at present would halt an education and blight a career of great promise.

There is the teen-ager, tempted to keep and try to raise the child with little more capacity for doing so than caring for a doll. The result is all too likely to be a badly brought up, sometimes battered, often neglected child, or grandparents coming to the rescue and beginning another round of child rearing in middle life. Then there are the adolescent marriages following conception, ending in a disproportionate number of unhealthy relationships, broken homes and divorces.

Finally there are the men and women who choose a child-free life style for reasons they consider valid and compelling, both for their own personal fulfillment and their contribution to society. Certainly this is a legitimate alternative in a world that has no need of any more children, other than the ones who are wanted and will be loved and properly reared. There is not even a shortage of children to be adopted, only of children who are white and very young. In many parts of the world the problem of overpopulation is desperate, with abortion — often self-induced and dangerous — the principal method of birth control.

3. Providence and Redemption: We believe that life can be redeemed by the grace of God, who is capable of using all kinds of misfortune and tragedy for good purposes. A poor family will welcome a child with joy and many a retarded child has brought blessings to his parents, just as children conceived out of wedlock in careless lust have become outstanding citizens. However, to use such facts against abortion is to fall into the fallacy against which Paul warned in his Epistle to the Romans, "Shall we continue to sin that grace may abound? By no means." Being able to redeem disaster is no ground for seeking it. In a somewhat similar category are remarks such as, "Suppose Beethoven's mother had had an abortion?" Indeed, but what if his parents had not slept together on a particular night? Such comments are never heard about Adolf Hitler or Charles Manson.

"The Supreme Court wisely decreed birth to be the time when a fetus becomes a baby, with personal identity and personal rights, that moment when the child breathes on its own and enters an environment larger than its mother's body."

4. Freedom: All that has been written about abortion and its complexity reinforces the wisdom of the 1973 decision, underlines the importance of every woman's right to choose her course freely and points to the blasphemy of compulsory pregnancy and mandatory motherhood. Few causes are more compelling to Christian consciences than efforts to lift the current outrageous restricting on government funding of abortion on Medicaid. Also urgent is the provision of more facilities for the performing of abortions and appropriate counseling, now disproportionately concentrated in large urban centers and a few states.

Closely related to the issue of abortion are broader issues of sexuality. Many years ago Margaret Sanger stated that no woman unable to control her fertility could call herself free.

To realize such freedom and reduce the incidence of abortion will require the development of contraceptives that are safer, surer, and longer lasting than those now in use as well as having fewer of the side effects, dangerous and upsetting to many women. Ideally these contraceptives would create conditions where it would take a conscious, deliberate effort to have a child rather than to prevent a conception. The development of such contraception will demand research and expenditures of funds — public and private — comparable to money now being spent on other health needs and diseases associated with the end of life, such as heart and kidney failure and strokes.

Even more important is the kind of sex education and ethical teaching that will help people make sound choices. At present we subject teen-agers to all the blandishments of a sex-drenched culture in media, advertising, and dress. By adult example, we give them mixed signals by our silence or negative admonitions, often denying them access to proper contraceptive care, and then complain when they become pregnant and seek abortion.

Most churches have only begun to meet the issue with honesty and realism. There are few parishes that provide opportunities for people to face together the personal and ethical implications of non-reproductive sexual relationships, to acknowledge positively the joy of sex and the fulfillment to be found in orgasm, along with the obligations they create. Need we leave such teaching to secular scientists and health agencies or even to meretricious publishers and pornographers? Or has the church a god-given vocation to provide wise and imaginative leadership for people to achieve a larger measure of the responsible freedom for which Christ has set us free?

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Newark: The Pits? Or Hope-Filled?

by F. Sanford Cutler

"Newark? It's the pits . . . People don't give a damn . . . It's full of hungry politicians . . . We have bullshitting people in office." These rather sharp comments by members of the Trinity Youth Group of the Episcopal Cathedral expressed the feelings of many who testified at the Newark hearings sponsored by the Urban Bishops Coalition in December.

There were, however, some voices of optimism. The Rev. Arthur Thomas, for example, called Newark, "an exciting community full of hope." But he added, "We, the residents, have been ripped off by those who control the profits."

Skepticism about the Church's ability realistically to become involved in the issues facing the city was expressed by Maso P. Ryan, who told of the Tri-Citizens Union for Progress which was formed in the 60's in response to a call from the Episcopal Church. Based in Patterson, Jersey City and Newark, its goal was to translate Black power rhetoric into action. It received an initial grant of $10,000 from the church, but according to Ryan, "when it came time to act, the clergy disappeared." Referring to a recent sermon by Bishop John Spong, calling for an end to the fortress mentality of the church and for greater involvement, Ryan questioned whether this was not simply more of the same old rhetoric.

At the other extreme, a representative from one of the inner-city congregations, the House of Prayer, also challenged Bishop Spong's sermon, urging that the church not by-pass existing parishes, but help them break through their budget crunches and provide funds for program. Questioned by the panel, he admitted that the present membership of House of Prayer was only 38 communicants.

Banking and Insurance executives expressed their confidence in the future, and described job training and housing programs their companies were sponsoring. But when challenged to explain the recent public statement by the President of Prudential that, "the time had come to phase out Newark as a residential area," they could only claim that this was taken out of context.

The restrictive nature of some unions also came under fire. The security officer of the building where the hearings were held testified that, because of union rulings, he was unable to get a job for which he was qualified despite his completion of the Newark training program.

Time after time, testimony evidenced the effectiveness of a number of community-based organizations in providing alternative forms of education, organizing co-ops, providing houses, pressuring Government for services and in raising consciousness and expectations of people. Particularly outstanding were the efforts of *Casa de Don Piedro,* and *Aspira,* two organizations working among the rapidly increasing Hispanic community. The work of the Roseville Coalition, the Ironbound Community School, and the Vailsburg Service Organization, were also proof that with sufficient organization, community-based projects can become a reality.

"The church wouldn't cheat nobody."

"What makes you so sure?"

"Well, you know, the church
is representing God.
And I believe in God.

And I believe God wouldn't cheat me.

So I'm saying I have faith in you.
So don't do me wrong."

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Derek Gaters, Philip Williams, and Donnie Days (left to right), members of the youth group at Trinity Cathedral, responding to a question at the Newark Hearing sponsored by the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

Panel, Newark Hearing: John Burt, Bishop of Ohio, chairperson; Francisco Reus-Froylan, Bishop of Puerto Rico; Paul Moore, Jr., Bishop of New York; Magdalia de Jesus Garcia, law student and community college teacher, New York; Kathryn Yatrakis, Ph.D. candidate in political science at Columbia University; Rebecca Andrade, Executive Director of Tri-Citizens Union for Progress, Newark; Dillard Robinson III, Dean of Trinity Cathedral; Malcolm Talbott, President, the Rutgers University Foundation; and Marjorie Christie, President, Episcopal Churchwomen, Diocese of Newark.

What can the church contribute in this area?

While there still are situations where seed money to begin community organization projects is needed, as was done in many General Convention Special Program projects, it was evident that something more was wanted besides money. Several speakers urged the church to take the lead in forming larger coalitions of community organizations in order that they might exert stronger clout on issues. Training of personnel, particularly of community organizers also seemed a feasible operation. Several speakers pointedly challenged the church to change its missionary priorities.

But in spite of the picture of things happening in Newark, and of real opportunities for the church to move into new forms of mission, two comments made at the hearings should be noted here: The first from an experienced social worker who, when asked what in her opinion represented the major obstacles to be overcome by anyone working in the inner city, replied quickly, "the Hierarchy". Secondly, the unanswered question posed early in the hearings by Archdeacon Martha Blacklock: "How far are the bishops really willing to go in terms of new forms of ministry?"

As Bishop John Hines recently pointed out, the Diocese of Newark has been singularly fortunate in its Episcopal leadership for several decades, and the future is promising. But no one diocese nor individual bishop can turn the church around. The Newark hearings alerted the church to some major areas of concern, produced evidence of the effectiveness of community-based organizations and challenged PECUSA to rethink its goals. ■

In Search of a Square Peg Caucus

Anyone who has enjoyed the last couple of General Conventions of the Episcopal Church would have enjoyed the National Women's Conference in Houston. It was no surprise to me that my subconscious did its usual pre-Convention job and provided me with an honorable excuse not to go (in the form of a sprained foot). What my subconscious underestimated was the extent of my morbid fascination with politics (which I loathe, together with its attendant crowds, noise, acrimony, bad food and worse hotels). I went, persuaded in a weak moment to be a Delegate-at-large.

It turned out to be neither as hopeful nor as depressing an experience as I had hoped/feared, but one that bears little relation to articles I have since read. Did anyone else go to the same Conference I did? Surely among almost 2,000 delegates there must have been material for a Square Peg Caucus.

One of my first impressions was the size of the meeting. Even before we got to the hall, standing in interminable registration lines made graphic the numbers of delegates. Diversity of race, accent, and class all rather overwhelmed me. Southwest and Plains tribeswomen, bottled blondes from Mississippi, and what must have been the reincarnation of one of Hawaii's ancient queens, a larger than life-size Polynesian demigoddess, and many more.

Apart from the anti-Equal Rights Amendment types, the delegates of the lesbian caucus were perhaps among the most disproportionately white and middle-class. In all the opening speeches extolling diversity, however, gay was never mentioned, not even in the rundown of Commissioners, one of whom is co-Executive Director of the National Gay Task Force. I began to develop certain suspicions about process policy when Bella Abzug and others at the opening session kept mentioning the numbers of children and grandchildren the Commissioners had produced.

Former and current First Ladies were gracious; Barbara Jordan was more to the point, but hardly radical. Assorted remarks from dignitaries took up a large part of the afternoon as well, including an address from Judy Carter, "a housewife who writes for *Redbook* when my two-year-old will let me." Suspicions took a clearer shape. This was not to be a controversial conference, at least no more so than some of the resolutions in the "Plan of Action" necessitated. The wooly, smothering sensation one got at the last General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Minneapolis came back, without, unfortunately, the grace of a John Coburn to direct the proceedings.

Business finally began. Each session was to have a new chair — a good idea in some respects, confusing in others because of lack of continuity of rulings and differing expertise in parliamentary procedure. Not, withal, a job one would have wanted, and complicated by the procedural confusions of some of the delegates, principally those in opposition.

The opposition! After the terrific build-up the Schlaflyites had gotten, I would never have expected my major disappointment with the conference to have been the quality of the opposition. Apart, that is, from their incoherent maunderings against the ERA and all its works.

Why did our caucus bother to study in detail the parliamentary moves to counter sophisticated blocking tactics? There were none. I thought at first that the bumbling was put on, that experts would arise at the first issue of major controversial proportions, that they were trying to lull us into over-confidence. We obviously overestimated our opposition. The best they could muster was an annoyance more than anything else, an attempt to score points under the guise of procedural questions, most of which were clearly out of order and ruled so to the disgust of their initiators.

Very little in the way of negative debate was offered, though the chair went out of its way to seek it out.

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by Ellen Barrett

Substitute motions with anti-Plan intent were rarely presented, and badly handled when they were . . . copies not in the hands of the chair, introduced out of order, or, in one case, so badly written that it was rejected by chair and parliamentarians because it was incomplete and incomprehensible.

Seven issues were passed on Saturday afternoon, including a substitute motion on Disabled Women introduced by their own caucus. The evening session covered four more, including the star turn, the ERA. A good bit of the bogging down in this session was as much the fault of the chair (New York's Lt. Governor Mary Anne Krupsak) as of the opposition. After the pro-ERA resolution passed it took well over an hour to establish the count of votes in favor of adjournment. Somehow this final snafu was symbolic of the whole grim evening.

I began during this session to be more afraid of the politically slick Pro-Plan Caucus than of the opposition. Not because I disagreed fundamentally with the Plan of Action or with their desire to coordinate the various special interest groups to keep business moving, but because I have a congenital distrust of anybody's obligatory party-line and any agreement to vote as directed by a party whip. Communications on the floor about voting were excellent, and efforts at microphones to limit stalling were not bad, but generally they were handled in a dictatorial fashion that rather precluded real communication.

If politics is the art of the possible, with so many people, so heavy an agenda, and so little time, much discussion was admittedly impossible. I doubtless drive political savants mad by wanting to know why, and how did we get here from there, but am I altogether wrong in thinking it important to pay attention to the humanity of the process?

Feeling dubious about the morrow, we dispersed to return Sunday for an eight-hour session that would try to cover 15 issues of which at least four, including those on minority women, reproductive freedom, sexual preference, and welfare were acutely controversial. All passed, with substitute motions on minorities, older women, and welfare. The only defeated resolution called for a cabinet-level Women's Department, which few had taken seriously anyway.

Time pressure was beaten, the victory won. Why, then, did I walk away in the middle of the session and fly home instead of staying around for the self-congratulatory finale the next day? I missed some historic events, like Betty Freidan admitting for the first time in history that lesbian rights have something to do with women. Why leave before the voting on the very issue I had come to support? Why did it all feel finished then?

Not, obviously, because of the old-hat but still nasty and annoying (and illiterate) slogans like "Womans Libbers ERA lesbians REPENT Read the BIBLE while your able," or "Who needs Jews, Dikes, Abortian (*sic*), Communists," or from fear — though one young lesbian got her nose broken and another was deliberately sideswiped by a car. Not even wounded vanity at being a very small part of the process, because our caucus was leader-heavy in the extreme, though part of me was wandering about forlornly like non-delegate Kate Millett, wondering where I fit on this joyful juggernaut. Part of it was a sort of heartsick feeling that this was as much or more of a paper victory as most conventions — what impact will all our fine words have when they reach the President? Will they be like so many high school student government proposals and be defused or rejected by the principal when they come up for action?

Perhaps the worst was a conviction that women have changed nothing of the dirtiness of politics, that the methodology of horse-trades, discrete blackmail, and group pressure has simply changed gender. In some ways the opposition was right — Houston was a show-trial. But not necessarily the way they claimed. It need not have been so complete a liberal walkover. Indeed, whether it was or not probably makes little difference in the long run. What does make a big difference is to know that American women have finally had a chance to test our political skills on a large scale and most of us have passed with flying colors.

Whether this is a victory, in the light of the hopes radical feminists once had for the redemption of the political process, is questionable. Perhaps our militantly anti-feminist sisters have come off best after all. At least their tantrums and their blunderings are true to the self-images in their dream of a nation of happy male-dominant, female-submissive families. Their prophecy, at least, has been to an extent self-fulfilling.

And our dreams of change? There was certainly no revolution in Houston. No revolution, but a nagging echo of Yeats that I hope will prove false:

"We had fed the heart on fantasies,
The heart's grown brutal on the fare." ■

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The Embarrassment...

I notice that other Episcopalians, like myself, are now finding it difficult to rationalize being an Episcopalian and to remain within the fold.

I recall when I could muster enthusiasm about the affiliation — in the times, for instance, when bishops were of the caliber, as human beings, of Arthur Lichtenberger; or exemplified authenticity, as well as authority in Apostolic vocation, as did William Appleton Lawrence. Similarly, I can remember when the conscience of the Episcopal Church seemed to be quick and agitated, as in the heyday of Jim Pike, or when this church evinced ecumenical imagination, as in the era of Henry Knox Sherrill.

I have not forgotten events in which the Episcopal Church became a presence in American society — at once practical and sacramental — free of conformity or worldly compromise, as in the prayer pilgrimages in the Southern hinterland or when Kim Myers and Paul Moore and others first walked the ghetto streets in Jersey City or New York. I recollect genuine ventures in mission prompted by the Church Society for College Work, as well as the impulses of renewal in biblical witness signaled in Parishfield and elsewhere unaffected by public relations calculations or fabrications.

All this, and much more, comes to mind now as a matter of nostalgia. It is, I think, that, along with related factors of inheritance, family sentiments and ethnic roots, which occasions my own lingering within the premises of the Episcopal Church despite the heavy embarrassment, nowadays, of being Episcopalian.

I hope it is clear that this is no mere complaint against the superciliousness of the Presiding Bishop and many of his peers in the House of Bishops and the cabal of the church bureaucracy. The indifference to human issues, the usurpation of the canon and common law of the church, the vanity of preoccupation with image, the dissipation of "playing church" instead of being the Church, the inordinate regard for lucre, the familiar and typical incoherence, the capacity for mischief of such bishops represent symptoms of crisis in the Episcopal Church.

But the crisis originates in the Episcopal Church — as in other, similar "established" churches in America — in a process of profound secularization. There has been a radical surrender to the culture in which the preservation of the ecclesiastical institution *for its own sake* has acquired a priority which trivializes the gospel of Jesus Christ and demeans the Apostolic precedent of the Church. That, of course, does not diminish the burden which the incumbent putative leadership of the Episcopal Church is, but it does render urgent the need to exorcise the Episcopal Church from humiliating emulation of the world.

The so-called Venture in Mission campaign exposes this issue — in grandiose scale. VIM interprets mission, for the laity and common clergy, exclusively in terms of money contributions. By that token, VIM has virtually nothing to do with mission. More than that, VIM's declared objective is to amass a capital fund to endow the *status quo* of the Episcopal Church. If this succeeds, the existing ecclesial fabric would be able to be indefinitely maintained, as it is, with all its perquisites, whether or not the people of the church in the future can be persuaded to support the institution by their offerings. In fact, VIM could enable the entrenchment of the *status quo* regardless of whether there continued to be, any longer, *any* people in the church. VIM portends the ultimate secularization of the church — the church emptied of human beings.

This is not the only portent. Part of the process of secularization which has been happening, by which institutional survival becomes an end in itself, involves the abolition of accountability of the institution and its officials to human life. Such accountability is the elementary subject matter of law. In the church the integrity of both canon law and the common law ecclesiastical (in which, anciently, the conception of equity originated) is as an expression of that accountability in at least minimal terms applicable to all within the body of the church. In the world or in the church, where accountability is forfeited for the sake of the security of the institution, lawlessness becomes endemic.

That was what was going on in American society throughout the Johnson and Nixon administrations, not only in war and Watergate but, more basically, in the politicalization of technology. If somewhat less conspicuous at this moment, the overthrow of accountability to human life continues to be the reality of the secular order in America with respect to any of the great principalities of

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politics, commerce, science, education or the military. Now this is imitated in the Episcopal Church.

To be specific, in the *William Wendt* trial, in the Ecclesiastical Court of the Diocese of Washington, where the accused was charged with canonical disobedience, the notorious instance of lawlessness — proved beyond any doubt — was not that of the defendant but that of Presiding Bishop John Allin. He denounced accountability. He held himself beyond the law of the church. He defied specific canonical duty. He refuted his vows of office. He literally fled from the jurisdiction in refusing to appear when duly summoned by the ecclesiastical court as a witness and was thus adjudged in contempt of court.

The example, perchance, induces a spreading of lawlessness through the Episcopal hierarchy and the ecclesial bureaucracy. Church officials collaborate with agents of the State in unconstitutional searches and the abuse of grand juries; a bishop ruthlessly and unlawfully ousts a Cathedral dean, evidently seeking to manipulate assets to which his office is unentitled; other bishops refuse to ordain qualified postulants; a doctrine of nullification is promulgated, ironically in the name of conscience, exempting certain bishops from their elemental responsibility to uphold the lawful discipline of the Episcopal Church.

There are other evidences of the secularization of the Episcopal Church in the realm of doctrine (or, more precisely put, antidoctrine), particularly with reference to the priesthood.

Once again, the Presiding Bishop furnishes the notorious example, though hardly the exclusive one. Anyone who has remained alert during the controversy of recent years over the ordination of women to the priesthood has known that — despite a succession of ambiguous and erratic public utterances and confusing or contradictory impressions — the Presiding Bishop has been deeply bewildered by the very idea of women priests and personally apprehensive at the event of women being ordained to the priesthood. At the so-called emergency meeting of the House of Bishops, at O'Hare Airport, following the Philadelphia ordinations, he seemed hysterical. In any case, his vehement rejection of women priests has never been effectively concealed.

Yet he waited until a full year after General Convention had canonically authorized the ordination of women before speaking candidly about his opinion, when he mentioned to the House of Bishops at its latest session, that he thought a woman could no more be a priest than a husband or father. This is a startling notion, and one which is radically worldly, because it goes far beyond the stereotype macho attitude. It is more than a *sexist* antidoctrine of the priesthood, it is a *sexual* view of the priesthood which attributes priestly qualification to sexual function and capability. It is primitive, strange and pre-Christian, though it may be shared by many others, and, all the more so when articulated by the Presiding Bishop while the House of Bishops was closeted to ponder hypocritically the ordination of homosexuals.

Meanwhile the contempt for the law and discipline of the church and the record of equivocation and duplicity on issues confronting the church of the incumbent church management converge to encourage schismatic ferment. That may materialize in formal schism, but it should not be overlooked that those disaffected and tempted to schism have, for the most part, a political objective within the Episcopal Church. Theirs is an audacious gamble to aggrandize their power far beyond their numbers, relying upon the weakness and appeasing disposition of the present administration of the church to vest them with a virtual veto power over the actions of the General Convention — thus to accomplish by threat and intimidation what they have not been able to gain by persuasion and due process. That in the circumstances many people of the church are misinformed or manipulated or pastorally abused is a concern which is simply ignored as befits the way of the world.

Well, one could multiply the instances which show concretely how the Episcopal Church has been, lately, secularized. It is not, of course, that in other earlier times the Episcopal Church has been unambiguous or undefiled, but that recent events have new or different or particular dimensions that cannot be gainsaid. Whether this crisis in the Episcopal Church will be transcended, whether an integrity as church will be recovered remains, for now, uncertain. But there is no uncertainty about the embarrassment of being Episcopalian. ■

... of Being Episcopalian

by William Stringfellow

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Parish Begs to Differ

Pastoral letters issued by the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church are required by canon to be communicated to each congregation. That this requirement is often observed in the breach by the clergy is indicative of the present state of authority in the church. However, the following communication from a church in Denver reflects a dialogue with authority which is both novel and creative.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY REDEEMER

December 9, 1977

The clergy and people of the Holy Redeemer Church, Denver, return the greetings and peace of our brothers in Christ, the bishops of the church. Your letter has been received by us, pondered carefully, prayed over and discussed publicly. We make this open reply to you, hoping to strengthen the bond of trust within the church and, thereby, to increase our mutual understanding of Christ's loving mission to the world which we, through grace, share.

We accept with gratitude and hope your challenge to undertake a Venture in Mission, ministering to the hurts and hungers of the world. We note with great sadness, however, that the graces you evidence in mission matters seem to disappear in the considerations of conscience and sexuality.

You decided to speak to us on sexual matters before the study approved by the General Convention has been undertaken. Your letter to us reflects more haste than wisdom.

We wonder whether you honestly believe that someone who advocates homosexuality must be a homosexual. And, what is the meaning of ***advocate*** in this regard? Do you approve, and may we expect, an attack on our clergy because they, after patient, open searching, arrive at a conclusion which differs from yours?

We are deeply troubled that you permit the Presiding Bishop his conscience with respect to a duly adopted canon of the church, but deny conscience to us in a matter which has yet to be decided. Your manner of handling these two questions invites anarchy in the church.

Our members wonder whether you have asked yourselves how an individual's sexual orientation relates to his/her ministry. And we disagree with the reasonable inference from your letter that this church will not ordain an open homosexual, but neither will it drive from the ordained ministry those many homosexual persons currently enriching our corporate life and ministry to the world.

We respectfully conclude that our bishops have abandoned the pastoral ministry in the following respects:

1. The deeply-caring love which is the basis of pastoral action is not evidenced in this letter. You seem blind to the complexity of these issues and insensitive to matters of justice. Your action, despite the words, shows a willingness to join the world in making homosexual persons scapegoats, (as the church has done with witches, scientists, Protestants, Catholics, Blacks, Jews and others) who are forced to bear the weight of inarticulate outrage at the pressures of modern life.

2. You have failed to convince us that your study of the Bible and Christian theology has been of such depth that your conclusions must be shared by reasonable people. To address us before such study is unworthy of you, and renders your advice to us and to the world meaningless.

3. We cannot escape the conclusion that this is essentially a political, not a pastoral letter. Persons who do not choose to obey the canon on ordination can cause a good deal of fuss, but homosexual persons are sufficiently vulnerable that they can be made to bear our burdens. Your letter does not reflect any intelligent dialogue with homosexual persons, so that you can discover where and how God's grace is active in and through them. To act without such dialogue is to act as men without hope of finding God's grace everywhere.

Our brothers in Christ, we ask that you return to your high calling. We need your ministry to us and as leaders to the world. But we would have you know of our confidence that when you abandon your vocation, God is not left without power for truth. His Spirit is ceaselessly working, calling forth new ministries, higher prophecies, deeper acts of devotion and love. From you, we expect holy order, but we are receiving confusion. The unity you felt in your midst at your meeting may have been purchased at the peril of your people.

We pray that by the grace of our Lord Jesus you will be led away from the path of hasty judgment, to walk again the path of patient love, bearing the burdens of the weak . . . to be for us living examples of God's love for all, especially those whom the world hates.

Your brothers and sisters in Christ,
Richard Kerr
The Clergy and People of
Holy Redeemer Church
Denver, Col.

(*Your pastoral letter was read to us by the rector without comment. He announced at the end of the reading that on the following Sunday, the congregation would discuss the letter. At that time a careful record was made of our people's responses, again with very little comment from the rector, although it was solicited. From these notes the rector wrote this letter. It was printed and read at each service the next Sunday. Two weeks were given for written responses. The people unanimously agreed that the letter expressed their response to your pastoral*). ■

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Bishops Confuse Gay Issue

by John M. Gessell

The recent pastoral letter from the House of Bishops — particularly the section on homosexuality — has caused much perplexity for Episcopalians and other thoughtful Christians.

The opinions of the bishops on matters touching the status of homosexuals in the Church appear to be simple reiterations of theological and social scientific judgments which are now being called into question. These statements bear no trace of acquaintance with work being done currently in the field of human sexuality by theologians and social scientists as reported, for example, in the recent book issued by the Catholic Theological Society of America, *Human Sexuality.*

Curiously imprecise language, lacking in rigor, appears in these paragraphs. Is it possible that the bishops really have agreed to deny ordination to those who refuse to condemn homosexual persons? If so, this would create intolerable pastoral dilemmas. In view of the life and work of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, how is it possible that the bishops agree that they "must not condone what we believe God wills to redeem?" On the face of it, this implies a condemnation of all men and women everywhere.

Is it possible that the bishops are saying that "practicing homosexual" persons are lacking in, or suffering from. a defect of matter appropriate to receive the grace of ordination; or that they are morally incapable of the office and work of priests? If they mean the former, we will have a first-class theological snarl on our hands. If they mean the latter, then what are we to say about, for example, "practicing alcoholic" priests or "practicing adulterous" priests?

Further perplexity prevails in this discussion. On the one hand, we are told that homosexuals are children of God (presumably by water and the Holy Spirit, surely not by nature), having a "full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, concern, and pastoral care of the church." On the other hand, we are told that, whereas the state must insure homosexuals equal protection under the law, the church will not afford that spiritual equality assured above since that acceptance, concern, and care are to be qualified by the *a priori* denial of ordination without cause. What is by the one hand offered, is by the other removed. The denial of justice is mitigated by the offer of balm.

The Rev. John M. Gessell is professor of Christian ethics at the School of Theology, University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn.

There appear to me to be matters of fundamental theological incoherence here. That which can be redeemed can nonetheless be qualified by the church (or at least its bishops), either for theological or moral reasons. By what warrant do the bishops make this judgment? How are we to discuss this issue in the church with the seriousness which it deserves?

Gregory Baum wrote in *Commonweal* (Feb. 14, 1974) that ". . . human nature as it is at present is not normative for theologians . . . What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned, which is defined in terms of mutuality. This, at least, is the promise of biblical religion . . . Homosexual love, then, is not contrary to human nature, defined in terms of mutuality toward which mankind is summoned."

Baum's statement is an attempt to move beyond the theological pitfalls characteristic of much contemporary discussion on the issue of homosexuality — the appeal to authority and the appeal to nature.

Recent discussions of homosexuality and the church disclose in many quarters an *a priori* condemnation of homosexual behavior. The argument then moves to the appeal to Scripture, yielding Bible fundamentalism and all of its inconsistencies. Failing that, it moves to the appeal to nature and to natural law, ending in the naturalistic fallacy or in a closed system of prior discovery. Clearly neither of these approaches is helpful to a serious discussion of this matter.

There is the further problem of theodicy. If a theological judgment has as its consequence the de-personalisation of a class of people, or renders them less than fully human, or takes from their hands their rightful share in decisions affecting their destiny, that judgment must of course be called into question. Alfred Hennelly, S.J., reminds theologians that the intellectual and cultural milieu of theological discussion can no longer be ignored, and that "the question of praxis is . . . a key issue in theological methodology . . . or even *the* central issue." ("Theological Method: The Southern Exposure," *Theological Studies,* December 1977).

What is required for constructive theological debate on this (and any other) issue before the church is a careful and rigorous examination of additional data from all centers of inquiry, and exacting and systematic theological reflection on that data. What the bishops had hoped to settle is merely the beginning of a lengthy dialogue. ■

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Meanwhile, in the Rosados' Homes

by Mary Lou Suhor

Left to right: Diana, Lois, and Margarita Rosado (with son Hiram) ponder an unfavorable newspaper article about their husbands, Luis, Julio, and Andres, respectively, with their mother-in-law, Mrs. Maria Rosado. The three Rosado brothers are in jail since Aug. 22 in contempt of a New York Grand Jury investigating the FALN.

Lois Rosado went into the hospital on New Year's Day to abort her baby. But she didn't want to.

Margarita and Diana Rosado are on welfare this year. But they don't want to be.

These are only two of a long series of indignities suffered by members of the Rosado family since the FBI began surveillance of them last year. Three brothers — Andres, Luis, and Julio — have been in jail since August in contempt of the Grand Jury investigation of bombings by the FALN, allegedly a militant Puerto Rican group. Luis once served on the staff of the Episcopal Church National Commission for Hispanic Affairs, and Julio was a member of the Commission.

Lois Rosado had just completed her master's degree in bilingual education — with honors — from City College New York at the beginning of summer, and all seemed to be going well. Julio had helped to see her through school, taking over family duties with the two daughters, Leila, 7, and Akilah, 5. They were looking forward to paying off family debts and having another child, as both parents were working again. Then Julio went to jail.

"I was teaching at a day care center when I had a bad fall and my pregnancy was threatened," Lois said. "The doctor told me I should stay off my feet and rest. But with Julio in jail I was the sole support of the family and each day I took off from work I lost $10. I couldn't afford to take as much time off as I was advised, and lost the baby. Can you imagine what it's like to carry a dead fetus around for two months under those circumstances?"

Diana and Margarita Rosado make regular trips to the Welfare Office now, although they have never been on welfare before. "That's a harassment in itself," Diana said. "And Margarita can't speak English very well, so someone must go with her to see she's getting the right thing."

The Rosados are angry, and sometimes bitter, about the harassment the family has been undergoing, solely, they feel, because they are strong supporters of Puerto Rican independence. Since the FBI first arrived on the scene, the Rosados say they have been constantly maligned and the victims of "dirty tricks" which they catalogue one after another. For example:

— An FBI agent showed a male acquaintance of Diana a picture of him and Diana talking together and asked him if he was "having an affair" with her.

— FBI agents questioned the friends of a nephew of the Rosados, asking "how many teenagers had been pressed into carrying bombs for the Rosados."

— A cousin of the Rosados in Puerto Rico was shown photos of the apartment of the Rosados' mother, photographed from all angles. The women have frequently seen men on rooftops or in adjoining apartment buildings shooting pictures.

— Photo taking by agents was constant. The Rosado women were clicked at crossing the street, at bus stops, going to work. The mother and grandmother — who is 99 — were photographed going to church. "The FBI even visited my grocery store, and asked if I had ever discussed my political beliefs there," said Mrs. Maria Rosado, mother of the three brothers.

— A cousin was interrogated on the job so many times that his employer threatened to fire him if the FBI kept coming around.

— Agents visited the school attended by Julio's children and asked the principal to identify the children, claiming there was a

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robbery in the neighborhood and they wanted to see what the children were wearing.

"But the school knew Julio and me very well. I had done my practice teaching there and Julio had attended parents' visiting days while I was studying. The principal told the FBI they would need a court order if they wanted to talk to the children, and that they shouldn't come back," Lois said.

— Neighbors have been interrogated, the Rosados said, "always with the insinuation that we were terrorists. Now as we go through the building we hear people say, "That the family of the terrorists."

Again, Lois had better luck. "The neighbors in my apartment building knew Julio because he had helped organize a rent strike. So the FBI had to tell them they were trying to clear Julio's name. Our neighbors have been very good to us. One even paid the back rent I owed, saying that the children and I shouldn't have *that* problem, at least."

The three Rosado women can't understand how judges and Grand Juries can break up families for so long a period. It also mystifies them why all nine people in contempt of the Chicago and New York Grand Juries were not granted furloughs from jail to visit home for Christmas.

"Julio was granted two leaves from jail, when I aborted and earlier on, when I was first having problems with the pregnancy. Now if there was real evidence that he was involved in these bombings and they were close to an indictment, would they have let him out twice?" Lois asked.

"Haldeman, Mitchell, and organized crime figures got furloughs for the holidays," Lois said. "Andres, Luis and Julio are *family* men and our children are suffering without them. Luis and Julio were with the children for long periods of time when Diana and I were studying. They helped the children with homework, made visits to school, played with them. Does that sound like crazies who go around bombing?" she asked.

What gives the women courage to get through these days? "Strong family support, for one thing," Diana said. "And I try not to dwell on my problems. I have to maintain my balance, otherwise I'll fall apart and my kids will fall apart. This experience has also opened me up to the abuses other people are suffering in this society. I had read about them, but somehow didn't believe it. Now it's happening to *us*. I also know that Luis is in jail for his beliefs, and I back him 100%. I feel a lot of anger inside, but basically you have to go on living."

Margarita said she is suffering because her 7-year-old son, Andres, is the most emotionally affected of all the Rosado children. "He feels his father has abandoned him, and cries a lot," she said. "But I have had to adjust to the situation, and the children should know the sacrifice their father is making, too. We try to talk about that."

"Coming as I do from a family of very strong Black women, I lean heavily on the example of my mother," Lois said. I never saw her defeated in problems of daily life, and this molded my character. Also, as a Black American who has studied the history of my own people, I believe strongly that no country has the right to dominate another country and, like Julio, I believe Puerto Rico has a right to be free. I'm trying to make life as normal as possible, under the circumstances for my two girls. Also, our strength helps to keep the men in jail strong. They have to see that we can bear up to this responsibility."

The mother of the Rosados said that she was proud of her three sons for going to jail for their ideals. "Sometimes I am very nervous and feel like crying, but I feel the rights of people should be respected, and all peoples want to be free. Our family has a long history of supporting independence.

In Puerto Rico, we took Julio when he was a little boy to hear Pedro Albizu Campos speak. My sister ran for mayor of the town of Isabela in Puerto Rico on the Independence — PIP — ticket some 20 years ago. And a cousin, Pedro, ran for mayor recently on the PIP ticket in Vega Baja, Puerto Rico."

"You might sum it up by saying that we can't accept this represion that's going on," Lois said. It is not a *crime* to believe in the independence of Puerto Rico. And we feel that a repressive organ like the Grand Jury can be used not only to destroy rights of Puerto Ricans but also the rights of people in this country. You lose some humanity when there is oppression in any society, and when you lose humanity, you lose the soul of living. Somebody has to stand up and say 'No.' Those people in jail are saying 'No!' "

GRAND JURY UPDATE...

FLASH !!! FLASH !!! FLASH !!!

- *Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin were released from jail by Judge Robert Carter as THE WITNESS went to press Jan. 23 Details next month!*

- *A story by the Rev. Benjamin Campbell in the Virginia Churchman (12/77) hinted that Presiding Bishop John Allin was loathe to throw the full weight of his office behind an effort to release Cueto and Nemikin. Campbell said that privately, Bishop Allin and his assistant, Milton Wood, "seem to have been dropping hints that they think the women may be implicated in the whole FALN business and the bombings."*

- *Grand Jury reform legislation currently before Congress would reduce the term of those held in contempt to six months. Cueto and Nemikin have currently served more than 10, and Pedro Archuleta more than seven.*

- *Some $2,000 in donations and pledges was raised for the families of those in jail at a cocktail party in New York recently. The event was sponsored by Churchpersons Against Grand Jury Abuse (now the Grand Jury Abuse Working Group of the National Council of Churches).*

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"the vast majority of Cubans are not concerned about whether or not they can disagree fundamentally with their government." Thus he demonstrates his low opinion of Cubans. Is this not a perpetuation of the American superiority complex that has caused so much resentment in all of Latin America?

Hopefully in his next visit he will not be so naive as to use the Central Committee as an information source and visit for himself the political prison camps which he "of course" did not visit. It seems that not many can. The International Red Cross, Amnesty International, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the International Rescue Committee have continually reported on the plight of political prisoners in Cuba. Their number, according to the *Journal de Geneve* is estimated at 50,000, The French Communist Pierre Golendorf puts it at 120,000 as of last year. They include a cross section of the population, including priests and Christians who insisted upon proclaiming the name of Jesus. It is true, as Mr. Lawrence points out, those who choose to be "rehabilitated" are sent to "rehabilitation center." But would he be willing to "rehabilitate" from Christianity or commitment to human rights?

What most distressed me is the association of the primitive church with a revolution that expressly denies God. Christians too have revolutionary dreams. We work with faith that JESUS alone can sustain us. Secular materialism and Marxism will pass away.

Jorge S. Rivero
Boynton Beach, Fla.

CRC Responds

The Cuba Resource Center, which conducted the interview with Charles Lawrence, forwarded the following response since Dr. Lawrence was not immediately available for comment:

I have been to Cuba twice since the Fall of 1976, once as part of a delegation of U.S. church representatives, and once to do research. I attended Sunday morning services in Havana's Presbyterian church, worshipping with an enthusiastic congregation including persons of all ages. Sunday school for children and adults preceded the service. Several months later, I was a guest at the Annual Assembly of the Cuban Ecumenical Council (CEC), an organization which includes most Protestant denominations as well as other religious organizations such as the Student Christian Movement. The program included a dialogue on Protestant-Catholic relations, and discussions with ecumenical visitors from Jamaica, Mozambique and the U.S.

In all these places I was able to question church people, both clergy and laity, about their own experiences as Christians in Cuba. Many active church members, young and old, asserted that they are indeed revolutionaries. They firmly believe that the Cuban Revolution—which has ended unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy and organized prostitution—is indeed a blessing to all of Cuba's people and something which their Gospel commitment calls them to support wholeheartedly.

This is not to say that the Christian or Jewish communities which I found in Cuba are large or powerful institutions. Prior to the Revolution, the church was not known as a champion of social justice against the corrupt Batista regime. In the early 1960's, some counterrevolutionary activities, including acts of sabotage, were carried out by "Christians" in the name of Jesus Christ. Relations between the church and the socialist government haven't always been friendly. But to say that religious believers are actively persecuted for their belief is, from my experience with Cuban Christians and Jews, simply untrue.

Mr. Jorge Rivero, in his letter to you, notes the fact that several international organizations, including Amnesty International, have been denied permission to investigate the situation of political prisoners in Cuba. Let me point out, however, as he does not, that Amnesty's estimate of the number of political prisoners there is 5,000—considerably lower than that of either of the sources Mr. Rivero quotes.

The Rev. Elice Higginbotham
Cuba Resource Center
New York, N.Y.

Jail Visit Provocative

In this country, more aware now of human rights because of President Carter's emphasis on their importance, it comes as something of a shock to find Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin in prison. As readers of THE WITNESS know, Maria and Raisa are two former staff members of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church, who refused to testify before a Grand Jury and will presumably be detained at the Metropolitan Correction Center until May '78.

Meanwhile they feel that given their options, they made the right choice: To honor the confidence of their Spanish-speaking clients even at the expense of spending 14 months in jail. In so doing their lives became a witness: "Even as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me." They are the allies of the victims, the friends of the oppressed. They are a sign to us out here, a light in the darkness of this society.

I am a member of Amnesty International, and visited Maria and Raisa recently. The visit raised many questions for me:

What is our response to their incarceration? How do we stop Grand Jury harassment of minorities and intimidation of witnesses? How do we reform the Grand Jury system which at present knows no limits, which disregards the Fifth Amendment once it offers immunity to those appearing before it? Is pressure by a Grand Jury to involve others a violation of our religious freedom? If we are one in the Spirit (as we are), does not kinship as children of God supercede the demands of the State?

Mary Bye
Doylestown, Pa.

Complicity With Militarism

THE WITNESS deals with a wide range of problems facing the Episcopal Church and its members. I am therefore surprised that a problem as great as war and militarism is barely touched.

The Episcopal Church has a real complicity with war and militarism. We send our young into the military and off to war, while we pay the taxes to fund wars. We accept as legitimate the over 8,000 strategic nuclear weapons that threaten the cities of the world. In church we use the national flag and generally accept the supremacy of the state. Yet only the Episcopal Peace Fellowship among the organizations of the church protests this behavior.

The scandal of our military chaplains being paid by the State, accepting military authority, having military rank and even wearing military uniforms should create a real protest by the rest of the church. Yet the House of Bishops has aggravated the situation by its recent election, for the second time in our history, of a Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces.

The Episcopal Church is not likely to deal effectively with the problems of poverty and injustice so long as it puts Caesar ahead of God.

Dana S. Grubb
Gaithersburg, Md.

CREDITS
Cover, Ben Grim; photo p. 9, Martha Blacklock; graphic p. 10, Peg Averill, LNS.

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preaching. I disliked it so much, I didn't read it." On the same question, one pragmatist replied: "Can't say. When article looks like a bummer, I don't read it." We asked for an example of a recent graphic particularly liked. One answer: "I don't like graphics."

Asked whether THE WITNESS has/has not provided a real service to the church, one respondent checked that it had, adding "Please remove my name from the mailing list." One return was checked as a husband-wife response, but bore the note: "But this is not a joint return. I'm doing it for us, but mostly me." Another had the comment: "My wife says she agrees."

There was a consistent quality of forthrightness in the responses, a few abrasively so. "Would be greatly pleased if you ceased publication" . . . "Why take the trouble to send out this questionnaire? The magazine is a creation of its editor, and he seems to enjoy having it available to express opinions he endorses. Why change? I'm sure the editor isn't going to" . . . "The size of the magazine is *nuts* (the format). Why in the name of heaven don't you just admit it and change it? You're a stubborn lot!"

And there were several who made comments such as "Because I have been so negative, it is only honest to sign my name" — and did. Another reader commented: "I am not happy with what I read, but like to hear what you have to say." And another: "Be as extreme as you wish. I'll do the thinking for myself."

Very human touches, too, emerged many times in the responses. One respondent checked that he thought THE WITNESS was providing a real service to the church, adding "if anyone is really listening." Another volunteered: "I have given up changing the world. Just once in a while a tiny piece of it satisfies me." And a number surprised and touched us by saying: "Thanks for asking" . . . "Thank you for caring enough to ask."

Perhaps most arresting, for those responsible for a journal of opinion on the social mission of the church, were the number and intensity of expressions of concern about our church, about our society: "What can we *do?*" . . . "I am becoming aware of the fraudulence of our culture" . . . "Isn't it about time to have clergy and laity band together?" . . . "Am beginning to question attempts to sensitize the church" . . . "Any way THE WITNESS is prepared to organize to do something on these issues? Speakers, workshops, conferences, teach-ins, etc.?" . . . "How does THE WITNESS translate *its* beliefs into action?" . . . "My frustration is how to get a handle on problems that tear people to shreds" . . . "I wish there were a bit more humor and a bit less stridence, but realize that those who feel intensely find it hard to achieve those goals."

Commenting on a question as to whether THE WITNESS has been too preoccupied with the Grand Jury case involving Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, a woman who indicated she would like to know *more,* not less about the case, commented: "Why doesn't the Presiding Bishop get them out as he would if they were White — male — clergy — or a bishop?" Or, again, the wife of a clergyman writes in a concluding comment: "As a woman who has been a life-long devoted worker (not paid) in the church and who is so painfully alienated by this institution's careless disregard of women and their worth, I am only still in the church because of lone voices such as yours. How much longer I can hang on is a real question in my troubled soul . . ." Another respondent writes: "I'm a priest-worker . . . I must admit my attitude (toward the church) is becoming more ho-hum daily — but thanks to THE WITNESS I do still care a little."

Four years ago when the Episcopal Church Publishing Company was considering republishing THE WITNESS, it consulted with scores of clergy, laity, writers, publishers, college students. It was a sobering exercise, replete with well-founded warnings. We were told it was a hard time for periodicals, that people were not interested in the social mission of the church. The decision was made to go ahead, regardless.

Three years later, with the evidence coming in from this questionnaire, we are more determined than ever to do the job, and to do it better, helped by the hundreds of reactions and suggestions we have received. Given readers who are so precise, forthright, human, and so concerned — what else could we do? ■

Continued from page 3

diocesan moral support if they are not to despair of their task. Similarly, a great deal of national support from concerned clergy and laity will be required if the bishops' efforts are not to be dissipated and if they are not to be diverted from this central task of their mission.

Response to the Gospel has always been marked by challenge and risk, undergirded by hope. In the midst of the desolation of the economy and the politics and the human condition of our cities, and in the midst of the trivia and superficiality of so much of our church life, a valid and authentic hope has arisen in the efforts of this coalition of bishops.

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As Our Readers See Us

by Robert L. DeWitt

As was reported in the January issue, THE WITNESS was advised at a recent editorial consultation to "expose" itself more to its readers, to "share" in a human way.

Another suggestion was to query the readership and ask how *they* see THE WITNESS, thereby being vulnerable and open to suggestions for change.

So THE WITNESS prepared 30 questions — about style and content of the magazine, and also about our readers — and sent them to all subscribers.

Some 25% returned the questionnaire. (We are told that this is ☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☒ Excellent). To squeeze out every possible insight that we can from the responses, we have sent them off to academia and a computer for collation and assessment, and will give a complete report later.

Meanwhile, we want to thank the many who replied. We got more compliments than we deserved (although not more than we need!) Further, we would like to share a brief, preliminary sampling and a few initial reactions *we* have had to the responses.

Our readers are precise. Some, for example, found the questionnaire inadequate and went a second mile by writing lengthy letters of comment which were, of course, enormously helpful. Others endlessly edited the questions and wrote innumerable comments, in addition to checking the proper boxes. In front of adjectives suggested by the questionnaire the words "sometimes," "occasionally," "slightly," "generally," were inserted too many times to count.

Asked if WITNESS articles are too intellectual, one respondent crossed out "intellectual," and inserted "arrogant, prejudiced, one-sided." Another crossed out "intellectual" and replaced it with the word "academic," adding "God knows they're not intellectual." The three choices in one question were "(THE WITNESS) Does a good job," "Is too opinionated," or "Rates only a passing grade." One respondent crossed out the last choice and wrote, "Is failing."

To ascertain the age of our readers, the questionnaire suggested successive chronological decades, the last category being "Verging on or arrived at senior citizenship." One respondent crossed out those words, stating "stupid category — also insulting and trite." (He listed his own age in the 30-49 bracket.) One clergyman checked that same category, triumphantly adding "Have arrived; retired at 76." A woman checked the category "50-59," adding in parenthesis "(56)."

In developing a composite picture of our readers we were also interested in their education background. They seem a pretty well-educated lot. Where we indicated "college," we listed the digits 1 through 8, asking them to circle the last year completed. One circled "8," then added "+." Another, not to be outdone, circled "8," then added "+++++." Still another circled "8," then added diffidently, "I suppose — Ph.D."

Some comments defy categorization, but cry out to be heard. On the question of what the reader would like to see added to the contents of THE WITNESS on a regular basis, said one: "Nothing. Prefer subtractions. A good model would be Harvard Business School's *Management Thinking* (now dead)." Asked to mention any recent article particularly disliked, a respondent said: "Article on

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Black Theology: Where to, What Next?

James H. Cone
Howard Dodson
Muhammad Kenyatta

Christians on the Edge

Phyllis M. Jones

Maria & Raisa: Free at Last!

THE WITNESS is pleased to present this exchange of letters between Bishop William Davidson of Western Kansas and Dr. Charles V. Willie, professor of education at Harvard Graduate School, whose article "When to Resist Authority" [December WITNESS] prompted the dialogue.

Regrets 'Authority' Stance

Dear Dr. Willie:

I have read with great interest the article in the December, 1977, *Witness* excerpted from your address at EDS. We have not heard much from you lately and I rejoice that your voice has not been stilled completely.

I regret, on the other hand, that you now appear to be in a position of judging the Church from the outside, instead of working from within to make it the kind of perfect community you seem to expect it to be. Unless you want to eliminate from Church membership all those of diverse opinions and make it a club of like-minded people, it is necessary to keep working at the conversion and renewal of the whole body.

Instead of giving even a little credit for the achievement of Minneapolis in authorizing women's ordination, you only point to the fact that much of the Church has not been converted to this position as yet. Instead of noting that the House of Bishops clearly affirmed the Minneapolis decision at its October, 1977, meeting, you only note that in the resolution we did not urge the Presiding Bishop to resign.

Beyond this attitude on your own part which disturbs me, you then proceed to recommend to seminarians that they should also take a position as over against the Church. You would like to supplant the power of the "hierarchy that is stifling the Church" with seminarians seizing "sufficient power to renew it." In all my ministry I have seen the Church (however inadequately and with whatever meager results) working at the criteria you suggest of being called to repentance, teaching its members how to forgive and be merciful, and trying to be loving and just and fair. If seminarians can do a better job of it and I pray that they will (thank God seminarians have always felt they could!), I hardly see how they can do it in opposition to those who have been working at the task these many years.

It seems to me incongruous for you to speak of incompatibility between the requirement of obedience and that of love, when our Lord Jesus Christ demands commitment and full allegiance of His followers, yet at the same time promises them perfect freedom. In Him there is relationship between obedience and freedom. Why not in the Church? Most Bishops I know are crying for the leadership of priests and lay people who will convert and renew the *whole* body, but they believe it is important that, to the fullest extent possible, none be lost. It is one thing to give leadership to those who will follow; it is quite another thing to educate and persuade and convert those who have no initial intention of doing so. Being essentially a fellowship and a voluntary association, the Church has no enforcement agency to compel obedience as government has, nor does it even have the threat of such sanctions as educational institutions have (you mention how well each of these is doing with reforming society), so it is left with education and persuasion and with prayer—waiting upon the Spirit to move as He will in His good time.

I trust that you will continue to be alert to and observant of the shortcomings of the Church, but I pray that you will see yourself as being responsible with all the rest of us who are called to leadership in it, to work together to overcome, to persevere, and to achieve what is God's will for all His people.

The Rt. Rev. William Davidson
Bishop of Western Kansas

Dr. Willie Responds

Dear Bishop Davidson:

Thanks for your letter in which you raise some important issues to which I will attempt to respond.

My old college president, Benjamin Elijah Mays, of Atlanta, Georgia, has said that *belief* is the basis of *action* and that if one does not act upon one's belief, one does not have a belief at all, but merely an *opinion.* To me it appeared that many bishops in August, 1974, had opinions about justice for women but no real belief in equality. Without a Special General Convention to change the sexist discriminatory laws of the Episcopal Church against women priests, I, as one of the presiding officers, had to enforce sexist laws that I knew were wrong. Now I could have acted like Pilate; enforced sexist laws and denied that I was personally responsible for oppressing women as I was merely conforming to the will of the Church.

The remainder of this story is history.

While I resigned from high office in the General Convention and the Executive Council, I did not resign from "the Church" as your letter implies. We have different conceptions of "the Church." I consider "the General Convention" and "the Executive Council" to be units of "the Episcopal Church" but not "the Church." Indeed, I have continued to serve as a communicant member of local parishes. Presently I am a member of the choir and vestry of Christ Church, Cambridge. It too is a unit of "the Church" as is "the General Convention" or "the Executive Council."

My memory about what the Scriptures have to say about the meek and lowly versus the high and mighty cause me to believe that the perspective of one who has been a high officer and is now a lowly communicant member may be as valid and as useful as any "within the Church;" so I am bold to speak out as a member "in the Church" and not as one "outside the Church."

My basic reason for asking seminarians to cease *obeying* their bishops was for the purpose of asking them to cease cooperating in their own oppression, which is as damning to the bishops who demand obedience as it is to those who acknowledge that one human being has the right to rule another. Although elevated to high office, bishops are not without sin. And any bishop who believes that he or she has the right to demand obedience is on shaky religious ground.

There is one point in your letter on which you and I fundamentally disagree; and it is that freedom and obedience are compatible. I would contend that your interpretation of the Scripture is in error if you derive from the Gospel the idea that the demand for blind obedience also acknowledges the possibility of perfect freedom. Beyond the Scriptures, there is evidence from our national governmental system in contemporary times of what happens when obedience is demanded of those with whom one is associated.

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THE WITNESS

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BLACK THEOLOGY

Where to, What Next?

by Muhammad Kenyatta

Muhammad Kenyatta is Director of the Black Theology Project of the Theology in the Americas, a program which grew out of a conference in Detroit in 1975. At that conference Christians from both North and South America covened to consider the divergences and convergences of their approaches to Christian faith and life. Mr. Kenyatta recently helped organize the Black Theology Conference in Atlanta where James Cone and Howard Dodson were featured speakers. [Articles in this issue are excerpted from their papers]. We welcome Mr. Kenyatta as guest editorial writer for the March WITNESS.

The birth of the Black Theology Project (BTP) in the post-Nixon era of our country represents the renewed hopes, sharpening analyses and festering frustrations among Black Christians and within Black communities generally. This effort by activist Black churchfolk to recreate national as well as parochial frameworks for social justice advocacy signals a renewed spirit of ecumenical purpose, a spirit that had been effectively assassinated with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, April 4, 1968. This renewed spirit manifested itself in the awesome display of Black political power, organized via church leadership, which insured the November 1976 defeat of Nixon appointee Gerald Ford.

Furthermore, as evidenced by BTP's unapologetic linking of international and domestic issues, the Black ecumenical movement is entering a new phase of maturity in its ethical and sociological analysis. This new phase was harbingered by Martin Luther King Jr.'s espousal of the anti-Vietnam War movement in his historic April 1967 Riverside Church sermon and by the radical internationalism of the Black Manifesto rhetoric affirmed by many Black theologians in 1969. However, in the present era, intensification of southern Africa liberation struggles and radicalization of African Christian leaders have been the prime catalysts of global consciousness within American Black theology. The resonances between Africa and Afro-America ought not be underestimated in assessing the politicization of Black Christianity in both southern Africa and North America.

James H. Cone's "Where Do We Go FromHere?" affirms the resurrection of the Black Church as the locus of hope and leadership for our people's historic aspirations. Yet Cone acknowledges the persistent contradictions that challenge and often compromise Black church leadership in practical reality. Howard Dodson's "Review to Renew" incisively surveys the analytic and strategic questions which confront Black churches and communities in the context of objective realities, internal and external. It is an obvious, yet profoundly suggestive observation that Dodson's questions are equally significant for other North Americans of whatever race or religious persuasion.

However, lest we get lost in euphoria of renewed hopes or debates about ethical-sociological analyses, we must not forget the deep frustration, even

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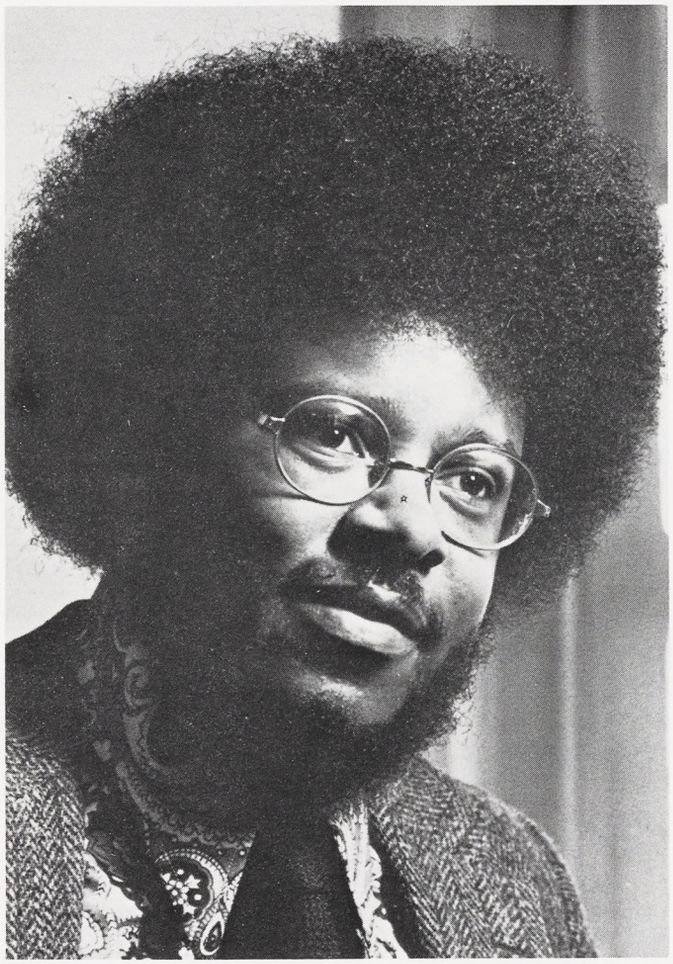
BLACK THEOLOGY

Where Do We Go From Here?

by James H. Cone



The Rev. James H. Cone is Charles A. Briggs Professor of Systematic Theology at Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

"The time has come for Black theologians and church people to move beyond a mere reaction to White racism and to extend our vision of a new socially constructed humanity into the whole inhabited world. We must be concerned with the quality of life not only in U.S. cities but also in Africa, Asia and Latin America."

When the Black Power Statement was written in July 1966 by an *ad hoc* national Committee of Negro Churchmen, we faced a dilemma. We knew that to define Black Power as the opposite of the Christian faith was to reject the central role that the Black Church has played in Black people's historical struggle for freedom. Rejecting Black Power also meant that the Black Church would ignore its political responsibility to empower Black people in their present struggle to make our children's future more humane than intended by the rulers in this society.

But to locate Black Power in the Christian context was not easy. First, the acceptance of Black Power would appear to separate us from Martin Luther King, Jr., and we did not want to do that. King was our model, having creatively combined religion and politics, and Black preachers and theologians respected his courage to concretize the political consequences of his confession of faith.

Secondly the concept of Black Power presented a problem for Black theologians and preachers not only because of our loyalty to Martin Luther King, but also because many of us had been trained in White seminaries and had internalized much of White people's definition of Christianity. Our intellectual ideas of God, Jesus, and the Church were derived from White European theologians and their textbooks.

To accept Black Power as Christian required that we thrust ourselves into our history in order to search for new ways to think and be Black in this world. We felt the need to explain ourselves and to be understood from our own vantage point and not from the perspective and experiences of Whites. When White liberals questioned this approach to theology, our response was very similar to the bluesman in Mississippi when told he was not singing his song correctly: "Look-a-heah, man, dis yere *mah song,* en I'll sing it howsoevah I pleases."

Thus we sang our Black Power songs, knowing that the White Church establishment would not smile upon our endeavors to define Christianity independent of their own definitions of the Gospel. For the power of definition is a prerogative that oppressors never want to give up. Thus from 1966 to the present, Black theologians and preachers, in the context of the church and the streets, have been

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searching for new ways to confess and to live our faith in God so that the Black Church would not make religion the opiate of our people.

Their term *Black Theology* was created in this social and religious context. It was initially understood as the theological arm of Black Power, and it enabled us to express our theological imagination in the struggle for freedom independently of White theologians. It was the one term that White ministers and theologians did not like, because, like Black Power in politics, Black theology located the theological starting point in the Black experience and not the particularity of the western theological tradition. We did not feel ourselves accountable to Aquinas, Luther or Calvin but to David Walker, Daniel Payne and W.E.B. Dubois. The depth and passion in which we express our solidarity with the Black experience over against the western tradition led some Black scholars in religion to reject theology itself as alien to the Black culture. Others, while not rejecting theology entirely, contended that Black theologians should turn primarily to African religions and philosophy in order to develop a Black theology consistent with and accountable to our historical roots. But all of us agreed that we were living at the beginning of a new historical moment, and this required the development of a *Black* frame of reference that many called *Black theology.*

The consequence of our affirmation of a Black theology led to the creation of Black caucuses in White churches, a permanent ecumenical church body under the title of the National Conference of Black Churchmen, and the endorsement of James Forman's "Black Manifesto." In June 1969 at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta and under the aegis of NCBC's Theological Commission, a group of Black theologicans met to write a policy statement. The statement was influenced by my book, *Black Theology and Black Power,* which had appeared two months earlier. *Black Theology* was defined as a "theology of Black liberation."

Black theology then was not created in a vacuum and neither was it simply the intellectual enterprise of Black professional theologians. Black theology like our sermons and songs, was born in the context of the Black community as Black people were attempting to make sense out of their struggle for freedom.

To be sure, we have talked and written about our "dream," which has not been realized. Indeed, every Sunday morning Black people gather in our churches, to find out where we are in relation to the actualization of our dream. If people have no dreams they will accept the world as it is and will not seek to change it. To dream is to know what it ain't suppose to be. No one in our time expressed this eschatological note any clearer than Martin Luther King Jr. in his "March on Washington" address in 1963: *"I have a dream that one day my four children will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."*

What visions do we have for the people in 1977? Do we still believe with King that "we as a people will get to the promised land?" If so, how will we get there? Simply by preaching sermons and singing songs? What is the Black Church doing in order to actualize the dreams that it talks about? These are hard questions, and they are not intended as a put-down of the Black Church.

I was born in the Black Church in Bearden, Arkansas, and began my ministry in that church at the age of 16. Everything I am as well as what I know that I ought to be was shaped in the context of the Black Church. Indeed, it is because I love the Church that I am required, as one of its theologians and preachers to ask: "When does the Black Chruch's actions deny its faith? What are the activities in our churches that should not only be rejected as unchristian but also exposed as demonic? What are the evils in our church and community that we should commit ourselves to destroy?"

Bishops, pastors, and church executives do not like to disclose the wrongdoings of their respective denominations. They are like doctors, lawyers, and other professionals who seem bound to keep silent, because to speak the truth is to guarantee one's exclusion from the inner dynamics of power in the profession. But I contend that the *faith* of the Black Church lays a claim upon all church people that transcends the social mores of a given profession. Therefore, to cover-up and to minimize the sins of the church is to guarantee its destruction as a community of faith, committed to the liberation of the oppressed.

If we want the Black Church to live beyond our brief histories and thus to serve as the "Old Ship of Zion" that will carry the people home to freedom, then we had better examine the direction in which the ship is going. Who is the Captain of the Ship, and what are his economic and political interests? This question should not only be applied to bishops, but to pastors and theologians, deacons and stewards.

Unless we are willing to apply the most severe scientific analysis to our church communities in terms of economics and politics and be willing to confess and repent of our sins in the struggle for liberation, then the Black Church, as we talk about it, will remain a relic of history and nothing more. God will have to raise up new instruments of freedom

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so that his faithfulness to liberate the poor and weak can be realized in history. We must not forget that God's Spirit will use us as her instrument only in so far as we remain agents of liberation by using our resources for the empowerment of the poor and weak.

It is very easy for us to expose the demonic and oppressive character of the White Church, and I have done my share of that. But such exposures of the sins of the White Church, without applying the same criticism to ourselves, is hypocritical and serves as a camouflage of our own shortcomings and sins. Either we mean what we say about liberation or we do not. If we mean it, the time has come for an inventory in terms of the authenticity of our faith as defined by the historical commitment of the Black denominational churches toward liberation.

Young Blacks contend that the Black churches of today, with very few exceptions, are not involved in liberation but primarily concerned about how much money they raise for a new church building or the preacher's anniversary. This critique of the Black Church is not limited to young college students. Many Black people view the church as a hindrance to Black liberation, because Black preachers and church members appear to be more concerned about their own institutional survival than the freedom of poor people in their communities. "Historically," many radical Blacks say, "the Black church was involved in the struggle but today it is not."

Whatever we might think about the unfairness of this severe indictment, we would be foolish to ignore it. For connected with this critique is our international image. In the African context, not to mention Asia and Latin America, the Black Church experiences a similar credibility problem. There is little in our theological expressions and church practice that rejects American capitalism that is so oppressive in Third World countries. The time has come for us to move beyond institutional survival in a capitalistic and racist society and begin to take more seriously our dreams about a new heaven and a new earth. Does this dream include capitalism or is it a radically new way of life more consistent with African socialism as expressed the *Arusha Declaration* in Tanzania?

I think that the time has come for Black theologians and church people to move beyond a mere reaction to White racism in America and begin to extend our vision of a new socially constructed humanity in the whole inhabited world. We must be concerned with the quality of human life not only in the ghettoes of American cities but also in Africa, Asia and Latin America. For humanity is whole, and cannot be isolated into racial and national groups. Indeed there will be no freedom for anyone until there is freedom for all. This means that we must stretch our vision by connecting it with other oppressed people's visions so that together all the

What's All This Jive About Black Theology?

Black theology is no "jive." It is an historical movement of Black people. It began before our ancestors left Africa and it has persisted, in one form or another, in every stage of our development to this day.

We are an African people in diaspora. We are a religious people in the quest of our God-given destiny. Almost all of us believe in God. More than 18 million of us belong to some church or religious organization. White missionaries taught us about a pale-faced, blue-eyed savior named Jesus who would make us—

"civilized"
"respectable"
"cheerful"
"good"
"obedient"
SLAVES.

But we found something different in the Bible. We re-interpreted White Christianity and created a Black Christianity which had to do with—

manhood and womanhood
persevering under undeserved suffering
destroying the institution of slavery
worshiping God in our own way
understanding America as "Egypt-land"
understanding Jesus as "Liberator"
understanding the gospel as
LIBERATION

With this new African-American religion, we left the White missionaries and their churches. We organized independent Black churches. We created Black-led congregations. We made our churches the weapon of our struggle against dehumanization, racism, political oppression, economic exploitation, and cultural domination.

This is, therefore, what Black theology is all about. It is the way Black people (Christians, in this context) think about God and act on his promise of liberation through Jesus Christ. In the hands of preachers and scholars it gets involved in more complicated ideas, propositions, feelings and assumptions about God, Jesus Christ, the Holy spirit, and Black peoplehood. *But essentially it is Black God-talk and Black God-action*—from the slave baracoons of the 17th century to the mass Black churches of the 20th. It is not mystical "jive." It is something very real to our people. It is "how we got over." It is "how we overcome." It is how we will triumph over every form of oppression and help to make a new world of freedom and equality for all people—by the power of God.

—From: Orientation Papers, Black Theology Project

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victims of the world might take charge of their history for the creation of a new humanity. As Franz Fanon has taught us, if we wish to live up to our people's expectations, we must look beyond European and American capitalism. Indeed, *"we must invent and we must make discoveries . . . For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new (humanity)."*

I realize, with Merleau Ponty, that "one does not become a revolutionary through science but through indignation." Every revolution needs its Rosa Parks. This point has often been overlooked by some Marxists and other sociologists who seem to think that all answers are found in scientific analysis. Mao Tse-tung responded to such an attitude with this comment: "There are people who think that Marxism is a kind of magic truth with which one can cure any disease. We should tell them that dogmas are more useless than cow dung. Dung can be used as fertilizer."

But these comments do not disprove the truth of the Marxists' social analysis which focuses on economics and class and is intended as empowerment for the oppressed to radically change human social arrangements. Such an analysis will help us not only to understand the relation between economics and oppression in North America but also throughout the world. Liberation is not a process limited to Black-White relations in the United States; it is also a process to be applied to the relations between the rich and poor nations of the Third World.

If Jesus Christ is more than a religious expression of our economic and sexist interests, then there is no reason to resist the truth of the Marxist and feminist analyses.

I contend that Black theology is not afraid of truth from any quarter. We simply reject the attempt of others to tell us what truth is without our participation in its definition. That is why dogmatic Marxists seldom succeed in the Black community, especially when the dogma is filtered through a brand of white racism not unlike that of the capitalists. If our long history of struggle has taught us anything, it is that if we are to be free, we Black people will have to do it. Freedom is not a gift but is a risk that must be taken. No one can tell us what liberation is and how we ought to struggle for it, as if liberation can be found in words.

Liberation is a process to be located and understood only in an oppressed community struggling for freedom. If there are people in and outside our community who want to talk to us about this liberation process in global terms and from Marxist and other perspectives, we should be ready to talk. But *only* if they are prepared to listen to us and we to them will genuine dialogue take place. For I will not listen to anybody who refuses to take racism seriously, especially when they themselves have not been victims of it. And they should listen to us *only* if we are prepared to listen to them in terms of the particularity of oppression in their historical context.

Therefore, I reject dogmatic Marxism that reduces every contradiction to class analysis and thus ignores racism as a legitimate point of departure in the process of liberation. There are racist Marxists as there are racist capitalists, and we must struggle against both. But we must be careful not to reject the message of the Marxist's social analysis simply because we do not like the vessels that the message comes in. If we do that, then it is hard to explain how we can remain Christians in view of the White vessels in which the Gospel was first introduced to Black people.

The world is small. Politically and economically our freedom is connected with the struggles of oppressed peoples throughout the world.

The global perspective in Black theology enlarges our vision regarding the process of liberation. What does Black theology have to say about the fact that two-thirds of humanity is poor and that this poverty arises from the exploitation of the poor nations by rich nations? The people of the United States comprise 6% of the world's population, but we consume 40% of the world's resources. What then is the implication of the Black demand for justice in the United States when related to justice for all the world's victims?

The dependent status we experience in relation to White people, Third World countries experience in relation to the United States. Thus in our attempt to liberate ourselves from White America, it is important to be sensitive to the complexity of the world situtation and the oppressive role the United States plays in it. African, Latin American, and Asian theologians, as well as sociologists and political scientists, can aid us in the analysis of this complexity. In this analysis, our starting point in terms of racism is not negated but enhanced when connected with imperialism and sexism.

We must create a global vision of human liberation and include in it the distinctive contribution of the black experience. We have been struggling for nearly 400 years! What has that experience taught us that would be useful in the creation of a new historical future for all oppressed peoples? And what can others teach us from their historical experience in the struggle for justice? This is the issue that Black theology needs to address. I hope that we will not back off from this important task but will face it with courage, knowing that the future of humanity is in the hands of oppressed peoples, because God has said: *"Those that hope in me shall not be put to shame"* (Is. 49:23). ■

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BLACK THEOLOGY

Review to Renew

by Howard Dodson

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I have been asked to present an analysis of the crisis facing Blacks and American society and a strategy for a new Black agenda. Generally, when people hear a phase like "strategy for a new Black agenda," they assume that such a strategy and agenda is designed to contribute to the ultimate liberation of Black people. What I propose to present is much more modest than that.

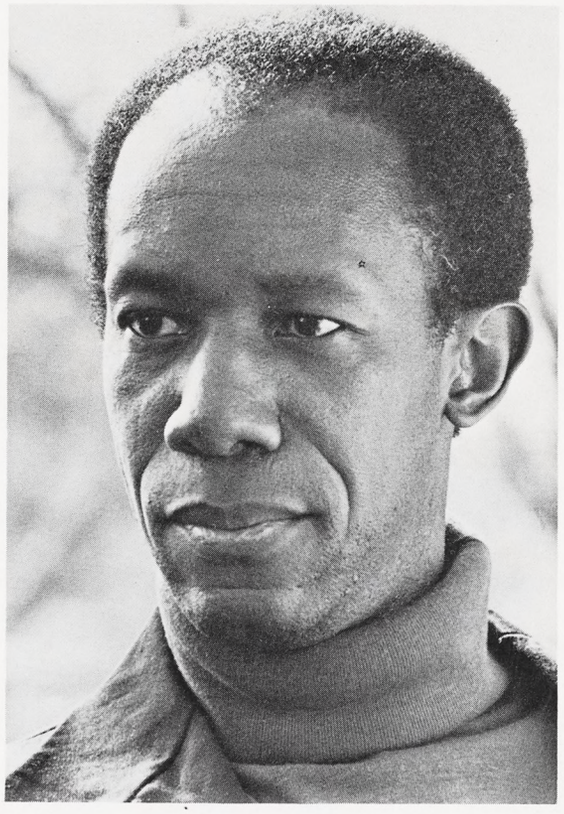
I do not come with a strategy for our liberation. That would presume the existence, in my judgment, of a theory of revolutionary transformation that is fitted to the unique conditions of American society. For, it is only through the revolutionary transformation of American society that Black liberation will in fact be achieved. To the best of my knowledge, no such theory has been elaborated.

While the mounting contradictions with Black and American society clearly indicate that we do not have 100 or 200 years to wait before these contradictions are resolved, at the same time it is clear that, given the complexity of these problems, they're not going to be solved in the next year, or decade, or indeed generation. We must begin with the realization that it will, in all probability, take longer than we would like. A sense of *revolutionary patience,* then is required for this stage of struggle.

With that preface, I will now try to review and critique some of the most recent strategies and tactics of the Black movement, analyze some of the most critical contradictions both within American society and within Black America, and suggest some of the first steps that must be taken in preparing ourselves to participate in the process of creating new theories and agendas.

Whether we have realized it or not, the world as we have known it — especially since the end of World War II — is a thing of the past. The period of American hegemony, the "great American dream era" which began in 1945, has ended.

"Creating the new society will require that Blacks be willing to struggle, first, against the enemy within ourselves; our own individualism and our own political irresponsibility, our own victim mentality and our own reluctance to live up to our fullest potential as human beings — allowing us willingly to accept rather than to avoid the challenge and the historic necessity to transform American society for the mutual benefit of everyone."



Howard Dodson

The American economy which once provided its people with the highest standard of living in the world is in a shambles. The American political system that preaches democracy in name, while it practices subversion and repression in deed is bankrupt and exposed.

The once arrogant, boastful, "superior" American people for whom this period has been one of growing prosperity and rising expectations now find themselves threatened and demoralized by military defeats and rampant inflation; perennial recessions and unemployment; soaring crime rates and drug epidemics; emotional and spiritual depression; and an economic, political and social system that has proven itself totally incapable of identifying, much less addressing the problems posed by this new era. Yes, Black blues poet, B.B. King was hitting the right note when he sang, "The thrill is gone, the thrill is gone away for good."

Black people are not immune to this confusion, demoralization and collapse. Rooted as we are at the bottom, if not completely outside of American society, we have been among the first to feel the effects of the prevailing crisis. And as it has mushroomed throughout the land, we have been among its chief victims.

Our unemployment rates are double and sometimes triple that of the national average. Crime rates in our communities continue to soar. The exploitation of Blacks by Blacks has increased. The

Howard Dodson is director of the Institute of the Black World in Atlanta, Ga.

prisons and the courts continue to mete out everything but equal justice before the law. Reform and rehabilitation are a cruel joke. Hundreds of thousands of Black youth have been sentenced to the ranks of the *permanently* unemployed. The Black family is in crisis. The schools — Black as well as White — are failing to educate our children for the new roles they are being called upon to play.

The Black Church is losing its hold on our community and the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the past two decades which served as such invigorating forces for the social and moral redevelopment of America are now in complete disarray. Our cities, the spoils of victory we thought we were winning less than a decade ago, have turned out to be nothing more than the cancerous appendages on the carcass of a dying civilization. The sense of hopelessness and despair that infect America has crept into our lives as well.

It is important to note that the crises in America are *national* phenomena, not just Black people's crises. They will require, therefore, *national* solutions. Black people cannot solve the problems of Black people in America, without in the final analysis resolving the problems of America — all of America.

Electoral Politics Option

Against this background, I would like to review some of our most recent politics. Black political behavior in the 1976 election was the continuation of a trend that dates back to at least 1968. It is likely that this trend has characterized our total history in the electoral political arena. But it is clear that since 1968, the votes cast by Blacks have been more often than not a reflection of what we were *against* than what we were for. By 1968, the shift away from other forms of social and political struggle toward electoral politics was based, at least in part, on the assumption that Blacks were more likely to represent Black interests than Whites. Our votes for Black elected officials, our struggles to get Blacks appointed to positions of authority and responsibility, and our efforts to get Blacks into jobs that we had been exluded from in the past were votes and struggles *against* White domination of the economic and political system. Rarely if ever did we ask the question, which Blacks should hold these offices or occupy these positions — and toward what specific ends?

In the presidential contests since 1968, it can be said that the Black vote has been essentially a reflection of Black opposition to Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. And in 1976, both during the primaries and the actual election, the Black vote was clearly a negative one.

It will be recalled that Black support for Jimmy Carter in the primaries was largely an effort on the part of Blacks to prevent George Wallace from becoming the Democratic candidate for the presidency. Black votes for Carter in the primaries, then, were essentially votes against Wallace. The same holds true for the presidential race. Ford made it clear that he had no intention of addressing any of the interests and needs of the Black community. It was of utmost importance, therefore, that he and his administration be removed. In retrospect, we should conclude that for Blacks, the results of the 1976 election were more an important defeat than a major victory. Carter's election was and is in no way an expression of what Black people are *for*. We have yet to clarify for *ourselves* what we are for.

It is important that we understand this not only in terms of what it tells us about the kind of role that we have played, but more importantly for what it tells us about the limitations inherent in continuing to play such a role. Until we are clear about what we are struggling *for,* it is impossible to unify and educate for action. That is one of the major problems facing the Black movement at this stage.

Even more significant is the need to realize that the problem facing the American political system is not a problem of personalities. Even assuming that Carter has the best of intentions, the fact is that the American economic and political structures under White or Black control cannot produce the changes in the material and moral life that Black people and American society in general now require. Racism, sexism, classism and other forms of social and economic oppression are endemic to the system. Only a radical (root) transformation of the system itself will resolve these contradictions. Contrary to Ma Bell and others, the system is *not* the solution. The system is the problem as far as Black Americans are concerned.

When Gerald Ford took office in August 1974 the national inflation rate was 12% and 4.86 million people were unemployed. There were 86.3 million people in the labor force and the unemployment rate was 5.3%. When Gerald Ford left office, in January of 1977, the labor force had increased by two million; the number of unemployed people had increased by three million to 7.86 million, and the rate of unemployment which had been 5.3% was now 8%.

What it really meant was simply that the ability to cut the rate of inflation in half was achieved by increasing unemployment by almost 100% — doubling the rate of White unemployment and quadrupling the rate of Black unemployment. And this was praised as "recovery."

What's more, Ford accomplished this reduced inflation rate by building up one of the most massive deficits in the history of the country. When he took over the White House, the deficit was 11.7 billion dollars; in 1975 he raised the budget deficit to 71.2 billion dollars; by 1976 the budget deficit was back "down" to 60 billion dollars.

It should also be noted for instance, that the increase (some 44 billion dollars) in the deficit between the fourth quarters of 1974 and 1975 coincidentally corresponds to the amount of corporate surplus declared for the same period. The rate of profit declared by American corporations during that same month was some 48 billion dollars. So the idea that this kind of intervention creates jobs is ridiculous.

At the center of the problem is the fact that at least three-fourths of the federal budget is already committed to fixed expenses. That is, President Carter today or any other President has only some 25% of the budget to play around with, and if he is to use the so-called "power and authority" of the State to deal with the problems of the economy, he must increase that 25%. That is, he must increase the deficit. Thus, Carter already has a budget with a deficit 11 billion dollars greater than that of Gerald Ford. The country cannot continue to live on credit for long. And balancing the budget remains a highly remote and costly enterprise. For, it is impossible for American capitalism at this stage to have a balanced budget, unless, as Bill Strickland warns us, "You get rid of a sizeable portion of the American population."

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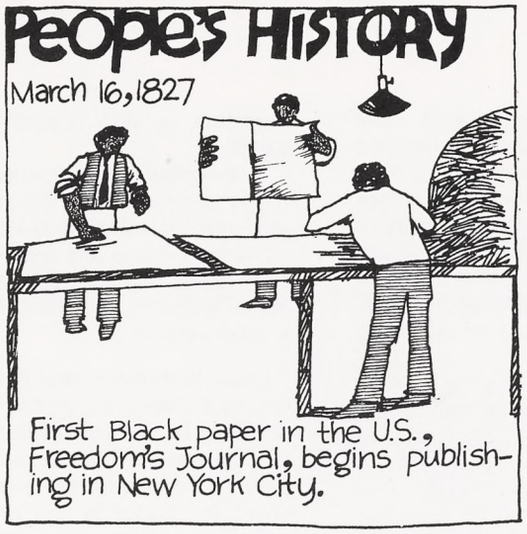

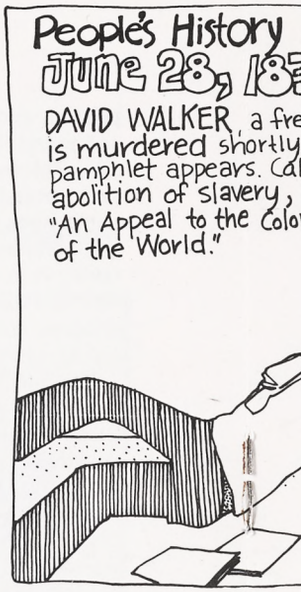

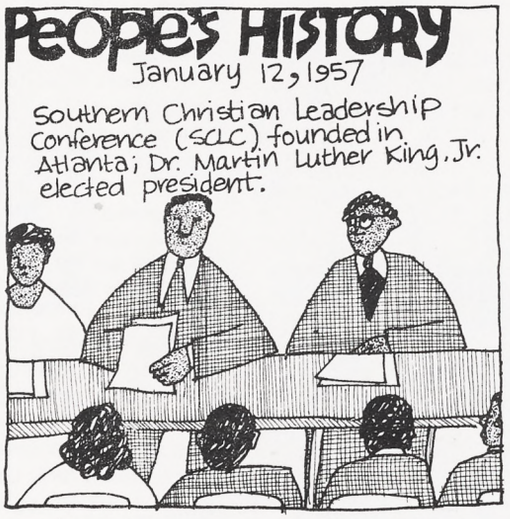

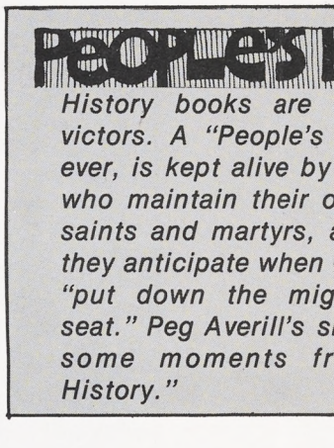

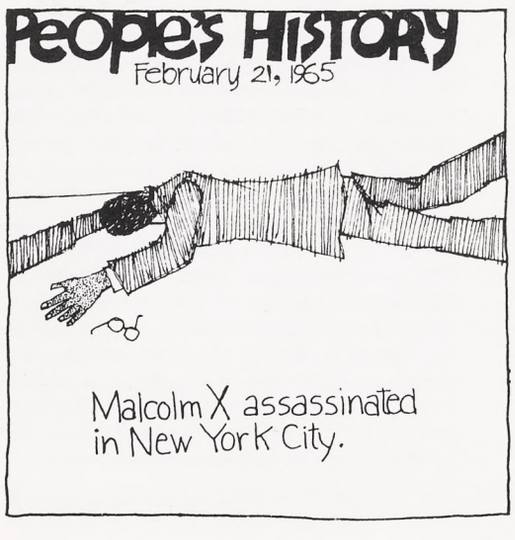

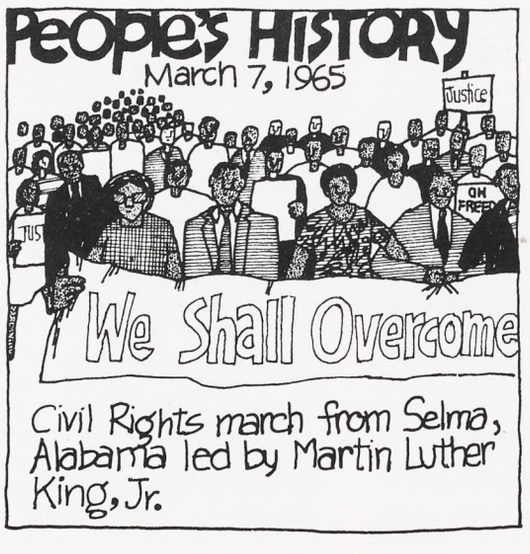

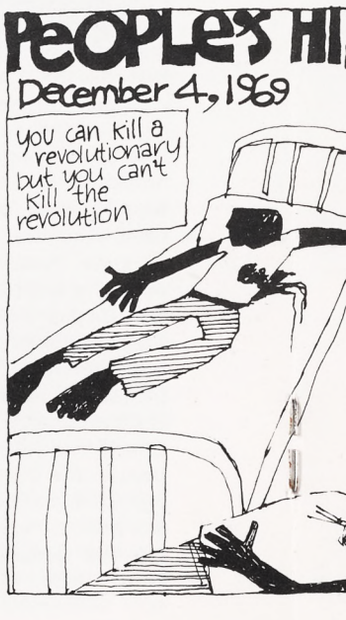

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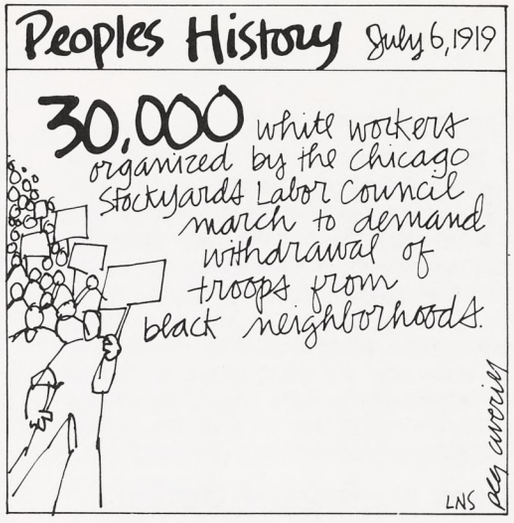

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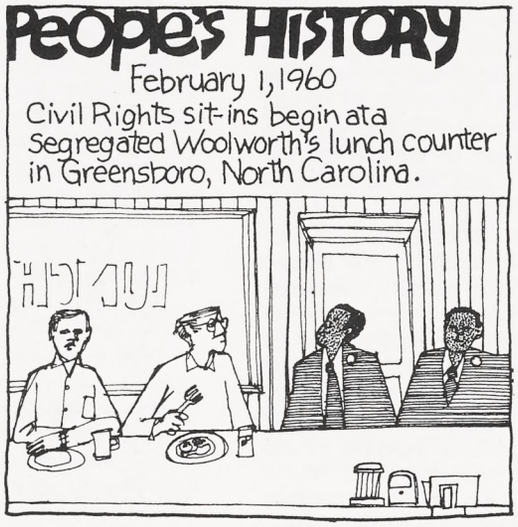

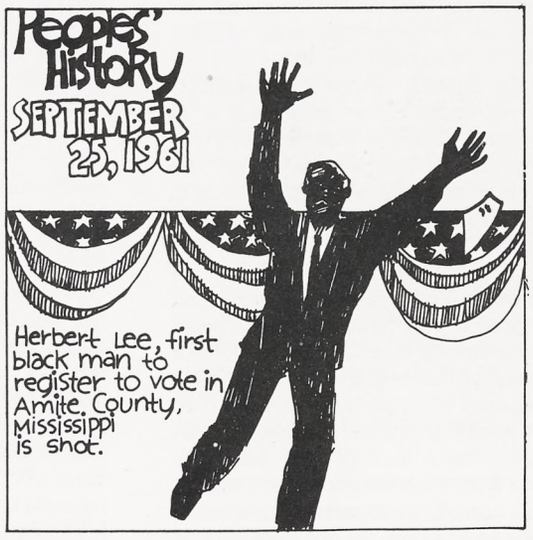

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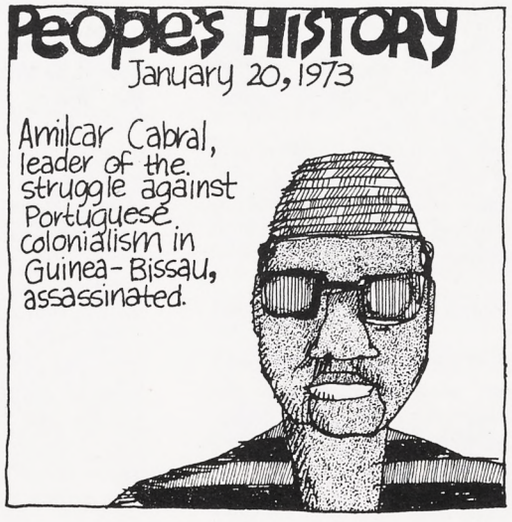
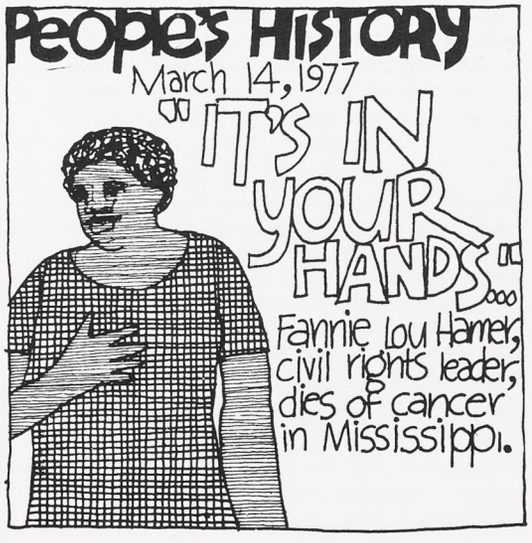
Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark are murdered by the Chicago police and the FBI.





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The capitalist option, then, is not a realistic alternative. The capitalist system simply cannot provide for the needs of the masses of people. And the Black capitalist option is no more viable than the White capitalist option. For capitalism, be it black, green, yellow or white is about exploitation. Black capitalists, in order to be successful capitalists have to exploit somebody. It is likely that they will be other Blacks, either here in the United States, or in Africa or the Caribbean.

Black Nationalist Option

Black involvement in the electoral political arena is in many ways an extension of the nationalist stage of our movement — a stage that was characterized by its emphasis on affirming our identity as Blacks. Black is beautiful! There is no doubt about that. And it is important that we affirm that fact. But it is not sufficient. It is a repudiation of the notion that Blacks are inferior, but not a projection of the goals and aspirations of our struggle.

The one-to-five Black Nationalist state option, which was another expressed political goal of this tendency, was based on the assumption that it was possible to make peace with America as it is — to rip off a corner of it, organize that corner to serve the needs of Blacks and live happily ever after. Well, that is not possible. America is both a nation and an empire. Its tentacles currently stretch around the world. Blacks in Africa are not even safe as long as America, as it is currently organized, remains intact. How could we even hope that America would leave us alone here on these shores?

The Pan-Africanist option is a further expression and affirmation of our Black identity, but projected on a world scale. It is also an expression of the cynicism and despair about the prospects for the future of Blacks in America and indeed the future of America itself. It is a capitulation of the belief that it is impossible for Black people to wage a successful struggle for freedom and human dignity here in America.

Pan-Africanism projects the notion that the key to Black freedom in America is the liberation of Africa. In actual fact, the reverse is true. For it is America, not Africa, that has the world's people in its grips. Creating a new America, waging a successful struggle here in America, not trying to get away from it or substituting someone else's reality for our own, is the key to Black liberation both in America and around the world.

Marxist Option

In recent times, various neo-Marxist formulas have been projected as the revolutionary option for Black Americans. What has received the greatest airing has been steeped in the dogma and the realities of other places and other times. Marxism is a theory, a methodology of analysis, and an ideology. All too often, however, the neo-Marxists have latched on to the ideological dimension and tried to impose it on unique American conditions. Marxist theory and methodology hold a lot of possibilities if we apply them critically to the understanding of our particular situation. The experiences of Mao Tse Tung, Ho Chin Minh and Amilcar Cabral are just a few examples of the ways in which the application of Marxist theory, methodology and praxis can be successful.

Rather than learn from their experiences and begin with the study of the unique contradictions of this society, however, the neo-Marxists seem to be content to quote these brothers' words (in vain) or mistake the conclusions they reached about their own societies as universal truths. Even worse, many revert to quoting Marx's own 19th century analyses of the contradictions of pre-imperialist, European-based capitalism as though they reflected the 20th and indeed, 21st century realities of America today.

America needs to be understood if we are to change it. Superimposing other people's realities, be they 20th century African realities or 19th and 20th century European ones will only lead to further obfuscation and confusion.

Now, the moral of all of this history and analysis is that whether we will to or not, we cannot escape the awesome responsibility of struggling here in America to transform American society and build a new America.

How did we come to be vested with this responsibility?

James Boggs explains that: *"Ten years ago, the Black movement raised the question of power which the labor movement did not do in the 1930's. But those who were in the leadership of the movement did not realize that when an oppressed layer raises the question of power, it must also face the responsibilities of power — that is, it must face the political responsibility of reorganizing the entire nation, from top to bottom and from bottom to top, for the benefit of everybody in the nation, regardless of race, color, sex, creed or national origin. If it does not do this then the movement will inevitably degenerate into opportunism or escapism — as the Black movement has done.*

"It was no crime that we did not recognize the awesome responsibilities of raising the concept of power ten years ago. Looking back, it was clear that those who were most active in the movement had little idea of the profound questions which had been raised about American society by the Black movement and the Vietnam War. In the heat of the struggles to redress the grievances of the past, we did not realize that Blacks were also raising the most profound questions of the future; that the American way of life had become as outmoded as feudalism had become several hundred years ago; and that the whole of humankind is on the threshold of a new era, a new time.

"Therefore we did not realize that we were faced with the responsibility for creating a new philosophy and practice of politics — as the continuing commitment to the responsibilities of governing this entire country — on the basis of which we could then grapple with the complex questions of creating a new society in the United States."

New Goals for New Times

The task of creating the new society we seek to build in America will require that Blacks be willing to struggle, first, against the enemy within ourselves, our own individualism and our own political irresponsibility, our own victim mentality and our own reluctance to live up to our fullest potential as human beings — allowing us willingly to accept rather than avoid the challenge and the historic necessity to transform American society for the mutual benefit of everyone.

For many of us, this is too awesome a task. We prefer deliberately to remain on level of perception or reaction, of complaints and protests, because we sense that if we once begin to think with more depth about the nature of capitalism and how it has been destroying our relation-

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ships with each other and the entire world community, we will also have to accept responsibility, as citizens, for the politics of this society and not just blame everything on the politicians.

Boggs emphasizes that, *"we are not just victims of the system or of our exploiters. Living in the richest country in the world, where even those on welfare live better than the middle classes in most other countries, and where every school child is constantly exposed to information about the evils of racism and capitalism we can and must transcend the limitations and the slave mentality which have been natural to us in a racist, sexist, class society. As human beings we have a choice. We can continue on our present, individualistic and materialistic course — just struggling for more things which we must then stay home, behind barred windows and doors, to guard, because we are afraid they will be stolen by our equally individualistic and materialistic neighbors. Or we can commit ourselves to struggle, thoughtfully, resolutely and systematically, in association with our thoughtful and resolute comrades, for another way to live, a way of life which will mean putting a ceiling on our greeds in order to satisfy our deeper human needs to live in harmony with one another and to control our own destiny."*

Those who decide to commit themselves to such struggle must then begin raising the question, "What kind of human society do we want here in America?" We must take certain terms that I have used like racism, capitalism and imperialism and try to understand for ourselves what they have actually meant in the development of the structures of American society, and how they have impacted the lives of the people who live in America and around the world. Then, we must begin the process of determining what the alternatives should be.

Racism, for instance is a system whereby one race of people exploits the labor, talents, strengths, gifts, and lives of another race of people. What kind of society do we envision as an alternative to a racist society? What kind of real society do we envision with a mix of White people, Black people, Chicano people, Native American people, Asian people? What are the social relationships that should govern these people? What is the nature of the relationship of their respective heritages to this kind of society?

Moreover, on an internal level, we must struggle within ourselves and ask, how can we — who have been made to believe that we are nothing but victims by this racist society — break out of that and begin to take responsibility in new ways for our lives, for our future, and indeed for the whole society?

We define capitalism as a system that by nature exploits the labor of the majority of the people, for the advantage, the profits and the advancement of a small sector of the people. It is a system that is built in such a way that the decisions in the society are made basically on the level of what produces the most profits for the corporations, and that small group of individuals who control the major corporations of the society. It is not enough simply to condemn it, by name. The question is, what do we project for a society that moves beyond the capitalist way of economic and social organization? What alternatives do we see for human development? How shall we decide the use of natural resources? We must give those questions a content that is indigenous to the American situation.

And what about us? What do we do about our own internalization of the capitalist way of thinking? Of its temptations and its willingness to exploit other people for our own good. How shall we face the fact that for many of us, what is really wrong with capitalism is that we are not the capitalists? How shall we deal with the transformation that is necessary to go to the next stage?

We speak of imperialism as a world wide system whereby capitalism moves its tentacles out to exploit the labor and the resources of peoples beyond its own borders for purpose of its own economic advancement. Are we prepared to deal with what it will mean to live in America but no longer live off of the rest of the non-White world? What kind of society will we have that will no longer exploit Jamaica and Trinidad and Guyana and all the parts of Africa? What kinds of impacts will these changes mean for our own style of life? All the things that we ride in, all the things that we wear, all the things that we currently aspire to, depend so often on the exploitation of other peoples in other parts of the world.

We must begin to project, externally, and internally, the ways in which we believe women and men must live that take us against and beyond racism, capitalism, imperialism, after they have become to us more than slogans, after they have become realities that we really understand.

Boggs has concluded, I think correctly, that the fundamental contradiction facing American society at this stage is the contradiction between its material and technological overdevelopment and its social and political underdevelopment. This being the case, it is imperative that we commit ourselves to the task of developing people for that higher level of struggle which must be waged if we are to begin the process of transforming American society.

Continuing to struggle against manifestations of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of social oppression and capitalist/imperialist exploitation is necessary, but not sufficient. Developing theories, strategies and tactics for eradicating one or the other of these forms of oppression and exploitation is necessary, but not sufficient.

An analysis of the contradictions that are peculiar to American society is required. A theory of social transformation that is adequate to the task of dealing with *all* of these contradictions is necessary. A commitment on the part of people like yourselves to prepare yourselves and our people for this next stage of protracted struggle is needed if we are to assume to responsibilities of creating the new American society that history has thrust upon our shoulders. ■

Continued from page 2

May I assure you that I am working with the leadership to bring about change. As a sociologist, however, I must remind you that change seldom comes from the top down. The General Convention in Minnesota probably would not have authorized the ordination of women as priests if the irregular ordinations had not occurred in 1974. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was not passed until after the March on Washington in 1963. The action at the top of a system—be it the Church or the government—usually is in reaction to initiatives that were taken by those who were oppressed. While cooperation is a valid social process, so is conflict or competition. Your letter indicates that you would prefer a cooperative approach; it is all right to prefer that approach—but on whose terms—those of the *leadership* or those of the *communicant members?* When there is not consensus, then conflict is inevitable.

Charles V. Willie
Harvard Graduate School

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Birmingham Hearings

Suffering: Disproportionately Black

by William A. Yon

Birmingham was selected as the site of the third public hearing sponsored by the Urban Bishops' Coalition to explore "the Church's mission in the urban crisis." The word we got was that Atlanta wanted the hearing. Maybe Birmingham looked more typical of the urban South. Maybe it was because we intimated that we might come up with $1 million dollars over the next few years to do something new. Anyway, it had been a long time since Birmingham got something that Atlanta wanted, so that got things off to a good start.

I was impressed by the rationality and fairness of the choice. The young Black legislator, a member of our panel, figured it was political. He turned out to be right.

Find some people who are willing to spend a day listening and asking questions on behalf of the church's servanthood.

BIRMINGHAM HEARINGS PANEL

John Walker, Bishop of Washington, D.C. and chairman of the Urban Bishops Coalition, convened the Birmingham panel. Also serving with him were Morris Arnold, Bishop of Massachusetts; Frank Bromberg, businessman and diocesan treasurer; Tony Harrison, state legislator; John Krumm, Bishop of Southern Ohio; Ted McEachern of Nashville and Odessa Woolfolk of Birmingham, urban specialists; and the Rev. Martin Tilson, rector of St. Luke's, Birmingham.

It was a good panel: bishops from Washington, Cincinnati, Massachusetts, a local urbanologist, the young legislator, an out-of-town urban mission consultant, a suburban rector, and the diocesan treasurer. Get them together to orient them to this city and this diocese and their function in this hearing, and the action starts right there.

Right away the Alabama bishop and the local committee members begin to learn some things about *their* city, its origins as an industrial center, satellite of Pittsburgh, and its future as an educational center; about the subtle Black-White coalitions that are forming and shaping Birmingham's political future; about the political and economic strangulation of the core city by its 32 peripheral municipalities. Local church leaders meeting for the first time and learning from local experts.

Put out the word that you've got some money and you want to spend a day hearing some ideas about how to spend it, and it's not hard to find 20 people who will put some energy into preparing testimony. All day long the plaint went on:

— Some 11,000 families with incomes under $2,000, living in sub-standard, privately rented dwellings.

— The "walking wounded," not sick enough to be institutionalized, not well enough to live independently in society.

— A criminal justice system, alleged to be as criminal as it is just and systematic, victimizing the poor especially, and the Black poor, more especially. "Every Black person knows someone in prison."

— Infant mortality (that means babies dying) more frequently in the United States than in most other developed countries, more frequently in Birmingham than in most of the rest of the country, more frequently among Blacks than Whites.

— Christian gays, suffering the condemnation of silence of the church.

— The deaf and otherwise physically impaired, without housing or educational opportunities adequately designed to their needs.

— Hunger in an area among the nation's leaders in non-utilization of federal food programs.

— Young people, bombarded by more options for self-destruction, finding fewer options for self-fulfillment, and confronted by a moralistic church which turns them off.

— An economic system whose capital increasingly flows to where its owners live: outside the corporate limits of the core city.

— Women, struggling for equality without adequate constitutional protection.

The Bishop of Alabama finally confessed that it was enough to make him "weep over Jerusalem."

Tony Harrison, aforementioned legislator, young and Black, became the panel's gadfly-in-residence. All day long he asked witness after witness: "Just who are these poor . . . these hungry . . . these slum-dwellers . . . these prisoners?" Sometimes he had to tease out the response with a more

The Rev. William A. Yon served on the staff of the Diocese of Alabama from 1963 until 1973. He is currently rector of a Birmingham parish, engaged in private practice as an organization consultant, and serves as chairperson of the diocese's Department of Church and Society.

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explicit question: "Does this group of which you speak have any particular racial composition?" All day long the answer came back: "Well, yes, a disproportionate number of them are . . . BLACK."

And so it was that as we opened our eyes to the human misery in our midst in all its forms we were to discover what we already knew; that well over a hundred years after the War of Black Emancipation and 14 years after this city became known to much of the world as Bombingham — and in spite of the many social transformations brought about by those tragic events — human misery in this society is inextricably related to RACISM. The Bishop of Alabama called it sin. It promises to be as enduring.

Strangely, the day was not a downer. Perhaps because of the way Bill Stough spoke at the end, giving good evidence that he had been listening — all day — with both his head and his heart, making some explicit commitments in response and somehow striking a note of Gospel hope; perhaps because Johnny Walker, who was presiding, and John Krumm, and Ben Arnold, and Tony Harrison let that seduce them out of their listener roles into making their own testimonies of dismay over the enormity of the issues, but affirming their resoluteness to carry on — whatever, some of us milling around at the end acknowledged to each other that it had been a spiritual experience. Hope had been quickened. Some indefinable New Life seemed to be stirring.

The hearing was on Dec. 16. The good feelings persisted for 11 more days. On Dec. 27 the executive committee of the Diocese of Alabama agreed to propose a budget for 1978 which would include a 10% salary increase for all diocesan employees. Funds for responding to the needs of the world's poor and hungry and homeless were slashed in order to make this possible.

The battle has not yet been won. It hasn't been lost either. It merely continues. And doubtless will for a while.

Now, BE a Witness!

When you read THE WITNESS do you sometimes feel you'd like to talk with others to see how you could gain further understanding about the issues presented? And join others in some constructive action?

The Church and Society Network will take you there. You've recently received its brochure in the mail, inviting you to enroll as a supporting member and we urge you to do so.

THE WITNESS and the Network operate independently of each other but have parallel concerns. In the Church and Society Network, through local and regional programs, ideas become *alive.*

Continued from page 3

anguish, which shrouds Black communities and impels the resurgence of activist Black theology.

That frustration and anguish is nowhere more viscerally brought home to us than in the continued victimization of the Rev. Benjamin Chavis and the Wilmington 10. Chavis, who was honorary chairman of BTP's Black Church and Black Community Conference in August 1977, remains incarcerated in North Carolina on preposterous and disproven charges, graphically described by Robert Maurer of Amnesty International in a 1976 article in THE WITNESS.

Ben Chavis languishes in jail simply because (1) it is politically expedient for North Carolina Governor James Hunt to suppress this living symbol of liberation-oriented Black Christianity; and (2) it is politically inexpedient for President Jimmy Carter to pardon the Wilmington 10, thus setting a domestic precedent for the human rights cause Mr. Carter has so loudly articulated relative to other nations.

But Ben Chavis does not simply "languish in jail." Rather — like Paul and Silas, the Wilmington 10 have transformed their incarceration into an active witness for a caring Lord who is ever on the side of the oppressed. Ben Chavis insists that his supporters not only lobby with the White House for the freedom of the Wilmington 10, but that we also intensify our efforts on behalf of political prisoners, all the victims of racism, all those who are oppressed by political and economic distortions inherent in the American social system.

Ben Chavis's indomitable faith, amidst intense personal hardship, is a charge to Black Theology and to the whole body of the Church to persevere and even celebrate, confident in the promise that "the acceptable year of the Lord" is yet at hand. ■

RESOURCE: BLACK THEOLOGY

An hour-long cassette, "The Black Church: A New Theology for Liberation," is available from the Black Theology Project, Room 439, 475 Riverside Drive, New York City 10027. It features interviews with participants in the BTP Conference, interspersed with speech, sermon and song to capture the spirited atmosphere of the gathering, as well as its analytic theological concerns. Price is $10.

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Profile of a Community in Exile

'Christians on the Edge'

by Phyllis M. Jones

The Episcopal Bishops' distressing retreat from support for the ordination of women this Fall marked clearly some current dilemmas of the Community for Christian Faith and Action in Oberlin. We were alternately outraged with the church yet relieved to be rid of it, desirous of initiating political action, yet powerless to affect an institution we had chosen to leave.

Such quandaries spelled out a main theme for many of us, certainly for me: How are we to be Christians in society when we are a small group firmly placed on its edge? How are we to witness to this troubled world beyond providing worship and support for each other? But such issues speak to the present and anticipate the future, and it is the history of our community that concerns me now.

The Community for Christian Faith and Action has many beginnings, but the following paragraph from a news release of January, 1976, marks its structural origin:

"Recognizing that the political determinations of the parish meeting of Monday, Jan. 12, indicate that a majority in Christ Church, Oberlin, wish to dissociate themselves from the course we have taken, we feel that the only creative moral and spiritual action for us is to establish a separate worshipping community . . ."

Much pain, anger, recrimination, and guilt preceded this formal acknowledgement of a split that had been experientially evident for many months. The majority of those remaining at Christ Church had all along favored the principle of women's ordination but thought that its enactment should occur at General Convention. Those of us supporting Peter Beebe, Alison Cheek, and Carter Heyward believed in a different means of effecting women's ordination. We argued that Carter and Alison and their sister priests ordained in Philadelphia in July of 1974 were valid priests deserving our affirmation.

But to argue unanimity of mind or rationale among all remaining in or leaving Christ Church in January of 1976 would misrepresent the record. For me, the act involved long hours of guilt and doubt as to whether I, a fairly new member of the parish, had the "right" to disrupt an existent congregation. Had I an "obligation" to remain and try to resolve difficulties? Or, had I an "obligation," to rephrase the issue, to follow another interpretation of "good behavior?" I had come to feel that for me there was a spiritual and moral imperative to continue to affirm persons I judged were valid priests. I was unshaken in my beliefs that general Christian dictates and an accurate interpretation of Episcopalian rubrics argued for our position.

I think some left specifically to support Peter Beebe and others to signify their anger over diocesan intervention in parish affairs. I went less for those reasons than to seek out the priests and community that ideologically and experientially provided Christian worship and self-definition for me. I was joined by many in recognizing that the long fight to support the issue of women's ordination since the first celebration by Carter and Alison in December of 1974 in Christ Church had changed me radically: I no longer was nourished by the conventional forms of enacting liturgy and worship in the parish. Many of us felt a need to find space to express liturgically what we had been living in the struggle: joy, grief, self-actualization.

Although it would appear that the Community for Christian Faith and Action evolved principally by practical adaptation to momentary need, a brief look at events in the first 12 months of our existence displays much conscious theoretical and theological planning: Coffee hours to discuss our relationship to the Episcopal Church . . . a summer experiment in worship services with lay celebrants . . . adaptation for the fall of 1976 of a system of rotation of priestly leadership among Peter, Alison, and Carter . . . the hiring in September of Nona Thompson, as our half-time co-ordinator . . . a retreat day to learn a new form of Bible study from Carter . . . a crucial retreat in November 1976, to deal with the leave-taking of our three priests from us and to decide whether we could or should continue and, if so, in what form . . . the formalization of our status as a chapter of Church and Society.

For me a pattern of three principal concerns — with identity, with leadership, and with celebration of the sacraments — dominated, often without our full awareness, these activities of our first months of independent existence when we flourished and floundered as a worshipping community.

When we left Christ Church, none of us had any idea what our denominational identity or what our period of survival would or should be. Were we really an Episcopal parish in exile? A protest group that would rejoin the local parish when and if the national chruch approved women's ordination? Or something else altogether? From its first to most recent meeting, however, the Community has always provided for its members Sunday worship. Furthermore, there has been no question that we have felt strongly our Anglican roots, particularly the emphasis on the Lord's Supper.

From our parish we brought with us as resources two strong traditions — practice with experimental liturgy and family education. Our first business was to plan Sunday worship since we had no resident priests. Not only could we rely on previous efforts in executing services but we also could direct our all ages Sunday school forum to plan services to result from its primary purposes of Bible study and fellowship.

From January through November of 1976 many of us felt we didn't want to infringe upon the rights of anyone else by assuming that person's permanent alliance with us. We wanted each person to feel free to return to Christ Church if she or he wanted. In fact, our numbers, initially close to 100, have decreased by about one half, not so much by attrition to other churches but rather by a leave-taking from

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any structured worshipping community at all.

If puzzlement over our relationship to the Episcopal Church pushed us to discussion groups on that issue, the passage at Convention of women's ordination in September of 1976 threw us into total confusion. Had we been so successful that we no longer had a reason for a separate existence? Fortunately we had previously scheduled a November retreat to help us clarify our purposes.

For some of us, certainly for me, it seemed unwise and undesirable to try to be a church/church substitute by continuing to meet on Sunday mornings. How could we meet all the traditional "church" needs from Sunday School to choirs? Weren't we, after all, an activist group, a political and social force, that should claim that identity and not compete with "the church?" The answers were complicated by the force among us of two strong stances: feminism and distrust of the institutional church. We were very wary of many of the activities and duties incurred by a traditional congregation, fearful that they often mean volunteer busy work for women — or highly useful activities that nonetheless are only staffed by the women this society has expected to serve for no pay.

Similarly, most of us distrusted enormously the church from our challenging of it. It seemed that, once institutionalized, Christianity frequently reacted with self-preservation rather than creative moral response. Some in the Community felt betrayed by a denomination that seemed to promise a liberal doctrine and in practice labeled as heretical those who felt they were acting within its bounds.

Hence, many of us went to the November retreat thinking that we should meet on a week-day night and define ourselves as a task force working for social betterment. We hoped thereby to keep everyone with us, enabling anyone to rejoin Christ Chruch or another congregation and not be forced to choose. Yet somehow in the long hours of struggling with the issue I and others were called to examine our political activist roots and strength: the Gospel and its prayerful study and explication. Somehow out of chaos I found the need to acknowledge my own churchly needs and all of us found the courage to take on ourselves the responsibility for our own worship. We acknowledged we had to be regularly in worship and let social needs penetrate that forum rather than trying to solve problems without steady guidance from the Gospel.

If I had been confused over group identity, I only realized months later how perplexing my attitudes toward the ministry must have seemed to anyone expecting logic. Here was I, a supporter of ordination for women, coming to distrust the theory of leadership by the ordained. Peter, Alison, and Carter, who continued from January to November to be with us for Sunday worship on a rotating basis, sensed such confusion, probably before we did.

For example, Alison in early summer said it was always her joy to return to us but she had begun to wonder whether she shouldn't pay her own way to return as a friend for she felt we really weren't certain what we wanted her to do for us. The reasons for such doubt were easily traced for me. As I witnessed what I thought many loyal to the Episcopal Church wanted Peter Beebe to do and be for them, as I followed his trial and its appeal, it seemed to me that the role of priest was both insufferably limited and unbearably weighted with responsibility. I came to think many of us in the church had too often wanted our ministers to relieve us of responsibility both for our own lives and for Christian witness to the world.

I also knew that the risking and consequent agony Peter, Alison, and Carter underwent caused them to question and examine every aspect of the role of priest. For over two years we had as a group and one to one supported, hassled, and counseled them on the single question: What is it to be a priest? I gradually came to believe that if there were external illogic to my desire to proceed as a worshipping community without a minister that there also was an experiential logic to it. All three at various times had stated that a good priest writes her or himself out of a job, that a true priest "spiritually enables" individuals to claim their own power to lead themselves and others to a full release of their potential and influence in the world.

Enablers and facilitators, Peter, Alison, and Carter in November of 1976 deemed that they had to leave us to free their own powers in other callings or tasks. Our fear of going on in November of 1976 probably mostly reflected our grief over losing their leadership. I cannot say whether I will always choose to worship without a minister. I think I cannot know that because of the miracle for me of the ministry of these three remarkable priests in my life. They gave me such an unspeakable model of leadership — at the same time freeing me to realize my own potential — that it will be a very long time before anyone can replace them. And that ministry they fulfilled by being "unpriestly" enough to need me — in such specific ways as comfort and in such all-embracing ways as giving me the power to lay my hands upon them and call them "priest" when very few others would.

No one characteristic distinguishes our worshipping life together more fully than our lay celebration of the Lord's Supper, at once our most Episcopalian and non-Episcopalian mark. From our weekly celebration of this sacrament in our times within an Episcopal parish to our need of this ritual when we had gathered as a small band of protestors within the system, none of us could conceive of worship without

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Maria and Raisa: Free at Last

by Mary Lou Suhor

"There has been no showing or indication in any of the papers presented to me that these women (Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin) are other than what they appear to be — persons legitimately engaged in the work of their church. There has been no showing that they are themselves involved in criminal activities or engaged in crime. There has been no indication that they belong to FALN, or condone or espouse its terrorists' views . . . It does not appear to me that coercive incarceration beyond six months' duration is justified in situations of this kind."

—Judge Robert L. Carter, Jan. 23, 1978

With the above words, Judge Robert L. Carter, a liberal Black judge with a background in NAACP struggles, ended a 24-page decision and freed Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, former director and secretary, respectively, of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs. The women had spent more than 10 months in prison in New York's Metropolitan Correction Center for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury investigating FALN bombings.

When the two women received word that they were to be released, they did not believe it. Their hopes had been dashed many times as legal efforts to free them had failed. Maria said, "Even as we headed downstairs, I told Raisa, don't get your hopes up — they're only taking us to another prison." (The fate, incidentally, of four other of their colleagues who had been jailed for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury).

But as they stepped out of the elevator, their attorney, Elizabeth Fink, was waiting to announce that they were free.

In a press release shortly after, Maria and Raisa said: "Our release represents a significant victory for the people. It is a blow against the Grand Jury system and its abusive tactics which are utilized to destroy movements for self-determination. The concerted efforts by the National Council of Churches, various supporters within the Episcopal Church and the community at large were instrumental in bringing about our release."

While the NCC received praise for its efforts, the women and their supporters have viewed with grave concern the way in which Presiding Bishop John Allin and Bishop Milton Wood handled the FBI investigation, allowing agents into the Episcopal Church Center after hours, and turning over information at will (see list of items released in June, 1977 WITNESS). Bishop Francisco Reus-Froylan of Puerto Rico commented at the time that "our church officials were too eager to help in turning over what amounted to free access to the records of the Hispanic and other ministries. It makes me wonder if they have been reading the same papers I have been reading the last 25 years."

The two women hold the administration responsible for the subsequent jailing of nine persons, all somehow connected to the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, and the chilling effect these arrests have had on the ministry to Hispanics.

Maria and Raisa said that since the ministry suffered the "taint" connected with the investigation, funding is harder to come by. Moreover, with key personnel in jail, their associates in programs across the country are spread thin in their own operations as they are burdened to form "defense committees" and raise money for legal fees.

Item: The Miranda School in Chicago, partially funded by NCHA, and a target of the FBI investigation, lost its accreditation and it is unlikely that it will survive. The school had taken high school dropouts — about 70% in the Puerto Rican community — and offered them sufficient incentive to finish their education. Graduation achieve-

Maria Cueto relaxing with her parents, Josefina and Leopoldo Cueto, at the family home in Phoenix, Ariz., following her release from 10 months in prison.

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ment by students was in the 90 percentile ratio.

Item: The complex of family, health and legal services offered to the Chicano community in Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico under a program called *La Cooperacion del Pueblo* is crippled from the jailing of one of its administrators, Pedro Archuleta, being held since June 30. Pedro was fundraiser and ambulance driver for the clinic, whose maternity wing was partially funded by the NCHA.

Item: Media reporting, or lack thereof, was most damaging to those in jail and to the Hispanic ministry. As the FBI tried continually to forge a link betweeen the NCHA and the FALN bombings, front page stories leaked to the *New York Times* and other papers hinted at the connection. Such leaks were criticized by Federal Judge Morris E. Lasker, who ordered Attorney General Griffin Bell to conduct a national investigation into possible violations of Grand Jury secrecy and Department of Justice guidelines. Results of this investigation have never been released.

Other than government-slanted press releases, information about those in jail was hard to find. Curiously, THE WITNESS, the only Episcopal journal which carried monthly accounts of the event, was visited by the FBI and the managing editor, Mary Lou Suhor, singled out for questioning. Bishop Robert L. DeWitt as editor of the magazine, asserted a legal stance of non-cooperation with the investigation and Ms. Suhor refused to be interviewed by the FBI.

The complete toll in human suffering caused by this Grand Jury investigation is yet to be reckoned. Four persons remain in jail in New York, and may stay there until May 8 when the life of the Grand Jury expires. They are Archuleta, a Chicano, and three brothers — Andres, Luis and Julio Rosado, all Puerto Ricans. Archuleta had been subpoenaed to two Grand Juries — to Chicago as well as New York, and recently won a motion which freed him from the Chicago jail. He was immediately taken to New York and imprisoned there. Three other persons jailed in Chicago were released — Ricardo Romero of Alamosa, Colo., on a "Grumbles motion," and Jose Lopez and Roberto Caldero when the life of the Grand Jury expired at the end of January. Before the latter three were freed, they had been moved from the Metropolitan Correction Center in Chicago to inferior county jails which fail to meet minimum standards for prisoners, apparently a punitive measure and the last lash of the whip.

The release of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin signals one bright spot in a long catalog of harassment and human suffering. A few others should be noted:

—Increased consciousness raising across country in church and community groups around Grand Jury abuse, although reform legislation introduced by Rep. Josh Eilberg of Pennsylvania still hangs in Congress, jeopardized now by an investigation around Eilberg himself.

—The dramatic intervention of the National Council of Churches on behalf of Maria and Raisa, and its efforts to set up guidelines so that none of its member denominations would suffer from the Episcopal precedent. The NCC guidelines on what to do when the FBI knocks is a document which well might be read — perhaps memorized — by anyone engaged in social action and work with ethnic groups. For a free copy, write to THE WITNESS.

What about the future for Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin?

Shortly after her release, Maria sent a memo to Bishop Quintin Primo of the Church and Society Division (at his request) outlining what she and Raisa would like from the Episcopal Church. Essentially, Maria's memo asked that she and Raisa be paid their salaries during the time they spent in jail (the women are officially "on leave of absence"); that their legal fees be paid, and that the NCHA be urged to take as one of its objectives the correction of Grand Jury abuse.

Supporters of the women were not taking bets that the outcome would be favorable. Bishops Allin and Wood made it known early on that they thought the women should testify and have consistently refused to support them in court. (Ironic that Bishop Allin, who would not honor a church subpoena in the *William Wendt* trial, should be so eager to push two of his employees into the lion's den of FBI and Grand Jury inquiries). Also, Bishops Allin and Wood have even hinted privately that the women may have had some connection with the FALN.

Their position was undergirded by Judge Chester Byrns, a member of the Executive Council, who was quoted in the *Virginia Churchman* as saying that he thought the women were confined "because they have knowledge of the bombings."

"The feeling I have is that the Presiding Bishop and others directly concerned at 815 have good and reasonable grounds to believe that the incarceration of the women is not church-related," Judge Byrns was quoted as saying.

"If it turns out that these ladies have been the greatest witness for the faith since Joan of Arc," he said, "then you can imagine the spot the top bishops will be in. I feel that they're just not going to do that stupid a thing."

Following Judge Carter's decision, Episcopalians now have to ask themselves whether the administration has, indeed, done "that stupid a thing." ■

CREDITS

Cover, Ben Grim; graphics pp. 10-11, Peg Averill/LNS

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this utterly inexplicable symbol and effector of strength.

I suppose to have believed and fought for an equal access to celebration for women as well as for men logically forced us to examine the right of access for lay Christian as well as for professional Christian to this task. By need and theological study, by experiment and by reflection, always cautious and sensitive about whether we were "giving offense" to certain of our members, we went ahead with lay celebrations.

Where do we go from here? Do we need to become active and recruit members as other churches have? Have we needed to exist only to support the community and spiritual brotherhood and sisterhood that arose during our support of the priesthood of those ordained in Philadelphia and all women? If or when most in that original group find communal support and direction elsewhere will we or should we disband? I honestly don't know — and trust I am not being too self-deceptive to report I don't worry. In the present I am finding our worshipping life together needful and sustaining — and I know it is supportive to others as well. Our corporate life has alternated between trying to define what we are and responding to particular needs; in this process, we continue to evolve and work out our mission. That might continue only for a short time or for many years — it will be as the Spirit wills it. ■

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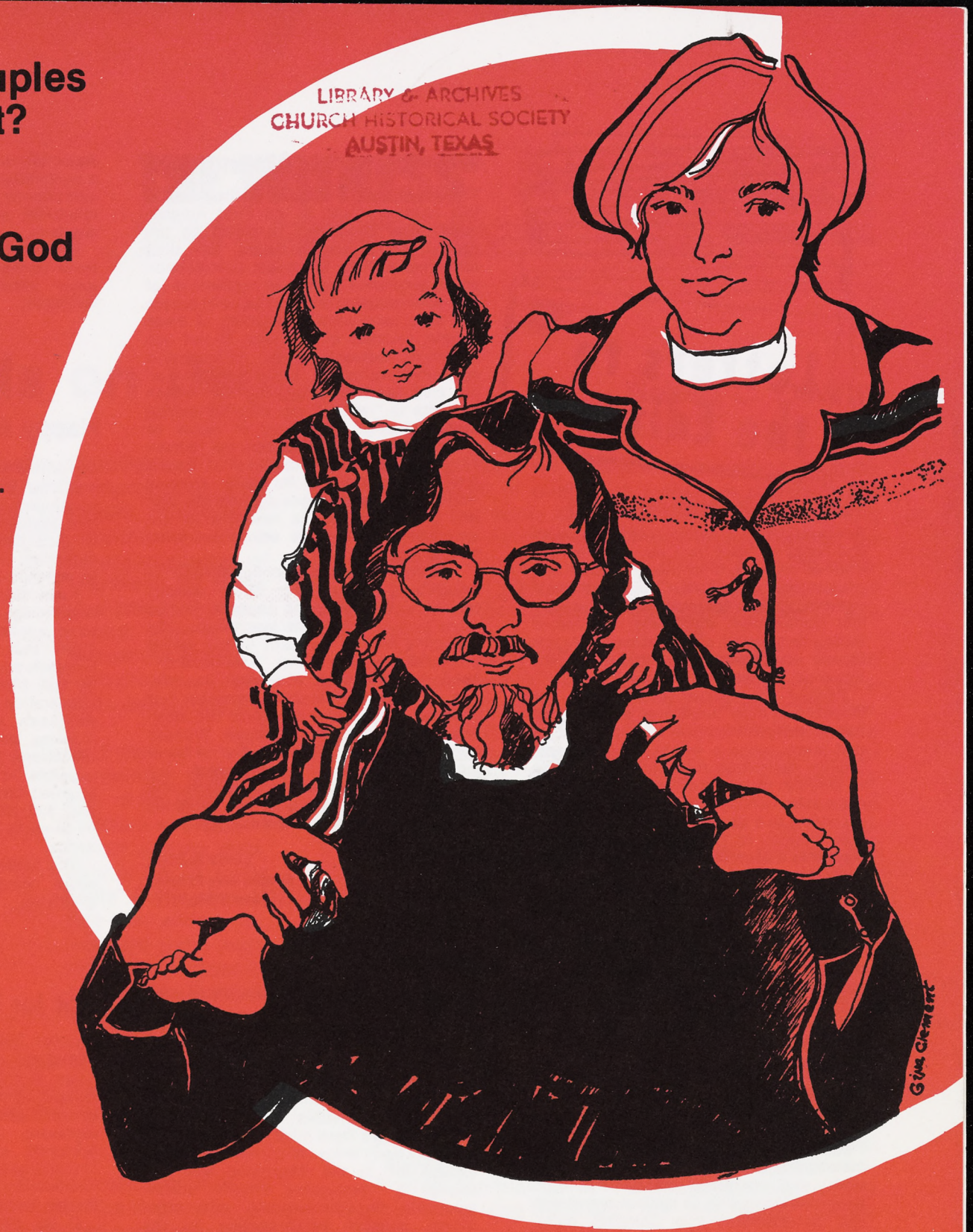

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THE WITNESS

APRIL, 1978
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Time for Recommitment

As we reflect on the release of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin from jail after ten and one-half months, it is clearly evident that various sectors of the Church are most deserving of our appreciation for the work and commitment which was manifested during this period of heightened struggle for our companeros in particular and the Hispanic community in general.

Despite the official position of the Church hierarchy since the beginning of this investigation, it became clear to us that many persons within the Episcopal Church recognized that Christ's teaching to minister to the poor and oppressed is not a tenet which is able to be modified according to a prevailing political climate. True mission to the poor and oppressed mandates a commitment which transforms one's personal comfort. Certainly Maria and Raisa have demonstrated this

Maria and Raisa's release is for us a time for rejoicing; however, beyond that, it is a time to re-commit ourselves to continuing our struggle against oppression and repression. Four people still remain in jail in New York. The likelihood of new Grand Juries being empaneled is a distinct possibility. The harrassment of the Puerto Rican and Mexicano/Chicano communities continues daily. We cannot allow Maria and Raisa's release to lull us into a false sense of security.

Finally, on behalf of all the companeros, I want to thank THE WITNESS staff, the members of the Church and Society Network, and countless others who have struggled along with us against repression and demonstrated true Christian ethic. Your past and future support is most meaningful to us.

Peggy Powell, Chairperson
New York Committee
Against Grand Jury Repression

Witness to 1st Amendment

You are indeed a witness to the faith. In this case, my faith in the First Amendment. Your consistent reporting on the cases of 10 people jailed for their affiliation with an Episcopal Commission which supported legitimate aspirations for self-determination among Hispanic people has been invaluable. The jailing of these people, accused of no crime, is but one important indicator of the political and economic repression which threatens all our civil liberties today. S. 1437, which purports to "reform" the criminal justice system makes a mockery of rights to assemble, speak and petition for redress of grievances. The withdrawal of federal funds for abortions for poor women, well-financed campaigns against the ERA and gay rights, and a reneging on the promises of affirmative action are other danger signals.

THE WITNESS is to be congratulated for recognizing these and other serious threats to the progress towards justice made by churches in the last decade. The magazine renews my faith in the values protected by the First Amendment—freedom of the press, of speech, association and religion. It is most important that churches, especially, recognize the interdependence of all these values. Without one, the others atrophy. And without increasing vigilance by the press, the church and the people, each freedom will be eroded separately until the religious and political dissenters meet in jail.

Linda Backiel
Grand Jury Project
New York, N.Y.

Magazine Is 'Silly'

Please stop sending me copies of your silly magazine.

I find my self out of sympathy with the a priori positions THE WITNESS takes on every important issue. That in itself would not necessarily disincline me toward it. Indeed, I enjoy reading cogent presentations by responsible persons holding views different from mine.

What I don't enjoy, and what there is no excuse for, is the disgusting way you engage in irresponsible rhetoric, unconscionable question-begging and other illogic, maudlin sentimentality (in the sense of G.K. Chesterton's phrase "the sentimentality of divorce"), "chronological snobbery" (thanks again, G.K.C.) and other grotesqueries too numerous to list.

The self-satisfied smugness and pontification one finds in your pages are especially unseemly and incongruous from a publication that dismisses tradition and authority as a matter of policy, wallows in relativism and glibly embraces nouveau anything.

Seldom have I ever seen a narrower, more uncharitable, more doctrinaire and more illiberal publication than THE WITNESS.

Jan P. Dennis
Naperville, Ill.

Happy Ending Noted

My article in the March issue describing the Urban Bishops' hearing in Birmingham concluded on a somber note. I reported that following the hearing the Diocesan Council had cut proposed funding for community and mission programs in order to increase diocesan salaries by 10%.

I am happy to report now that the Department of Church and Society was instrumental in a successful last-minute effort that restored some $30,000 to outreach programs in the budget adopted by the Diocesan Convention. With the cooperation of the bishop and a number of diocesan agency heads, the salary increase was cut back to 8% and other reductions in diocesan expenses made it possible to add $8,000 to community-oriented urban ministries in the diocese and $22,000 for the development of a multi-racial church school in Southwest Africa.

The battle still has not been won. But small successes along the way are gratifying.

William A. Yon
Chelsea, Ala.

Not for Bruce and Harry

Contra John M. Gessell (February WITNESS), the bishops did clarify the gay issue, in these terms. Practices such as fellatio, cunnilingus, and anal intercourse between persons of the same sex do not represent morally right behavior for followers of Jesus Christ under any circumstances, including a homosexual relationship of deep mutual affection and lasting fidelity.

If the Church ordains Bruce who is sharing Harry's bed, it is giving its official approval to such acts and the example they set.

Fr. Gessell and THE WITNESS still have to show where the Bible, church tradition,

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THE WITNESS

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All Hands on Deck

Robert L. DeWitt

In the mid-'40s a Presbyterian pamphlet was issued which pressed the parallel of the church to an army on the move in a strategic campaign. Speaking to the weakness of the church's commitment to its mission, the pamphlet cited the preoccupation of the church with its own internal harmony, its stress on parish calls by the clergy, the growing emphasis on the pastoral care of parishioners. Against this background, the pamphlet questioned the effectiveness of an army whose officers were *chiefly* engaged not in leading the campaign, but in comforting the troops.

That pamphlet was issued over a generation ago. Today many would find the military analogy distasteful. Despite the venerability of the term "the church militant," the glamour of warfare where it did exist has fortunately palled for most people. And, amongst those alive to the ministry of the laity, the allusion to clergy as the "officer elite" in the army of Christ is apt to raise more hackles than allegiance.

Another vivid analogy was suggested some years ago by Bishop Emrich of Detroit, who frequently likened the church to an automobile manufacturer whose building-and-grounds department gained more and more prestige in the life of the company and secured an increasingly large share of the budget, so that the company finally came to pride itself more on its shrubbery than on its production of automobiles.

The suggestion of the Presbyterian pamphlet is that the army would lose the war. The implication of Bishop Emrich's analogy is that the company would soon become bankrupt, and go out of business. The meaning of both parables is this: What happens to a church which is deaf to its call to mission, which loses a sense of its central purpose?

But perhaps we need a new metaphor, because "no amount of oughtness makes an is-ness." The church too easily moralizes, appealing in vain to a nobility of sacrifice which has little attraction for people. Those who feel they already have too many problems of their own are not apt to have the moral energy to be concerned about the problems and needs of others.

We need an image for the mission of the church which expresses the mutuality and interdependence of the people who make up the human enterprise. For example, the analogy of a ship which has sprung a leak speaks more clearly to our times and to our circumstance. To whom is the leak a matter of concern, when all are in the same boat? In the same vein, scripture makes it clear that there is a community of interest amongst all people. The individual who gives for others is helping him or herself. The person who "loses" his or her life shall find it. God's concern is with the whole human enterprise, God's family.

But what clues do we have that God's purposes for the human family will not end in disaster, that they will indeed come to fulfilment? There is, in the message of Easter, a promise of hope in the divine intent to redeem the human enterprise. Not without arrest, not without trial, nor indeed without crucifixion. Yes, surely we have seen God's purposes for human society apparently stalled-out, "arrested." We have seen those purposes confronted, "on trial" before the powers and practices of this world. And the death, the "crucifixion," of the innocent, the helpless, the poor, the wretched of the earth, have been witnessed in our time as in no other. But Easter persists in its message of hope. "Nevertheless," it insists, "God's purpose for the human family shall prevail." ■

The Enigmatic God

by Carter Heyward

We are told that upon completion of "The Hallelujah Chorus," Handel fell to his knees, beside himself, overwhelmed because he had seen God — and the *beauty,* the *power,* the *majesty* of God were extraordinary.

Elie Wiesel, incarcerated in a concentration camp during World War II, tells of having watched a young boy his own age (about 10) being hanged by the Nazi soldiers. As the boy writhed in agony, refusing to give in to the rope, one of the witnesses asked another, "Where is God?" The response was silence. The boy continued to struggle and the man asked again, "Where is God?" Still, silence. Finally, as the boy succumbed, the man asked again, "Where is God?" And his fellow prisoner replied, "God is there. Hanging on the gallows." Wiesel speaks of the *utterly helpless* God.

What of this God, this terrible good, this holy terror, this Father, Son, and Holy Spirit Trinity? This Mother Goddess giving us birth and taking us back again into her womb the earth? This God of many faces, to whom has been ascribed many names? *Who is our God?* I ask believing, to quote one of my students, that "God does not mechanically answer our questions, but rather moves us to ask them." And unless we encounter God honestly — probing, seeking, risking offense — we do not encounter God at all.

In the beginning, long before there was any idea of "God," something stirred. In that cosmic moment pulsating in possibility, God breathed into space, and groaning in passion and pain and hope, gave birth to creation. We cannot remember this easily, for we cannot easily bear to remember the pain and the hope of our own beginning. But it was good.

It was far better than we can imagine. For coming forth from God — in God, with God, by God — (as were all created things) we were shaped by God, in God's own image, formed in the being of God, daughters and sons of God. We are living reflections of and witnesses to God's own possibility. It was very, very good. For being human meant being *with* God. (To be *without* God would be not to be at all.)

James Weldon Johnson suggests that God created us because God was *lonely*. Various "process" theologians suggest that God created us because God needed us to help God continue to become. It may be that God created us simply because it is the nature of God to create, or that God created us because God, having begun to "come to life" Godself, realized that the only way to experience life would be to share it.

And so we were created in God's own being, to move with God, in God, by God, into the passion and the pain and the wonder of creation.

Long after the dawn of creation, a small group of people in the Middle East began to speak to one another of God. Other people believed that there were many Gods: Gods of rain, of sun, of war, of fertility, vying for supremacy. The people of Israel believed, however, that there is in fact one God who is the creator of all and who has created us in God's own image.

Furthermore, the people of Israel heard God promise them that God was with them on the earth, empowering them to do what it is in the being of God to do: To *LOVE,* to reach out to one another and to creation itself, aware of the worth and value of every created person and thing. God showed the people of Israel that God was/is not a far-distant God, spinning holy wheels off high in the sky, but rather passionately involved in creation, history, and human activity.

Long before Jesus, God made Godself known as One immersed in the affairs of being human. Human history was, in fact, sacred history, the story of God's own being moving in creation itself.

The Rev. Carter Heyward, Assistant Professor of Theology at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, is currently on sabbatical at Union Theological Seminary. The above is excerpted from a sermon she preached recently at Duke University Chapel.

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The people of Israel wanted to know more about this God in whose being they were bound up. So Moses spoke to God and asked God what, he, Moses, was to tell the people God's name was. (For the Israelites, there was much in a name; a name was a revelation of a person's true character.)

And God responded. God did not give a long list of credentials or a speech about power, authority, and might. God did not "spell things out," but responded simply, "I AM WHO I AM" (or, in other translations, "I AM WHAT I AM," or "I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE.")

God could hardly have given a more enigmatic reply, the sort that would be totally unacceptable to most of us, to admissions committees, teachers, or psychiatrists. We would be likely to hear "I am who I am" (in response to "Who are you?") as outrageous, impudent, defiant, disturbed. Certainly evasive. God *was* evasive. Moses could not pin God down. Approaching God in fear and tremor, seeking clarification, we are met with a riddle. *I am who I am.*

What about God is God saying?

Could it be that God is *not* being evasive, but clear, straight-forward and to the point? And that the point is that God *is*, in fact, evasive, elusive, not One to be pinned down, boxed into categories and expectations! God will be what God will be:

God will hang on the gallows.
God will inspire, fill, overwhelm Handel with power and splendor.
God will be battered as a wife, a child, a nigger, a faggot.
God will judge with righteousness, justice, mercy those who batter, burn, sneer, discriminate, or harbor prejudice.
God will have a mastectomy.
God will experience the wonder of giving birth.
God will be handicapped.
God will run the marathon.
God will win.
God will lose.
God will be down and out, suffering, dying.
God will be bursting free, coming to life, for
God will be who God will be.

If this is so, then God is suggesting to the people of Israel and to us that the very minute we think we "have" God, God will surprise us. As we search in fire and earthquaking, God will be in the still small voice. As we listen in silent meditation, God will be shouting protests on the street. God is warning us that we had best not try to find our security in any well-defined concept or category of what is "Godly" — for the minute we believe we're into God, God is off again and calling us forth into some unknown place.

God is saying something prickly to any of us who believe that our way is God's way — hence the only way. God is alerting us to the fact that God's own growth and movement will not be stunted by our low tolerance for ambiguity and change. God will not be confined to our expectations of who God "ought" to be.

And God surely knows that most of us cannot bear much God. When God says, "I AM WHO I AM," our characteristic response is one of utter denial. We do not easily hear what God is saying. Instead, we opt for the creation of our own idol, one in which we can believe; a god-idol who, as Sister Corita Kent said, is "like a Big Bayer aspirin: Take a little God, and you'll feel better."

But, what if:

In seeking to feel better, we are avoiding God's moving us toward growth?

In seeking God always as light, we are missing God as darkness?

In avoiding change, are we missing God's plea for us to move into the wonder of some unknown possibility?

In perceiving God as our Father, we are refusing to be nurtured at the breast of God our Mother?

In seeing God only in our own colors, shapes, styles, and ways of life, we are blinded to God's presence in others' colors, forms, and ways of being?

In looking for God in the magnanimous, that which is great, we are overlooking God in the most unremarkable places of our own lives?

In running from death, in trying to hold onto life, we are utterly missing the presence and power of God in aging, in letting go, in dying itself, in moving graciously along with God?

In perceiving God always in that which is sacred, holy otherworldly, religious, we are failing to see God in the secular, this world, the office, the home, the classroom, our day-to-day relationships, work and play?

What if, in seeking God always in the Bible, we are missing God in the newspaper?

What if simply to be with God, live with God, know God, love God is enough — in living and in dying?

Might it be that being human is simply *being with God* — and seeking, and finding, God's presence in all reality?

That being alive is both a terror and a wonder, an adventure in living and dying — all with God, in God, in

which terror and death do not lose their sting — but are experienced graciously.

The people of Israel had to struggle with this enigma. Their expectations of a Messiah who was to save the nation, beat down the enemies, rout out the wicked, suggests also Israel's needs, and ours, for a God we can count on to bring us light, life, and victory. I AM WHO I AM is hard to bear.

And Jesus Christ did not come to clarify the enigmatic God, to help us put God into an incarnate box that we can carry around and show off as "God." Jesus did not come to reveal God's power, God's might, God's victory. Rather, Jesus came as one created in God, by God, empowered to move with God, into the pain, the passion, and the wonder of creation itself. Jesus accepted the vocation of being truly human, in the image of an enigmatic God.

In Jesus, we are able to discern a person in whose human being God was made manifest, and a God in whose holy Be-ing human life was lived fully. "Christ" is that way of being in which God and humanity, the creator and the created, the infinite and the finite, are experienced and manifest as One way of being.

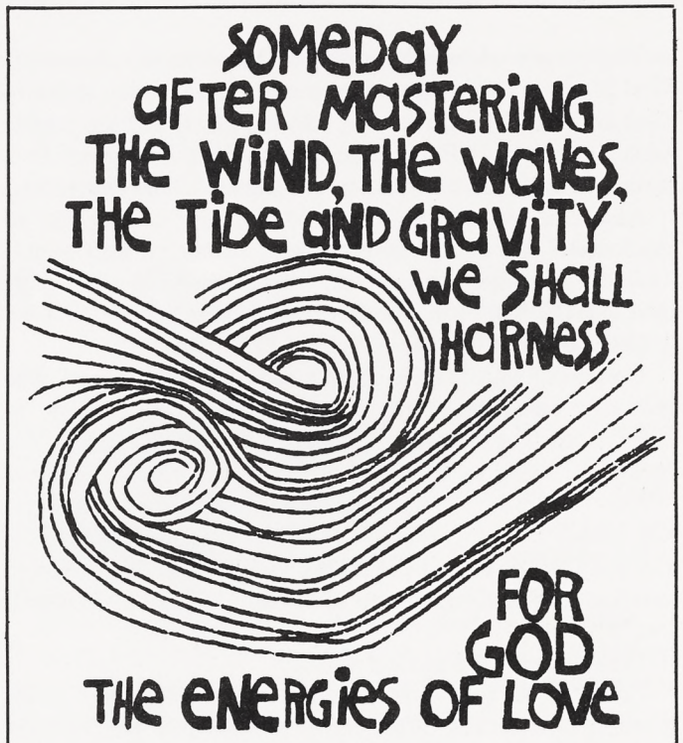
Jesus Christ lived and died to show us what being human is all about. In Jesus, we see what it means to be a daughter or a son of God, to bear God's name; in Jesus, we perceive that being human, in the image of I AM WHO I AM, means simply that *we are who we are!*

As God's namesake, Jesus was who he was, free of all expectations and categories, defiant of any expectation that would stunt his growth as a person of God.

Jesus lived and died allowing himself, by God's grace, the freedom to be himself, regardless of customs, laws, and expectations that he be some other.

The people who wished him to be a political zealot found him to be a person of prayerful spirituality; those who wanted him to be a pious, sweet man discovered they had on their hands an offensive activist. To those who wanted him to be Messiah, he retorted, "Get thee behind me, Satan." And in the presence of those who wanted him to explain himself, he stood silently. The enigmatic God reflected in enigmatic personhood.

When I probe the depths of Jesus Christ, I realize that as Jesus was who he was, so too am I put here by God to be who I am. Jesus could not be who I am. I cannot be who Jesus was. My vocation as a person of God is not to imitate Jesus — not to try to recreate the being of a person who lived in a different world, in a different time, with different life-experiences and possibilities. My vocation as a person of God is to live with God, in God, for God, in my own time, as graciously as I can.



. . . and then for the second time in history the human race will have discovered fire.
— Teilhard de Chardin

Our business, our birthrights and our beings are in God here now. As such, with individual interests and persuasions, we are together in One Christ: a way of being in which God's Being and human being are experienced as one.

There are four qualities which, I believe are ways of being I AM WHO I AM. No one of the four can stand alone. They are overlapping pieces of a whole cloth, the tapestry of creation itself: Wisdom, Passion, Justice, and Prayer.

• **Wisdom.** Wisdom is a virtue close to the heart of God, we are told in Scripture. Wisdom is the perception of the wholeness of all that is. The wise person, like God, knows that there is more to life than her/his own little world; that there is more to living than pursuing happiness. The wise person will face reality, ambiguity and tension. She/he is able to live into, not flee from, matters of life and death.

Moreover, she will do everything she can to deal creatively, realistically, empathetically, with conviction, in her everyday comings and goings. She is no fool. She is, in the words of St. Matthew, "as wise as a serpent, as innocent as a dove," aware that she is, God with her, put in this

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world, here, now, to participate fully in the affairs of this world — loving this world as God does — and using everything at her disposal to work cleverly, carefully, wisely for the good of the whole.

• **Passion.** As wisdom allows us to perceive the breadth of God and of creation, the wholeness of it all, so passion allows us to discern the depth. To be passionately committed, passionately involved, passionately immersed in God, in life itself, is to be involved and immersed in enigma. To experience one's own dying as the boy hangs on the gallows, to realize one's own shortcomings and capacities for wrong-doings when Nixon resigns, to realize the extent to which living involves dying, and to know that to the extent that we are afraid to die, we are afraid to live! In passion, we find our resources, our energy, our courage, our motivation, a way of being human as Jesus was human. In passion, we are aware that we are infused by the Spirit of God. (This is what birth is all about, what creation is, and what baptism signifies.) We are created as Spirited people — holy spirited people.

Immersed in passion, we are aware that the Book of Common Prayer (even the new one!) misses the point when it says, "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again." In fact, *Christ is dying, Christ is rising, Christ is here again!* And the wise passionate person will know that Christ has as much to do with the secular arenas of our lives as the sacred; as much to do with the profane as with the holy; as much to do with the sexual, the political, the social, as with the spiritual. The passionate person who is wise will realize that God is just as present in the kitchen, the classroom, the hospital, the prison, the bed, as in church. The passionate person is one who can cut through to the heart of the matter whatever the occasion, and discover God.

• **Justice.** Suppose Jesus' friends had advised him to speak only of God and to stay out of religious and secular politics. Suppose they had warned him not to offend people. What do you suppose he'd have said? The Bible as a whole speaks of justice as "right-relationship" between and among people. Justice presupposes community as fundamental to human life with God. In justice, there is no such thing as a person living simply for him/herself. I am suspect of anyone who tells me she or he has "found the Lord," or been "converted to Christ," or is "committed to Jesus" if that person is not passionately committed to justice for *all* people . . . black, yellow, red, white; poor, rich; straight, gay; sophisticated, simple; well-educated, poorly-educated; sick, healthy; male and female.

Some years ago, yearning for justice, I was saddened and angered by White governors blocking the doors to schools and universities to prevent Black people from entering. Today, although the racial crisis in this country is far from resolved, other issues cry out for justice. And I am fired up by, and compelled to call to account, state legislators who willingly put their own re-election, economic interests, and their own insecurities above clearly and simply affirming that "equality of rights under law shall not be denied or abridged by the United Stated or by any state on account of sex." I do not believe that a person who is truly aware of his/her birthright and responsibility to be with God in on-going creation, can sit back silently in this world. I believe we are compelled and empowered to risk whatever we must risk to create with God, a climate in which *all* people can be who they are. It is a matter of doing justice, of standing up to be counted, a stand infused by the passion of the Holy Spirit; informed by wise perception of the wholeness, the breadth, the interdependence of the issues at hand; and empowered by prayer.

• **Prayer.** The Gospel that speaks most explicitly about social activism, Luke, is also the Gospel in which Jesus is most often portrayed at prayer. Prayer is the opening up of oneself to the presence and power of God, perceiving what is invisible to the eye and hearing what is inaudible to the ear.

Without prayer, passion may become restless, manic activity. Without prayer, wisdom is empty and becomes "intellectualizing," spinning conceptual wheels to no particular end. (Without prayer, for example, theology may talk *about* God, but cannot draw us further *into* God.) Without prayer, justice is doomed to disillusionment, because we are unable to see beyond what the eye can see, and all we see is injustice. This terror may lead us eventually to rage, to futile outcry, to apathy; to feelings of helplessness, violence, or suicide. With prayer, we hear and see that something is happening, stirring, moving, coming forth out of the awful pains and groans of labor and travail. Something is being born again and again wherever there is any justice, any wisdom, any passion. And, in prayer, we know well that this something is God — in us, with us, for us, carrying us along.

In the beginning of all that is coming into being, something is stirring, pulsating with possibility. The Spirit of God is breathing forth. Groaning in painful hope, God is giving us new birth, bringing us into ways of being who we are, empowering us to live our lives. God is drawing us into the terror and the wonder of being human, of finding God in ourselves and in the world, and, in the words of the poet Ntozake Shange, of "loving God fiercely." It is a way of being in which all our laughter is at the heart of God, and all our tears are streams of living water. In the name of God, I AM WHO I AM. Amen. ■

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Anglican-Orthodox Dispute

What Price Unity?

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This has been the century of ecumenical discussions, and of some achievements. One stubborn exception has been the failure of rapprochement amongst the three largest "catholic" bodies — the Roman Catholics, the Eastern Orthodox and the Anglicans — the last of which includes the Episcopal Church.

These three are usually grouped as the Catholic branches of Christendom because of their retention of the historic orders of the ministry (bishops, priests and deacons), and their claim to origins which go back to the beginning of the Christian era. Rome is historically the heart of Roman Catholicism, Constantinople of Eastern Orthodoxy, and Canterbury of Anglicanism.

The mutual excommunication of each other by Constantinople and Rome took place in the 10th century, and Canterbury separated from Rome in the 16th century. Constantinople and Canterbury have had an ambiguous relationship, so different in culture, yet often recognizing the validity of each others' orders.

After centuries of separation, the Anglican and Orthodox churches officially opened dialogue in 1931. Interrupted by World War II, the conversations resumed in 1973 in Oxford. Concurrently, an American Orthodox and Episcopal dialogue was taking place. It was in this group that the Orthodox members made public their objections to the ordination of women.

Their first reason was that "the clear understanding of women in Scripture and Tradition excludes headship in the Church or family and hence the priesthood as well. Christians are called upon to oppose those current trends which tend to make men and women interchangeable in their roles and functions and thus lead to the dehumanization of life . . ." It was also stated that ". . . it is evident that if the Anglican Communion takes (this) decisive action the issue will involve not only a point of church discipline, but the basis of the Christian faith as expressed in the Church's ministries. It will obviously have a decisively negative effect on the issue of the recognition of Anglican orders and on the future of Anglican-Orthodox dialogue in general, and will call for a major reassessment of the quality and goals of dialogue between the two bodies . . ."

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CATHOLIC BODIES OF CHRISTIANITY
(1977)

In the United States	
Anglican	**2,857,513**
Eastern Orthodox	**4,176,000**
Roman Catholic	**48,881,872**
World-wide	
Anglican	**45,000,000**
Eastern Orthodox	**84,803,200**
Roman Catholic	**542,531,000**

When Presiding Bishop John M. Allin met with Orthodox leaders in the summer of 1977, he summed up the actions of the Episcopal Church in having authorized the ordination of women by saying: "The Episcopal Church found no progress was being made by argument. So permission was given by our General Convention to test by experience that which could not be settled by argument. It was an effort to proceed in faith. It does not suggest that the Episcopal Church is correct and that other churches are wrong." His statement to the Florida interim meeting of the House of Bishops, "I remain unconvinced that women can be priests", further added to the impression that the Episcopal Church had a very tentative position on this issue.

It was against this background that the convention of the Diocese of Washington, meeting in late January, strongly endorsed the following resolution which was introduced by the Standing Committee of the diocese, and ordered to be sent to all members of the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission, as well as to all Episcopal bishops, Standing Committee, and members of Executive Council:

> *This Convention affirms the 1976 decision of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church to ordain women to the priesthood and episcopate as an important and prophetic decision in Christ's one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church; and*
>
> *This Convention prays that the decisions made by the Episcopal Church and other branches of the Anglican Communion to ordain women, will soon be embraced by all branches of the catholic Church.*

In this Anglican-Orthodox controversy the ecumenical movement seems to be hampered by the difficulties involved in balancing the relative claims of the biblical mandate for unity in the church with the biblical demand for justice in the treatment of persons. ■

Me, a Bishop? No Thanks . . .

In the Episcopal Church it is customary for a diocese facing the election of a new bishop to secure a nominating committee which presents a list of nominees to the electing convention. This task requires considerable screening, and the persons suggested for the bishopric are usually asked if they are willing to have their names considered. THE WITNESS recently obtained a copy of a letter written by a priest who was not willing. It appears below. At his request, his name is withheld, as is the name of the diocese.

Dear Sir,

I received your letter notifying me that my name has been submitted as a potential nominee for Bishop of _____. I feel deeply honored that this has happened to me — it is an interesting and moving feeling.

I do not feel that my particular gifts would find their best and most creative outlet in my being a bishop of the Church; and therefore I must with much respect decline to permit my name being placed in nomination. In a nutshell, I would say both by my temperament and my experience in the Church, that within the priestly-pastoral-prophetic tension present within the ordained ministry, I would come down distinctly on the prophetic side; and that the office of bishop deals more (although not at all exclusively) with the priestly-pastoral side of that tension.

The very fact of your letter and accompanying questionnaire and forms, has, however, had the effect of causing me to reflect for the first time at a little depth what it is that I might wish any diocese to be concerned about. Thus, for what it might be worth, I offer these few reflections — perhaps myself most benefitting from the discipline of setting them down!

As the broad background of the Church's mission in the last quarter of the 20th century, I would sketch the steady receding of the premise that America is best understood as a Christian nation. Instead, coming into ever greater prominence in both the world and America are a pluralism of beliefs and cultures, and an increasing cry by impoverished peoples for life, justice and the simple recognition of one's basic humanity.

I believe that this growing pluralism and this growing demand, far from being threatening, may in fact be the welcoming movement of the God of history in our time.

The response of our Church, I believe, must be to welcome this movement, understand it as God's Spirit, and seek to live within it and proclaim it.

For a diocese, I see this response as meaning a dual emphasis of strengthening our Christian identity, and of involving ourselves locally, nationally and internationally with the great human, social and political issues of the day.

The Christian identity quest calls us to rediscover the richness, depth, and variety of our Christian tradition, from the Old Testament right on through the exemplary Christian communities of light, power, and human concern to the present day. I see this as needing massive and innovative Christian education efforts. New definitions of the work and mission of the whole people of God — laity and clergy alike — need to be carved out.

The involvement of our churches will call us to broaden sharply the race and class strata within the Episcopal Church, and to begin to understand the relationship of our economic, political and educational institutions to the great justice issues in the world and in America. There is no better place for parishes to begin this process of learning and involvement than to reach out and understand the community around them.

This must be beginning to sound like a sermon — and for that I apologize. But I believe that a diocese in this day must resist the temptation to retreat into a simplistic ecclesiastical comfort (as many of our dioceses and, alas, of our bishops seem to be doing), and instead have the courage to lead — to face controversial issues while not alienating its people. The health of a diocese will, I feel, be demonstrated by a willingness both to act and to create discussion on the vital issues that concern us today.

I found both your profile and your questionnaire addressing some of these concerns in a lively way. Through them come a feeling that there is some of that health in the diocese.

I wish you success in this endeavor, both of sharpening your vision of what you ought to be as a Christian community, and in choosing a bishop.

Thank you again for the honor you have given me.

Very sincerely yours,
(Name Withheld)

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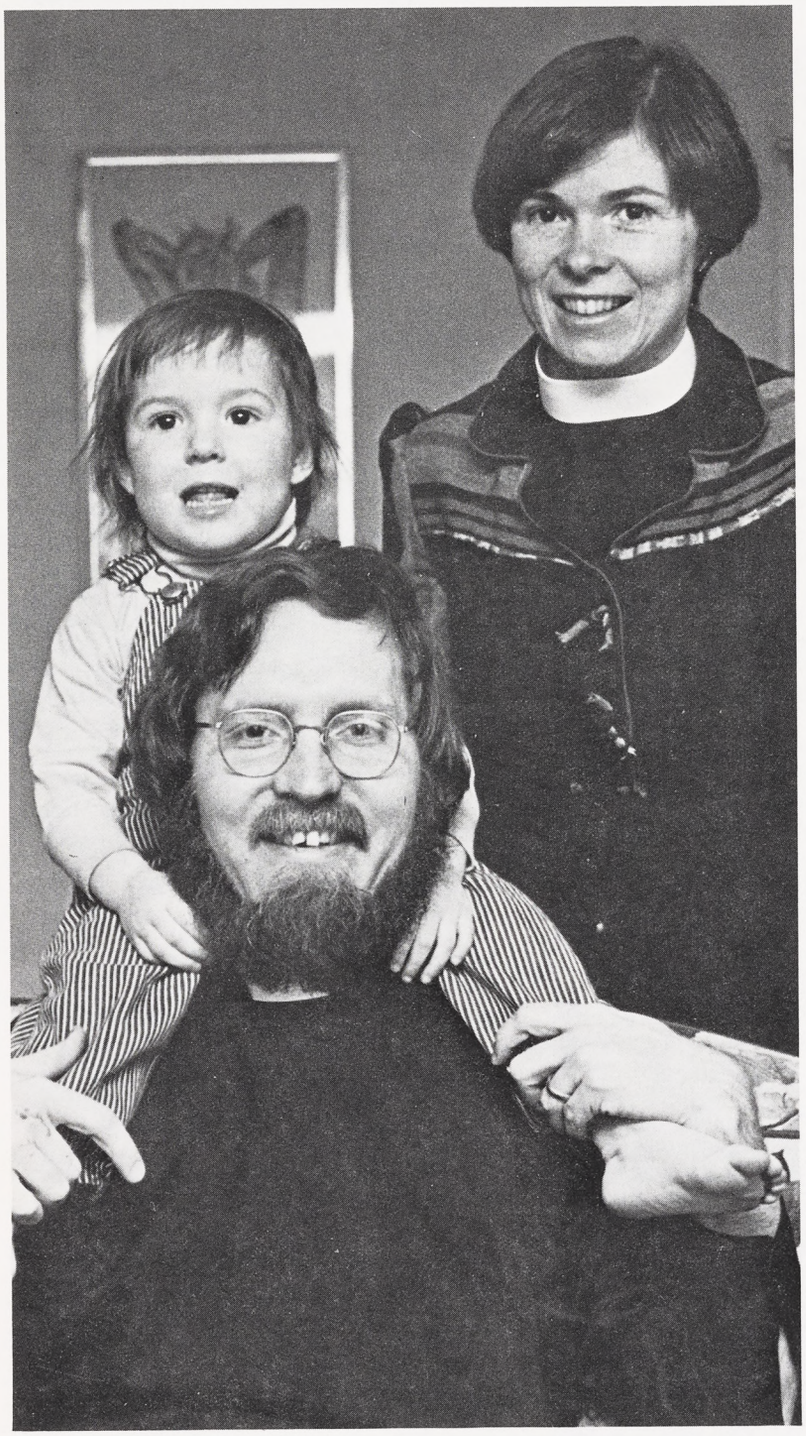

Mel and Barbara Schlachter with daughter, Erika

Can Clergy Couples M

Barbara and Mel Schlachter see themselves as pioneers. They and 40 other clergy couples — Episcopal priests who are married to each other — are struggling to understand and to identify their roles in the Church, a structure that was not designed to accommodate them.

Without previous generations of clergy couples to guide them, they are in what Mel calls "a groping process."

"Whom do we look to as mentors to help deepen our questions about a clergy couple's role in Church life and practice, both as individuals and as a couple?"

For the Schlachters, who were married in 1968, the questions have deepened and the answers have appeared day by day—from a team ministry in Yonkers, N.Y., five years ago to their present position in White Plains, N.Y. Currently, Barbara is assistant to the rector at St. Bartholomew's Church, and Mel is Assistant Director of Sound Counseling Center, specializing in Transactional Analysis counseling.

Mel and Barbara say they were "naive" when in late 1971, as they anticipated graduation from Union Theological Seminary they decided to give team ministry a try. It "seemed like a really neat idea."

From September, 1972 to August, 1973, they tested the idea as team assistants in the Yonkers parish — "an inner-city church that had died and was reborn" — and got a taste of what a clergy couple's life can be like.

"It was a bad year," says Barbara. "We were re-adjusting to the real world. The parish was different from what was described to us. The rector gave us little guidance and support. He had this image that we were ganging up on him right from the start. He said I wasn't feminine and nurturing enough (I still don't know what that means!).

"And the people just naturally turned to Mel because they understood a man working in the parish, but not a woman."

They performed typical assistant's duties — visitations, and organization of youth and community activities. Mel set up a food co-op and assisted the rector on Sundays. Barbara also helped lead worship and worked part-time in a local children's home.

Lockwood Hoehl is a free lance writer and photographer who lives in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

es Make a Go of It?

by Lockwood Hoehl

"There was also the built-in difficulty of our having unequal status in the Church," Mel adds. "During the year, I was deacon, then priest; Barbara was 'nothing,' then became deacon."

They learned the importance of continuously sharing with each other — talking over the day's events and their reactions to them. Without that, Barbara believes, they wouldn't have survived the year.

Their conversations helped them handle conflict with the rector. They averted competition that otherwise would have occurred by talking about the members' favoring Mel. And, the discussions revealed that parish members made assumptions about them that they have experienced again since leaving Yonkers.

"People mistakenly assume that clergy couples are of a single mind. We can have our differences too," Mel says. "They assume that by talking to one they are also talking to the other. Or, when one of us speaks that he or she speaks for the other. It can really get out of hand unless you keep the other person informed."

Open communication among clergy couples is as important as sharing between partners. It has become a substitute in the absence of older role models to guide them. Most of the couples are about the same age as the Schlachters (early 30's) and have about equal experience in the Church, although their ministries vary widely.

The couples have been through the defeat and subsequent approval of women's ordination. They have based their marriages and families on equality, rather than on the traditional husband-as-breadwinner, wife-as-homemaker-and-mother model. And they have experienced both hostility and acceptance in all levels of the Church.

Since the approval of women's ordination in 1976, inequality based on rank no longer exists. But some clergy couples have found that equal status does not guarantee parishioners will not play favorites.

"Although ordination makes a couple equal," Barbara says, "other factors that make either the man or the women more attractive, such as individual style and personality enter the picture."

She thinks, therefore, that a couple serving in the same parish is more likely to break up, and cites a study of United

Barbara and Mel concelebrating

Church of Christ clergy couples that showed the highest divorce rate was among those who shared a church.

Mel and Barbara know of only one couple working — successfully — in the same church. The others have either one or both spouses in ministries outside of parishes.

What about each partner serving a different parish? Barbara says this option is the least desirable for most couples. Parishes want their priests' spouses involved in their activities, particularly during holidays. And it's likely their schedules would not allow sufficient time for children and each other. The Schlachters think it can be done, but only with "a heavy price to pay" — probably at home.

"Who's going to care for the kid, and when?" Mel asks. "Just finding that answer takes a whole lot of energy!"

Barbara and Mel are determined to give their own daughter (2½ year-old Erika) the attention she deserves. But it's work, and takes planning and coordination.

Fortunately, their schedules are flexible. Barbara works in the mornings and most afternoons. Mel has many mornings free because he has evening appointments with clients who work all day. Erika goes to the office with Barbara one morning, and spends about 20 hours a week

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with a grandmotherly baby-sitter and another clergy couple's child.

About two-thirds of the 40 clergy couples have children (ages range from six months to 15 years) and the rest are planning to have them.

"Because we share housework and responsibility for Erika, we don't have as many hours in the day for our jobs," Barbara says. "There are just too many needs to meet, including our own personal ones."

She cannot devote 60 hours a week to her job as many other assistants do. As a result, Barbara thinks she will not get ahead as quickly as others.

"Because of our give-and-take relationships," Mel adds, "clergy couples are not going to go up the ladder with the usual speed."

Usually, male priests advance through Church hierarchy by gaining key, high-visibility positions, and they have their wives' active support. The Schlachters think this route is closed to clergy couples.

"We're not going to get the breaks from above. We're not considered safe to be placed in high Church positions where we can be seen. And we're not going to trample on our spouses to make the breaks from within. We will all probably have marginal careers in terms of upward mobility."

But, advancement through Church structure does not motivate them now. Instead, they are concerned with the quality of their present ministries and with finding clergy couples' special niche in the Church.

"When Mel and I celebrate the Eucharist together," Barbara says, "there is an image of wholeness at the altar. It's a symbolic and visible equality. The old business of how a man shall dominate his wife according to St. Paul is thrown up for grabs."

Barbara says clergy couples have "a real pastoral ministry" to other couples, including male clergy and their wives, as more women seek occupations outside the home.

Mel and Barbara think clergy couples' ministry is to help other couples find answers as their new relationships develop, not to serve as examples for what the relationships should be.

"Other couples," Barbara adds, "can learn from what clergy couples' stories tell about openness to each other, and about willingness to share and to give the other person some grace."

The Schlacters' and all clergy couples' stories relate the problems and benefits of a new way to approach marriage, family, and careers. They are stories about opening a path for others to follow.

And that's what being pioneers is all about. ■

Hearing the Hurting

by Robert L. DeWitt

"Bishop, this sounds like rhetoric. Are you bishops going to *do* anything about the issue?"

A member of the press was addressing Bishop John Walker of Washington at a press conference in Minneapolis at the 1976 General Convention of the Episcopal Church. On behalf of a group of some 18 urban bishops, Bishop Walker had just read a release which said, in part: *"We are calling upon the Church . . . to renew, deepen and expand its commitment to the city and the metropolitan environment. We are asking the Church to make this urban focus — where two thirds of Americans live and work — the primary domestic priority in the years ahead."*

The press conference was occasioned by the growing fiscal and human crisis in many major cities across the land, and by the consideration being given by the 1976 General Convention to Venture in Mission, a proposal to raise $100 million to undergird the Church's mission.

"The Urban Bishops' Coalition," as the original 18 bishops called themselves, has now expanded to 58 bishops from all sections of the country who have determined to stay in association with each other. Bishop Walker has been designated chairman of the group, and Bishop John Burt of Ohio serves as vice-chairman and treasurer. The bishops have raised, from various sources, some $70,000 to finance their projects.

Two action programs have resulted thus far. The first is a series of institutes on public policy, to provide a resource for the leadership of the Church to witness for the Gospel in the many-sided realm of public policy questions affecting human welfare in general and the life of the cities in particular. The second is a series of public hearings on the urban mission of the Church.

The hearings, now completed, were held in Chicago, Newark, Birmingham, Colon (Panama), Seattle, and Washington, D.C. A hearing on national urban issues was held in Washington as well.

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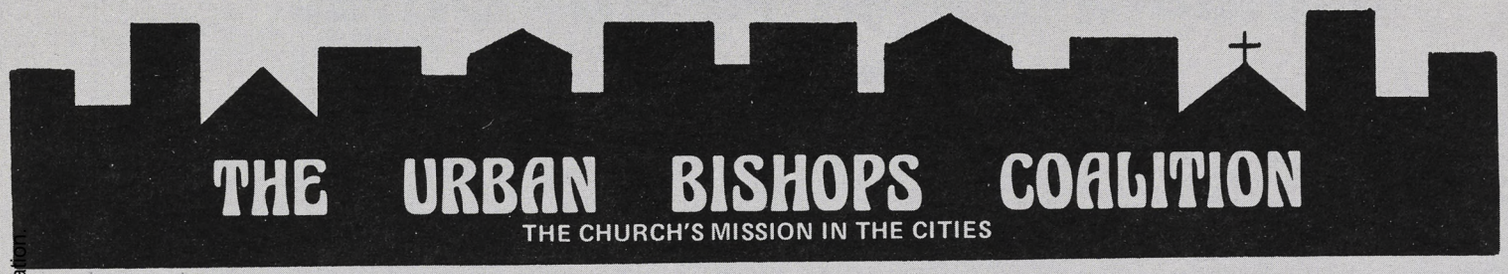

THE URBAN BISHOPS COALITION

THE CHURCH'S MISSION IN THE CITIES

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Some 20 of the urban bishops served as panelists, together with a number of men and women who were urban specialists. The Rev. Hugh C. White served as project director, assisted by the Rev. Edward Rodman and Byron Rushing.

The Chicago, Newark and Birmingham hearings were reported, respectively, in the January, February and March issues of THE WITNESS. The other four, though widely scattered geographically, tended to underscore the issues already encountered in the earlier ones.

For example, the pressures on family life were spoken to by a number of testifiers in Colon, Panama, as at hearings in the United States. A 17-year-old girl testified: "How can you expect a child that grew up with an aunt or grandmother who really didn't know or try to learn anything about him to be healthy, bright or ambitious? Why would he be, if all he has seen is that he really doesn't belong anywhere and that he is alone?" A young law student at that same hearing, speaking to the problem of poverty, asserted that "Stealing food is not caused by delinquency, but by hunger."

A man testifying for the Urban League in Seattle gave some stunning statistics on discrimination, and then pressed the question of the causes of such social ills as racism.

Housing was perhaps the most frequently cited urban problem in all of the hearings. In Washington, D.C., the president of the D.C. City Council asserted bitterly that "Housing went to war in World War II, and never came back." A demographer in Washington pointed out that the church is programmed to deal primarily with family units, yet 57% of the adults in Washington are single. A young man testifying for a local group in Washington cited an advertisement placed in a gay publication by a gay atheists' organization which read: "Gay men and women: If you feel organized religion is your greatest enemy, we want to hear from you."

Mattie Hopkins of Chicago stated at the national hearing that "In America, if you deal with the race problem, you *ipso facto* are dealing with the class problem." And another testifier, speaking to the impact of the media, said, "TV and the other media enable us to look *in* on others without having to look *out* for them."

Surprisingly, there was little "hustling" — requests for funding — at the hearings. Instead, the dominant theme that ran throughout was a cry of anguish, and a plea for involvement on the part of the church. "People are hurting." This was already known, in a way; but now a group of bishops have listened to personal testimony about it in representative cities across the country, and beyond.

Will that make a difference?

As THE WITNESS went to press, the bishops were gathered in Chicago to deliberate on a summary of the testimony, and to weigh possible actions. As of this writing, three advances, at least, can be listed. First, each of the bishops who hosted the hearings now has a summary report which provides a number of action proposals for his own local programming. Second, indications are that a number of other dioceses — Massachusetts, Florida and Pennsylvania, for example — may conduct hearings of their own to focus their urban problems. Third, it seems likely that both Venture in Mission and the next General Convention in Denver in 1979 will feel the repercussions of these public hearings.

But will all of this really add up to more than "rhetoric?" That question, asked by the press a year and a half ago, will now be asked insistently by hundreds of people who were asked for their testimony on the urban mission of the church, and gave it. ■

Ultimate Threat to Our Cities

by Samuel H. Day, Jr.

The former editor of ***The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*** *tells urban bishops at the Washington national hearings why* ***all*** *testimony heard to date is but "a mild foretaste of the death and destruction which may yet be visited on the cities." Same Day is now editor of THE PROGRESSIVE magazine.*

Your hearings have produced compelling evidence of deterioration, despair and suffering. You have heard testimony about the decay of neighborhoods, about the plight of poor people, old people, handicapped, Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans and others. Distressing as this situation is, it is still but a mild foretaste of the death and destruction which may yet be visited on the cities of this and other countries.

The destructive capacity of the modern weaponry amassed by this country and its supposed adversaries literally defies imagination. And therein lies an ingredient of our problem. We have lost the capacity to grasp the consequences of our military and industrial policies. Let me try for a moment to re-kindle your imagination.

The biggest conventional bomb that fell in World War II — the blockbuster — had the explosive power of 10 tons of TNT. The first atomic bomb — the one that demolished Hiroshima — had the power of 13-*thousand* tons of TNT. Today's thermonuclear bombs — like the ones undoubtedly targeted on Washington, Chicago, Moscow and Leningrad — have the power of 24-*million* tons of TNT.

What would a 24-megaton hydrogen bomb do to the District of Columbia? The building in which we are sitting would be literally vaporized if the bomb fell anywhere within two miles. Not a single person in the city of Washington would survive more than a few minutes — no matter how deep his or her underground shelter.

Multiply those effects by 50 to 60 thousand, which is the approximate number of nuclear warheads in the world, and you have some idea of the current state of the human capacity for self-destruction. And the problem deepens year by year. The number of weapons grows larger. Laboratories produce unending refinements designed to make nuclear war more manageable, more thinkable and therefore more likely. A current example, by no means the only one, is the neutron bomb, a weapon which would all but erase the fast-fading distinction between conventional and nuclear war.

At the same time, the world moves closer to the brink of a new industrial era which would also enhance the danger of our nuclear destruction. Well aware of the physical and economic limitations of the present generation of nuclear power reactors, industrial countries are preparing the way for development of a new technology carrying unimaginable risks. The breeder reactor — fueled by the very same substance which produces atomic bombs — would put the fate of the world in the hands of an ever growing number of countries, organizations and people capable of acquiring plutonium fuel and fashioning it into nuclear weapons.

The neutron bomb and the breeder reactor are the technological symbols of our passage into an abyss wholly without precedent in human history. In a very short time — perhaps a few years at most — there may be no turning back. It may already be too late to save ourselves without the object lesson of a few million deaths through accidental or intended nuclear violence. Indeed, civilization might be fortunate to escape so cheaply.

Aside from the general risk in which cities share equally with other human settlements, what does all this have to do specifically with the problems of cities and the Church's mission in the cities? There are at least two links.

(1) Nuclear weaponry, in which the United States far surpasses all other nations, is but one symptom of a disease, which, if it does not kill us instantly, will debilitate us eventually. The ever-increasing military budgets (now approaching $125 billion) are feeding the fires of inflation and unemployment, diverting our scientific and engineering talents, sucking the life out of desperately needed domestic programs. The principal victims of this are our cities. We scratch for nickels for the cities while squandering dollars on the military.

2) Nuclear power, in addition to posing a host of environmental and social problems, is precisely the wrong way to go in addressing the energy needs of society, especially at the municipal level. Today's monstrous 1,000-megawatt, 1-billion-dollar power generators are the symbols and instruments of our increasing dependence on monolithic, remote, centrally generated energy distribution systems. Our emphasis should be on just the opposite; on conservation rather than waste of energy and on decentralized, more manageable, smaller scale plants typified by the many forms of solar energy technology. We scratch for nickels for simple energy systems that will liberate our neighborhoods, while we squander dollars on gargantuan ones that will perpetuate their bondage.

What can the Church do about all this in its mission in the cities? The answer is not to be found in special studies or programs or anything else that is likely to cost much money. It is mainly a question of deciding whether the dangers to which I have alluded (and for which there is virtually endless documentation) are matters on which the Urban Bishops Coalition, or the Church itself, has anything to say.

If your reflections lead you to believe, as I do, that our national preoccupation with military security and technological infallibility is urgently in need of re-assessment; that this re-assessment may be a prerequisite to amelioration of the human condition not only in the cities but throughout the land; that policies which countenance the use or threat, for whatever reason, of weapons of mass destruction are bad in themselves as well as bad for the cities; that neither the nation nor its cities can afford any longer to bleed themselves or risk their very existence on the altar of ideological fantasies; and that we have an obligation not just to the cities of this country but to all cities, and not just to the cities of today but to the cities of tomorrow as well, then I urge you to say so with such moral and spiritual force as you command.

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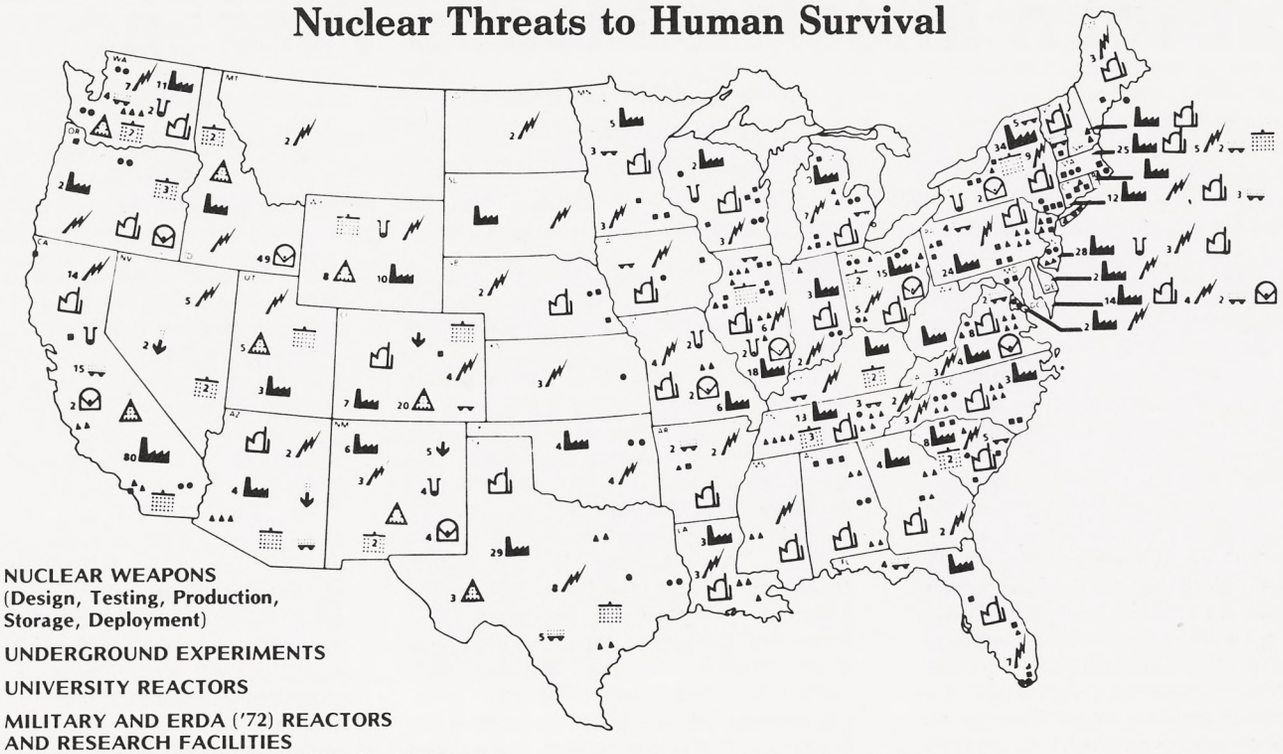
Nuclear Threats to Human Survival



NUCLEAR WEAPONS
(Design, Testing, Production, Storage, Deployment)

UNDERGROUND EXPERIMENTS

UNIVERSITY REACTORS

MILITARY AND ERDA ('72) REACTORS AND RESEARCH FACILITIES
Accounting for 50% (appr.) of All Radioactive Waste

NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS (Commercial)
Accounting for 50% (appr.) of all Radioactive Waste

- UNDER CONSTRUCTION
- OPERABLE
- PLANNED

NUCLEAR INDUSTRIES

URANIUM MILL TAILINGS

TRANSPORTATION/STORAGE OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS

RADIOACTIVE WASTE BURIAL GROUNDS

Every state in the union houses nuclear reactors, nuclear weapons, or both. There are nearly 100 nuclear power plants, 15,000 nuclear weapons and scores of research reactors, radioactive waste dumps, uranium mining, milling and refining facilities and contaminated test areas. Every site represents an ongoing threat to human life by generating uncontrollable, lethal wastes that remain radioactive for thousands of years. (Clergy and Laity Concerned. See other credits page 19.)

And I urge you, in spreading the alarm, to look around and see for yourselves that the flames which now threaten to engulf us have not suddenly and inexplicably materialized out of thin air. They are part of a general conflagration which long has been eating at our social fabric.

The atomic bomb, symbol of the technological absolute in modern weaponry, is merely another form by which some exercise political domination over others. The breeder reactor, symbol of the technological absolute in modern industrial power, is merely another form by which some — and by and large it is the same ones — hold economic sway over others. Science and technology have merely brought to final and suicidal fruition the means by which political and economic power are wielded in the industrial world.

There is no way we can suppress the scientific and technical knowledge that has now given mankind the means of its own destruction. But surely the realization that the capability exists, and that it steadily grows more likely to be used, should impel us toward a reordering of the means by which political and economic power are exercised. In this country, which is the seat of so much concentrated power, this translates very clearly in my judgment into the radical transformation of an economic system which concentrates power in the hands of a relatively few.

We must reclaim our strength and purpose as a people from those who have appropriated it for the pursuit of narrow private, institutional and professional interests; we must shake off the opiates of militarism, racism, sexism, and imperialism by which those narrow interests have enslaved us; we must free ourselves from political and economic bondage as a people in much the same way as our individually oppressed groups have begun to do; we must begin to take action — vociferous and sustained action in the real political world — to insure that our purpose here on earth will continue to be life, not death. ■

Urban Mission Means Presence

by Gibson Winter

A professor of Christianity and Society from Princeton Theological Seminary testifies at the urban hearings that parish life as we have known it is "historically and practically untenable" today. "The working class and middle class family structure which sustained this style of parish is disappearing."

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These hearings come none too soon. They come as a sign of hope after almost a decade of apathy. We can only trust that this may mark a turning point.

I shall concentrate my brief remarks on the character of the urban mission, but it is important to indicate the broader context of urbanization within which such a mission may develop. There is considerable diversity of opinion with regard to the urban prospect. My own view is that we are not facing a *crisis* in the sense that we are dealing with an immediate problem which can be resolved through sufficient effort.

I believe we are dealing with a *degenerative disease* that is approaching a critical stage. This disease can no longer be confined to urban areas. It will destroy our whole society if it continues. It has already wreaked havoc on every level of urban life. It has eroded communities, educational institutions, citizenship and religious life. Through most of Western history the cities were the centers of religious life. The inversion of this process should give us some warning of what is in store. We may be seeing the end of a 5,000-year period of experimentation with urbanism. In any case, this degenerative disease is touching every phase of our national life and corrupting societies all across the globe.

To say this is a degenerative disease suggests that crisis measures will be of little help. We are dealing with fundamental structures and values of the society—structures which we can only change through generations of effort. There is, of course, a place for dealing with immediate sufferings and needs, but such measures should not be mistaken for an urban program. We shall have to decentralize this mass urbanization into competent communities of work, education and political responsibility. This cannot be done through national programs, though it can be undergirded by proper legislation and funding. It means challenging the organization of work, restructuring the relation between communities and habitat, and rethinking the organization of political competence. It means regaining control over our lives and communities. In this process the churches could be an essential factor.

It seems paradoxical to speak of the churches as crucial factors in the reconstitution of our urbanized society. We know that these institutions themselves are being wiped out by this degenerative disease. These hearings on "The Church's Mission in the Cities" developed in part because that mission is foundering. Nevertheless, our religious institutions have the potential for engaging in a long-term struggle if they can recognize their vocation and be liberated from institutional prejudices.

I assume we would not be here if the Urban Coalition believed that the work of the Church is to extend its power and institutions in the affluent sectors of the society, abandoning the poor and oppressed to their fate. Christianity has a twofold peculiarity as a faith tradition which makes the path of power ambiguous at best. Christianity is an historical faith, arising in and through historical actions of divine disclosure and grace, culminating in the person of Jesus as the Christ. A disembodied or detached Christianity is just as unbelievable as a Christ who avoided the agonies of the flesh. Further, the Hebrew Scriptures and Christian testimony locate the divine love in the struggles and sufferings of the oppressed. A Christianity for which these struggles are peripheral is simply apostate. Assuming we heed this call as a Church, what would urban mission mean?

Urban mission means first, and possibly last, *being present* in the urban struggle. Whatever the outcome of these generations of agony, this is our place as a caring and celebrating community of faith. This calls for a commitment to forge a sustainable ministry and life of worship in different sectors of urban life. This is not to overlook the important work being done by other Christian traditions. However, their creative efforts give us no license for flight. Christian presence is an ecumenical calling, cherishing the gifts of the Spirit within distinctive traditions.

Several prejudices in our institutional life have to be faced before we can forge a sustainable ministry in this struggle. The equation of a style of parish life, as we have known it, with the witnessing church is historically and practically untenable.

The working-class and middle-class family structure which sustained this style of parish is disappearing. More and more women engage in work away from home out of necessity and/or personal desire. I do not believe we have begun to conceive what "parish" would mean in this new urban scene. Moreover, this style of parish assumed a rector ministering to a particular congregation, making annual reports, baptizing, preparing for confirmation, marrying and burying. This assumption may have to be reconsidered. We are probably looking toward communal ministries of priestly and lay fellowships. All of this can be kept in order provided we acknowledge that our individualized view of ministry is not viable in the urban struggle.

A bishop with clergy and lay people may well be a more workable unit of ministry. Moreover, we need ecumenical networks of such communities of presence and celebration. Isolation of ministries is part of the urban pathology. Commitment to a sustainable ministry can liberate us from some of these inhibiting prejudices.

Urban mission also means bringing to light what the destructive forces conceal. Bishop Martin in one of the hearings spoke of our "throw-away society." We are also a society of *concealment* which tries to make suffering invisible. The agonies of urbanization are hidden behind the buttresses of overpasses and in the attics of gray areas. Death in a hospital bed, behind a white screen, out of sight—this is the way a technological society deals with its defeats. Hide what we cannot conquer!

Urban mission means a witnessing to the truth, removing the sanitary screen,

exposing the disease to the light. Such disclosure comes only from a ministry of loving involvement, a ministry inquiring into the forces that wreak this havoc among us. Western peoples have dreamed for over a century that economic and technological growth would erase all evil and suffering. We now know that the very system that was to erase these evils is a source of even greater evil. Urban mission means uncovering and interpreting these realities.

Much that I have said implies a kind of despair over the future of our cities and society. I would be dishonest with you if I suggested that we can look hopefully to an arrest or healing of this degenerative disease in the body politic. But this gives urban mission no mandate to become a passive onlooker in the degradation of young and old, minority populations and destitute people. A sustainable ministry of presence and interpretation also involves *advocacy*, sharing with the oppressed in their protest against evil.

A transformation of our urban condition, if it comes, means a release of the competence and powers of people. Mission is not a substitute for this empowerment. It means enabling and citizenship. Advocacy is "standing with" such protest. There is a place in our tradition for celebrating even amidst the defeat of such protests; there is also a place for victories. I do not prejudge the future of our advocacy. There may be some victories, but we merely ape the manipulative society if we enter the struggle as a triumphant church. We are on a pilgrimage, not a crusade.

How we begin to implement an urban mission is hard to say. My only wisdom on this, little as it is, comes from our experience with the Urban Training Center for Christian Mission in Chicago. We could benefit from such centers if they were organized on local and regional levels, developing along ecumenical lines and forging networks of ministry in and through our religious institutions.

I oppose any programs that will increase the numbers of middle-class experts and enforce further dependency upon local communities; nevertheless, we need to mobilize our networks of presence, further the understanding of our situation among lay people and pastors, mobilize our advocacy in the midst of these struggles. I do not propose this as another gimmick to substitute for ministry and witness. If an institute of urban mission can lend focus to our local ministries, it may be useful. Without such ministries, an institute becomes one more alienating agency.

A criterion we can apply to any instrument of urban mission was by Gustavo Gutierrez at the end of his remarks to us in Detroit at the "Theology in the Americas" Conference. He proposed that the religious question of our time is not one of academic theology but the practical question of the credibility of the love of God in our suffering world. When we speak of urban mission, I believe we are talking about that credibility, about a witness to the love of God. ■

Continued from page 2

and Jesus himself sanction or commend any extramarital genital expression of that mutuality which properly should develop between brothers and sisters in Christ.

The Rev. David R. King
Elizabeth, N.J.

May Stir to Leadership

Dr. Charles Willie's talk to the seminarians was excellent. I hope that every bishop will receive a copy.

In these distressing times when they are wavering, such an input might stir them to leadership.

The Rev. Robert S. Lambert
Jacksonville, Fla.

Cherishes Obedience

I am writing to take issue with Dr. Charles Willie's understanding of obedience ("When to Resist Authority," December WITNESS). When I was in seminary I too would have given a standing ovation to a church leader who suggested that I should be the conscience of my superiors. What a thrilling mission, certainly more noble than subjecting myself to some ancient concept of discipline which has shaped their ministry. I didn't know then what I know now — that ministry to this broken world requires great personal and spiritual discipline.

The principle of obedience is cherished in the church and I try to obey my superiors as they did theirs, as we all do our Father in heaven. I commend to you the words of St. Francis: "The kindness of God has granted me this grace that I would obey a novice of one hour, if he were given me as my guardian, as carefully as I would obey the oldest and most discreet person. A subject should not consider the man in his superior, but Him for whose sake he is a subject."

If the church is not responsive to social issues, it is not because the church deprives us of our freedom, but because in our freedom we have not chosen Christ's way. Obedience to him is the most loving thing I can do. Obedience to his ministers, given as my superiors, is an act of love. I challenge Dr. Willie that the requirement of obedience and the requirements of love are incompatible. St. Francis discovered that they are in fact inseparable.

The Rev. Ralph W. Pitman
Columbia, Pa.

Good Reading

One of the most enjoyable parts of my Christmas celebration 1977 came with the December issue of THE WITNESS. "To the Unknown God," "When to Resist Authority," "Catholic Woman Finds New Way to Affirm Ministry" — good thinking, good writing, good reading! Thank you.

Dr. Willie presents a crisp brief against our malingering faith. But I cannot agree with his definition that "the essential role of the professional religious practitioner is to help individuals to help others." And yet I am confident his blunt assertion gave many, like myself, occasion for long pause and self-examination.

In my opinion as a distant but veteran observer of Bob DeWitt's journeys and encounters, "To the Unknown God" comes as the clearest, most direct statement of his theology.

The Rev. Bert Mahan
Rochester, N.Y.

Thanks for Willie

The December 1977 issue and the essay by Charles V. Willie, "When to Resist Authority" is outstanding. It is by far the best article I've ever read on this subject. His position on the "professional religious practitioner" is succinctly stated. In this time of a stated over-supply of ordained clergy, we find few who have the training to function and minister in the style Professor Willie advocates. May I say, "Right on!"

Jane Oglesby
Indianapolis, Ind.

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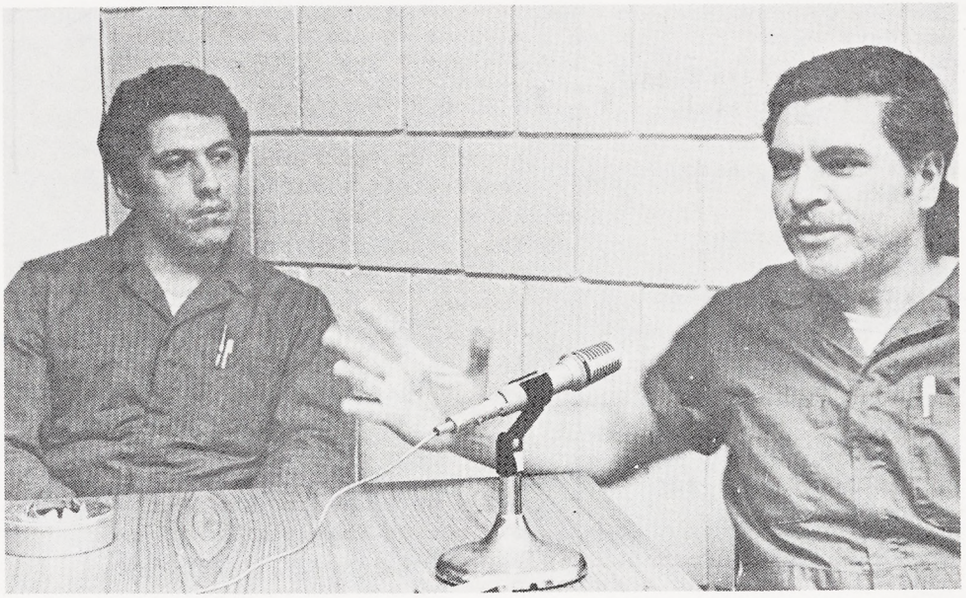
Hispanics Find Unity in Jail

"Being in jail has in effect brought us together. And now it is unthinkable for us to talk about organizing the Puerto Rican people without thinking of organizing the Chicanos-Mexicanos. And it's unthinkable for the Chicanos-Mexicanos to think about organizing . . . without the Puerto Rican people. We now begin to see ourselves no longer as the Puerto Rican people on the East Coast, but as the Spanish-speaking people in the United States — from California to New York and from the South and Texas all the way up to Wisconsin in the North."

— Julio Rosado, Feb. 17, 1978, in prison



Pedro Archuleta, left, and Julio Rosado during an interview in prison in New York

NEW YORK (LNS) Nestled deep in the concrete heart of downtown Manhattan stands the Metropolitan Correction Center where approximately 530 prisoners await transfers, either to other prisons, or to freedom.

Four of those prisoners — Pedro Archuleta, and three brothers, Julio, Andres and Luis Rosado — share the tedium all MCC "residents" have in common. But unlike the other inmates, they have not been indicted on any criminal charges, but were jailed for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury.

Grand Juries in Chicago and New York were convened to investigate a series of bombings for which an organization called the Armed Forces of National Liberation of Puerto Rico (FALN) has claimed responsibility. But supporters of Puerto Rican independence and of the Chicano-Mexicano movement charge that the government is using the Grand Jury to suppress these movements by jailing and intimidating members.

"We haven't been convicted of any crimes," Luis Rosado told Liberation News Service in the jail where he has been locked up since August. "The fact that we're in jail is supposed to force us to talk."

Luis, his brother Julio, and Pedro Archuleta (in fact, all of the activists imprisoned by the Grand Jury with the exception of Andres Rosado) were all members of or connected to the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

"Obviously the FBI was saying that the Commission was an FALN front, which has been proven to be a farce," Luis continued. "Carlos Alberto Torres, the person that they're looking for, was a member of the Commission for about 10 months. Alfredo Lopez, who they're also looking for, was a member of the Commission about two years ago.

"So they began to make a connection where the connection didn't exist. And they began to focus on the Commission. They went on a nation-wide investigation which is still going on."

Although Luis had worked for the Hispanic Commission, he was no longer connected with it when he was called before the Grand Jury. He had started working for the National Council of Churches, where he had been given an office to develop the Grand Jury Education Project. "My task was to mobilize the church people in support of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin and against the Grand Juries."

Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, director and secretary, respectively, of the Hispanic Commission, were jailed in March of 1977 for refusing to testify before the New York grand jury. They were released 10 months later, after a judge ruled that there was no legal basis for holding them any longer.]

Church support eroded as the pressure of the investigation intensified, Luis said. The Grand Jury Education Project was terminated in April of 1977, only three months after it had begun. Luis was subpoenaed to appear before the Grand Jury in August.

Andres Rosado is the only one of the four who was never associated with the Hispanic Commission. "I was working as a family counselor; I was active in 1968-69, especially with the students at City College and the East Harlem community," Andres said. "But after that, the flame of the sixties started to die. Therefore, I started to pull away. I started to work. I started to maintain a family. I did not become active in any political organization, any movement.

"I had been subpoenaed about August of last year to appear before the Grand Jury. Because I wasn't that active politically, it was difficult to understand what the Grand Jury was — how it operated, how it worked.

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"I think that the subpoena opened a whole new chapter for me," Andres continued. "It allowed me to see much clearer how the Grand Jury is used as a repressive instrument."

Pedro Archuleta, a Chicano activist from Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico was first subpoenaed to appear before the Chicago Grand Jury in December, 1976.

Archuleta was finally released on a legal motion from Chicago in mid-January of this year — only to be brought to jail in New York.

Why was Archuleta singled out? "Because I am considered an activist in the community who has been involved in the land struggle for years," is his explanation. (See story in December WITNESS re Pedro and La Cooperacion del Pueblo).

"My father was a farmer and taught me how to drive a tractor and irrigate and make a living off the land. Yet I couldn't — because it takes a big portion of land for one family to make a living. And I didn't even have an acre of land to my name. It made me think, 'Why? This is land that belongs to the Spanish-speaking people. How come all these rich people are in power?' "

Like Luis, Andres and Julio, Pedro also feels that the Grand Jury investigation that has taken him away from his family and community for so long has more to do with repressing an active Chicano movement than investigating the FALN.

"It's not just that they were investigating the church. You really have to look at the whole situation of the Chicano people in the Southwest.

"The whole fight is to get the land back so we can feed and take care of our people. Where I come from in Tierra Amarilla, they haven't been able to tap yet the oil resources there. That's what they want in Puerto Rico, too — the oil, minerals and riches from under the ground. So Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, we're in the same situation."

Julio Rosado believes that Grand Jury investigations came at a time of growing strength of the movement for Puerto Rican independence — both in Puerto Rico and in the United States. What threatens the U.S. government is "the ability of the Puerto Rican independence movement to reach out" and rally support, and also "because it represents a potential base of possibly 20 million Spanish-speaking people in the U.S."

"Spanish-speaking people have these common bonds, both culturally as well as economically," he explains. "We're all in the same bind."

Pedro agreed: "Whether you're from Puerto Rico, Colombia, Dominicana, the system sees you as a greaser, as a Mexican, as a wetback. We've got to be proud of what we are — that we're a people who have always struggled for what we believe in and will not forget."

Jail has not been easy. At the time of our interview, Luis, the youngest of the Rosados, was still on the maximum security floor after being released from solitary confinement for a charge on which a hearing later found him innocent. But after the hearing he was not returned to the floor with his brothers and Pedro.

"They've always been trying to split us up. They've done it before," Luis said. "In this case, it's very important to us because we were hoping to go to court soon on a Grumbles motion to see if the court would release us. We discuss the legal arguments together and if we're separated, we can't ."

"At one point," Julio recounted, "when we were on the ninth [maximum security] floor, some of the Spanish-speaking inmates who spoke no English at all were being taken advantage of by the administration. The work wasn't being shared equally among the inmates, but was being piled up on the Spanish-speaking. We began to speak out for them.

"We also began to hold open assemblies, right on the floor, in which things were decided very democratically. We did it with drug pushers, illegal aliens, bank robbers — all mixed in together.

"In smaller groups we rapped about their own problems and how they got into this situation, how the system through its media and other types of communications created these fantastic desires in many of us. Not only to escape poverty but to become wealthy, to live the good life.

"And so people who may have come from fundamentally hardworking families suddenly found they wanted to make quick money and they turned to drugs, and they turned to other forms of what everybody correctly understands as criminal activities. So you wind up in jail for attempting to become wealthy, just as you wind up in jail for political activities."

In spite of the hardships and daily frustrations they share with other inmates, the four insist that their term in jail should not be regarded as a tragedy.

"As far as going to jail, it was a big decision. Maria and Raisa had a lot to do with my making a decision, because they were strong," said Pedro. "And also the five Puerto Rican nationalists. Looking at them, after them being 23 years in jail and the sacrifice that they have made for their country, the love for the land, that helped me a lot too. So I just had to make up my mind that going to jail wasn't a bad thing. I've learned a lot from it."

Julio Rosado feels that the government, in jailing them, "has done more to bring us together than any equivalent experience on the outside."

Pedro agrees. "I feel that the federal government doing this has done work that would have taken us years to do. The government would have been better off leaving us at home and not bothering with us.

"We got a lot of support, we got to meet a lot of people. And the Puerto Rican movement as well as the Mexicano movement in Chicago were brought together. And when the government put me in jail in New York Puerto Ricans found out about the Chicano land problem in the southwest. It has brought us together, not only here in the states but in Puerto Rico as well." ■

POSSESSION

He enters
Shuffling, slouched, slurred speech,
Crumpling like some sculptured frame
not yet dry enough to hold substantive clay.
Frail, transparent, slowed down automaton
Stoned not by Jerusalem's crowd
but by his own internal demons.
I break with all his brokenness
My hand so light upon his head —
first felt in ecstasy of birthing
That touch . . . Christ's love . . . my cross.

Katrina Carter

CREDITS

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Gays in the Church Speak for Themselves

- **ellen barrett**
- **malcolm boyd**
- **ron wesner**
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THE WITNESS

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Catholics for Women's Ordination:

Confronting the Roman Patriarchy

by Georgia Fuller

Urban Poor to Bishops:
'Be Our Advocate'

Bishops to Urban Poor:
'Are You Our People?'

Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action:

Why the Church 'Waffles'

by Juan Luis Segundo

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Stringfellow 'Marvelous'

After reading Bill Stringfellow's marvelous piece, "The Embarrassment of Being Episcopalian" in the February WITNESS, I know what it is to be typewriter-tied; to be unable to articulate the embarrassment, to use his term, which for me has been anger.

The anger is not assuaged when I realize that those who perpetrate the callous attitude towards women and those of us who believe in freedom and liberation as found in the Gospel will neither read his words, nor be moved by words already written by many others.

The Presiding Bishop and those members of the House who are conscience-striken about women priests will continue to seek after dissidents and neglect the loyal Episcopalians who have hung in, and those who are loyal wear many labels.

One wonders what happened to the idea of the Church existing by mission as fire exists by burning. I fear that we'll continue to be so caught up in one group creating ways to put another group down that we'll neglect our very reason for being, the proclamation of the Gospel.

The Presiding Bishop should issue a public apology to the women of Christendom for his remarks, to the women and men who have been offended by his desire to retain "leadership" and deny the canon of the Church.

The Rev. William B. Gray
New York, N.Y.

Breaks 5 Year Silence

After reading William Stringfellow's "The Embarrassment of Being Episcopalian," I decided to break a five year silence. I was a lay deputy to Louisville in '73, and have not felt the same about the organized Church since. I *know* how long it took the House of Bishops to agree on John Allin to be the new Presiding Bishop. I was an alternate to Minneapolis, and while I was very pleased with the passage of Woman's Ordination, I was disquieted, because I have known how draconian the Church can be.

The absolute nadir was the 1977 meeting of the House of Bishops, where collegiality reigned supreme and an inability to deal with human sexuality was a disgrace.

Lately, a new concern has surfaced. What is it about Southern leaders who yield absolute power regionally, are able politicians, but when they reach the National level, equivocate and appear powerless and out of their depth? In this case I am not talking only of our P.B., but also our President. This is not a comment based on Southern prejudice; I lived in the South for 10 years, and hold it in my fondest memories.

Has *Future Shock* set in that these men cannot cope effectively out of their milleau, or has the *Peter Principle* set in?

I have no answers, only questions. I was an ardent supporter of Bishop John Hines. No leadership after such greatness has left me and the Church bereft.

I am very confused and hurt by my Church. I am just hanging in the wings for something positive to happen. V.I.M. is not it. The interim period is intolerable. I feel like a carpenter with a hammer and a saw, but no nails or boards with which to build.

Jane Boyer Parker
Lebanon, Pa.

Embarrassed at Article

My first issue of THE WITNESS just came to my door. The discussions in it on abortion and homosexuality were a breath of fresh air. It's helpful to me to know that quoting old statements from the past does not close off theological discussion.

I, however, was embarrassed to read of author Stringfellow's embarrassment. I'm sorry that he is embarrassed but I wonder if charges of aggrandizement and intimidation will help others to feel at ease? As an attorney, might he not have limited his discussion to procedure and left personalities out of it?

Does a bishop make a Church or does its historical liturgy? Which helps more to sustain life lived as a Christian? Today we are celebrating the life of George Herbert. According to the ATR, scholars are finding he was a man who lived the Christian life well. And we can't say he was exactly in with the polls. Might someone write of his life and how he managed to sustain himself inspite of the System of his day? After all, Jacques Ellul has entitled our time a time of abandonment and attributes some of that to putting too much faith in our institutions.

Also, if I might, I as a school teacher would like to have someone take up the problems presented by education in the public schools today. Those who speak of the right to life and then do not appear at PTA meetings or contribute to the superintendent's task forces on various aspects of education make me wonder what they expect of that life.

Douglas H. Schewe
Madison, Wisc.

For Weeping Together

"To Weep Over Jerusalem," in the February Issue of THE WITNESS, unwittingly illustrates the fragmentation that is destroying the Episcopal Church today.

The plight of our cities and the Church's ministry to them is long overdue as a priority in our common life. That task demands the very best efforts we can muster. Of the human resources notably engaged in urban life and ministry upon whom the Church can call, most are lay persons and clergy. Why then should the Urban Bishops' Coalition presume "to devise new and effective strategies for the Church in its urban mission"? And can Bishop DeWitt suggest for those who care about ministry to the cities nothing more demanding than providing "diocesan moral support if they (the bishops) are not to despair of their task"?

The fiasco of the House of Bishops meeting at Port St. Lucie grew out of the splendid isolation in which that body sought to deliberate for the entire Episcopal Church. Now we witness the Urban Bishops' Coalition, with the best of intentions, presumptuously treading that same path to the accompaniment of heroic rhetoric in THE WITNESS. Surely there *is* cause for weeping over Jerusalem. When we can weep over it as bishops, clergy, and lay persons *together*, perhaps we will be ready to respond to the city's needs.

The Rev. James R. Moodey
Philadelphia, Pa.

Mobilization May 25-27

I have wanted to write many times about how helpful THE WITNESS, the articles and your editorials have been to me on many issues involving the social responsibility of the Church.

Are you aware of the Mobilization for Survival on May 25-27 in conjunction with the special United Nations Session on

Continued on page 19

THE WITNESS

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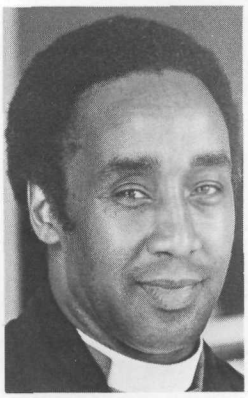

Bishop Walker

John T. Walker, Bishop of Washington and Chairman of the Urban Bishops Coalition, gave the opening address at the recent conference in Chicago during which the bishops deliberated on public hearings they had sponsored on the urban crisis. They voted to make his statement their own communication to the Church. THE WITNESS is pleased to publish this excerpt as a guest editorial.

Jesus was Serious

I am a city man. Bred in the city in poverty. Educated in the city, working in and for the city, knowledgeable of the city and how many of its systems work. *I live and move and have my being in the city!* Yet, to hear the testimony of so many "broken victims" and those working in their behalf, and to be in their presence, as I was in three of our seven hearings, is to experience each time as for the very first time the shock and disgust over the reality of the human suffering which is experienced day in and day out by people in our cities.

For example I learned something of the extent of deprivation and starvation in my own See city—the Nation's capital. One of the testifiers was the director of a hunger education project. She explained that one way of studying malnutrition is to look at infant mortality rates. In Washington, infant mortality averages about 26 out of every 1,000 births which is the same rate as Taiwan. In the affluent area west of Rock Creek Park in Washington, the rate is 8 per 1,000, which is the same as Sweden's, the best in the world. However, in three inner city areas and Anacostia, where our heaviest concentration of urban poor resides, the rate rises almost to 40 out of every 1,000. She suggested that "the shocking contrast between neighborhoods of the same city signals a tragic by-product of income maldistribution and a pressing need for policy oriented research."

Fairly recently, a study by Robert C. Weaver, former HUD Secretary, appeared in the *Civil Rights Digest.* In the study entitled "The Suburbanization of America or the Shrinking of the Cities," Weaver points out that suburbanization in America, the flight of those who could afford it from the central city is practically as old as the nation. In fact, to prove that suburbanization is indeed an ancient phenomenon, he quotes from a letter written on a clay tablet and addressed to King Cyrus of Persia in 539 B.C. by an early suburbanite:

"Our property," he wrote, "seems to me to be the most beautiful in the world. It is so close to Babylon

that we enjoy all the advantages of the city, and yet when we come home we are away from all the noise and dust."

One essential point of the Weaver Study is that the effects of suburbanization as a phenomenon with resultant population and employment shifts and loss of capital from the city, were being felt even before World War II. As a matter of fact, the population peak for most large cities in relation to their suburbs occurred in 1900. In that year Boston's population was already only 43% of its Metropolitan Area as that would be defined in 1950. By 1970 it had shrunk to 23%. Cleveland's 85% became 36%.

Another factor is the pattern of employment growth as the "critical mass" of the suburbs, as a way of measuring the effect of the flight of urban capital. For example, between 1960 and 1970 New York City lost 9.7% of its jobs, while its outlying suburbs gained 24.9%. Chicago lost 13.9% while its suburbs gained 64.4%. Philadelphia lost 11.3% with a suburban gain of 61.5%. Detroit lost 22.5% and its suburbs gained 61.5%. And Washington, DC gained 1.9% during that period *but* its suburbs gained a spectacular 117.9%! Weaver cites a study in the late 1950s which concluded that the outward movement of people from the city would be matched by an outward movement of jobs. Retail trade would follow the populations. Manufacturing and wholesaling would continue to respond to obsolescence by looking for new quarters and by renting new structures in the suburban industrial areas where obsolescence is less advanced and finally, the movement of jobs would reinforce the movement of residences.

No one can doubt that this prediction has come true. I remember Bishop Paul Moore's Easter Sermon of 1976. He characterized the ugly consequences of the flight of population and capital from the cities as death. And he courageously urged industrial chiefs to reconsider their decisions to abandon the city.

The effects of no new investments in the city today and, even worse, the actual draining off of existing capital leaves no resources for providing the basic human services of health, education, welfare, and most vitally, jobs for the poor — mostly minorities who remain in the cities.

Thus, whether we were hearing of problems related to unemployment, education, housing, or racism; and whether in Newark or Colon, in Birmingham or Seattle, in Chicago or Washington, one fact emerges. The urban problem is systemic, long term and, as the report of our national hearing puts it, "infects every major structure of our national life and corrupts societies all across the globe."

But it is *the cities* that are the repositories of the poor and of the most acutely damaged victims of the systemic economic, political and social malfunctioning of the society.

Indeed, President Carter has recognized this fact in his urban program announced earlier this week. It is encouraging that the President has finally acted. It is immediately evident, though none of us has had the opportunity to study the proposals in depth, that his program is a modest one.

However, there are several good points in the program. He does focus largely on the city, and recognizes that neighborhoods and community organizations are indeed where the action is. Points our deliberative document also makes quite strongly. Moreover, it shows an awareness of the severity of the unemployment problem among ghetto youths.

Certain weaknesses are equally apparent. The administrative procedures seem too complicated to function efficiently. Further, the commitment of resources is less than the severity of the situation would seem to call for. For example, although 8.3 billion dollars is earmarked for the Carter urban program, in fact only 4.4 billion of that is new money.

In formulating this program, did the President listen only to his urban "experts," or did he hear the voices of the cities that *we* have heard?

From Seattle, Washington to Colon, Panama, we heard the voices of suffering cry out to us about their own pain and anguish — and hopes, or of their hurt and anguish over the pain of others and about the utter captivity which is the lot of so many people who live in our cities. So many are crippled by the horrible consequences of joblessness and hunger; by alcoholism and drug addiction; by social and economic injustice and by racist policies; by classism and sexism; homelessness and rootlessness; by neglect and oppression; and hopelessness and despair.

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We have learned what the President intends to do. Now we are engaged in determining what it is the Urban Bishops Coalition is going to do.

When I say, "what is the Coalition going to do," I am not thinking of structures and processes. There will be time for that. What I am talking about is the call for us to take seriously our commitment to the *people* of the cities. The Coalition's work is tied directly to the mission of the Body of the Christ in the world. That mission is the same as it always has been. That is, to show concern in the name of Christ for the suffering, the friendless and the needy.

Our aim as a Coalition should be primarily to serve as a reminder to the Church of what our mission is. Standing on the cutting edge, unencumbered by bureaucracies, we pledge to hold before the Church the awful challenges and tremendous opportunities to which God calls us in the urban mission.

It is hard to imagine our being able to take steps too radical or too drastic for the circumstances. Rather, we need to fear a too *timid* approach. As we move ahead, our actions are based neither on the notion that we have all the answers, nor on the view that we are totally unaware of what is happening. All of us here have some knowledge of how the crisis is affecting the cities in our own dioceses.

Even with our present state of awareness — with so much more to learn — it is clear that any response we may make which is less than serious will reveal a gross insensitivity to the plight of those people we are called to serve.

And a part of being serious means a willingness to make hard, inconvenient decisions and radical readjustments to our present ways of doing things.

I truly believe that God has called us to prepare ourselves to exercise *leadership* in his mission which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, he has laid upon us. The model for our action is Jesus, who "when he drew near and saw the city, wept over it." (Luke 19:41) Then, he went and died for the city. He was serious.

In my opinion, the main ingredients for a strategy for mission are that kind of compassion and self-giving. I pray that our weeping over the city and *our* willingness to die in service to all of God's people will bring joy and life, as Jesus brought the joy and the life which we celebrate at this Holy Easter Season. ■

(*See related stories pages 14-16*).

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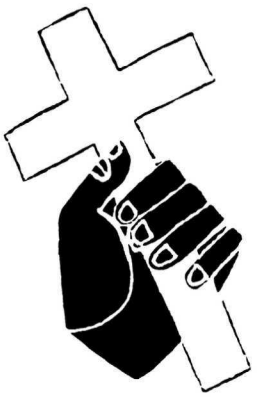

In answer to a number of requests. THE WITNESS presents the following suggestions for those who wish to pursue further resources on Black Theology, after reading our March issue.

THE BLACK CHURCH: A New Theology For Liberation. Documentary audio program featuring sermonettes, songs and interviews with Black theologians and religious leaders. Suitable for pastors, seminarians, laypersons and students. Send $10 for one-hour long "Black Church Tape Cassette."

Message to the Black Church and Community. This powerful epistle is suitable for classroom or church study groups. Bulk orders: $5 for 25 copies or $10 per 100 copies. Single copy free upon request.

New Liberation Covenant by Hazel Reid. A book of liberation-oriented liturgies using old and new Black worship forms. Price, $3.50 each, postage and handling included.

Liberation and Unity 1978. A book of meditations featuring 50 leading Black American Christians, prepared for the Lenten season but suitable as a thoughtful reader or gift for any season. Price, 50¢ each.

Black Faith and Black Solidarity. An anthology from the 1972 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania consultation of African and Afro-American religious leaders and activists. Explores the roots of Christian Pan-Africanism. Price, $3, postage and handling included.

Complete texts of the lectures by James H. Cone and Howard Dodson, which were excerpted in the March issues of THE WITNESS, can be obtained from the Black Theology Project, address below.

Lectures and seminars arranged for college, seminary or church settings. Black Christian perspectives on changing world order. Write for further information.

All of the above items can be ordered directly from:

Black Theology Project
Room 349
475 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10027
or by calling (212) 678-6276.

Catholics for Women's Ordination:

Confronting the Roman Patriarchy

by Georgia Fuller

A patient was being wheeled down the hall by the hospital chaplain, a Roman Catholic nun. By her own self-definition, she is middle-aged and not the least bit radical. When they met the patient's wife, he introduced them:

"This is the sister who said mass this morning."

"No! No!" interrupted the nun. "I did a communion service. (A priest had previously consecrated the elements.)

"Well," shrugged the patient, "It seemed like mass to me."

Ordain women in the Roman Catholic Church? "No!" resounded the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to a plea which emanated from the national Call to Action Conference in 1976 in Detroit.

The bishops declared the issue "already decided in light of the universal teaching of the Church," and shelved it at their 1977 meeting. It should be noted that the Call to Action Conference was comprised of 1,340 grassroots delegates — 90% of whom were bishop-appointed — to consider pressing issues in the life of the Catholic Church.

While women's ordination continues to gather dust at the bishops' meeting again this year, it has been absorbing grass roots vitality as the Women's Ordination Conference (WOC) prepares for 3,000 people to attend its second major conference Nov. 10-12 in Baltimore.

The issue will not lie still despite official obituaries. It is grounded in the simple fact that women *are* ministering within the Roman Catholic tradition. But hierarchical opposition is formidable. Perhaps in order to expedite last May's negative decision, some U.S. bishops had encouraged the January, 1977 release of the declaration of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. This declaration claimed that there would not be a "natural resemblance which must exist between Christ and His minister if the role of Christ were not taken by a man. . ."

Many bishops quickly praised the release, agreeing that women cannot "image Christ." Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin, then NCCB president, pronounced the matter closed. Within eight weeks, Catholic support *increased* by 10 points.

A Gallup Poll, co-sponsored by Priests for Equality, the Quixote Center, and 60 other Catholic organizations took samples of U.S. Catholic opinion on Feb. 18-21, March 4-7, and March 18-21, 1977. As debate raged, grassroots support climbed, reaching 41% in the last sample. Strong opposition decreased from 50% to 40% in the same 6-week period.

All my life I thought I was imaging Christ. That's why I had entered religious life. Then the Vatican document said women can't image Christ. What have I been doing all these years? I felt that I had been lied to! I had a faith crisis. Where can a mother superior go with a faith crisis?

I was hurt. I was angry. I turned to a young priest friend of mine and declared, "I can *never* again go to confession. The church has sinned against me!" The young priest raised his hand saying, "In the name of the church, I ask your forgiveness for our sins against you and against all women."

"Given the growth both in public interest and of people supporting the ordination of women, we felt that it was time to schedule another major event," said Mary Beckman, Women's Ordination Conference Core Commissioner. She and other commissioners were selected after the 1975 WOC Conference, which drew 2,000 registrations and spawned a publication of the proceedings plus an 1,800 member organization.

According to Ms. Beckman, the 1978 Conference will feature four major presentations:

- The state of the question of women's ordination, theologically, and nationally and internationally
- A social analysis of women's ordination as a justice issue
- An analysis of the dynamics of change within the Church
- A look at Christian feminism in the Roman Catholic tradition.

Interspersed will be workshops in three areas: For those hearing or trying to discern the call to ordination; for those interested in active organizing; and for those continuing theological reflection. Topics to be taken up include

Georgia Fuller, Ph.D., has served as Co-coordinator of the National Committee on Women and Religion, National Organization for Women (NOW), for the past two years.

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sexuality, a psychological profile of 100 Catholic women who feel called to priestly ministry, and "How to Survive in a Church That Doesn't Want You."

This month the WOC Pre-Conference Process is in full swing. Some 50 small, self-organized groups are gathering nationally and internationally to share their experiences and to "dream dreams and see visions."

"One of the main sources of revelation is our lived experience. We believe that our living and thinking is the raw data for theology. Theology cannot just come from scholars who are detached from the people," insists Dolly Pomerleau, coordinator of the 1978 Conference.

The Pre-Conference Process includes two group meetings. The first discusses how Catholics experience the priesthood *now*, and how they are ministering and/or experiencing the ministry of women in the Church. The second session attempts to flesh out the grassroots vision through two questions: *What would a renewed Church look like to you?* and *If you could participate in creating a new priestly ministry, what would it look like?*

Early this summer, each group will submit a report to be forwarded to those who will present the major speeches. Speakers will also receive 112 stories of personal call written by Catholic women contacted through WOC's Project Priesthood. Theologians will reflect on these data as substantive input to their presentations. Additionally, the Project Priesthood stories will go to an editorial board for selection and publication for mass distribution beginning Sept. 1.

Vatican prohibits ordination of women as priests because Christ's representatives must have a 'natural resemblance' to him.
—News item

The anonymous personal vignettes appearing throughout this article in bold type are all taken from Women's Ordination Conference (WOC) files.

"I think our program will be exciting primarily because of the Pre-Conference Process," says Dominican Sister Donna Quinn, Program Co-Chairperson. "We are hoping to capture the dreams of grassroots Catholics, to make their input part of the Conference and to strengthen the grassroots renewal of the Church."

As plans for the WOC Conference go forth, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), an organization serving women's congregations and communities, is preparing a July 1 pilot study on women and ministry. Spearheaded by the Ecclesial Role of Women Commission, the study will be two pronged. The first will be a nation-wide random sample by the Gallup Organization to ascertain the experience women have had in the Church. The second will be a quota sample conducted nationally by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. It will identify and sample groups of women currently ministering, what they are doing, what they would like to be doing.

"This study will contextualize the question of the ordination of women," summarizes Doris Gottemoeller, a Sister of Mercy who is EROWC Chairperson. "The problem of not ordaining is the inability of the Church to recognize and legitimize one aspect of women's ministry. We will research the range and character of women's present services, the inadequacy of the ministry women now receive, the pastoral needs unmet. Having uncovered these data, I, personally, am confident that ordination will be seen as a more plausible, legitimate expectation — a legitimate evolution and necessary development of the present ministry."

Sister Joan Doyle, president of the LCWR, likes to highlight a coincidence of history — that Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* appeared about the same time as Pope John XXIII's encyclical, "Peace on Earth," in which he identified the quest for women's rights as one of the three "distinctive characteristics of our age." Pope John wrote, "Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human

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person both in domestic and public life." Today a new pope faces the issue of change and women's consciousness in these areas, *plus* church life.

"And we will impact the Church because one of our feminist roots is the Gospel," explains Sister Kathleen Keating, chairperson of the National Association of Women Religious. "Through the Gospel, we relate to other issues of human liberation. The Church will change because there is an incompleteness, a brokenness in the way the message of Christ is revealed when women are denied an equal place in liturgical and sacramental life." Sister Kathleen identifies three goals of the Catholic feminist movement: The ordination of women; shared decision making, and the opening of new kinds of ministry and participation in "the priesthood of all believers." Underlying all these is declericalization and systemic change.

Sister Joan Doyle adds that the issue of *justice* touches the people to whom women minister as well. The shortage of Roman priests, especially in the Third World, is increasing the ministerial responsibilities of women. In Latin America, for example, many women, particularly nuns, are regularly leading paraliturgical services and educating and preparing parishioners in all aspects of Gospel living — prayer, scripture, the sacraments and justice issues. A priest comes but once or twice a year to preside at the sacraments, and the religious expression of the people is being limited and segmented.

The issue of justice touches all women, everywhere, Sister Joan says. "I think that the exclusion of women from ordination is the Church's radical affirmation that women are inferior among the people of God. The Church is saying that we women have one crippling defect — our sex."

One woman who believes herself called to ordination is Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, a Cuban who works as a full time parish minister in Rochester, N.Y. She does hospital and home visitations, takes communion to shut-ins, prepares people for marriage and baptism, works in the religious education program and actively participates in the liturgy. As a bilingual minister, her presence is especially important to the growing Hispanic population.

"I do everything a priest does," comments Ada Maria, "except preside at mass, anoint the sick and give absolution. But I hear a lot of confessions as I minister. It is very painful for me not to be able to share the sacrament of absolution with people because I *believe* in the sacrament of absolution."

"I come from a tradition in which sacraments are central to the expression of our faith," she continues. "Priestly ministry is totally intertwined with what I am and who I am. Part of me is being negated when I am denied the opportunity to test my call." Women like Ada Maria are supported by many others who do not feel personally called to ordination.

On Holy Thursday we took the children to "an upper room" in the parish hall for a separate service. The children read the lessons, the children led the singing, we played duck-duck-goose and we sang the Our Father. Then we gathered around our altar and I pointed to the bread and asked, "What did Jesus do?" The children chorused, "He took the bread and He broke it."

Then someting stopped me — me, a mother seeking ordination. I asked myself, "Do you really want to break this bread, or do you want the children to break it?" When Jesus broke the bread, He shared who He was. And so the children broke the bread and shared who they were — and my personal vision of priestly ministry changed!

Change began in Rosalie Muschal-Reinhardt in 1972. As she was concluding a presentation, she said to the women, "Shall we close this meeting with a prayer?" Several days later she received a poem from one of those present. Entitled, "Shall We Close This Meeting With A Prayer," it spoke of the pain that came to her as a woman when these words were usually said. In the middle was the line "But tonight it was different because Rosalie was there — and she is our priest." A few days passed before Rosalie, a mother of four, stopped shaking enough to ask the woman what she had meant. "You are our priest, whether you admit it or not," came the response, "because you call us to be alive." Rosalie is now a WOC Core Commissioner with a Master of Divinity degree from the Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago.

Looking toward the future with optimism and the past with love, Rosalie proclaims, "For a church that didn't change one iota in 400 years, we've made a lot of progress recently. The women's movement is the prime Christian renewal movement because it asks the church to look at *all* of itself — not just part." While admitting that transition times are trying times, Rosalie chooses to be fully part of this age. "As a feminist," she concludes, "I see patriarchy as the oppressor of men *and* women. We must challenge this tradition. I will not give permission to anyone to say I am not Catholic. I will NOT be displaced from where I believe I am called to be!"

Although the future is envisioned and its inhabitants are determined, it vibrates in tension with today's church. Joan Doyle posits five essential questions:

1) Do women want to move into the current structure?
2) Do women want to change it?
3) Do women want to wait until it changes?

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4) Will celibacy be integral to the priestly ministry of women?

5) When will the time of pastoral acceptance be right?

Regarding the final question, Joan believes that women moving into new positions anywhere, especially into the Episcopal priesthood, fosters a more receptive climate in her church. The fourth question, that of celibacy, has the potential to divide Roman Catholic women.

"Celibacy is not necessarily a 'better way' to live your life," insists Joan. "But for centuries our life style was held up to be 'better.' That very life style restricted us from dialoguing with laywomen. Only since Vatican II have we been removed from our isolated pedestal. The ancient chasm will be difficult to bridge. Women are trying to reach out to each other in reconciliation and healing."

Selecting answers to the first three questions poses no problem to WOC members, who are committed to changing the present structure. Rosalie Muschal-Reinhardt runs an alternative model of ministry called "In Hope for the Future." It is a consultative, ministerial service that will do "anything" — religious education, spiritual direction, counseling, group process, retreats — anything except compete with existing services and deny needed ministry to poorer clients.

Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz observes, "Women are operating more and more out of a sense of priestly ministry rather than priesthood. The more I can go to the people and be with them and respond to them rather than decide what they need, the better it is. Seeing and experiencing this are my main sources of consolation for the pain of not being allowed to minister sacramentally.

"When you're in a bad mood, you call up somebody and they help you. There is a real sense of shared prayer among us. I'm especially excited about the interfaith dimension that has opened in my life. I had never set foot inside a non-Roman Catholic church until 1½ years ago when Marilyle Sweet Page was ordained to the Episcopal priesthood."

Another WOC Core Commissioner, Dominican Sister Dolores Brooks, was the principal of a co-ed Catholic high school before feeling called to the priesthood. In 1973 she began a Master of Divinity degree at Weston School of Theology, which shares facilities with Episcopal Divinity School. She met and received encouragement from the Rev. Sue Hiatt, one of the first Episcopal women to be ordained. With inspiration from Sue and other women ministers, and support from WOC members and local Catholic women, she has been a staff assistant in a large, diverse, urban parish for the last two years.

I see the priesthood today as a closed system which provides services and maintains dependent relationships and the expression of faith as it is. I believe I am called, as a single woman, to a renewed priestly ministry, which is the enabling of the adult faith community. If I can give you the opportunity to use your gifts, I am enabling you to become your fullest possible self — which is what salvation ultimately is.

I've described this vision to male priests. Some have responded, "If you are ordained to priestly ministry, I will have to get out of the priesthood — because I like the structure the way it is!"

"A parish is an old, tradition-bound structure," offers Dolores. "I'm trying to see if it's possible to create a role for women within that structure. I'm beginning to think that it is." Dolores supports her typical church ministry (visitations, teaching, etc.) by maintaining a liturgical presence at every service because "liturgy is one of the primary ways Catholic people experience ministry. It is one of their few expectations of the church."

But the awkwardness of trying to create a role and the feeling of sometimes being left out, manifested as personal pain and hurt integrity, cause deep struggles for Dolores. This is balanced by the genuine appreciation she shares with the parishioners.

"I'm grateful that they seem to want me to serve," she says. "At the same time, I don't want to get caught in the cultic priesthood. We talk about renewed priestly ministry, but what is it? Trying to form a new model — one that works with the people rather than for them — is hard especially in the presence of the old model, with all its temptations of expectation and certainty."

Ada Maria echoes her tension, "With the grace of God and a good support system, I might not buy into the present structure. It is a VERY comfortable structure!" ■

Further information on the Women's Ordination Conference, the Pre-Conference Process, or Project Priesthood can be obtained from 1978 WOC Conference, P.O. Box 651, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

CREDITS

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Why the Church 'Waffles'

by Juan Luis Segundo

The Rev. Juan Luis Segundo, S.J., is a Latin American theologian associated with the Peter Faber Pastoral Center in his native Montevideo. This article is excerpted from Chapters IV and VI of his new book, *The Hidden Motives of Pastoral Action,* and presented with permission of Orbis Books. The paperback version is available at $5.95 from Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545.

The tacit and frequent alliances of the Latin American Church with centers of political and economic power do not seem to derive from any will to gain political or financial power. They seem to be based on the principle of choosing the lesser evil. Since Christian majorities are in great danger of falling away from the church in modern society, it seems more prudent to protect their Christianity with the help of outside authorities.

When a military coup is effected, and such coups are usually conservative in nature, the change of political command is always supported by the prestige of the Church. One of its higher-echelon representatives in the country appears alongside the new rulers, and the scene is recorded for radio, TV, and the press. Now this maneuver is not something that greatly appeals to the church official in question or promotes his own career. In most instances it is an unpleasant task for him. He knows very well that a large part of the population will find the new regime odious and against their best interests, and that they will view his participation in unfriendly terms. But if he did not add his prestige to the takeover, that would signify a break with the government and reprisals would be sure to follow. It is not that the reprisals would fall on him personally, but that they would affect the aid that the government gives to the Church in one form or another to bolster its hold on the masses or its institutions.

If we were to ask that prelate why he was not willing to rely on the Gospel message itself, why the Church could not carry on its functions under the impetus of that message, he probably would not even understand the point of our question. Chronologically and culturally we are far removed from that ancient Church that relied solely on the intrinsic force and attractiveness of the Gospel message itself.

It is much the same with economic power. More than one bishop in Latin America, for example, has personally chosen to take seriously the notion of "the Church of the poor." More than one bishop has stopped living in the old episcopal "palace" and gone to live with the poor in their neighborhoods. But such gestures only reinforce the point I tried to make earlier. One is making a serious mistake and overlooking the real problem when one assumes that the Church's alliances with economic and political powers stem from any personal desire for power or money. Nor is one justified in talking about the *personal* cowardice or conservatism of the bishops, for many of them are valiant individuals who are willing to endure poverty and imprisonment. It is what they see as the needs of the Church that wins out over their own personal generosity and courage.

Take the case of the bishop who goes to live among the poor. It is almost universally true that this gesture will not mean that the episcopal palace or the curial buildings will be shut down or sold. The Church, too, needs an administrative setup to handle its internal affairs. While the bishop may choose to be poor himself, the Church still needs and uses considerable sums of money to maintain the organisms used to protect Christians. Schools and universities and media continue to operate, and they are visible to all. Thus the personal witness of the bishop is little more than an epiphenomenon, perhaps convincing some people that there are a few decent people even in the Church. But the growing social awareness of people in Latin America is not convinced or converted by that gesture.

Another line of witness might be much more effective. Let the bishop stay in his palace. But let him also decree that the Church will hand over all its institutions to the State and henceforth rely solely on the enduring power and attractiveness of Christ's good news. We do not find that line of witness in Latin America.

At this point we cannot help but raise a question: Why does such a line of witness seem so impossible to the Church and its

leaders? Why does that option seem so crazy that it is not even brought up for discussion? It think we must say that the shift from alliances to reliance on the Gospel is not made because an underlying certainty prevents it. Underlying our present pastoral approach is the conviction that *the Gospel message no longer possesses the power it once had.* And we need only point to pastoral experience itself to prove the truth of that assertion.

Whatever the reason may be, the Church today knows it is impossible for it to match the performance of the early Church in the area of evangelization. The Latin American Church feels keenly aware of that fact. Whether one regards it as scandalous or as obvious, that conviction pervades our pastoral approach here to such an extent that the Church ends up witnessing *against* the Gospel message. And those who offer this counter-witness fully realize what they are doing.

This pastoral conviction, too, derives from three underlying assumptions that are taken for granted and that play an important role:

The first derives from the paradoxical realization that the present difficulties facing the Gospel are the result of its success. In the early days of the Church people had a certain conception of Christians. It may have been overly simplistic and naive, but it was widespread. The Church and its followers seemed to have a monopoly on love, and this did much to spread the Gospel message to others. The Gospel seemed to have a monopoly on certain authentic values.

But what impact can the Gospel message have today, when everybody displays love to some extent and Christians do not seem to love more or better than anyone else? If the older image of the Church and its message was true, then that message has been so successful that in the 20th century we find numerous groups and movements espousing love, solidarity, and mutual sacrifice. Marxism itself, now the official doctrine of countries that contain more than half the world's population, proclaims the implementation of real and effective love as Christianity once did. It seeks to give equal opportunity and fulfillment to all, but disclaims all ties with religion. And it directly opposes the profit motive as a basis for social relations, associating that motive with the western capitalist world where most Christians live. In short, then, some evangelical values have become so generally known and accepted that the Gospel message itself no longer has the peculiar attractiveness it once had. But dismay over the fact can only be justified if one assumes that the Gospel is preached only to win adherents to the Church. One can hardly be dismayed if one assumes that the proclamation of the Gospel was meant to bring about such widespread recognition and acceptance of its basic values.

The second underlying assumption is simple enough, but it would be well to spell it out. No one doubts that many people can indeed find the reason for their existence in the Gospel message, even today. What is doubtful is that the number of people who reach that conviction will exceed the number of people who join other organizations, movements, and parties engaged in fellowship and united effort. If the church relies solely on the power of the Gospel message, it will only come up with a minority; and it will lose the masses. It will have a minority of strong and courageous Christians engaged in transforming society but the masses will be lost to it, and perhaps to God and salvation as well.

The third underlying assumption is most important for pastoral praxis: When people point to concrete pastoral experience to prove that the Gospel no longer possesses the attractive power it once had, the underlying assumption is that our pastoral work is presenting the very same Gospel message that was proclaimed by the early church. That assumption is open to serious question. First of all, the task of proclaiming the Gospel was neglected for centuries; even while external circumstances remained largely the same, our pastoral technique got rusty. Today the world has changed greatly. Can we really be sure that we are dealing with the "good news" of Jesus every time that we talk about Jesus, his message, and the Church? Only if we could prove that we are could we rely on our pastoral experience to provide evidence for our assumptions.

In any case it should be evident that there are serious obstacles and objections confronting any attempt to make the transitions (from contracting alliances to relying on the power of the Gospel). What is more, we do not yet possess any sure criteria for determining the proper choice. It is not enough to point out that the present approach is a vicious circle, for the alternative approach might be one too.

The point of interest to us here is that however serious and important the reasons militating against a shift in approach may be, they are not brought out into the open and discussed frankly. Instead they are left buried under an air of fatalism.

Forced to select a term, I find that the term "evangelization" best suits our purpose here. Another Greek term, *kerygma* ("proclamation") might also be used, but several reasons make it less suitable for our purposes. The four Gospels constitute a literary genre that is usually called "kerygmatic." Moreover, the object of kerygmatic proclamation is the "good news," which is a precise translation of the term "Gospel" (*euangelion* in Greek). Thus I prefer the term evangelization here because it gets right to the point and helps to define the content of our proclamation.

A fine descriptive definition of what I understand by evangelization can be found in Seumois's description of the three elements that go to make up authentic kerygma. This adviser to the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith says that authentic evangelization or kerygma consists in: (1) communicating only the essentials of the Christian message; (2) communicating it as good news; and (3) adding nothing further except at a pace that will allow the essential element to remain precisely that.

Here I shall examine each of these features.

1. **Communicating only the essentials of the Christian message.** This becomes imperative if we choose to shift from exerting pressure on people to relying on the liberty of adults and respecting that liberty. The fact is that if we do give up all use of pressure, we also give up something that has made our pastoral work much easier. For we have been used to detaining our listeners as long as we wanted, whether they were really interested or not.

This means that we could no longer begin to transmit the Christian message with just any one of the elements, however authentic, that Christian experience and thought have been accumulating over the course of 20 centuries. In effect the new challenge brings us back to the situtation of the early church. We must be able to transmit the *essential* message of Christianity within a very restricted span of time — one that our interlocutor can tolerate without looking for an excuse to bid us adieu.

This does not mean that the task in question is directly and primarily incumbent on the priest. Insofar as the priest primarily has *internal* functions within the church, the job is to form a community capable of carrying out the task. Thus both the priest and the community must rediscover the essential ingredients of the Gospel message. To some extent these ingredients have been buried under a welter of other elements. While these may also be true and authentic, they were piled on indiscriminately over the centuries by a Church that had *plenty of time* to initiate each generation of Christians no matter which element it started with.

Today that situation is past. If the church cannot formulate the essential message of Christianity in the course of a typical conversation running no more than a half-hour, then there simply will be no evangelization. It cannot count on weeks, months, or years. Needless to say, many pastoral officials rely on the belief that at least the family and the Catholic school do have the time to transmit the gospel message without confining themselves to its essentials only. They forget two things. One is that even if the Christian message is transmitted to children, that no longer means that adults will really "know the Gospel." The other is that the time available to the family and the school is also a time when the mass communications media can interfere and disrupt any such transmission of the message.

Now let us suppose that we were to ask pastoral officials, *What is the essential message of the Christian faith?* What would be their response to this natural question which is of such critical importance today? My feeling is that the question would take most of them by surprise. Perhaps it would even be most disturbing to those with the greatest and longest pastoral experience. We might get answers such as these: "That God raised his son, Jesus Christ, from the dead"; that Jesus is the Son of God"; or "the truths formulated in the Creed."

What are we to think of these responses? That brings us to the second element described by Seumois.

2. Communicating it as good news. This element makes it clear that the above formulas, however brief and correct they may be, however much they may represent the essence of the Christian message, do not constitute the content of an authentic evangelization. Unlike the stituation at the first level described above, at this second level it does us no good to examine the earliest professions of Christian faith. Why is this? Because either they were fashioned for profession *within* the bosom of the church (against heresies, for cultic worship, and so forth), or else they were responses to questions and expectations of *their own day.*

But the *Gospel* of Jesus Christ is either good news *right here and now* or else it simply is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ—however orthodox may be the formula of the Creed employed. There is no evangelization when Christianity is understood to be a restrictive condition imposed by God for the attainment of salvation, a restrictive condition to which we must bow even though life is complicated by faith and the practices it entails.

If we are talking to a person whose problems and expectations are unknown to us, it is not enough to say: Do you know that God resurrected his son, Jesus Christ? With that remark we have not yet even begun the task of evangelization. The remark may be true, but our interlocutor might well say that he or she knows lots of other news that is much better.

One thing should be clear by now from all that we have said. Our fearfulness that the Gospel message does not have the drawing power it had once upon a time is based on a real experience that is doubly false. It is false because we do not actually give people the essential message of Christianity and because we do not give that message as good news. It is not surprising, then, that it seems to be pastoral suicide to take the risk of fostering and relying on the freedom of our interlocutor in the proclamation of the Gospel message.

From a more positive perspective we can say that two practical consequences flow from our second point. The first is that a message can be good news only if it relates to some expectation. Any evangelization process, therefore, must begin with *listening*, which runs counter to all our habitual reflexes and habits. Our customary assumption has been that evangelizing means talking and, insofar as it is possible, keeping our listeners quiet so that they may pay attention to our complete and logical exposition.

By "listening" here, I am not referring solely to an act on the level of the individual alone. Insofar as the Christian community is concerned, "listening" must be translated into a friendly and thoroughgoing sharing of life with the non-Christian. It must entail a shared historical sensitivity, shared commitments, and the recognition of the human values that the non-Christian holds and cultivates. This recognition, in turn, must be fleshed out in deeds.

Obviously such a context is directly opposed to any context in which Christians are set apart for the sake of their own protection. Yet only such a context can provide the foundation for an authentic process of evangelization.

And that brings us to the second practical consequence of this point. If our efforts to renew our contact with the essential message of Christianity is to be fruitful, it cannot end up in *prefabricated formulas.* A Christian community truly engaged in evangelization is one that *translates* any such rediscovered formulas into something that is capable of meeting the concrete expectations of contemporary listeners. No Christian community can operate mechanically here, much less be content to bring in the priest when someone begins to express an interest in the content of the Christian message. The Christian community must be creative.

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In the religious world of Old Testament and pagan times, the good news could be formulated and expressed thus: "God raised his son, Jesus Christ, from the dead." Today the Christian community may have to say something like this: "No love is lost on this earth." Note that the latter formula is an authentic translation of the former. The Son of God (who is love) loved us to the end and died; but his love did not perish, and we express that belief by bearing witness to his resurrection. Our expression of this belief in new terms does not mean that we now claim to have a finished and perfect formula. Our new "evangelical" forumula simply is a response to what we feel to be a characteristic anxiety of human beings. People proffer their love, but in the end it seems to be in vain. Many other expectations would call for very different formulations.

Finally, two points should be noted in connection with the persistent stress on Christian *witness*. First of all, we must admit that no evangelization can be effected if our words run counter to our deeds. On the other hand, however, no witness is in itself evangelization if it does not express the basic underlying foundation of our conduct as witnesses. No moral code or behavior can take the place of the "good news."

3. Adding nothing further except at a pace that will allow the essential element to remain precisely that. This may well be the most surprising and unexpected point in Seumois's description of the task of evangelization, but its logic is inescapable.

For some time the early Church clearly felt no temptation to add much to the essential core of the Christian message. It simply had not yet made explicit more items that could be added. Our situation 20 centuries later is quite different. During that period the Church took on the physiognomy of a "universal religion," and structures, dogmas, polemics, mystical experiences, and liturgies developed freely.

Up to this point, however, Seumois's third feature corresponds with his first. Both refer to the essential core of the Christian message. But there is a difference between the two features insofar as the third presumes an interest in the essential core and then calls for something more. Exactly what is this *additional* element to be?

Our answer to this question is closely bound up with one of the fears discussed earlier: That the gospel message no longer holds the attraction it once did. The implication is that the gospel is no longer the single blazing star in an otherwise dark sky. To some extent many evangelical values have been fleshed out to the point where they can and do lure people into associations and movements centered around values that are closely akin to those of the "good news." We need only cite the French Revolution, for example. Though it began in opposition to Christianity, it was waged in the name of three central Gospel values: Liberty, equality, and fraternity.

In the outlook of many, however, this is a mixed blessing. While it can be said that some modern-day values do seem to embody or resemble the Gospel message, they also seem to strip the Gospel of its force and novelty. What is more, they also pose the danger of *deviation*. For example, any of the brief formulas that the Christian community might fashion to respond to other people's questions about the faith are formulas that are readily shared by other viewpoints that the Catholic church regards as erroneous. We might tell our listeners that "God is equally the father of all human beings." But if we let it go simply at that, we might well fear that they will hear the same thing in a Protestant setting and join that branch of Christianity. Likewise, if we simply tell our listeners that "no love is lost on earth," we might well fear that they will hear the same thing from the Communists and join their party.

How are we to forestall that danger and prevent such errors? Two approaches come to mind, but both work against the overall task of evangelization. The first approach would start out with our listeners' initial interest based on their own free choice; but it would then introduce some sort of pressure that would *provide us with time* to forestall any possible deviations. The second approach would be a bit more radical. Right at the start, when we are laying the groundwork for our evangelization, we would introduce elements designed to prevent any deviation.

Both, I noted above, work against the overall task of evangelization. This may already be clear to the reader, but I want to make sure. In a famous address to Italian jurists, Pope Pius XII concluded that tolerance of error was not only a *lesser evil* but could even be *the greater good.* Even though one had the means to prevent error, therefore, it might be better sometimes not to employ those means. Commenting on Pius XII's address, Cardinal Lercaro tried to further explain this teaching. He noted that it was not based on the commonly accepted notion of respect for the freedom of the erring person. Pardoxically enough, it was really based on *respect for the truth*—not for the truth *in itself* but for *the way in which truth reaches human beings.* Thus if we start out with the assumption that people do not err, we are not really respecting the truth.

If human beings are to really *take hold of* a truth, it is not enough to keep repeating it in parrot fashion. They must make it their own, which means they must have freedom and time to ponder it and work it out. What is more, they must have the opportunity to "experiment" with it, to apply it to their real life even if in an erroneous way. For the things we really get control over are things with which we make mistakes first and then learn to handle correctly.

But what about the second approach? Perhaps it can escape this criticism. Unfortunately it cannot. Suppose, for example, we want to keep someone from falling into Protestant "errors." As soon as we have spelled out the essential core of the Gospel, therefore, we add some other criterion stemming from the Christian experience in the 16th century. We inject some comment about the controversy over justification or devotion to Mary, for example. What have we done? By injecting these additional remarks, which may be based on real "truths," we have moved at a pace that destroys the essential core as such. Since the supplementary features are more concrete and tangible on the contemporary scene, since the gap between Catholics and Protestants is readily apparent, their differentiating features immediately take the place of the essential core of the Christian message. Our listener sees devotees of Mary rather than Christians, Catholics rather than Christians. The danger of dislocating the evangelization process by appealing to elements that are true and valid but secondary has not gone unnoticed. It is not Protestants alone who have warned against the dangers of devotion to Mary.

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Urban Poor to Bishops:

'Be Our Advocate'

Following are some key excerpts from the document put together by Dean Joseph Pelham, summarizing testimony of the seven public hearings sponsored by the Urban Bishops' Coalition. The document will be published in the near future.

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Heard and reflected upon were the voices of the poor and those who work on their behalf, the unemployed and underemployed, blacks, Hispanics, women, gays, native Americans, Appalachian whites, undocumented Latino workers, Asiatics, youth, the elderly, and those who are the objects of the criminal justice system. These are the people of the cities. As individuals and as groups they are victimized by the cities and form a vast "underclass" without access to power, caught in a web of discrimination, deprivation and oppression, and often without hope or any reason for hope.

* * *

Honest words were spoken, candid words were spoken, in some instances angry words were spoken. Often, too, restrained words were spoken. But in every instance, pleading words were spoken: Be our advocate!

* * *

The problems of the urban "underclass" decribed so vividly and terrifyingly by a multitude of testifiers are related to the persistence of phenomena written deeply into the structure of society: racism, sexism, classism, and a domestic kind of colonialism. It is these systemic phenomena which are incarnate in the agony of the cities and cause and maintain the existence of an "underclass" which is the special victim of poverty and deprivation.

* * *

The overall dynamic is thus an interaction between the systemic phenomena of racism, sexism, classism and urban colonialism on the one hand and, on the other, an economic policy motivated by exploitation for the sake of profit, and political and social policy largely determined by this interaction.

Many of the psychological dimensions of the urban problem have accompanied the shift of population to the suburbs: feelings of alienation, despair, rootlessness and the pathologies such feelings generate among youth, adults and families. All of urban society is beginning to show signs of these strains and stresses. However, the physical, socio-economic and political manifestations of the crisis are of a magnitude and character in the cities not equaled in the suburbs.

* * *

The question cannot forever be avoided as to whether the dynamics and the dynamic which are/is at once the causal factor and the source of the aggravation of the crisis of the cities and the distress of their inhabitants is simply the mindless, accidental working of impersonal forces or whether it is too logical, consistent and predictable to be the result of sheer accident. To put the question in another way, are the suspicions of the alienated in the cities true — that there are demons at work which can and must be named and exposed?

* * *

A whole new and exciting form of the diaconal ministry might be found in the training and deployment of clergy as professional community organizers. If the Episcopal Church is experiencing an over-supply of clergy in terms of traditional parish ministry, could this be a new way to respond to the fact that men and women continue to offer themselves for ministry and that there are needs to be met? Indeed, could the "parish" of the future in the cities be less defined in terms of a church building set in a certain location and more defined in terms of organization and processes related to certain issues? Do we, in fact, have need of many more such "parish" clergy?

There was, additionally, abundant evidence that the Church faces a crucial "credibility gap" in relation to the "wretched of the cities":

— Testimony presented in several hearings by Integrity and by other representatives of the gay community indicated that the actions of the House of Bishops at Port Ste. Lucie call into question the ability of the Church to speak and act with authentic concern for gays, whose feelings of a lack of "citizenship" in the Church are strong.

— Testimony presented in the Newark Hearing and elsewhere, questions in the same manner, the authenticity of the Church's commitment to the equality of women and to support of new styles and forms of ministry in light of its decision to legitimize dissent, at even the highest level of its leadership, from the General Convention's approval of the ordination of women.

— Testimony presented by Hispanics indicates lack of confidence about the Church's commitment to them both by its failure to develop strategies of ministry in the Hispanic community and by its insensitivity to ways in which legal processes and agencies are used to harass the Church's ministry to minority communities' quest for self-determination. The Church has, in their eyes, sold them out and become an arm of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and a partner to Grand Jury abuse.

— Testimony was presented at the Chicago Hearing by Mattie Hopkins which indicates that the Church has practiced its own form of "redlining" the cities and disinvestment in them. Ms. Hopkins indicated that, "Racism in the Church displays the same bruising elements that it does outside the Church — exploitation, denigration and neglect. Dioceses that include urban areas (and through them the National Church) collect assessments from parishes in the inner city, send a

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Bishops to Urban Poor:
'Are You *Our* People?'

by Robert L. DeWitt

The "Pelham Document" — a 35-page, hard-hitting statement of the Church's obligation to the people of the cities — was the central focus of some 40 Episcopal Urban Bishops at a deliberative session in Chicago recently as they tried to determine strategies following public hearings in seven cities.

Dean Joseph A. Pelham of the Rochester Center for Theological Studies had been commissioned by the Urban Bishops Coalition to summarize and analyze the testimony of nearly 150 people from the cities where the hearings were held — Chicago, Newark, Birmingham, Seattle, two in Washington, D.C., and Colon, Panama.

The "cries of anguish" reported in the document set the tone for the deliberations. The majority of the testifiers were people caught in the crunch of deterioration of the fabric of the cities. The document was clear that there is a cruel logic at work — intentional or unintentional — which victimizes the "urban underclass" inhabiting the core cities of the land: *"Cities are the centers of residence of those who have been declared obsolete, unneeded and of no value by institutional, systemic principalities and powers. Cities have been consigned to the scrap heap, to be maintained only as colonies for the unneeded without adequate housing, health care, jobs or security, or as presently convenient locations for certain business or commercial activities."*

The document called upon the bishops to make a basic decision as to whether the issue is primarily "cities in distress," or "people in distress." That the two are inseparable is obvious, but a determinative difference for the Church will result from which it sees as its priority. Just as the bishops have deliberated on the Pelham document, so will others, as it is circulated. It will be surprising if this does not make a difference in many dioceses, in many parishes.

"Are those people (in distress) *our people?"* queried the document — a difficult question for a church as deeply entrenched in the middle class ethos, and with as large a middle class constituency as the Episcopal Church. The bishops in Chicago indicated that they were not yet clear about the answer.

Despite its agonizing array of human ills, the Pelham document did not suggest any attempt to take the urban crisis by storm. It carried a strong note of sobriety. The testimony of Dr. Gibson Winter of Princeton was quoted. It referred to the urban situation not as a crisis, but as a "degenerative disease," centuries in the making, which will not yield to emergency measures. (See April issue, THE WITNESS.)

A continuing ministry of presence — of "being with the people" — was deeply congruent with a theme which ran throughout the hearings: that the people of the cities are not calling so much for financial assistance from the Church as for involvement *by* the Church. Many of the action recommendations in the Pelham document were therefore directed toward the *community* as the focus of ministry, community organizing, for example. It pointed out that this is consistent with the geographical parish pattern through which the Church has been expressing its life for centuries.

The document noted that efforts of the Episcopal Church cannot be successful if isolated from its "potential partners" — organized labor, the business community, the ecumenical community and secular groups. But even with such allies, it warned, the Episcopal Church comes to this challenge with a weak reserve of credibility because of its poor record of sensitivity to large groups of people in the cities — gays, women, Hispanics, Blacks and other minorities, and because of its failure to demonstrate, in the past, that it has the staying power for involvement in such struggles.

This warning was substantiated at the deliberative session. Two issues were discussed at greater length than any others. One was a statement of policy for mission which called upon the bishops to make *"a decision to cease the attempt to be all things to all people. A decision to abandon the role of chaplains to the Establishment. A choice to be for the poor."* Each of the sub-groups discussing the document in Chicago wanted to edit that statement. They obviously were ill at ease in responding to a call to be for the poor if that meant "taking sides." In a choice between the haves and the have nots, they wanted to have it both ways.

The other issue was the first action recommendation, which stated that "Immediately, members of the Urban Bishops' Coalition, as a coalition, agree to *stop* all campaigns for capital funds until such time as they have looked analytically at the nature of the crisis in their cities, listened carefully to the advice and counsel of those who are the victims of that crisis and those who seek to deal with it, and have become *involved* with those persons and in that

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effort." This suggestion was discussed more than any other, and fundamentally changed as follows: "In the raising of capital funds it is essential that dioceses look analytically at the nature of the crisis in the cities . . ."

The response of the bishops to these two issues said a great deal about the difficulty of the Episcopal Church in its dealing with the poor of the cities. This sober fact was reflected in comments after the meeting:

• The Rev. Suzanne Hiatt, consultant: "Some of the Bishops complimented the Pelham document by saying it pulled no punches; but they then proceeded to have the punches pulled. However, the very fact that these bishops are meeting on this urban concern can only be a positive thing."

• Bishop Wesley Frensdorff of Nevada: "The bishops went further than we had any reason to expect. But given the constituency and the leadership of the Church, it remains to be seeen how much the bishops can deliver on the decisions made."

• Dean Pelham, author of the report: "The question is whether individual bishops are able to make fundamental decisions about the style and emphasis of their own ministries. Those decisions on the part of the individual bishops are essential to there being any reality to the Coalition. The real issue is whether the response is seen as one more thing the Church is doing, or whether it is seen as the priority."

It would seem, however, that as a result of the hearings, and the deliberations on them, things are not as they were. The Coalition adopted the following recommendations:

On the diocesan level: Dioceses in the Coalition which have not had hearings will be urged to do so, or to adopt some other appropriate mode of "listening" to those suffering in their cities, and to those attempting to deal with that suffering. (Some dioceses, such as Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Southeast Florida are already contemplating doing this.)

All dioceses in the Coalition are urged to establish commissions of 50-100 people which will include the urban victims as well as diocesan representatives, to review carefully the findings in their locales. (Some dioceses such as Chicago and Alabama have already initiated specific programs as a result of the hearings in their cities.)

On the national level: A national Policy and Action Committee, which will include bishops and representatives of the best thinking expressed in the several hearings will review the testimony of the national hearing as well as the Deliberative Document itself to make suggestions for the national level.

Before the year is out the Coalition will meet with clergy and laity to assess the action taken at the diocesan and national levels. Several months later another meeting will be held for the same monitoring process.

The Coalition will continue as an organization, with interim actions and planning being referred to a Steering Committee. The next meeting of the Coalition will be held immediately prior to the meeting of the House of Bishops in Kansas City in early october, at which time ongoing organizational matters will be discussed.

Fifty members of the Coalition, a sizable minority of the House of Bishops, have now identified their commitment to the urban mission of the Church. Their continuing to meet for discussion of these issues, to undertake joint programs, will inevitably make a difference in the tone and tenor of their own diocesan ministries, and in the posture of the national church. How much so, only time will tell. Perhaps it was symbolic that the deliberative session was held at a Center for Continuing Education. ■

Continued from page 14

pittance back, then decry the burden of the poverty-stricken black parishes to the diocese. What in fact happens is that our money goes to support and develop suburban churches where the former city congregations have fled . . ."

* * *

It is clear, therefore, from the voices heard at the Hearings that the members of the Urban Bishops' Coalition would, because of their action or inaction in the past, enter into renewed interest in the cities handicapped by a lack of credibility.

An absolutely pivotal issue in relation to the Church's stake in the city is the question of the extent to which the Episcopal Church does or does not come to identify the people of the cities as *its people*. The church was led to the suburbs in the '50's and '60's because that was where "its people" were moving. This exodus left the cities inhabited by people whom the Episcopal Church has never identified as "our people."

* * *

Response to the urban crisis will demand a radical commitment to ecumenicity which has not heretofore characterized the Episcopal Church. Much of the wisdom spoken in the Hearings was voiced by representatives of other churches and synagogues who are engaged in a significant way in urban mission.

Finally, a theology of urban mission will emerge through engagement, action, involvement. The nature of God's call to the Church in the decade ahead will come clear to us only as we are present at those places and among those people whose hunger, thirst, oppression and imprisonment are the words which God is using to form that call. ■

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'Women's Reformation' in Motion

by Barbara Brown Zikmund

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As the circumstances and attitudes of the American woman have changed in the last decade, it is important to realize that these changes have not failed to affect the churches. And because of the close historical relationship between American women and church life, the future vitality of American religion cannot be considered apart from the contemporary women's movement.

Probably the most direct way to highlight this relationship is to mention the remarkable fact that *40% of all theological students in seminaries are presently women.* When one looks at figures for Protestant seminaries alone, the percentages are even higher. These figures represent a new era. Women in seminaries (and many women throughout the churches) are injecting vitality into our ecclesiastical veins. I say this not only as a woman, but as a student of American church history.

History has not been helpful to women. As Peggy Way has put it, "the historical record defines, builds upon, perpetuates and creates myths about women which become the untested 'self-evidents' of history." History and tradition make it difficult for women to change past patterns which have become codified as God-given truths. Furthermore, the historical records clearly neglect the actual presence of real women "so that there is a paucity of literature defining and tracing our actual roles within any particular historical epoch."

Although the Christian Church did give certain women direct opportunities to lead in special ways, for much of Christian history a more indirect style has been the predominant way women have served the Church. I do not wish to degrade or downplay the significant impact of women, even when it has been indirect.

Although certain women in the early Church and the monastic orders did exercise more direct leadership, by the late middle ages the acceptable forms of Christian service were linked to a celibate life style. It is to the credit of Protestantism that the ideal of Christian service for women was moved from the medieval cloister to the "freedom" of the Christian home. While today we may object to the traditional limitations imposed upon women within the family, it is important to understand that the glorification of women as "helpmeet," indirect servant of the Lord, was a step forward in the history of women.

In the great missionary outreach of the 19th century and in the development of ministry in America, many women carried on a significant ministry working behind, and alongside their husbands.

The second way that women have predominantly related to the Church has been in separate, special and sometimes limited arenas or areas of activity. So much so, that within American church life some things have been particularly defined as "women's work."

Ironically, "women's work" has often come closest to the works which Jesus told the disciples of John were signs of his ministry. When they asked Jesus if he was the Christ, he said "Go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: the blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor." (Matt. 11:4-5)

Throughout the history of the Church, women have opened themselves to places of human pain and organized significant special ministries to children, the elderly, the weak, the ill, the infirm, the insane, the imprisoned and other women. But the tacit understanding (particularly in Protestant history) has usually been that work beyond those activities viewed as a natural extension of the role of Christian wife and mother were inappropriate. Indeed, if women ventured beyond this territory, it was not good for them and it was not good for the faith. Because, some Christians believed, women were keepers of culture and preservers of faith and morals, if women's world was not kept separate and protected, the very future of civilization and/or the faith was in peril.

Nevertheless, within American religious history women in the churches have accomplished marvelous things from an independent power base. Women's societies, associations, guilds and fellowships have flourished in our churches. American women have raised millions of dollars and given millions of hours to put their faith into practice.

These are the two ways that women have tended to serve the Church in the past — through indirect supportive roles in the shadow of some man or through separate special efforts, organizations and concerns defined as appropriate for women.

My thesis, however, is that the women's movement of the past decade has upset these classic patterns and expectations. I want to suggest seven ways that women have become and will continue to be a source of vitality in American church life.

First, I believe that in recent times women have increased the awareness of Christian people that individuals must take personal responsibility for their faith and actions. The women's movement has used the consciousness-raising group as a major vehicle of self-revelation and personal growth. In small groups women have explored what it means to be in *any* relationship, what it means to consider the future, what it means to have a commitment and live by it. Because of the women's movement people have become more serious about marriage and parenting. People have learned to listen to each other and to view their faith as something rooted in experience, not simply found in creed and custom.

Obviously, parts of the women's movement have been irresponsible. The sexism of the past seems demonic at times and the rebellion of some women has been extreme. But the greatest impact of the women's movement has been to strengthen people, particularly women, to take hold of their lives and live responsibly. Why should we lament that women are not keeping the old limited forms of church participation alive? We need new forms of church life to support changed people.

Secondly, our new sensitivity to the problems and concerns of women has made us all more open to the physical, or bodily, dimensions of life. Because women, not men, get pregnant and the arrival of a child dramatically affects

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The Rev. Barbara Brown Zikmund is Assistant Professor of Church History and Director of Studies at Chicago Theological Seminary.

women's lives, women are concerned about issues that take the body seriously — issues such as rape, contraception, abortion, homosexuality and physical violence. Too many times in Christian history we find a disembodied understanding of the faith. Yet we worship a God who cared so much for this world that we believe the Divine entered into human flesh and became incarnate. Christianity is not a bloodless philosophy or theory, but a living Word which speaks to us where we are in our physical condition. As painful and disruptive as these issues are, it is important for the Church to struggle with matters of the flesh.

Women, who have historically suffered because they were considered *only* bodies, are able to keep the Church from lapsing into spiritual imbalance.

Third, because of the particular history of women in the labor force and as volunteers in the American church, I think that women are challenging the church to rethink its understandings of church membership and Christian vocation. As more and more women have less and less volunteer time to give to the Church, we are approaching a crisis in our institutional life. The American voluntary church has thrived on the "church work" of many women.

But the situation has changed. Most American women spend the majority of their adult years holding a time consuming job outside the home. They simply do not have the energy, or the conviction, that volunteer work at church is where they should spend their leisure hours. Yet many of them want to remain part of the Church.

We need to take seriously the new roles women find themselves in and consider what is essential to sustain church health and membership. Even more significantly the rapid movement of women into the labor force raises some important questions about Christian vocation itself. How does any Christian relate his or her faith to a job? My hunch is that the greatest challenge facing the Church is not to uphold the right of every person to a meaningful job, but to offer meaning in life which is not dependent upon whether one has a job at all. Because women have historically found meaning outside of occupational categories, the experience of women becomes especially important to the Church.

Fourth, as women seek a theology to inform and reflect their new sense of worth in society (and the Church), there is a growing interest in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It seems to me that there is some correlation between the recent rise of the charismatic movement and the development of contemporary feminism. Historically there has always been an increase of female participation and involvement in the Church when the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has been emphasized. It makes sense. If the major reason that women have been limited in church participation and leadership is because of the authority of tradition and the Biblical record, any time there is an emphasis upon the power of the spirit to transcend tradition and scripture the situation of women in the Church has improved.

Fifth, the theological reflection of women is raising some very basic questions about the language we use to speak of God and describe the human condition. Here we come to a place where the particular perspectives and experiences of women are challenging the Church and upsetting some old habits. Women are learning what it means to do theology within the framework of feminine experience. Women are asking questions and seeing things which they never before noticed, and are finding the masculine bias of the English language increasingly offensive, if not idolatrous.

The impact of language upon our world view must be taken seriously. We now know enough about human development that even if one is not bothered personally by the use of the word "man" to refer to all people, or pronouns which emphasize that God is masculine — we must wonder if our children are hearing the *Word* of the Gospel. Any time we speak we are using a symbol system. Women have raised some fundamental questions about our symbols and henceforth the Church cannot afford to ignore the issue.

Biblical translations, liturgical forms, creedal statements and social policies are the raw materials of church life. It is healthy for the Church to be prodded on these things.

Sixth, the authoritarian institutional style of traditional church life is being directly questioned by women who have had experience with shared leadership and non-patriarchal structures. This rejection of institutional traditions is not pointedly anti-ecclesiastical. It reflects the new sophistication of women about the politics of power.

Within the women's movement there have been two rather different judgments about power. Women have come to realize that historically power was like a commodity. Some people (usually men) had power and others (usually women) did not. When and if women were seen as powerful, it usually meant that their power was less pure (*e.g., witchcraft*). Also it was felt that powerful women reduced the power of men. As feminism developed there were two different ways women sought to cope with power: one group struggled to get power and one group sought to get rid of power.

In the 19th century campaign for women's rights the concept of mass organizing to gain equity in employment, education and citizenship is a good example of powerless women claiming power for themselves. In the recent re-birth of feminism there is certainly a continuing desire to take and share power held by men. But there is also a fundamental attack upon power structures and patterns themselves.

The concept of "consciousness-raising," which is at the heart of contemporary feminism, undercuts some basic assumptions about institutions and leadership. The consciousness-raising group is a leaderless gathering where all are "equally" in charge. There are rules laid out which protect people from petty criticism, external authority, or domination. Everyone is encouraged to speak briefly and listen openly.

It is significant that women are finding alternative methods for personal and institutional change through consciousness-raising. Women are sharing enough to question basic assumptions about power and historical structures. Women are even concluding that the Gospel of Jesus Christ (which uplifts weakness over strength and says that the first shall be last) calls for new structures to empower the powerless in the Church.

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Women are suggesting important alternatives to hierarchical and patriarchical history — not because women want to gain control, but because they want to disperse control. The vitality of our religious life will continue to be enriched by this movement.

Finally, the decision of increasing numbers of women to attend seminary and seek ordination is changing the quality and character of parish leadership and congregational life. This is the most obvious impact of the women's movement upon the church. Female leadership will bring a fresh perspective on personal faith and responsibility. Simply by their presence, women in ministerial leadership will witness to the inter-relationship between our faith and our bodies, our faith and our location, our faith and the Holy Spirit, our faith and our language and our faith and the authoritarian structures of the Church. Not that male clergy cannot do this as well — but for this moment in history women have an edge. It is an awesome responsibility which women cannot afford to take lightly.

What makes the situation more difficult, however, is that the influx of women into the full-time ministry comes at a time of shrinking opportunities and fewer full-time jobs in the churches.

Ultimately, I think that this, too, will contribute to the vitality of the Church. I am not worried about the qualifications of women for ministry. Some of the best prepared pastors are women. If churches can get past their initial reservations about "women ministers," and call people who will do the *best* job for them (male or female), the Church is sure to benefit.

Thus the oversupply question raises another problem. If there is an increase in seminary enrollments and a decrease in church openings, should the seminaries curtail admissions? There are a number of practical reasons the seminaries cannot reduce enrollments, yet we recognize that care must be taken not to mislead students about the opportunities that exist after graduation. There is also the question of limiting ministry to the vocational slots that already exist in the Church. Some United Presbyterian literature has rephrased the issue to ask whether the Church has a shortage of jobs or a crisis of vision.

The most important impact of women in ministry will finally come in the local congregation. Women pastors raise some interesting questions about parish life. Is there something sexual about the historic pattern of male pastor and the fact that most active church people are female? When the pastor is a woman those sexual dynamics are upset and recast. Is there something nurturing and maternal about the efforts of today's clergy to care for hurt people? When the pastor is a woman her socialization and history enhance her ministry. Is it important that the Protestant preacher challenge the status quo? When the preacher is a woman, her very presence, as well as her words carry that message.

Here, therefore, are seven developments in contemporary church life which seem to me to relate to the changing circumstances of women. I do not pretend to know where it will all lead, but I believe firmly that the changing relationship of women to the Christian Church is a blessing — God's blessing. ■

Continued from page 2

Disarmament? It seems to me that the "Save Our Communities" part of the program with its emphasis on the linkage between nuclear weapons, nuclear power, the arms race and unmet human needs dovetails with the intent of the Urban Bishops Coalition.

We know military spending is often justified in terms of creating jobs, and defense workers are often cold to pleas on shifting priorities which could cost them their jobs. Yet, military spending creates fewer jobs than spending money on almost anything else. In other words, jobs which are such a vital part of easing the situation for workers are more plentiful when linked to peaceful purposes. As Jimmy Carter said recently "I think the shift away from weapons towards peaceful goods and services in the long run is favorable for world peace; and you also get more jobs per dollar spent."

The Rev. Arthur Kortheuer
New York, N.Y.

Thanks for Abbie Jane

Thanks and praise for bringing us Abbie Jane Wells! (December WITNESS) So many of us are listening — hoping to hear a theologian who starts where we are and "wonders" what we wonder! You are fortunate to be on her mailing list.

Blanche Hamilton
Pittsburgh Network
Church & Society

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The former President of the Latin American Episcopal Conference, Bishop Manuel Larrain, asked the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith to alert preachers of the Gospel to the danger of introducing devotion to Mary too soon. Her prerogatives could be introduced at a pace that would dislocate the core of the Christian message.

The elements of the Christian message, then, must be put in a proper hierarchy by adopting a proper "pace" or "rhythm." Only in this way can the essential core of that message retain its central place as such. But the need for proper pacing is not confined to the proclamation of the message by the Christian community. It must also show up in our *praxis* of the message, and this may be even more difficult.

Even if a Christian community is proclaiming the essential message *in words,* it is not and cannot be evangelizing if it judges historical realities in terms of criteria that do not reflect the same proper hierarchy. If we prefer a project with a Christian label over one with greater liberative content that bears a different label, then we are submerging the essential in the secondary. If we prefer the undifferentiated unity of Christians bereft of liberation impact over commitments to liberation that are shared by some Christians and non-Christians, then once again we are letting secondary elements drown out the essential core of the Christian message. It is most important, therefore, that the matter of pace or rhythm be extended to praxis also.

The following point, however, may well be the most important one associated with this third feature of evangelization. If we are to be able to evangelize, we must divest ourselves of the three fears discussed previously. We must stop fearing the freedom of our listeners because only through the exercise of their freedom can the Gospel message become a truly personal conviction giving direction to their whole life. We must stop being afraid for the salvation of the majority; we must stop trying to bring them up to the logical minimum of faith as quickly as possible, so that we can dwell deeply and at length on the core faith that we now take for granted. Finally, we must stop fearing that the Gospel no longer has the power to attract human beings. ■

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Gays in the Church Speak for Themselves

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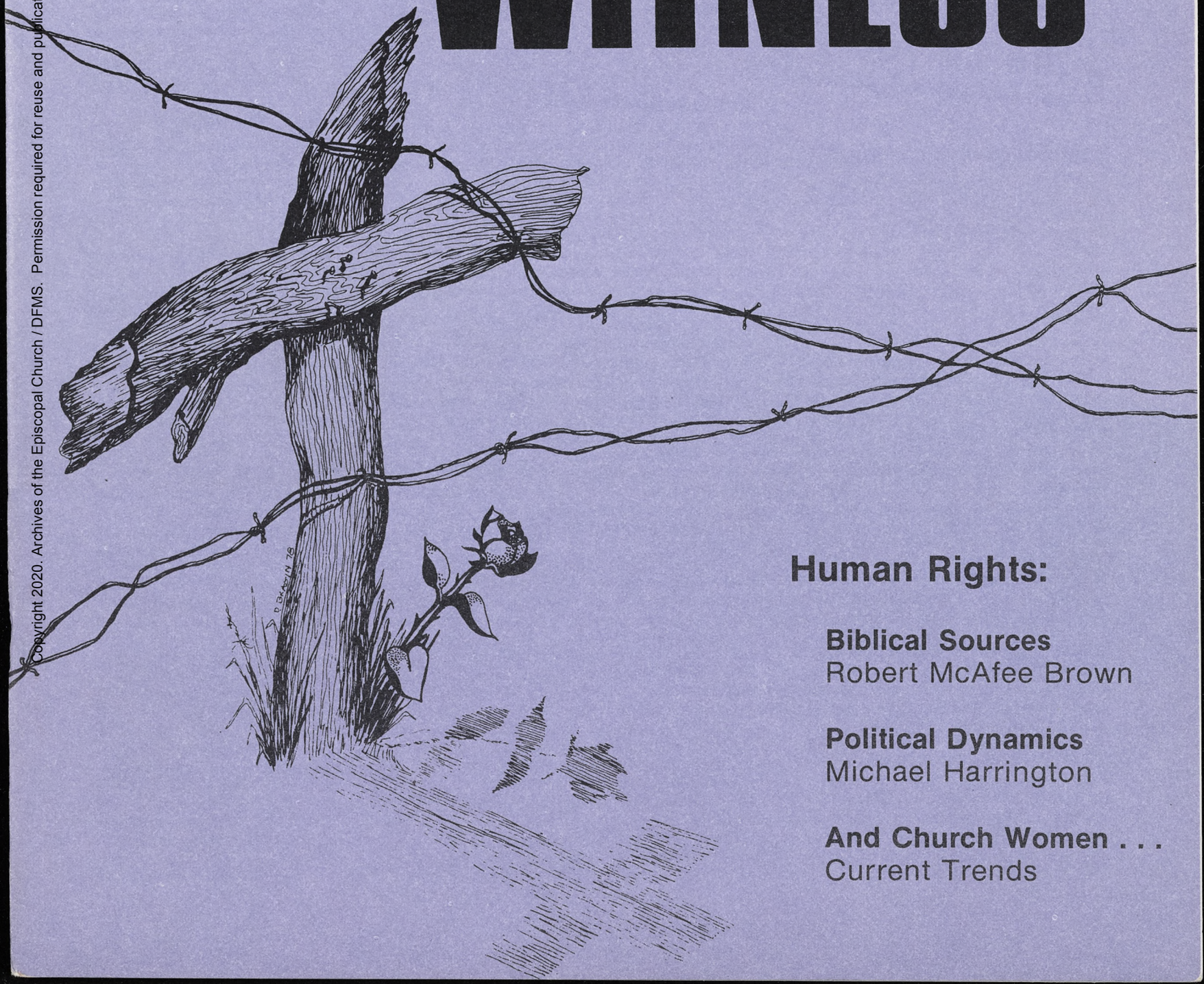

Human Rights:

Biblical Sources
Robert McAfee Brown

Political Dynamics
Michael Harrington

And Church Women . . .
Current Trends

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Heyward Meditation Hopeful

Carter Heyward's meditation "The Enigmatic God" in the April WITNESS comes as a welcome reminder of the sermons of a generation ago, before God's death and other odd doctrines were offered to us as serious theology.

The Israelites' ability to perceive that *I am what I am* is a deeply descriptive name for God also enabled them to understand that human beings cannot define God, but merely suggest probable attributes which seem godlike to us.

Dare we hope that Carter Heyward's appreciation of the name, *I am what I am,* means that once more wisdom such as that expressed in the Book of Job and the Epistle to the Ephesians will be matters pondered by theologians?

Dare we hope that once again we of the laity will be guided toward deeper understanding by the quality of thought of Phillips Brooks, Evelyn Underhill, C.S. Lewis, St. Bernard and St. Catherine of Siena?

Frances A. Benz
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Embarrassed at Stringfellow

I must in all seriousness protest the article by William Stringfellow which appeared in your February issue, entitled "The Embarrassment of Being Episcopalian." This article is not only illogical but uncivil. Whether or not one agrees or disagrees with the Presiding Bishop's stand on the ordination of women is of no consequence in his decision to treat the character of Bishop Allin, in print, as a gentleman. I would urge *THE WITNESS* to be more discerning in the future as to relative churlishness of its contributors.

I must also take issue with the content. I find it remarkable that those so long the champions of ecclesiastical license are now crusaders for "the law and discipline of the Church." Such a metamorphosis is hardly credible. Perhaps Mr. Stringfellow would have us believe that the law should only be obeyed when he supports it.

I concur that it *is* an embarrassment for many to be Episcopalians today. I rather think that this embarrassment is due less, however, to the actions of the Presiding Bishop than to the proliferation of such ill-mannered and ill-conceived diatribes as this.

The Rev. Jack E. Altman, III
Dallas, Tex.

Euthanasia Scene Set

The Rt. Rev. George W. Barrett made a benighted attempt at "similizing" in his abortion article (February WITNESS). He wrote: "A fetus is not a human person anymore than an architect's working drawings of a house are the house itself."

There is a basic, ethical insight that human life — all human life — is sacred. Surrender this once and other attacks against human life come quickly. Once a society gets by its legal qualms of having doctors end any form of life (liberalized abortion laws) it is hard to find any clear cut reason to rule out the same judgment for those declared incurable.

The fetus in a woman's body is human life. When two people bring about a pregnancy you have a human fetus. This is biological law. A baby is going to come out unless somebody does something.

Specific arguments for liberalized abortion are:

1. To prevent birth of defective children. Do only perfect physical specimens have the right to live?

2. Women's Lib argument — that a woman should have control over her own body.

Helen Seager in the same issue sees restrictions on abortions as part of a misogynist plot, God help us!

1. From the first moment of conception, tissues are developing which are completely different than the mother's. The developing child cannot survive alone until birth but never is it a part of the mother's body.

2. Every child has a right to be wanted. This has a fine humanitarian ring. But how can anyone possibly say, even before a child is born, that no one is ever going to want it or love it.

The scene is being set for euthanasia. Once the momentum is started, you will see committees formed to endorse a change in the law. All the names will carry prestige and influence. Complicated, mind-numbing debates will be carried on in all the channels of communication until the ordinary citizen loses his confidence in the certitude of his judgment.

Once we settle on a basic pattern of legislation with regard to abortion, the campaign for euthanasia will come fast and hit hard.

Many are driven to abortion by poverty, illness, illegitimacy and economic burden. We must work for the removal of these conditions rather than destroying developing children.

James Connolly
Bellingham Center, Mass.

Orders NCC Guidelines

While reading the March issue of THE WITNESS, I bumped across your service of sending free copies of the NCC guidelines on what to do when the FBI knocks at your door. I would appreciate receiving a copy of this helpful document.

I also want to say how much I have enjoyed reading the first copy of THE WITNESS which I just received. I believe it is absolutely necessary for anyone who is working towards economic and social change to keep in touch with activities and trends of thought in the movement, and to keep a broad view of factors and bases necessary for change.

Sally M. Tarler
Decatur, Ga.

Of Rosados and Parables

I loved your "Meanwhile, in the Rosados' Homes" (February WITNESS).

I think one of the embarrassments to the Episcopal church should be that Margarita and Diana Rosado had to go on welfare because the church was too stingy with its money to take care of the families of those in jail so that they *didn't* have to go on welfare. It is like having your Ma and Pa at the poor farm because you won't take care of them yourself.

In the margin of my Bible beside Mark 7:9-13, I have written "taking care of elderly." I have now added, in red ink, "taking care of anyone in the church family" — for I think what Jesus said about *corban* in the first century applies in the 20th. And what the church sets aside "for God" in buildings and administrations, etc., it takes from what is needed to take care of people — especially people like the families of those who are in jail

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THE WITNESS

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Will It Play in Peoria?

Robert L. DeWitt

The Episcopal Church has a problem, and it is cold comfort to observe that it is not peculiar to that body alone. The problem is that the main body of church opinion is frequently at variance with a better informed, ethical approach — what *should* be done.

A few years ago, many leaders in the church and in the nation held deeply felt reservations about the Vietnam War long before they felt at liberty to express them publicly, such was the counter-force of public opinion. The same situation obtained in the '60s concerning the many facets of the struggle for racial justice. For some time now and probably for some time to come, that dynamic is at work again in the matter of the manifest injustices of our economic system.

Thoughtful and well-informed leaders are reluctant to say what they really think on that issue for fear of outraged indignation on the part of their middle class constituents. Just as in decades before, the slaughter in Vietnam went on mindlessly and racial subordination continued, so today unemployment and inflation continue to take their toll on a majority of our citizens.

Our American experiment in democracy felt that untutored human nature was unlikely material with which to build a sound body politic. Early on, the need was seen for an extensive, pervasive system of free public education to equip the citizenry for creative participation in the democratic process, because where there is no understanding, as where there is no vision, a dangerous threat to the people exists.

The soul of a church, as of a nation, arrives on the scene in a fallen state, in need of sanctification. Christian doctrine has long maintained that the church has the proper right to interpret the Bible, that the church is our best means to discern the will of God. But how? By a referendum of the church membership?

Consider the question of homosexuality. Or the issue of compassion and concern toward minorities, the poor, the unemployed, those elements which make up the vast underclass of our urban areas. Is God's will for those issues, for those people, determined by taking a poll of the attitudes of church people?

Studies in recent years have demonstrated that one cannot expect any discernible difference between the attitudes of church members and non-church members. Until they have been educated on an issue, church people are no different from others. They reflect the same stereotypes, the same prejudices as their non-church neighbors.

It is here that we see the pertinence of the historic role of the bishop as defender of the faith, the apostolic charge to "banish all strange and erroneous doctrines." It is the vocation of the church to have a wisdom different from the wisdom of this world, and bishops are called to help the church gain access to that wisdom of the Gospel. Yet there is a considerable obstacle to the bishops' moving to banish those strange and erroneous prejudices and stereotypes, attempting to defend the faith against sexual and racial and class bias. That obstacle is their concern that Episcopalians will not agree with them, will be alienated from them.

Despite this difficulty, the bishop's responsibility is still to nurture his flock. What are the means whereby

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Biblical Sources Of Human Rights

by Robert McAfee Brown

"Christians have no corner on the issue of human rights. Furthermore, we have burned our share of witches, heretics, and other "deviants" whose human rights were denied, and whose tortures were arranged in the name of the Bible by God-fearing men (one time when I think the sexist language is probably appropriate)."

Let me begin with some observations about human rights that all sorts of people share. I believe that such an approach represents a theology characteristic, for example, of *Gaudium et Spes* of Vatican II, with its consistent theme that "we must hear the voice of God in the voice of the times," and the Biblical recognition that, as Isaiah 10 reminds us, God can work through the pagan Assyrian to proclaim and exhibit the divine will, when the self-denominated "people of God" harden their hearts or stuff their ears with theological wax.

Concern for human rights is thus pre-theological or at least paratheological. One need not be a theologian, a Biblicist, a Christian, or even, in the conventional meaning of the word, a "religious" person, to be passionately concerned about human rights. Rather than being threatened by this fact, I think we ought to rejoice, in it, grateful that we can join hands with others far beyond our enfeebled and often dispirited Christian band.

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights is an example of this. It is not a "Christian" nor an avowedly "religious" document; it rather selfconsciously seeks to avoid such adjectival charges. But we must certainly affirm with it that the rights it enunciates are to be guaranteed to all — life, liberty and security; protection from slavery and torture; equality before the law; protection from arbitrary arrest, detention or exile; the right to freedom of movement, to marry, to own property; the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; freedom to hold opinions; freedom of peaceful assembly; freedom to vote in secret; freedom to social security; freedom to work, to equal pay for equal

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work; freedom to join a union; the right to rest and leisure, to education, to live in a supportive social and international order, and so on.

With different nuances, other declarations would affirm similar agendas. There are clearly some things on which most rational people are agreed, though different contexts may produce different emphases — a matter that is important enought for brief examination. In our western, democratic, capitalist countries, for example, we have put particular stress on *individual* human rights — the right of protest, of dissent, freedom of speech, of movement, and so on, and these have been and remain a precious part of our heritage. In other situations, more stress is put on *social* human rights for all — the right to food, clothing, shelther, education, and medical care, for example.

Part of our own task is to get over the often frenetic fear that concern for social human rights is "socialistic" in the pejorative meaning of that word, i.e., un-American. I think it is patently arguable that a baby born in Cuba today under the Castro regime has a better chance for a human life than such a baby would have had under the Batista regime, or would have today in Chile under the Pinochet regime. And yet we have opposed Castro for over 18 years and have supported, virtually sponsored, Pinochet since his illegal seizure of power.

Now, some may be getting restless because theological and biblical bases have not yet been indicated. But I have been trying to press the point that Christians have no corner on this issue. Furthermore, we have burned our share of witches, heretics, and other deviants whose human rights were denied, and whose tortures were arranged, in the name of the Bible by God-fearing men (one time when I think the sexist language is probably appropriate).

Let us go on, however, in the light of what we observe about the human scene today — that this is a time of gross violation of human rights and also a time when many people are rallying around the need to defend human rights, often at great cost. Let us go on to reflect on these realities, Biblically and theologically. What kinds of things could we affirm that would bring some important further emphases into the discussion and the action?

1. Surely one of the most important things we can affirm theologically and Biblically for an understanding of human rights is the conviction that every person is made in God's image. This says many things. It says that each person is unique and precious, and the one who is unique and precious may not be tortured, starved, left without shelter, denied a chance to develop the fullest capabilities, and so on. It says further that what is a right for anyone must be a right for everyone. If our children should not be denied milk, neither should children in Nicaragua, and if we support the Somosa regime we are denying the image of God in Nicaraguan children.

It says once again that to reflect the divine image is also to share, in ways appropriate to the creature, in the creative properties of the Creator. If God is creator, and we are moulded in God's image, then being co-creators is part of the definition of who we are, called to bring the divine intention to fulfillment rather than to thwart it. And if that divine intention is love, then whatever thwarts love is to be condemned, whatever fosters love is to be affirmed and enacted. It should not be hard to draw some conclusions about what that means in the area of human rights.

2. It has sometimes been said that the one empirically verifiable Christian doctrine is the doctrine of sin. Particularly when we reflect on violations of human rights, we are made aware of the pervasiveness of human sin. Human behavior may shock us, but there is an important sense in which it ought never to surprise us — we should always be aware that human beings can stoop to unprecedented depths of depravity, and that when we see such activity in another we must acknowledge that it mirrors possibilities to which we ourselves could stoop.

We are wrong to call torturers "bestial." As Dostoievsky pointed out long ago, that is an insult to the beasts. So if we reflect on the interrelationship between our world and our faith, we will recognize that there always need to be social structures that will deny to individuals the chance to abuse their power, and there will always need to be individuals who will deny to structures the chance to abuse their power. If a belief in the *imago dei* means that everyone must be invested with infinite worth a belief in sin means that nobody can be invested with infinite trust.

3. At different times in Christian history different themes have properly been stressed: grace and nature in the Middle Ages, justification by faith at the time of the Reformation, sin in the 1940s, and so on. Today the rallying theme that has emerged is liberation. Jesus came to bring liberation to the captives, freedom to the oppressed, and all the rest. It is hard to fault that as a central Biblical concern. So let us take it seriously. If liberation is meant for one, it is meant for all.

To be free means more in the Biblical understanding than just to be liberated from personal guilt, sin, and all the rest. It must also mean to be liberated from

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structures of oppression, bondage and evil — what the Bible calls "the yoke of the oppressor." It is not the full message of the Gospel that one has "found Christ" if one's child is still starving, even more, if someone else's child is still starving.

Stress on liberation is the theological side of the coin that says on the reverse side, "human rights," but human rights defined in ways that get to the heart of the social, corporate dimensions of human existence, and challenge the structures — political, economic, sociological or ecclesiological — that deny full humanity to any people. We forget very easily that in the parable of the last judgment, it is the *nations* that are held accountable for failing to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and minister to the sick. Biblical faith will not give us the luxury of retreating into the private arena of individual rights for the relatively privileged; it will demand social rights for the poor.

4. To talk about "God" today is difficult for many people. Yet, the arena in which human rights are talked about (oppressed peoples, demeaned individuals, the wretched of the earth) is also the only arena in which the Biblical God can be talked about, or observed or responded to or known. It is clear, however little we like to admit it, that there is a bias in the Bible toward the poor, as those among whom God dwells in a special way. It is with victims that God is working, whether Israelites in Egypt, or Babylon, or Palestine.

When God becomes flesh it is as one of the *amha'aretz*, the poor of the land. The God of whom we speak and to whom we pray is a God who has identified with those who suffer. As I look at the world today, I have no difficulty affirming that the God of the Bible is with the tortured rather than the torturer; with the one who says "no" to Pinochet rather than the one who says "yes;" with the one who is in jail for political reasons rather than the one who did the jailing; with Steve Biko rather than with Vorster; with those who are hungry rather than those who are stuffed. Our understanding of God, our commitment, will be nurtured not by aloofness from partisan struggle, not by disengagement, but by partisanship, by involvement, since God is partisan and involved. To affirm torture, or Pinochet, or Vorster, or to be indifferent to world hunger, is "practical atheism," a denial of the God of the Bible.

5. Other areas of Biblical and theological concern could be adduced: a belief in the church as the recipient of grace and as the community of those trying to embody the Jesus story themselves, must be a servant church, a remnant church identified with the needful, a protagonist of human rights. The sacraments, which show forth a broken body and shed blood, must be seen as stern reminders that those nourished thereby must commit themselves to see that no more bodies are broken, and no more blood is shed, either in prison cells or through the "silent genocide" fostered by indifference to the "least of these" God's children.

Instead of extending that exercise, however, let me conclude by trying to do something very briefly with what has been said so far. I am not willing to distinguish "principles" from "application." I think they intermingle and mutually affect each other. So having started with our situation and moved to a Biblical perspective, let me now in the light of that Biblical perspective move back to our situation:

I think we need to develop a fresh capacity for anger. I am not talking about hatred, but anger, outrage, of the sort that characterized Amos, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Jesus in the face of injustice. We have been outraged not only by the details of the Steve Biko murder, but also by the fact that even in the face of the uncontrovertible facts the South African government has exonerated all parties from responsibility for his death. And for every Steve Biko we know about, there are hundreds, thousands, in South Africa and elsewhere that we do not even know about. Paul's injunction, "Be ye angry, and sin not!" is clearly a Biblical word for our time.

Then, let us take sufficient account of a new dimension in the human rights struggle — *the rights of unborn generations* —who have the right to inherit an earth not contaminated by atomic wastes, or polluted streams, or exhausted resources for heat and food. The ecological issue must not be counterpoised to the human rights issue as though one had to choose between them. If "the earth is the Lord's," so are "they that dwell therein," and vice-versa.

We must see more clearly how our economic structures often lead to denial rather than expression of human rights. A competitive economy breeds an attitude that renders the life of the competitor expendable; work life based solely on profit justifies dehumanizing those who threaten profit; an economy based on corporations accountable to no one beyond themselves means that human rights will not be taken seriously if they interfere with corporation goals— social systems designed for pocketbooks rather than persons will end up destroying persons for the sake of pocketbooks.

In concern for the victims of human rights violations, while it is important to be the voice of the voiceless, that

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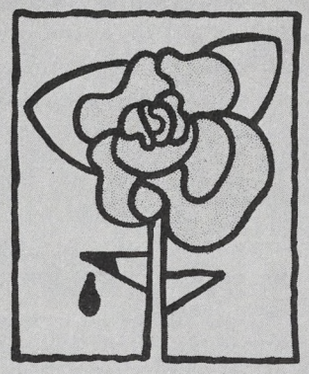
is not enough; *what must be done is to find ways to help the voiceless gain a voice of their own.* Put another way, our task is not to do things for the poor, but to empower the poor to do things for themselves. Otherwise we end up with a paternalism that demans those whom we mean to help; they are manipulated, object-ified, denied the chance to become full and responsible persons who can create their own destinies rather than being recipients of a destiny decided on by someone else, which is a clear denial of human rights.

Let us re-think the prohibition against "*interfering in the affairs of another nation.*" Granted that it can be self-righteous always to be looking at others rather than ourselves for violations of human rights, granted that we are not to tell Switzerland what its tariff policy should be or demand that Britain change its driving rules, there nevertheless comes a point at which human concerns override national autonomy — what is not beginning to be called "the Hitlerian exception." The torture of political prisoners is clearly one of those exceptions. But perhaps the list of clear exceptions should be further extended: If children are dying of slow starvation because economic or political policies dictate that their parents shall not be granted a living wage, that too is torture. Worse than that, it is murder, the "silent genocide" that condemns millions to die annually as long as we stay on the sidelines. Perhaps more aggressiveness is needed by us in these areas; inaction may be a worse sin that moving overzealously.

Finally, let us remember that there is a connection between rights and duties. It is a duty to intervene on behalf of the rights of another if those rights are being violated. Indeed, it is a duty to act ahead of time in such a way that the violation is rendered less likely by our attempt to create a just society in which people will not need to torture in order to stay in power, nor foster unjust economic systems so that others will be unable to gain power. Maybe then justice *could* "roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." That would produce a beneficent flood, requiring no ark. ■

The Price of Blue

For Beatriz Allende, daughter of the assassinated president of Chile, who died a suicide in exile Oct. 11, 1977.



Make no mistake about it:
exile is not freedom.
The suicide of a woman in exile
is suddenly comprehensible
to a woman on a swing, gulping the blue
air, pretending to possess the green
of late autumn grass in the public park,
hearing the incandescent prophet birds
shriek and whistle a coming winter,
tomorrow. She loved too dearly
not life, but freedom, the fire
that makes the body glow with
St. Joan's final passion. She loved
too dearly. Freedom, not life.
We often confound them. The blue air
of exile and the onion earth
of freedom; the habitat of joy and the soil
of regeneration. There are some prisons
we cannot begin again in or from. Some
blood we cannot rinse from memory's mouth. Some grief
that weights us down, inevitably and irrevocably
away from the strawberries and breakfast bread —
a final act, definitive, of love. She cut the cords
of bondage to fly towards freedom, home.

— Linda Backiel

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Faces From Prison

by Philip A. Getchell

In my office, there is a row of photographs of political prisoners that I know and must not forget. This often seems a vain exercise in a world which increasingly accepts imprisonment, torture, and repressive harassment as the normal means for controlling and making populations "safe."

There are now more than 100 nations holding prisoners for no other crime than a dissident viewpoint. In such an atmosphere it is very easy to let these "prisoners of conscience" drift out of mind. We lament their luck, but again, in such an atmosphere we succumb to the easy doubts: "How can we know of the motives behind a distant arrest in Chile, or Brazil, or Korea? What can a church person in this country do about it even if he is sure of the motivation? Often it occurs that we might be neglecting more practical and equally needful projects closer to home."

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Yet in the midst of it all, there are imperative reasons for placing political prisoners in a special category. I am impelled to keep the prisoners' photographs and faces before my eyes.

Our Lord Himself was a political prisoner. Much of the life of the early church issued from dungeons and prisons. Great portions of the New Testament were written there. The early church accepted prison life as being absolutely normal as a consequence of faith and witness. Through history this pattern has persisted. Bonhoeffer, Ghandi, and Chavez and many nameless ones have produced theology and ethics, and the iron spirit necessary for future leadership in prison. As Christians we should be the least surprised of all men and women to discover that at this moment, in a prison cell, in some country of the world, the mind and spirit of a future leader is being shaped.

Apart from the lessons of our Christian history, there are simple reasons why this will be so. Future leadership and inspiration will emerge from the prisons because

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these are the men and women that set themselves against the unjust systems that dominate their cultures. They inevitably draw the wrath of repression to themselves. But inevitably also, systems change, and such resistant moral courage carries leverage for the future. In addition, the prisoner, if he survives torture and long imprisonment, is often a different man or woman, less subject to fear and more sure of his commitments. Recently an 18-year-old Chilean girl reflected the galvanizing effect of this experience when she said, "We were blindfolded for long hours and I thought of Jesus — how Peter denied him — and then I grabbed the arm of a friend at my side and, crazy for joy, told her, 'No, we shall not deny him!' "

What is our relationship to all of this? Again, it is easy to let prisoners drift out of mind. But this need not be if we discover that it is often rather easy to help someone. This happened to me when the friends of a young Brazilian political prisoner that I knew said, "unless he is able to pay the cost of legal fees he will rot in prison for the rest of his young life." It was not difficult to raise the small sum necessary. That takes away a lot of excuses.

We also will not forget if we know some of the prisoners personally. All of us have observed the exiles and refugees that are appearing with ever more regularity in the cities of this country. Many of them come disabled or crippled by torture. My family took in a young girl after she had been subjected to the "parrot's perch" and other "technologically advanced modern torture techniques." Her crime was that of being elected secretary of her University student government in Northeast Brazil. At whatever level such persons enter the circle of your daily life, they will mark you and make you more likely to remember those still "inside."

Finally, one of the awakening experiences that keeps us from forgetting the world's political prisoners is the growing awareness in this country that we are actually very close to the whole syndrome of repression, illegal imprisonment, and torture. This does not require a sophisticated understanding of the current political scene or of the more complex relationships between such things as aid and our heavy role in training and then supporting foreign military and civilian police forces. The issue is closer at hand.

Studies undertaken at Stanford, Rutgers, and other American Universities indicate that Americans are not immune from the torturer's tendencies. Stanford University students were screened for emotional normality and given roles as guards and prisoners in a mock jail. The two-week study was aborted after six days because it generated so much abuse and petty cruelty among the volunteers.

A cross section of the population in New Haven, Conn. was invited into a learning experiment where each person was asked to give small electric shocks to a second volunteer whenever he answered questions incorrectly. (The second volunteer was really an actor, the electric-shock button didn't work, and the experiment's real object was to test the button pusher's obedience to authority). Most volunteers allowed the authoritative experimenter to goad them into giving what they thought were more and more dangerous electric shocks even after the actor began to scream and plead for mercy.

This experiment was dramatized on a C.B.S.-two-hour special feature recently entitled, "The Tenth Level." "The Tenth Level" is the theoretical point in these experiments at which the "victim" is killed by electric shock. At the end of the program our conscience was salved somewhat by the information that only 60% of the Americans involved in such experiments continue to the "Tenth Level" whereas in Germany the figure was 80%.

As we become conscious of political prisoners, what specifically can we do? One of the most effective and proven avenues for helping these prisoners is through the well-known organization, Amnesty International. Amnesty supports an inter-church network of groups that simply write letters to the authorities in areas of intense repression. Does it help? The answer that inevitably comes back from relatives, the prisoners themselves, lawyers and organizations concerned in the various cases confirm that it does. They even include reports such as this statement from a security guard to a political prisoner: "You are not dead because too many people are concerned about you!"

More regularly, Amnesty International is beginning to mount larger campaigns as in 1975 in relation to repression in Uruguay. This drew massive international attention, and 350,000 individuals in 70 countries signed a petition that was delivered to Uruguay's Permanent Mission to the United Nations. Unquestionably this campaign influenced the regime (whose President resigned during this period in June 1976) and strengthened not only the hopes of the prisoners but the position of those that are striving for the return of democracy in Uruguay.

And so the row of photographs remains in my office. If as Dietrich Bonhoeffer suggested, the ultimate question for a responsible person is "to ask how the coming generation is to live," then assisting prisoners of conscience is a priority for Christians of conscience.

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"I see the world politicizing the economy and economizing the power: Economic decisions are increasingly being made politically; political decisions are profoundly affected by economic power."

The Politics of H

I would like to develop some ideas on the politics of human rights in three different ways. First, I would like to discuss human rights as a political-economic concept, suggesting that there is not a separation between political and economic human rights; they are in the long run inseparable. Second, to relate that concept to the world outside the United States, particularly the Communist bloc and the Third World. And finally to consider the United States with regard to the politics of human rights.

First of all, is there a counter-position between political human rights and economic human rights? Sometimes one hears that we in the United States have *political* human rights and we criticize the Soviet Union for not having political rights. And then the Soviet Union turns around and says that we don't have *economic* human rights in the United States. It is as though it were possible from our point of view for there to be political human rights without economic human rights or from their point of view to have the economic without the political.

I suggest that that is wrong. In the modern world, there are no effective political human rights without concomitant economic rights; and similarly, there is no such thing as economic democracy without political democracy. And I would like to examine those two propositions.

In my opinion, political rights in and of themselves are precious. What is

Michael Harrington is author of *The Other America* and chairman of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee. The above article is excerpted from his keynote speech in Scranton recently during a human rights conference, made possible by a grant from the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania.

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# of Human Rights

by Michael Harrington

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expressed in the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States is one of the great acquisitions of the human spirit. Political rights are a tremendous gain for humankind and one of the great triumphs of capitalist society.

The revolution that brought capitalism into the world was not simply an economic revolution; indeed, it did not begin as a technological revolution at all. It was first and foremost a cultural and political revolution. The industrial revolution came after capitalism was underway for a couple of hundred years. And one of the gigantic triumphs of capitalism was the ideal of reason, the ideal of democracy, the concept of the self-determination not simply of nations but of individuals. (The concept that you get for example in the German classical philosophy — no law that I do not give to myself is worthwhile.) One does not recognize laws because of tradition or because of coercion, but because one's reason accepts the law and internalizes its rule. That is a tremendous stride forward in the worth and dignity of human beings.

But I want to point out that political rights are utterly incomplete, and that as time goes on into the late 20th century, that incompleteness becomes more and more perilous. Political rights are subverted and vitiated without economic rights.

Let me give some examples. When Jimmy Carter accepted the nomination of the Democratic Party in July of 1976, he said, "You've been hearing about tax reform all of your lives and you've never seen it. Now you're going to get tax reform, I promise you." Two weeks later he went to lunch at the 21 Club in New York (I assume all of you know it's not the tax reform club) with big businessmen, and in effect said to them, "O.K., fellows, take it easy." And since he has been elected the main tax reform that I have seen him propose is an extension of the investment tax credit for business which will be terribly destructive for the Northeast, for industries in the Midwest, and will further federally subsidize the exodus of jobs out of the depressed areas in which many of us live.

Why did Jimmy Carter go back on that speech? I think it is because corporate power in control of the investment process in the United States requires any president who is elected by a majority of the people who are against corporate power to adapt to that power. I think that the economic power of corporations in this country is such that they can lose at the battlefront and win by forcing the candidate who defeated them to adopt the program that he defeated. Jimmy Carter's actions in economic policy are much closer to those of Gerald Ford than to the program which Jimmy Carter outlined in his acceptance speech. It is because corporations in this society are more important than workers and poor people, the minorities, people living in the Northeast and in the industrial Midwest.

The President's constituency is not the majority of the American people. He reflected who his constituency is when he said, "We will know how good my speech on economic policy is when we see the reaction of the market." *That's* the American electorate. And that's an example of the limitation of political democracy when you have economic inequality.

Second, I suggest that the welfare state in the United States does more for the corporate rich than for the poor. Interesting that when Carter went to settle the coal strike, he had several phone calls placed. He didn't phone West Virginia, he didn't phone Pennsylvania. He phoned Texas! But the oil companies own coal, and that's the connection. So here is the President trying to deal with a coal strike, in which the workers were absolutely right and the bituminous coal operators were absolutely right and the bituminous coal operators were absolutely wrong, in my opinion. And in that situation the President is worrying about Texas oil men.

Now let me generalize. I would suggest that in America we do not have a system of free enterprise, but a system of corporate collectivism. We have a planning system which follows corporate prioritities because corporations are in control of investments. And under such circumstances where we are moving towards collectivism (albeit to free enterprise rhetoric), economic and political rights cannot be separated. One has to have political rights to challenge economic power, or else find that it is not only the dollar that is devalued, it is the vote that is devalued. And millions of American people have decided that the vote is already so devalued that it is not worth casting in a presidential election. So the concept of political rights without economic democracy is at best a very limited proposition.

Now, what about economic rights? And here let me be critical not only of the United States but also get on to the Soviet Union. In the United States we have the cheapest, most mean-spirited welfare state in the western world. The only advanced industrial democracy in the world that spends less on welfare than we do is Japan. We are the *only* advanced industrial democracy in which a citizen does not have a right to medical

care. This is, to me, an unbelievable scandal.

Let me give you a very simple catechetical theory which I also happen to think is true. Where the state owns, controls, manages, directs the means of production, the decisive question is who owns the state. There is only one way for a people to own the state, and that is through the political democratic right to change the policies and personnel of that state at will. In a state of high economy in the absence of political rights, state property becomes the private property of a bureaucratic elite.

Therefore, in a state of high economy, in a Communist economy or a capitalist one, political democracy is not simply a matter of individual rights. Alexander Solzhenitsyn should have the right to say the foolish things he likes to say, in the Soviet Union as well as in the United States. But it is not simply a matter of individual rights. The only way the Russian people can ever have economic power over their means of production is through political democracy. There is no economic freedom in a state of high economy without political freedom.

I see the world politicizing the economy and economizing the power: That economic decisions are increasingly being made politically, that political decisions are increasingly profoundly affected by economic power. In the United States, in the Soviet Union — everywhere in the world — the problem is how to democratize power. Human rights are individual but they are also social; they are political but they are also economic. There is an inseparable unity; and if we fail to achieve that unity, then the 21st century, I guarantee you, will be a collectivist century — if the world doesn't blow itself up before then.

Now, what about human rights in a more practical way? First of all I would think that it is good for the United States to be talking in its foreign policy about human rights. In terms of Africa, it is providential that Andrew Young is the Ambassador to the U.N. because obviously on issues of South Africa, Rhodesia, etc. this country absolutely loses its soul if it does not stand up for human rights. And we said we were going to. But the Swedish delegation for the U.N. came up with a proposal recently which was not terribly radical. They simply proposed a motion which said as long as there is apartheid, multinationals should not put *new* investments in South Africa. They did not say that multi-nationals should take their investments out of South Africa. Just "don't go in." The U.S. voted against that. So did West Germany, so did Britain, so did France, so did all of the countries that have investments in South Africa. There you get the economic reality.

Related to this, you can see the economic relationship of the human rights issue very dramatically in the case of Chile. We overthrew Allende by an economic blockade. We cut off the press, we closed off the markets, we deliberately weakened the economic position of a country which had politically decided to take a certain course, and by economic subversion we were able to destroy a democratically elected regime. It seems to me that if we were serious about a commitment to human rights politically, a fine place for us to have to do penance would be for what we did in Chile.

With regard to the Third World, I think we are in great contradiction. We want the Third World to be democratic, but we act as though democracy is something that is possible and easy at any time, any place, and under all conditions. And the fact of the matter is that when people are starving, are in a struggle for survival, or when people are moving from tribalism to nationhood as in the case of Africa, or when people are in danger of being drowned by a demographic wave as in India and Bangladesh, we can't talk about democracy. If we are serious about political democracy in the Third World we have to follow an economic

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Reporter: Mr. Gandhi, What do you think of Western Civilization?
Mr. Ghandi: I think it would be a good idea!
Quoted in *Fellowship* magazine

policy to make that political democracy possible. And we have not.

American prosperity is not dependent upon the Third World. It is simply a cruel convenience that we exploit the Third World. But the fact of the matter is we are taking money *out* of the Third World. The starving are supporting a nation in which there are many people worried about being too fat. A nation like the U.S. where diet is a national obsession is taking money from nations where people are in danger of starving. And so long as we do that we are not going to get human rights of any kind in the Third World. Of course, there even more than here, even more than in the Soviet Union, the economic and the political are closely intertwined.

What about the U.S.? Where are human rights here? Recently the **Wall Street Journal** had a whole series of discussions, not about *whether* there is going to be a recession, but *when.* That among businessmen is the big topic for discussion: Is the recession coming in '78, '79, '80? As long as our economy limps along with stagflation, with chronic high unemployment, with periodic recessions, we can solve no human rights problem in America.

Black people and other minorities in the U.S. receive on the average 2/3 of the White wage. We can't solve that problem under these economic conditions under which we live, because the Blacks are the last hired and the first fired as we all know, and their unemployment rates are double the Whites. We know that among Black youth unemployment rates in the urban ghettos are 40 and 50% higher than unemployment rates for the nation in the 1930's in our great depression.

An entire generation of young Black people and young Hispanic people as well are being denied their first economic contact with the society, being in effect declared superfluous. What is the meaning of human rights for them?

The most important social movement of recent times in my opinion is the women's movement. However, women now get about 60% of what men get. There is no chance for women to have their human rights validated by this society unless we solve the economic problem. I think that for Blacks and other minorities as well, for the environment, for peace, for every progressive cause in the United States, we cannot get "rights" — those important human rights — unless we have a full employment economy.

But full employment economy is not easy to get in a society dominated by corporate power. To deal with these problems, structural changes in society are going to be required.

I do not think America is on the verge of a social transformation. That's quite obvious. But at a bare minimum we need something equivalent to the kind of reforms that Franklin Roosevelt carried out under the New Deal. Only we are now so much more developed, so much more corporate-dominated, that I am afraid that the economic reforms we need as a pre-condition for human rights are going to have to be much more profound than anything Franklin Roosevelt ever thought of. Maybe not socialism, but we are going to have to move in what I would call a socialist direction.

One final point. Today in this society we have a competition for "not enough." *There is no just solution to a competition for "not enough."* It is mathematically impossible. When there are too few decent jobs, then we see men fighting women, Blacks fighting Whites, the old fighting the young, non-trade unions fighting the trade unions. Everybody is going to maximize his or her advantage of minimizing somebody else's situation. That's not a "rights" situation. That's a Hobbesian situation of the war of each against all. I think we have to have an ethical change in the United States — a social ethical change.

Let me end with what human rights are about, ultimately.

I would suggest that "the ideal" certainly will not be realized within our lifetime. I'm not at all sure if it will ever be realized. *The ideal is that no person born should be programmed because of the conditions of his or her birth.* And the fact of the matter is that in the year 1978 most people have their destiny decided at the moment they are conceived. To be born in India, to be born in Africa, to be born in the South Bronx means to have a fate imposed on you. But the ideal at the end of all the economic and political social change is a society in which all people can become the *best* of what they are intended to become. ■

Gays in the Church Speak for Themselves

- ellen barrett
- malcolm boyd
- ron wesner
- louie crew

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Women Priests: Good News And Bad News

What does the future hold for women priests and those women soon to be ordained priests in the Episcopal Church?

Recent reports received by THE WITNESS reveal good news and bad news. According to figures compiled by the Rev. Suzanne Hiatt, there are presently 122 women priests and 136 deacons in the Episcopal Church. Clergywomen reside in 74 domestic dioceses; dioceses reporting no clergywomen only number 19.

The majority of the women priests (40) are working as parish associates, assistants, canons, and helpers, with the next largest number (12) in college and hospital chaplaincies. Eleven were listed in charge of parishes or missions.

However, statistics released recently in "Women Ministers in 1977," a report issued by the National Council of Churches, showed that in churches which ordain women, women constitute just over 4% of the total clergy. The Episcopal Church which only began admitting women to the ministry in 1976, now lists 121 women priests of a total of 12,240, or less than 1%.

The study also revealed that less than half of the 211 major U.S. churches surveyed ordain women to the clergy. Of the denominations, 76 ordain women, 87 do not, and 10, including the Latter Day Saints and Jehovah's Witnesses place women in a special category. Thirty-eight churches declined to respond. Nearly 2/3 of the women clergy are in Pentecostal churches or organizations such as the Salvation Army. Only 17.4% are found in major Protestant denominations.

Of the 10 major denominations that ordain women, only three did so prior to 1956: The American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

The author of this report, Constant H. Jacquet, Jr., editor of the *Yearbook of Canadian and American Churches*, also points out that since 1972, there has been a 118.9% increase in seminary enrollment of women compared with a 20.2% increase in male seminary enrollment for the same period. But he noted that due to declining high birthrates, membership and other social factors, the "absorption of new seminary graduates into local churches and their advancement is not promising."

While the Episcopal Church and other mainline Protestant denominations are presently experiencing an oversupply of clergy, the Roman Catholic Church is suffering from a severe shortage of priests.

The *National Catholic Reporter* revealed recently: "In 1966, the U.S. had approximately 59,000 American religious and diocesan priests, and 46,000 seminarians. Today . . . there are 51,000 active American priests and 16,800 seminarians . . . a net loss of 14% of the priests in 12 years and an astounding net loss of 64% of the

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seminarians. The experts predict a net loss of 25% of the priests nationally by 1985, and no one has attempted to estimate where the seminarians will be by then."

Many Catholics are hopeful that this shortage will be the major catalyst in the current grass roots movement to ordain women in the Roman Catholic Church.

In the Episcopal Church, while there are many success stories concerning women priests, a few cases reported recently suggest a more ambiguous situation.

In Washington, D.C., for example, the Rev. Alison Palmer was invited by the Rev. Henry Atkins, vicar of the Community of the Advent, to preach and celebrate for the Community in a chapel at the National Cathedral. But Bishop John Walker ordered him to rescind the invitation because "what goes on in the Cathedral must reflect his (Walker's) policies for the Cathedral. Ms. Palmer is not welcome to celebrate and preach in this Cathedral because of her recent action in England, in contravention of the laws of the Church of England." This statement, read by Canon Michael Hamilton at the Cathedral service Feb. 18, referred to the fact that some months ago Ms. Palmer was the first women priest to celebrate the Eucharist in England (at the invitation of a parish priest), but that she did so without authorization from church officials there.

On the other hand, whereas the Rev. Ms. Palmer was not allowed to preach in Washington, another U.S. Episcopalian, in April, became the first woman priest to preach in Westminster Abbey.

Canon Mary Michael Simpson of St. John the Divine Catherdral, New York, told some 700 worshippers that the church should stop treating women as second-class citizens. Canon Simpson was invited to England for a month-long preaching tour by the Christian Parity Group, an organization promoting the ordination of women priests. But Canon Simpson will not be celebrating the Eucharist while she is in England.

Finally, an incident in Chicago in March triggered the possibility that advances made in the women's ordination struggle at the 1976 Convention might be turned back by a backlash at the diocesan level.

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Chicago withheld its endorsement of the Rev. Pamela Ann Mylet, a deacon seeking ordination to the priesthood by a vote of three in favor, two against, and one abstention.

Mrs. Mylet was informed that the sole reason for not recommending her was that she was a woman and that one clergyman and two laymen on the committee did not believe that a woman could be validly ordained a priest.

The Rev. Mrs. Mylet, who is chaplain assistant at Swedish Covenant Hospital and deacon assistant at St. Luke's Church, Evanston, had been recommended for ordination by Bishop James Montgomery of Chicago, the Rev. Thomas K. Ray, her rector, and a majority of the vestry of her parish.

Prior to Mrs. Mylet's appearance before the Standing Committee Father Ray had written a letter to the parishioners of St. Luke's, assuring the parish that it would not be placed in an "embarrassing or compromising position." He set guidelines which would govern Mrs. Mylet's functions as a priest: She would not celebrate at any Sunday Eucharists and would celebrate house Masses and weekday Masses only with clear and advance notice. Father Ray's letter was accompanied by a letter from Bishop Montgomery, which pointed out that he personally would not ordain women, but that he would authorize Suffragan Bishop Quintin Primo to do so on occasions when the Standing Committee gave its endorsement.

Mrs. Mylet has indicated she will continue to seek ordination to the priesthood. Her supporters have suggested that, in refusing to perform their duties under the National Canons, the dissenting and abstaining members of the Standing Committee have evidenced cause for their removal from that Committee.

Continued from page 3

that nurturing can be done? His own prayerful discernment, with other clergy and laity, of the mind of Christ on the particular issue at hand; clear preaching and teaching, the witness of his own personal involvement with and commitment to oppressed peoples on thorny issues; timely pastoral letters to his people setting forth the Christian dimension of the issues; a support group of clergy and laity which will be "the little church in the big church;" and finally the authority of his office which derives from the Gospel.

But what if, having done all these things to the best of his ability, the bishop finds his is still an unpopular cause? True authority is, in Tillich's lovely word, "theonomous." Its power springs from and is replenished by the moral integrity which it bespeaks. To follow the path of truth is undoubtedly in varying degrees to counter opposition, criticism and resistance. But this would seem a modest price to pay for having the church urged from its bondage to the world as it is toward a clearer glimpse of the world as it should be. ■

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Maria Cueto

Maria, Raisa Find Church Employment

Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin resumed ministries in the church recently after having been jailed for more than 11 months for refusing to testify before a Federal Grand Jury in New York City.

Ms. Cueto, former executive director of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, has launched a Grand Jury Education Project under the auspices of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, parent organization of THE WITNESS magazine and the Church and Society Network.

Ms. Nemikin, former NCHA secretary, began secretarial work May 15 at the National Council of Churches in the Dutch Reformed Church office under the direction of Arie Brouwer. Brouwer was one of the commission members appointed by the NCC to contact Episcopal Presiding Bishop John Allin to plead for restoration of the women's salaries and payment of their legal fees during their incarceration, a situation as yet unresolved.

Attorney Robert C. Potter of New York is representing the women in negotiations with the Episcopal Church administration.

Ms. Cueto's Grand Jury project, to run through September 15, will include:

- Consciousness raising among church and community throughout the country around Grand Jury abuse and the current status of reform legislation.
- Education of church communities concerning how government agencies have interfered with the social mission of the church, First Amendment rights, and caused a chilling effect in church work among ethnic groups.
- Discussion of present prison conditions and prison reform, using her own experience as a taking off point.

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In recent developments, the last remaining prisoners jailed for contempt of the New York Grand Jury were released May 8 when the term of that Grand Jury investigating FALN bombings expired. An enthusiastic crowd including children, relatives, and supporters from church and community groups were on hand to greet Pedro Archuleta, a Chicano, and Andres, Julio and Luis Rosado, Puerto Rican brothers.

In all, nine persons — all but one of whom were connected to the NCHA of the Episcopal Church, had been jailed during investigations in Chicago and New York. The "Episcopal connection" was Carlos Alberto Torres, who served for one year on the commission and who is being sought by the FBI as a suspect in the bombings.

All those incarcerated claimed that the FBI investigation of the case turned into a "witchhunt" and had a chilling effect upon the work of the church and community groups serving Hispanics.

Some evidence of this was seen in the accumulated time — approximately six years — spent in prison by the nine. Supporters of the group stress the hardships upon families of those jailed, considering the income cut off during that time. (an accumulated two years of income for the Rosados alone), plus the hours of productive work taken away from community projects. Many families had to go on welfare, and the clinic which serves Hispanics in Tierra Amarilla and the Miranda school which serves Puerto Ricans in Chicago suffered severe financial and administrative setbacks, from which the latter may not recover.

Moreover, since the Grand Juries in Chicago and New York were almost immediately re-impaneled, there is a possibility that those who have already been jailed may be re-subpoenaed to testify.

Ms. Cueto, in her new project, has made herself available to speak to church and community groups to explain in detail any of the facets of the Grand Jury investigation and its consequences on the Hispanic community. Coordinator of the project is Ms. Peggy Powell. For further information write to Grand Jury Education Project, Box 268, New York, N.Y. 10002, or call the Grand Jury Education Project answering service, (212) 868-3370 and ask for Ms. Powell, who will return your call. ■

Raisa Nemikin

Just What Do These Women Want?

by Mary Lou Suhor

What women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult.

So reads a women's movement poster. I dunno, poster; sometimes it's very difficult.

Take the little situation we had at the Associated Church Press convention in St. Louis recently. Among issues debated by some 80 editors of Protestant Church publications was whether the ACP should meet jointly with the Catholic Press Association in Florida next year.

Some of the ACP membership had pointed out that Florida was a state which had not supported the Equal Rights Amendment for women, and asked that the site be changed; the CPA had determined to go on with the meeting anyway — with or without the ACP.

So it was that I found myself at an open hearing to discuss the matter. The board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company which publishes THE WITNESS, had taken a position supporting the ERA and of non-participation in conventions in states which have not as yet ratified the amendment. Kay Atwater, promotion manager, and I had expressed that on the floor.

But to many ACP editors, the issue was fuzzier: Some were for women but against boycotts; others asked if the ACP could take a position on a "political" issue. One said that the ERA "was not a priority" with him; another opened his intervention with "It's hard for me to say this without sounding like 'some of my best friends are women,' but . . ."

As I listened to the rhetoric, it sounded much like what I'd heard during the Civil Rights struggle in my native Louisiana (an anti-ERA state) and during the Vietnam War. Why was I plunging into deep despair? The atmosphere seemed loaded with the unasked question, "Just what do these women want?"

Milt Ryder, editor of *The American Baptist,* offered one of the lonely male voices of solidarity with the ERA, saying that the women in his shop had voiced their pain and opposition to going to Florida. I tried to dig out of myself why I was hurting so much.

I recalled how, in 1977, when I attended the combined meeting of the CPA and ACP, it was such a great thrill to look around at the plenary sessions and see so many women. When I first started attending CPA meetings in the '50s, we were a handful at most. We had come a long way. But I thought of the scars some of us were carrying.

When I went to college, very few degree programs at my Catholic university were open to women — the most popular being education and medical technology. So I had to major in education and keep electing journalism whenever I had an option, to accumulate as many hours as though I had majored in journalism. Of course, none of the universities in Louisiana at that time were *integrated.*

Prior to that, there had been a citywide Spanish language contest in New Orleans for high school students. By some miracle I had won that contest, and the first prize was a full, tuition-paid scholarship to the Catholic university I later attended. *That* was first prize if the winner was a "boy." But if the winner turned out to be a "girl," *the first prize was $40.*

I remembered going with my father to plead my case. We were from a working class family. I was the oldest of five and I'd be working my way through college, at best.

I remember the two of us entering the "uptown" university, my father greeting the dean, hat in hand, apologizing for my sex, asking if the rules couldn't be bent. The good Jesuit father said they couldn't.

Over the years, I thought of the subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, ways my sisters had been sifted from the ranks of editorships. Somewhere along the way someone had told me, "No wonder you switched from Catholic to Protestant journalism!"

But no sooner had I arrived to be introduced to the Board of Directors of the ECPC as new managing editor of THE WITNESS than it was discovered that we would have to bend the rules. A 50-year-old by-law required that the managing editor had to be a priest.

In the "old days" — when I was in high school and college, I accepted these things as part of "life in these United States." I had shuffled out of the dean's office at the university with the same fatalism that many of my Black brothers and sisters had when getting onto streetcars and buses and sitting behind "For Colored Only" signs. And I was one of the *lucky* ones. I had *made* it. I looked

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around the group of ACP church editors and noted that my Black brothers and sisters had yet to arrive in great numbers..

The women's movement did for me what the Black movement did for Blacks. It raised my consciousness and allowed me to see what scars I was carrying, where I was hurting, so that I could move beyond this "victim mentality" to understand why the ERA was important and why it is experiencing such a backlash. It also made me brave enough to share a few of these experiences at the ACP open hearing.

Another of my sisters at the meeting, Barbara Howard, associate editor of the *Saints Herald,* followed my testimony to say that she felt that we should have learned something from the Vietnam War, that in the things she had experienced as a women she could begin to hear "with Black ears" what *they* were saying, and that a Christian group such as the ACP should be able "to deal with suffering in a creative way." I wish I could recapture her deep insights here, but I was shaking too much to write them down.

A straw vote which followed showed 25 in favor of going to Florida and 23 against. "You lose a few, you lose a few," I thought. But the Board of Directors of the ACP took this under advisement, exercised their leadership prerogative and decided *not* to go to Florida.

As it turned out, the 1979 meeting of the ACP will be in Toronto, in the country which sheltered so many U.S. conscientious objectors to the Vietnam War.

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Continued from page 2

or in trouble with Caesar because of practicing their religious beliefs.

I like Diana's words (they should have been printed in red, or in heavier type) "This experience has also opened me up to the abuses other people are suffering in this society. I had read about them, but somehow didn't believe it. Now it is happening to us." Maybe this is what Jesus had in mind for the rich young man: to become poor in order to know what it is like to be poor, by giving all he had to the poor — as much for his own benefit from experiencing poverty as to benefit the poor.

Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska

Likes Reduced Rate

Your last Renewal Notice, just received, is the first time I have noted the reduced rate for subscribers over 65. I retired Nov. 1, 1971 at the age of 65. I thought it only fair that I explain this since I am taking advantage of the reduced rate.

At my age, I consider it unwise to think too far in the future. Thus, I am enclosing a check for $6.75 for a one year subscription to THE WITNESS. It is a very good magazine and I do enjoy the thinking of most of your contributors.

Mattie T. Beason
Louisville, Ky.

'Whelmed' by WITNESS

I have been reading THE WITNESS for a little while now. I graduated from the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in May of '77, and was ordained a deacon in the Diocese of Arizona in June. I am currently participating in a program of C.P.E. at Austin State Hospital.

Sometimes you depress me. Sometimes you anger me. Sometimes you amuse me. But in the end you "whelm" me. I wonder how many dollars have gone into the publication of your magazine. I wonder how many pages of paper, and gallons of ink, have spread the words of different ideologies. From *The National Inquirer* to *THE WITNESS,* a lot of words and a lot of ideas have gone down. Perhaps, like so many of my generation, I am simply tired of each party, each cult, and each group, raising their shrill voices. To me, you are just another voice.

Since working at the hospital, I have come to realize that people don't care much what someone believes, as long as they can trust that person to care, and stand by them in hard times. Personally, I don't worship Capitalism, or Socialism, or any system. I worship God in my brother and sister, the God who makes personal his care through Jesus Christ. I prefer the struggle of living to the spectator sport of criticizing bishops, and other human beings. The Episcopal Church is full of little groups, and big groups, all screaming for their particular point of view.

I will be a lot more willing to take THE WITNESS seriously when I see more of an attempt to represent the struggles of persons rather than the factions of different ideologies.

The Rev. Derrill B. Manley, Jr.
Austin, Tex.

Relief from Nuts & Bolts

I can't tell you how much THE WITNESS means to me these days. It is a continual reminder that I am for the moment almost entirely swallowed by the nuts and bolts of a new parish. In time I hope to be able to look beyond that to what the real mission of the church is again. You and yours are going to be in part responsible for keeping me on the track.

In any case, thanks for being who you are and for doing what you're doing. Without you a good many of us would be less well informed and far less able to respond creatively to our times.

The Rev. John Crocker, Jr.
Princeton, N.J.

Rejoices at Release

THE WITNESS for me is the "Conscience of the Church," keeping before us the challenging, prickly, troubling issues of the day. Where else in the publications of the church are these issues set forth as they are here?

I am particularly grateful for the reporting of the Grand Jury case of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, for otherwise I would probably know almost nothing about it. And I rejoice at their release!

Marguerite Hyer
St. Louis, Mo.

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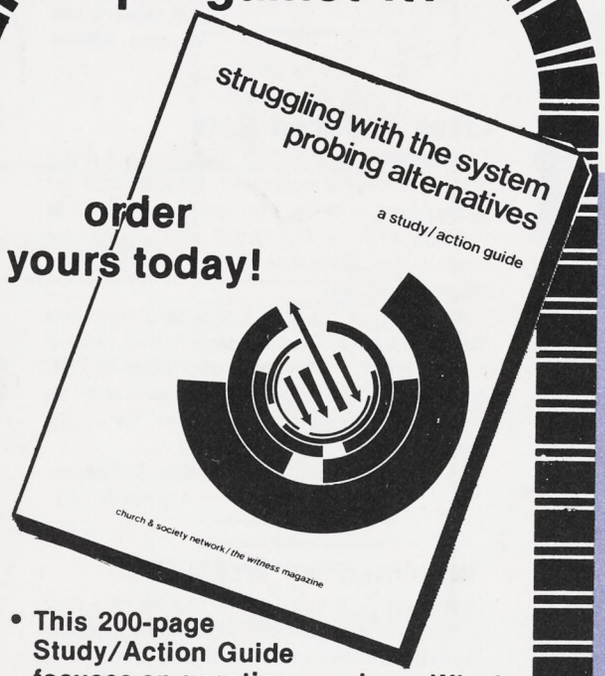

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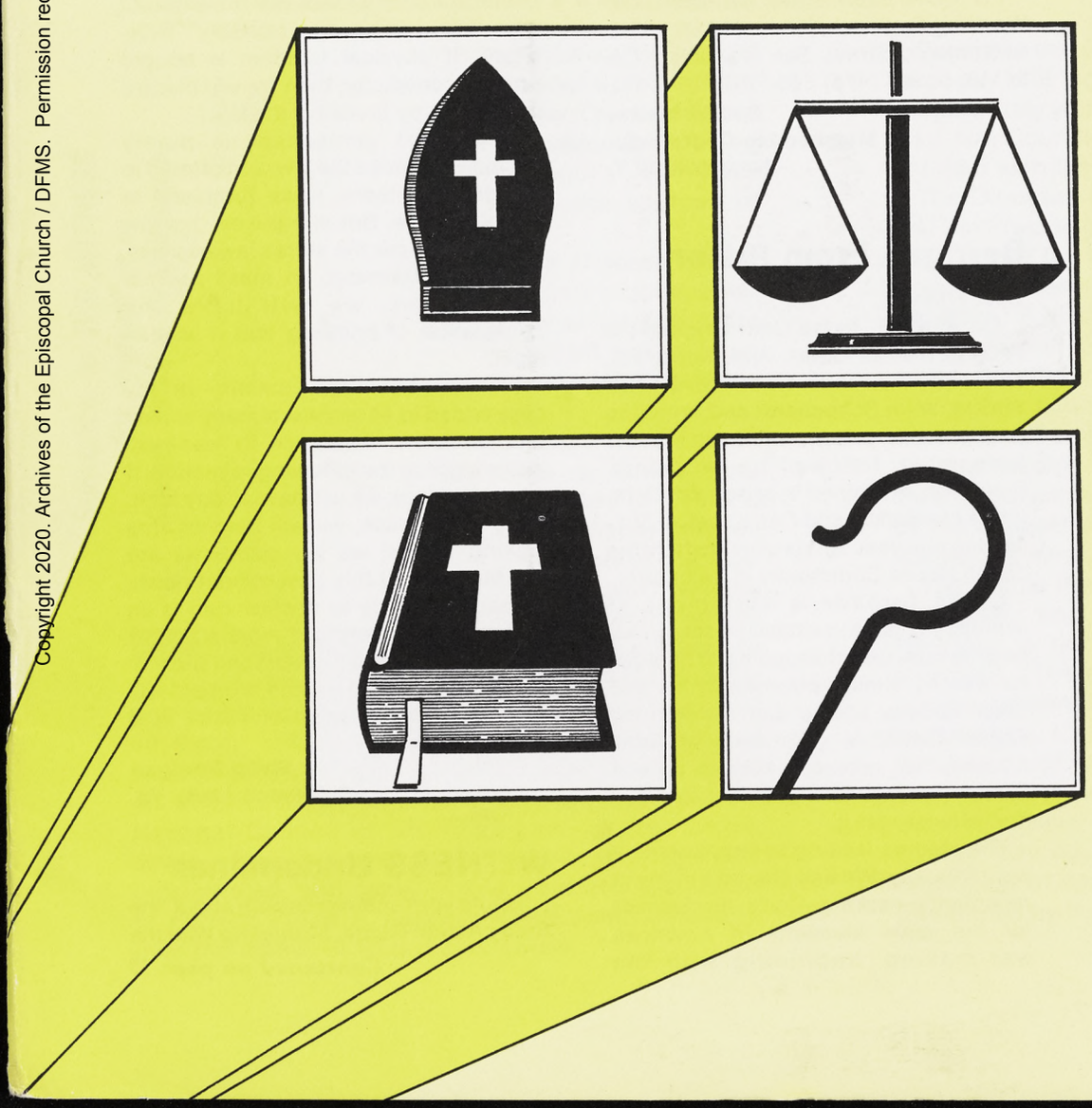

What Happened To Authority?

John E. Skinner
William Stringfellow
Donald J. Thorman

Response:

Alison Cheek

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Notes Amnesty Resource

The Rev. Philip A. Getchell in his article, "Faces from Prison," (June WITNESS) suggested tha while it may be easy for us to forget "prisoners of conscience" around the world, "this need not be if we discover that it is often rather easy to help someone."

As the author noted, Amnesty International has organized a mechanism in this country to make it "easy" for members of religious communities to do the hard work of making torture as unthinkable in this century as slavery became in the last. Some of your readers may already be familiar with our Inter-Religious Urgent Action Network (IRUAN), as there are now more than 400 religious communities involved.

The mechanism, based on rapid world-wide communication, works as follows. The AI Secretariat in London learns from reliable sources of someone who has been or is about to be tortured. (Cases of persons kidnapped, or about to be executed, or persons whose health is declining due to a hunger strike or inadequate medical attention, and so forth, are also taken up.) This information is then sent to more than a dozen national sections. Sometimes persons involved are priests, rabbis, Jehovah's Witnesses, or have some religious affiliation which has partially caused the extreme situation in which they find themselves. IRUAN bulletins are sent to religious communities in time for the regular gathering of their congregation on a monthly basis. The bulletins, containing sample messages and names of officials to write, are then distributed for members in order to send telegrams and air express letters. (Denominational and other office staffs are also joining the IRUAN.)

One can imagine the surprise of an official, who feels he is keeping torture quiet, when he receives appeals from around the world on specific cases.

Does the mechanism work? In 1977, 300 cases were taken up. AI prepared a detailed tabulation in which there was improvement in 47% of the cases, while in 31% the situation did not improve. There was no concrete follow-up information on 21% of the cases. In any event, in one out of every two cases, the appeals helped.

For more information, write: IRUAN, Western Regional Office/AIUSA, 3618 Sacramento Street, San Francisco, CA 94118, or call (415) 563-FREE.

Robert Maurer
AI Membership Coordinator
New York, N.Y.

Berrigan From Prison

Dear Friends:

On April 28, Judge Oren Lewis of the Federal District Court, Alexandria, Va., sentenced Esther Cassidy, Ladon Sheats, John Schuchardt and myself to one year in prison, with six months suspended, followed by two years' probation. We joined in prison Ed Clark, similar sentence, and Carl Kabat, O.M.I., serving one year. All six of us are from the Jonah House Community in Baltimore.

Lewis forbade a statement at sentencing, gave us excessive sentences despite concurrent dropping of charges for exactly similar offenses in his and other Federal courts and disregarded Esther Cassidy's pregnancy of three months, her recovery from a serious Easter Sunday auto accident and her first-offense status.

The witness leading to imprisonment went this way: We first shared a litany of repentance—asking God's forgiveness for the main elements of American war-making, beginning with the Manhattan Project, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and ending with the new doomsday weapons systems—Trident, cruise missile, Missile X.

We poured blood on the pillars and floors of the Pentagon, revealing its bloodletting covering three decades. And we scattered ashes, as a symbol of mourning and repentance, and as a warning against a world in nuclear ash.

At Catonsville we said that the genocide stops here. Now we say that the preparations for mass suicide stop here. (To prepare for mass suicide is to be guilty of it.) We will not pay for the conspiracies and mass destruction weapons of this or any government. We will not contribute our silence. Rather, we will testify against official waste and madness, simply because the price of complicity is unconscionably exorbitant. If physical freedom is bought only by complicity, then we will discard complicity by breaking the law.

The court sentenced us purely because we broke the law, and offered to withdraw sentence if we promised to honor the law. But in our view, the law clearly legalizes the state's lawlessness. If we are cremated in mass nuclear destruction, we will have the consolation of knowing that it was all legal.

Perhaps our imprisonment—in my case added to 44 months already served for nonviolent resistance to war—will give weight to the following reflection: If we want peace, we will have to pay for it. If we want peace, we will have to stop making war. If we are silent, we are making war. All this government needs to lead the world to nuclear ruin is an irrelevant vote every four years, a sizable slice of our income (for war) and silence.

We trust that sisters and brothers will awake—as the Gospel entreats. And respond in time.

Philip Berrigan
Richmond (Jail), Va.

WITNESS Undermines

I dispute your comments both about the Study Action Guide, *Struggling With the*

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THE WITNESS

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Conflict in the Council

Robert L. DeWitt

"By virtue of the authority vested in me . . ." — so runs the formula that traditionally has been the credential of people exercising authority in society. Our times have seen an erosion of authority; the credential is being questioned. Articles in this month's WITNESS comment on that fact, and probe the sources of authentic authority.

The report in this issue from the Diocesan Press Service on how the matter of "terminal entitlements" for Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin was handled at the May meeting of the Executive Council serves as an illustration of the confusion surrounding genuine authority.

The two former staffers at the Episcopal Church Center refused to testify before a Grand Jury investigating bombings allegedly related to a Puerto Rican terrorist group. They refused because they felt that such testifying would be a violation of the trust implicit in and necessary to their church work with the Hispanic community. Consequently, both served almost 11 months in jail for contempt. The women had previously told the FBI they had no knowledge of the bombings, nor of persons involved; but they refused to so testify before a Federal Grand Jury because of exposing themselves to unlimited questioning. So, as all WITNESS readers know, they went to jail, the National Council of Churches took up their cause, seven others followed their example and were also incarcerated, and considerable emphasis was added to current concern, nationally and congressionally, over the matter of Grand Jury abuse.

Central to this situation now is the simple question of back pay and legal costs for the two women. Or is it simple? They were released from jail in January, and in May, two Council meetings later, that body still could not deal with the issue.

The Diocesan Press Service account makes it clear that the Presiding Bishop's position — and this was the issue before the May meeting — is that he and not the Council "is responsible for the decision made in this situation." A discussion, estimated by some observers to have lasted 45 minutes, resulted in a majority vote supporting the Presiding Bishop.

Why this action, upholding a policy which is less protective of employees than, for example, the policy of most leading newspapers toward their reporters? Two responses to that question provide clues to some of the deepest dangers in both our church and our society, as viewed from a Christian perspective.

The first is that in a contest between justice for the individual, and the stability of the bureaucratic structure, a decision will be made in favor of the structure. "The system" is paramount. A questioning of management is felt to be a questioning of our very foundations. Cover-ups are to be preferred to a clear admission of mistakes. (This, incidentally, is a judgment not on the Presiding Bishop, but on the Council. There are indications that the Presiding Bishop may well be doing what he thinks is proper, regardless of whether one disagrees.) The Council is threatened by the danger of "war in heaven" — conflict

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Authority as Nurture

by John E. Skinner

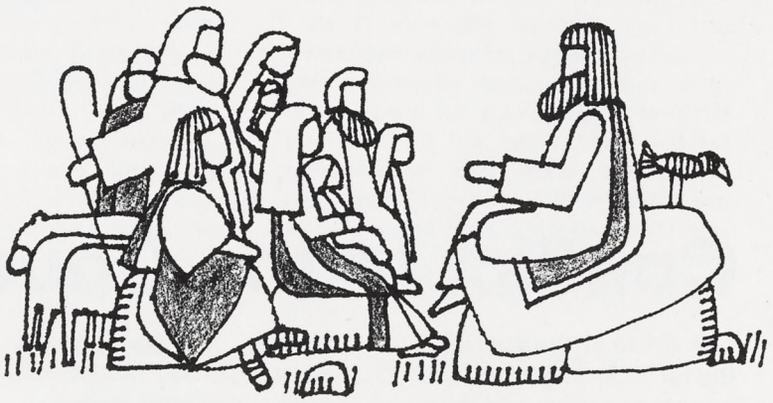
Many human frustrations and dilemmas can be traced directly to a confusion centering around questions of authority. Is there such a reality as authority? Hannah Arendt, many years ago, answered such a question in an article entitled, "What Was Authority?" In our world authority has disappeared because of the loss of primordial sources for it — constellations of events which focus ultimate reality for us and which give us a direction for the future.

In theological language, such events are called revelation. In the secular world they are no longer viable, so the powermongers have their day, and those who prevail attempt to invent modern myths to take the place of revelation and reinforce their power. Another way of expressing this is that ultimately authority is based on faith, and when the images and models for ultimate reality are lost, then substitutes come in and take their place.

In our Christian faith authority is anchored fully in the reality of God. All questions of authority which we ask ultimately have their referent in the Divine Reality. We have been taught a great deal about the nature of God. We affirm that the source of our being is also the source of our meaning. Another way to say this is simply that the One who creates us also redeems us, the One who gives us our life also makes that life worth living. God is the creator and preserver of all humankind.

Christian believers should be able to affirm the reality of authority because of the constellation of events centering in Jesus of Nazareth, and the revelation disclosed there which affirms that through the divine creative activity there is implicit a nurturing and redemptive presence. God expresses *his* presence in the totality of the creation, both in nature and in history. Theologically, this activity has been called the Word of God. And this Word of God, this nurturing and redeeming presence, is definitively revealed for Christians in Jesus Christ.

A criterion for authority can be found for the Christian in these affirmations of faith. All authority is derived from God, derived from his nurturing and redeeming



presence in nature and in history. Consequently, all authority should express itself as both a nurturing and a redeeming presence reflecting that ultimate source. The Gospel of Christ, as a result, becomes the criterion for determining whether authority is present, or only organized power parading as authority.

Many social structures, both secular and religious, express this nurturing function and serve as ways for bringing worth and meaning to human life. In another article, I have defined authority simply as follows: it is that kind of structured reality, whether societal or personal, which through nurture and cultivation enables individuals to become truly centered selves or persons and thus, relatively free beings. This definition is anchored in the Gospel criterion, and can be used for valuing the presence of such authority in scientific inquiry, artistic creation, political planning, moral struggle, and religious commitment. Furthermore, this criterion may be used for judging the pretensions of scientism, aestheticism, statism, moralism, and ecclesiasticism.

Although there are many appropriate symbols, let me now select one symbol for authority which derives from our Christian faith and embodies the Gospel criterion. Let us test it out on the basis of what has been concluded about authority. The symbol is the shepherd. In our tradition God has been imaged as a shepherd, Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd, and as Christians look to

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their bishops and pastors as shepherds, they often see the symbol of the shepherd's crook, the bishop's crozier.

The shepherd is one who cares for all his sheep, who seeks them out if they are lost, who knows them by name, who provides them with protection and nurture, and who at times risks his life on their behalf. In the Book of Ezekiel (34:11-17) God is identified as a shepherd. "*Now I myself will ask after my sheep and go in search of them. I will search for the lost, recover the straggler, bandage the hurt, strengthen the sick, and leave the healthy and strong to play.*"

This is, theologically, a remarkable identification, if we would only take it seriously — the God who searches out the lost, the God who recovers the straggler, the God who permits the healthy and the strong to play. The difficulty is that we Christians do not really believe this.

As A. N. Whitehead has observed, the tender vision of Galilean humility was replaced in Christian tradition by the overpowering imagery of Caesar's court. The attributes of Caesar became the attributes of God, and for hundreds of years Christians have been trying to adapt the Biblical wisdom of God concerning his nurturing and redeeming presence to these attributes of Caesar. God is immutable, God is impassible, we were often taught in the past. If we confronted another human being who acted as though he were immutable, we would classify that person as rigid; or if we met one who was impassible, we would find a person without warmth, without feeling. A human monster, no less! And yet such attributes have been applied to God. Fortunately, the Bible knows better and the Gospel criterion frees us from such affirmations, even though such imagery has influenced our views of human authority and human leadership.

This imagery of God as shepherd is focused poignantly in the New Testament. Jesus Christ, God's Son, is the Good Shepherd who gives his life for the sheep. In Jesus the imagery of the caring God, the loving God, the God who searches and finds, is definitively expressed. In the New Testment this image of Christ opens up the reality of God for us, and those of us who would be Christian disciples find that God claims us in this manner, not as the overpowering ruler, but as the tender shepherd, not as the remote monarch, but as one who is with us, *(Emmanuel)*.

"The Gospel of Christ is the criterion for determining whether authority is present, or only organized power parading as authority."

This is dramatized in the exchange between Jesus and Peter in John 21. Peter, who had denied Jesus three times before his crucifixion, is searched out and confronted with the Divine Love, and Peter affirms that love three times, and is then directed to feed the sheep, to nurture and care for them, to be one of the shepherds (pastors) of Christ. In I Peter (5:1-4) we hear an admonition directed to the shepherds (pastors) of Christ: "*Tend that flock of God whose shepherds you are, and do it, not under compulsion, but of your own free will, as God would have it, not for gain, but out of sheer devotion; not tyrannizing over those who are allotted to your care, but setting an example to the flock.*"

Consequently, the God who searches out his people, who wrestles with the forces of evil on their behalf, the God who is revealed as the Man on the Cross, continues to express his love and care through all those societal structures that convey a nurturing and redeeming presence, and through those persons who as shepherds of God search out the people and express in their lives the ultimate acceptance of the God they serve.

The theological dilemma, however, expresses itself fully here in the behavior of shepherds (pastors). Is the shepherd to be the representative of the ruling Caesar or of the Man on the Cross? Is the shepherd to be remote and isolated, or the wrestler with the forces of evil and deprivation? Is the shepherd to be a participant in some exclusive group which to all outside its confines is perceived as chatter reinforcing itself? Or is the shepherd to break from such group protection (whatever its collegial dimension) and be exposed to the reality without?

Adequate answers to these questions necessitate the union of theological reflection and pastoral practice. Here the theologian becomes the shepherd-pastor and the shepherd-pastor becomes the theologian. If this does not happen, the theologian may become the disciple of a God remote from struggle and change, and the shepherd-pastor may become engulfed in a frenzied activism in which the figure of the caring shepherd is lost, or he may act like a petty tyrant in which the figure of the caring shepherd is distorted.

The burning questions are these: Do we, as Christians, believe the Gospel or not? Are we going to let the Gospel

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be the criterion for forming our images of God or not? Are we going to permit the Gospel to be the criterion for our views of both secular and ecclesiastical authority or not? The answers to these questions are not easy to achieve. A part of the Christian moral struggle is precisely to attempt an answer in the affirmative. An answer in the negative would have devastating consequences.

The late British theologian, P.T. Forsyth, once said that if reality is not redemptive, it is not moral, and if it is not redemptive then it is alien to the human moral struggle for personhood. An alien reality, however it may be understood, must be resisted by human beings committed to the moral struggle. Many societal structures, both secular and religious, often appear to be alien to the human moral struggle. They have the character of imposing organizations of power solely interested in the maintenance of that power — the "business-as-usual" approach. They are apparently oblivious to the struggle of the outcast, of the neglected, of those without recognition and without worth (nonpersons) in the eyes of those protected within the powerful structures.

These societal structures represent reality for large numbers of people, but they are alien because they do not mediate a nurturing and redeeming presence. They are rather a smothering and oppressive force holding human beings back from full personhood, thus prematurely stopping the moral struggle. The power structure becomes the *substitute* for God's nurturing presence. As an alien blockage of reality finally begins to crumble, the people within it are bewildered and frustrated, faced with the disintegration of the only reality they ever knew. When this happens, it is a crucial time for genuine authority to act, for genuine authority to nurture, cultivate, and enable the affirmation of a deeper faith in the Divine Reality which transcends organizations of power, and affirms the only genuine authority, the authority of the Divine creative and redemptive activity.

In conclusion, when Christians through their faith can affirm such authority, then this authority expresses itself (a) as a prophetic witness against those societal structures (organized powers) which smother and oppress, and (b) as a witness for and an actual involvement in the nurturing and redeeming presence which enables individuals to become centered persons with relative freedom. Moreover, the community of Christians, the church, expresses its authority as a priestly medium only when it conveys the nurturing and redeeming presence of the Divine Reality. This Reality is the ultimate source for all human authority, and the ultimate Judge against all sinful distortions of authority. ■

Authority as Myself

by Donald J. Thorman

Since Vatican II a new role has been developing for Catholic theologians who began to come into their own publicly as the glamorous and powerful *periti* of the council. It is no secret most bishops are not theologians. The council forced them to rely heavily on the expertise and recommendations of a relative handful of theological experts. Those experts influenced the present and future of the church out of all proportion to their numbers and official status.

Unlike men before them, such as Teilhard de Chardin who no longer published after some frightened curial bureaucrats told him to cease and desist, the new breed of theologians has built its own national and international constituency.

For good or ill, contemporary theologians have direct access to the Catholic community through their writings and lectures. The practical result is that both the wheat and the chaff are able to flourish, at least until harvest time.

An immediate result of this state of affairs in the church is what increasingly is referred to as the "crisis" of teaching authority. It used to be so much easier for us in pre-conciliar days when theologians were kept in line by the strong and frequent declamations of Pius XII. For all practical purposes the pope had the franchise on the magisterium. In *Humani generis* in 1950, Pius declared:

"Thus if the supreme pontiffs render an opinion in their official acts concerning a matter which has been controverted up to that time, it is evident to all that that matter according to the mind and will of the same pontiffs, can no longer be held a question of free discussion among theologians."

And, in November 1954, speaking to a group of churchmen, he insisted that the church's power "embraces also all matters of natural law — its institution, interpretation, application — however far the moral reason of things extends." And he insisted the faithful must obey and accept the decision even when they remain unconvinced by the church's arguments.

Typical of the highly supportive reaction of most theologians to this almost infinite approach to the truth

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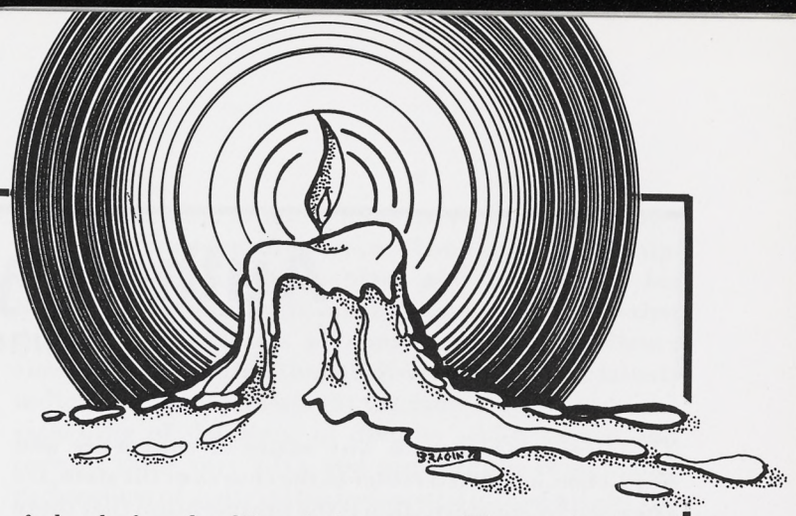

Donald J. Thorman, editor and publisher of the National Catholic Reporter until his death in November, 1977, was posthumously awarded the 1978 St. Francis de Sales Award, highest honor of the Catholic Press Association, for his "impact on the Catholic Church." The NCR issue which announced his death also carried this column by Thorman, a propos of how he saw authority in the church. It is reprinted by permission of the National Catholic Reporter, P.O. Box 281, Kansas City, Mo. 64141.

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was the very popular text by Jesuits John C. Ford and Gerald Kelly (*Contemporary Moral Theology, 1962*) which proclaimed: "It is hardly conceivable that the papal teachings on such things as divorce, contraception, the direct killing of the innocent and the possibility of observing continence with the grace of God is anything short of infallible."

Is it any wonder then that for most of us brought up in the papal infallibility school, it was a moment of confusion and even momentary scandal when the growing underground-swell of disagreement came out of the closet during the 1960s. Bernard Haring, Hans Kung, Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenens, Karl Rahner, Charles Curran, Archbishop Thomas D. Roberts, John McKenzie, Charles Davis, Avery Dulles, and a growing number of laity began to speak disquieting thoughts on democracy and "co-responsibility" in the church, on responsible parenthood and the supremacy of conscience.

Even when what was said made consummate sense, the old emotional ties made it difficult to begin the process of accepting personal responsibility for our actions. In the confusion, many of us identified with Alice's reaction to the trial of the Mad Hatter: "Nobody believes anybody. It's all stuff and nonsense."

Today, most of us who still believe in the institution, its ultimate values and our spiritual heritage must learn to make do. We don't have enough time left in our lives to wait for the theologians and the official magisterial forces to work out a *modus vivendi*. The "now" we live in demands that we live as best we can, making our own decisions based on the best information available to us and the formation of our own consciences.

Our sacrifice for the future of the institution and its unborn members is to live patiently and with fortitude while a very necessary struggle between honest freedom and a deadening monarchical-hierarchical force from the past works itself out. We shall survive because we know the real life of the church is in the faith-community, and not in the theologians or curial institutions in Rome or those in dioceses and parishes that have become the hand of death for the life of the spirit. The professional bureaucracy of the church has too often become a kind of neutron bomb leaving church buildings and offices standing, but the spiritual life wiped out.

Frankly, today I'm worried and wary.

I'm worried about my church, which is in disarray. And I'm wary of all theologians — liberal and conservative.

I remember back in early 1963 at a symposium at which some of the speakers were having a hotel room rump session. One well-known and respected observer just returned from the council indicated the changing mood among the theologians on artificial contraception. Disbelief is probably the best way to describe our reaction, especially among those of us who had large families and who had made great personal sacrifices to observe the church's teachings. We simply could not believe the theologians would ever take a contrary position.

Not long after, I was at supper in a rectory with the pastor, a former family life director of his archdiocese, and I asked for his reaction to this information. "My God," he said with anguish, "I can't believe it when I think of all the marriages and lives I've helped ruin because of this teaching."

The examples could be multiplied. But I have learned there is only one person I can entrust with my faith and soul — me. While all the discussions, debates and deliberations go on, my decision making cannot come to a standstill. Many of the issues might not be resolved until long after I'm dead. In the meantime, I'm still responsible for myself and, frankly, I cannot think of any human being I'd be willing to follow indiscriminately.

The institutional church and the theologians all have something to tell me and to teach me. I'll listen, even respectfully. But recent experience has taught me more than ever before that I must think, speak and act for myself. Somehow I don't think I'll be given the opportunity at the judgment seat to turn my defense over to a theologian or institutional official.

Authority as Parable

by William Stringfellow

The elementary reason why issues of conscience and obedience, as related either to the church or the state, are attended by consternation is the presumption that there is a singular proposition in terms of which such questions can be resolved, despite disparate circumstances in which they arise.

Commonly it is supposed that there inheres, somewhere within the corpus of the Gospel, a great fixed principle which — once truly apprehended and appropriately formulated — is capable of application whenever and wherever problems of conscience or claims of obedience in nation or in church require a stand by those aspiring to be faithful to the biblical task in history.

This notion, which is particularly ensconced in American Christendom, is curiously characteristic of pietists as well as activists; is blameworthy for frustration, confusion, mischief and tragedy frequently associated with that which purports to be the Christian witness in the world.

The presupposition is confounding because it is categorically false. It is a radical distortion of the Gospel. When pursued, it dissipates the genius of the biblical life in this world. There is no such simplistic principle in biblical faith to be located, isolated, applied and implemented in answer to any, much less every, question of conscience or obedience.

Instead of proposition or principle, the biblical witness offers precedent and parable. The Bible does not propound guidelines but relates events; the biblical ethic does not construct syllogisms but tells stories; the Gospel is not confined in verities but confesses the viability of the Word of God. The biblical responses to issues of conscience and obedience are empirical and historic or else they are sacramental and portentous. In either style or instance, they exemplify and edify decisions and notions rather than predetermining or otherwise abstracting them.

If this distinction seems fastidious, it is because it is basic and not because it is either esoteric or pedantic. The concern it signifies is for the biblical credibility of the Incarnation, that is, of the primal status of the participation of the Word of God in common history. It is the event of the Incarnation, at once imminent truth and ultimate reality pertaining to the whole of creation as human beings both perceive and encounter the same, which is definitive for the biblical witness in this world. It is the confession of the militance of the Word of God in this time and in this place, which constitutes the mature ethical knowledge of biblical people.

There is no norm, no ideal, no grandiose principle from which hypothetical, preconceived or pretentious answers can be derived because to the biblical mind there are no disincarnate issues. There are only actual questions requiring historic response on the part of persons and of principalities. There are only those decisions and actions which are judged, freely, in the presence of the Word of God in history.

To speak and act with coherence, biblically, in problems of conscience or obedience in nation or church — for that matter, to deal in biblical terms with ethics at all — is, thus, at radical variance from the way in which such matters are posited in the world. Contrary to worldly conceptions of ethics, the biblical style

William Stringfellow is a theologian, social critic, author and attorney. This article is adapted from his new book, *Conscience and Obedience: The Politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in light of the Second Coming.*

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foreswears preemption of the office of God, does not feign coincidence with the mind of God, patiently abstains from claims of precognition of the judgment of the Word of God. Instead of being vain, precocious or premature, the ethical activity of biblical people literally risks the judgment of the Word of God, or simply relies upon God's grace or, as its most essential attribute, esteems the freedom of God's will.

Some, I am aware, may cite here prophetic utterance, especially as that is heard in the Old Testament. What of those who confronted the professed people of God, crying *Thus saith the Lord?* I am neither unmindful nor ungrateful for the prophets, but I receive and affirm the New Testament as the completion or fulfillment of the Old Testament, so that I do not listen to the prophets of old in a vacuum, as if in ignorance of the New Testament. I do not find Amos or Jeremiah or their peers incongruous with Jesus Christ, or, further, to Paul and his peers.

I hear the prophets, then and also now, rebuking the impatience and idolatry of the people, exposing their religious vanity and moral legalism, and denouncing their recalcitrance to the presence of the Word of God. I notice the prophets admonishing the people that all creatures — the nations no less than humans — are subject here and now to God's sovereignty, reiterating that every thought and act and omission is under judgment, and calling for that repentance in which the new life of the holy nation is constituted. Biblically, the mark of the authenticity of prophecy is comprehension of the godliness of God and, thus, awe for the vocation of the Word of God in history. That reverence for the prerogatives of God is signified in the prophetic attribution which commonly follows the herald *Thus saith the Lord: "I am the Lord thy God!"*

It is the recognition of God's affirmation of himself in the midst of the history of this world which becomes the introit to all issues of conscience and obedience, rather than any derivation and formulation, however solemn, of any ethical proposition or great principle. It is that which renders vocation the subject of ethics. It is that respect for the integrity of God as God which undoes the profound confusion concerning the vocation of humans and of nations and of all creatures. Repeated, again, doctrinally, if perhaps more quaintly, the attempt to cope with questions of conscience and obedience in nation and in church begins in confession of the Incarnation.

At the outset, the focus is upon the vocation of the Word of God in this world. Yet, with that starting point, the realm of ethical activity implicates the vocation of all of life throughout creation simultaneously. That ethics have, essentially, to do with the exercise of vocation — with name and identification, selfhood and relationship, capability and function, place and purpose — for institutions and authorities as well as persons, means that decisions and actions of conscience and obedience encompass and utilize the full diversity of gifts or talents indigenous to human life. At the same time it means the eschewing of delusions of divinity which exceed and corrupt those very gifts, and resisting the comparable pretensions of godly status insinuated incessantly by the nations or other assorted principalities and powers.

Ethical deliberation originates vocationally and, for humans, engages every capacity pertinent to living humanly, neither more nor less. This in itself, it seems to me, should occasion our suspicion of any ethical methodology which narrows, distorts, suppresses or denies any human capability or the diversity of gifts within human life.

In other words, any ethical system which is settled and stereotyped, uniform and preclusive, neat and predictable is both dehumanizing and pagan — that is, literally, unbiblical. Such schemas misconstrue the significance of vocation in creation, inflating the role of the principalities while vitiating the human vocation; they issue in bombast and blasphemy, to use the word *Revelation* cites so often, in cursing and usurping the vocation of the Word of God in the present age. ■

Great Beast

India?
Africa?

From which jungle did you come?
Was there rough bark and dust
to ease your itch?
Branches and leaves
sufficient for your belly?
Was your thirst assuaged?
Did you trumpet once
before your fall?
Before they took your tusks?
Dear little ivory Cupid,
poised on your pedestal,
your tiny bow up-raised,
your arrows in their quiver
at your side,
dear little Cupid,
I hold you in my hand . . .
from which jungle did you come?

— Georgia Pierce

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Responses to Authority:

'I Kept Remembering My Ordination'

by Alison Cheek

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I read the articles by Skinner, Thorman and Stringfellow and then sat down to free-associate about authority in the Church. What quickly surfaced was my own crisis with authority in presenting myself for ordination to the priesthood in Philadelphia in 1974, and in functioning publicly as a priest in the years that followed.

I found myself fleshing out the thoughts presented in the articles with my own personal story. I relived some of the terror, some of the exhilaration, some of the pain and some of the peace of that transitional time for me. It was disturbing. I broke my diet and ate a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Each of the articles evoked a response of recognition, an "ah-ha!" Memories flooded back.

I remembered the night in July '74 when a sister deacon had called to say that four bishops were going to ordain some women deacons to the priesthood, and to ask if I wished to be one of them. Three distinct things seemed to happen all at once. Something deep within me leaped upwards in a "yes." In retrospect, I think I chose my destiny in one split second. At the same time my body registered symptoms of panic, and my head went to work computing the consequences. I expected one of the consequences to be deposition. I asked for time to consider.

As I turned it all over in my mind, the question which kept repeating itself was: "*What is worth living for, and what is worth dying for?*" I knew in my head I had a choice, but it was as if in my being I had no choice.

At the same time I remember struggling with anguish and doubt. Was I truly called to be a priest? Was I deluding myself? Was I making an awful mistake? Like Donald Thorman I had to take responsibility for myself in the "now" without benefit of certainty, or official approval, and live by faith. If I really cared about women in society, this was the arena in which history had placed me and in which I must risk myself and give myself.

The memories kept coming, helter-skelter. I remembered the day in 1972 when I was ordained deacon and was asked if I would obey my bishop and those in authority over me, following their godly admonitions. To myself I was saying, "This bishop, yes. No problem." I'd served on the Diocesan Board of Examining Chaplains with him. In very important ways I thought I knew this man, shared the same perceptions and values, and above all the same understanding of the gospel. I foresaw no difficulty. Yet the day came when I disobeyed his inhibition — deliberately, persistently, publicly, painfully — and could do no other. We parted ways over the precedence of Gospel.

I remembered sitting with my professor of canon law and my bishop before the Philadelphia ordination while they discussed the canons, and feeling strangely detached from it all. I knew what I had to do. And before I'd had time to think about it clearly, I already knew in myself that canon law is derivative and rests on the Gospel, and not vice versa. It was begging the issue.

I remembered when I thought that being deposed would feel like being shattered at the center of my being. I had not then yet sufficiently internalized "the Gospel of Christ" as "the criterion for determining whether authority is present, or only organized power parading as authority." (Skinner)

I remembered, in the days following the Philadelphia ordination, living by the authority of the image, the authority of precedent and parable. In particular, the story in Luke 13: 10-17 about the woman bent out of shape, whom Jesus healed on the Sabbath, became a paradigm.

I remembered how slowly I absorbed the realization that my sister priests and I had become symbols of great importance to many other women in our society, and that my decisions, such as that about a compromise staff contract with St. Stephen and the Incarnation, had much wider implications than the state of this parish family and their relationship with their bishop.

I remembered being on the witness stand at the ecclesiastical trial of William Wendt in Washington,

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D.C., addressing the judges. Since I had chosen not to comply with the inhibition of the Bishop of Washington, they wanted to know by what authority I had done the things I had done, where I was coming from in acting in the way I had acted. I struggled to describe the understanding of life and faith that informed and empowered me. I found myself drawing from Scripture, from church history, from tradition, from my training as a psychotherapist, from clinical experience, particularly with women, from worship and the prompting of the Spirit. My decisions certainly had not come out of a vacuum, but how difficult to articulate the nexus of that complex of authority!

What joy, then, to read Bill Stringfellow's article, and find myself saying, "Why, yes, that's it;" to read John Skinner and find a description of revelation that draws forth an "Uh-huh;" to read Donald Thorman and meet a fellow pilgrim. ■

Law and Revolution

by Peter Weiss

My thesis, if I may be forgiven a small amount of linguistic levity, is based on the hypothesis that the antithesis between law and revolution, at least in the American context, is a false one. In this as perhaps in no other country, the law has played an enormous role in achieving evolutionary advances at times in our history when such advances were most required, and the law retains this revolutionary potential, although its realization, in the present context, hangs precariously in the balance.

Lest I be accused of Pollyannism or some other infantile disorder let me make clear that, along with the rosy view I have just served up, I also hold to the belief that, by and large, American lawyers and judges serve the interests of the ruling class, are unresponsive to the needs of what I recently heard a Catholic nun call "the marginated people" of our society, and frequently carry the practice of non-involvement — in the case of lawyers — and the doctrine of judicial abstinence — in the case of judges — close to the point of gross negligence.

For the key to this paradox we are indebted, after all these years, to the Founding Fathers (I would like, in deference to the legitimate claims of sisterhood, to be able to call them the Founding Parents, but even consciousness raised to the highest can only correct most of the future and some of the present; our sexist past will always be with us.) The legacy of the Federalist

Peter Weiss, a native of Vienna, Austria, is a Manhattan attorney who serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Policy Studies. The above is excerpted from his address at a recent ecumenical, interfaith Law Week service in Calvary Church, Memphis.

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Papers, and the Constitution and the institutions which it brought forth, is a system admirably suited to the preservation of the *status quo;* but not, luckily, to the point of *rigor mortis.* The beauty of checks is that they yield to intolerable stresses, the advantage of balances that they accommodate what would otherwise be fatal strains.

This therapeutic effect of the law on the body politic is accomplished, I believe, in two principal ways, which, for lack of more precise terminology, we may call propulsion and deterrence.

In the propulsive mode, the courts, giving a new interpretation to a constitutional clause, or taking a hitherto neglected area of the constitution on a first impression basis, move society forward by a quantum leap. Such decisions do not spring full-blown from the heads of Supreme Court Justices; they almost invariably represent not only a judical, but also a judicious accommodation between the mandates of the Constitution and the temper of the times. As such, they, on the one hand, exert a revolutionary impact on the functioning and value system of the nation, and, on the other, serve to deflect pent-up needs and grievances into constitutional channels, from what in other societies might be revolutionary action in the literal sense of the word.

I cannot, of course, prove this point conclusively. But I invite you to speculate with me what path the nation might have taken:

• If the Supreme Court had adhered to its original interpretation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, in *United States v. Knight* (1895) that a combination producing 98% of the refined sugar in the United States was beyond the reach of Congressional control because the commerce clause did not encompass manufacture, and had not, ten years later, in *Swift v. U.S.* conceded to the federal government the power to bust the trusts;

• If, twenty years later, the Court had persisted in its initial frustration of FDR's New Deal policies and had not, eventually, in a line of cases beginning with *Jones v. Loughlin* (1935), put the Constitutional stamp of approval upon such vital economic recovery measures as the Wagner Labor Relations Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938;

• If *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) had affirmed the "separate but equal" doctrine of *Plessy v. Ferguson* instead of laying the groundwork for the major civil rights advances of the next two decades,

• If *Dombrowski v. Pfister* had not, in 1965, established the principle that the federal courts will intervene to halt unconstitutional state prosecutions, thereby paving the way for much of the so-called "affirmative action" litigation which has occupied public interest lawyers in the intervening period.

Not all propulsive cases have saved the nation from an American version of the storming of the Bastille. Some have merely enlarged the domain of human rights in ways crucially important to certain segments of the population, but not necessarily to the whole of society. A prime example of this is the glorious period of the Warren Court, which Harold Chase and Craig Ducat, two of our leading constitutional scholars, describe as having been concerned with extending protection and participation in society to a whole array of previous out-groups, to wit "black people, poor people, radicals, urbanites, juveniles, people accused of crime, and religious dissenters." (Notice the absence of women, homosexuals, Indians and prisoners. Their turn was yet to come and, indeed, in many respects has not come yet.)

The deterrent cases I call those in which the courts, by exercising a braking effect on popular reactions to previously wrought gains, manage to preserve those gains, often by whittling away at their substance, until the people are ready to resume their forward march. Thus, in the midst of a law and order wave stemming from widespread frustrations with the rising crime rate, the Burger Court, while handing down one bad decision after another in the area of criminal procedure, has not gone so far as to reverse the Warren Court's landmark rulings in *Gideon v. Wainwright* and *Miranda v. Arizona.* Similarly, while last year's decision upholding the cutoff of Medicaid funds for abortions went a long way toward establishing one law on abortions for the rich and another for the poor, there is no recognizable disposition on the part of the court to go back on its own 1973 decision in *Wade v. Roe* invalidating laws banning abortions, despite the amazingly powerful nationwide assault on that decision mounted by anti-abortion forces.

In all of this, there is a constant interplay between the pronouncements of the law and the shifting moods and social goals of the people. But though the law is frequently only confirmatory of government action or reflective of the interests of certain segments of society — more often than not the conservative ones — there is also in our legal system a bedrock of adherence to principle which is its saving grace. When at their best, our great judges have spoken with the passionate clarity and moral fervor of prophets; indeed, and I say this with some trepidation before a mixed legal-clerical audience, some of our greatest religious leaders have been judges.

Lest I be accused of violating the principle of the separation of church and state, let me hasten to make clear that what I mean by religion, in this sense, is the adherence to a set of moral principles transcending any positive rules of conduct laid down by the state. The disclaimers regularly issued by judges that they merely interpret the law leave me cold. We all know that judges, even the most "abstentionist" and "judicially restrained," make social policy. The only question is, what kind, in whose interest and by what lights?

The best of our judges, and the lawyers who come before them to inspire and goad them, have, I think, some or all of these qualities:

— A sense of justice including distributive justice, which goes beyond mere utilitarianism;

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— A sense of community which goes beyond mere loyalty to class or party;

— A sense of outrage at the wounds which privilege inflicts upon disadvantage.

Are there such people among us? I think there are. I have already said that they are to be found among our judges. I know for certain that they exist among the law students and the young and sometimes no longer so young lawyers who are giving up the material rewards of big firm practice for the less tangible but ultimately more satisfying compensation of public interest law. They are, almost without exception, bright, enthusiastic, dedicated and, Mr. Justice Burger to the contrary notwithstanding, *very* competent people. Anyone who accuses them of overzealousness has an argument coming from me because I believe, with my fellow radical, Barry Goldwater, that zealousness in defense of justice is no vice. The all too few hours I spend with them are, without fail, among the best hours of my professional life.

There also are many such people in what the public interest lawyers tend to consider the enemy camp: prosecutors' offices, government agencies, corporate law departments, "straight" law firms. I know, because some of them are my clients and I am fond of them as human beings.

There is a theory that, out of the balancing of interests and the working out of the adversary system, the invisible hand will bring forth the greatest good for the greatest number. Do not believe it for a minute. It is a lie. In the final summing up of our time, one of the principal entries on the minus side of the ledger will be the enormous waste of talent, energy, intelligence and experience which goes into the functioning of the legal establishment. Most of us go to law school to serve justice, uphold the rule of law and build a better society, and most of us spend our lives frustrating these ends, dreaming up ways to beat the antitrust laws, to save this or that client a hundred or a million tax dollars, to put another shoplifter in jail so he can learn to become a real criminal.

None of these things is intrinsically evil, but in the aggregate they amount to shoring up a structure so gross in its inequities, so deficient in *caritas,* so unyielding to genuine change that our powerlessness in the face of it anesthetizes our sense of revulsion. We do these things to make a living because we tell ourselves that there is no other way to keep up with inflation. And when they bother us — *if* they bother us — we salve our consciences by being Sunday Christians or Saturday Jews, by joining the odd Bar Association Committee or taking the occasional pro bono case.

Perhaps it cannot be otherwise in this Roman time in which we live, a time of aggregation rather than congregation, of contract in place of covenant, of interest instead of love (even self-interest instead of self-love), of national security over the life of the tribe.

But when things fall apart, some organizing principle is wanted. I have tried to suggest that such a principle may be found in the Constitution and in the penumbra of rights which hovers over it, provided the reification of these rights keeps pace with the changing social and economic conditions of society. At the moment, it seems to me, this adaption has fallen very far behind.

I have no magic formula to correct this imbalance, but I would suggest that such a correction presupposes our willingness to ask ourselves a series of questions which are generally considered unaskable.

Question:
Why is the United States the only advanced industrial country in the world today in which socialism is still a dirty word?

Question:
Given the centuries of racism and sexism in our history, can there ever be equality of the races or of the sexes without affirmative action?

Question:
Is the Nixonian approach to government by ruthlessness really behind us when we have a President who approves warrantless surveillance in the interest of national security and an Attorney General who argues in court that every former government employee has a fiduciary duty to withhold from the public information learned on the job, whether classified or not?

Question:
Why are we so far ahead of most countries in the technology of health care and so far behind them in its delivery to the people?

Question:
Do we really lack the will and imagination to devise forms of punishment for crimes which are alternatives to the death penalty, a form of collective murder, or imprisonment, an institution of relatively recent vintage which degrades and dehumanizes both the jailers and the jailed?

Question:
What do we really mean by "human rights?" Must we concede the phrase "right to work" to the union-haters and the phrase "right to life" to the anti-feminists? What does a President who is pledged to *only* 4% unemployment — think of it, *only* three to four million people condemned to the permanent loss of their dignity — have in mind when he signs, as the Chief Executive of this country, the United Nations Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, which guarantees the right to a job to every citizen? Was Thomas Jefferson thinking only of unborn fetuses when he postulated the right to life as chief among our inalienable rights?

These are hard questions, to be sure. But a country which has the freedom to give a forum such as this to one who has the arrogance to ask them, also has the capacity to grapple with the answers. The law is but one instrument for doing so, but it is one of the most powerful. ■

Coming up in THE WITNESS

- ***Bishop John Burt on the Ecumenical Coalition and the Youngstown Steel drama***
- ***Gustavo Gutierrez on "The Poor"***
- ***Maggie Kuhn on the fun and challenge of being old***

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Authority vs. MOVE

by Paul M. Washington

In early March of this year, historic Philadelphia again made history. In Powelton Village, some 25 persons — men, women and children (some infants) — were denied food, water, and utility and telephone services by order of Mayor Frank Rizzo. Their home was barricaded and a 24 hour armed police guard set up surrounding the house and the four square block area around it.

Why? These 25 members of the largely Black MOVE organization in their old Victorian house headquarters in West Philadelphia were suspected of illegal possession of weapons and having conspired to riot.

The weapons charges grew out of an armed standoff with police dating back to a year ago. The encounter began like this:

On May 20, 1977, Chucky Africa of MOVE went out to walk his dog. He carried a rifle openly on his shoulder and was immediately arrested for violation of the firearms code. When other residents of the MOVE commune learned of Chucky's arrest, they adorned military type uniforms, brought out an assortment of weapons and strode around a porch which they had built in front of their house and with loud speakers, before an audience of some 200 people, they began to preach the message of John Africa, their leader:

"The police are m-frs, Rizzo is the biggest of them all. America is also run by m-frs. Education is the training of slaves, all American institutions are corrupt and exploitative, all people are living lies which they believe to be truths. America is imperialistic both intranationally as well as internationally and there is one source of truth, John Africa . . ."

All MOVE members, both Black and White, have adopted the surname *Africa*. They do not use soap (it is poisonous), nor do they eat canned or processed foods. The house is almost completely unfurnished and they have not had electricity for years.

They have forced the message of John Africa into churches, into practically every public meeting that they hear about, into the televised meetings of the Board of Education. I use the word "forced" because they arrive uninvited and speak without regard for anyone else or concern for the agenda.

Officially they have been arrested for misdemeanors some 250 times, but according to their own figures, some 600 times, including numerous beatings by police.

Their sentences have been severe, first, because they show open and violent contempt for the court and secondly, they refuse to allow a lawyer to defend them.

So last May after Chucky Africa was arrested and MOVE members brought out their arms and declared they were not going to be pushed around anymore, the police and firemen — some 200 strong — confronted them.

Two residents of the area called me. "About 200 heavily armed policemen are outside MOVE headquarters. There's going to be violence." I got up from dinner and went over.

The whole block was barricaded. No one was to enter. I entered. Soon I was a messenger between MOVE and the police. Not much happened. MOVE wanted Chucky and the police wanted the guns.

Around 11:30 p.m. the police tried to disperse the people. Suddenly the blockades were thrown down and like a broken dam the people gushed in front of the MOVE house and began singing: "I shall not be moved."

So it was the police who moved, with the exception of about 15 or 20 who remained in front of the house from May 20, 1977 to May 10, 1978. In early March, these were joined by 200 more in riot gear. The MOVE members —

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who had not left the house since May of the previous year — had been faithfully fed by friends. Then the Mayor said, "We'll starve them out." Hence the blockade.

I asked a prestigious law firm to research this type of action to see if there was any precedent for it in the history of our nation. There wasn't.

To be sure, many in the community found MOVE's lifestyle and philosophy repugnant. MOVE members "looked dirty" and used obscenities in every other sentence. But Black activists remembered police raids on SNCC and Black Panther headquarters in the '60s. The blockade also coincided with a speech Mayor Rizzo had made about "equality for White people" attacking desegregation in housing and affirmative action. Starve MOVE to death? No!!!

Before the barricade was set up, enough food was taken to the MOVE commune by supporters to last them at least seven to eight months.

On April 22 at 11 a.m., I was one of 11 clergymen who informed the police that we would cross the barricade on April 23 with food. On April 22 at 6 p.m., the city announced that it would send food in, but *only for the mothers and babies.*

With TV cameras grinding, reporters present and all the rest, we saw the food taken through the blockade and deposited on a platform. Millions of TV viewers in the Delaware Valley saw what we saw: MOVE men and women (including mothers) kicked the food off the platform back toward the city agents.

"We are one," they said. "Either all of us eat, or none of us will!"

This went on for days. Food was carried in for mothers and babies, food was kicked back into the faces of those who brought it. Some of the public was enraged. They said, "We were worried about these people starving to death, and they just kick food back into our faces." But there were others who said, "Well, you have to respect them for standing by their principles," even though they thought MOVE was crazy.

Then on April 4, approximately 1,000 people marched to stage a symbolic blockade of City Hall in an action sponsored by the Citywide Black Coalition for Human Rights.

As May approached, it became increasingly clear that this drama had to end. The police had spent more than $2 million in 10 months guarding the house. After the force was escalated on March 15, the cost rose to approximately $60,000 a day to guard some 25 persons.

The folks inside the house were wearing out too, although they never indicated this. I had the privilege of visiting them while under siege whenever I cared to.

Then, too, summer was coming. Further, I was convinced that the police did not want their action tested in the courts. And the clergy was raising the question: Can the State prevent the Church from fulfilling its divine mandate to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty and minister to the oppressed?

Our announced arrest scheduled for April 23, when we were to bring in food, would have openly tested the issue. I must say, we were disappointed that we were thwarted when the city took food in, because we still have no ruling on that legal point.

As things turned out from that day on, MOVE agreed to permit an attorney to work in their behalf along with others, a settlement was negotiated, the barricades removed, the guns surrendered.

MOVE was given 90 days to leave their headquarters (the city in February had demanded *immediate* evacuation, and that MOVE not resettle within a two mile radius of their present cite.) Moreover, the final agreement took note of MOVE's complaints of police brutality, also previously ignored in terms proposed by the city. Charges have also been dropped against MOVE members accused of attacking prison guards and a pledge has been made for resolution of the charges against other MOVE members with due speed. ■

Continued from page 3

between Council and the Presiding Bishop — more than by the danger of acting unjustly. How does this differ from the operating principles of General Motors, IBM, U.S. Steel?

The second response is that persons of minority groups, or women, are simply more expendable than those whose elitist rating is higher. Reread the Diocesan Press Service account through the eyes of a Black, an Hispanic, a gay, a Native American, or a woman, and see if this rings true. Would that account communicate to you that, when it comes to discrimination against the "lesser people" of our society, the church is indistinguishable from the other institutions of business and government? Or, again, what would the response of the Council have been if the two principals were not women, but men — or ordained men — or (tour de force) bishops?

The Council action makes it clear where its priorities are. And they do not include the clear expression, through policy and action, of siding with the poor, the oppressed, the minorities — those precisely whom the church is called to serve. ■

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Daddy's Out of Jail

His daughters Leila, 7, and Akilah, 5, were the first to reach Julio Rosado, one of three Puerto Rican brothers released from prison May 8 after serving eight months for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury investigating the FALN. Among supporters on hand to greet the Rosados and Pedro Archuleta, a Chicano who was held for 10 months, were Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, former staffers of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

Maria, Raisa Stir Debate in Council

(*Diocesan Press Service*)

GREENWICH, Conn. — The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church accepted, after considerable discussion, a report from the Presiding Bishop concerning his decision on the termination entitlements of two former Hispanic office employees, as requested by the Council at its meeting last February.

The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin, Presiding Bishop of the three million-member Episcopal Church, told the 41-member Executive Council here on May 18 that he is "responsible for the decisions made in this situation."

Bishop Allin was assisted by the Rt. Rev. Milton L. Wood, Executive for Administration at the Episcopal Church Center, in presenting his report on the termination procedures with regard to Maria Cueto, former Hispanic Officer, and her former secretary, Raisa Nemikin.

Bishop Wood reviewed the events leading up to the termination of the two women last April 1.

The two persons were released from jail in January, he said, following more than 10 months incarceration for refusing to testify before a Federal Grand Jury investigating terrorist activities of a Puerto Rican nationalist group known as the FALN. A member of the Episcopal Church's former National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, Carlos Alberto Torres, is being sought in connection with FALN activities.

Miss Cueto and Miss Nemikin were summoned to appear before a Grand Jury on Feb. 4, 1977, and were sent to jail in March for failing to respond to the question of the Grand Jury, Bishop Wood said. On March 14, 1977, both women were placed on "leave without pay" by the Church Center administration.

At about the same time, Bishop Wood reported, the Presiding Bishop offered to help the two women financially but received no reply from them. He reported that Bishop Allin made a number of visits to the U.S. Attorney's office during the following months, once taking the President of the National Council of Churches, to seek the release of the two women.

Two months after Miss Cueto and Miss Nemikin were released from jail, Bishop Wood said, Robert S. Potter, of the firm Patterson, Belknap, Webb and Tyler, conferred with administration officials and requested full payment of their salaries and legal fees.

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On April 1, 1978, personnel policies of the Executive Council were applied for the termination settlements, Bishop Wood said. For Miss Nemikin, this amounted to $1,491.00 for 11 vacation days and 24 severance days, and for Miss Cueto, $4,242.87 for 11 vacation days and 22 severance days.

The papers and checks were sent to Mr. Potter, the administration report said, but they were returned on April 25 because Mr. Potter said he would be "embarrassed to give them" to the two women.

The report said that Bishop Allin "continues the offer of help for the needs" of the two former employees.

The members of the Council discussed at some length Bishop Allin's decision and also a request from Mr. Potter that he be allowed to speak to the Council on behalf of the two former staff persons.

A great deal of the discussion centered on a conversation reported by Bishop Wood that took place on Feb. 18, 1977, involving Miss Cueto, Bishop Wood, and Bisohp Richard B. Martin, at that time the supervisor of the two women. That day's discussion, according to Bishop Allin's report, raised the possibility of "leave of absence with pay" until the Grand Jury appearances of the two women were completed. The two staff members failed to keep a later appointment on Feb. 22 for further discussion.

Bishop Wood said about the Feb. 18 discussion: "I was prepared — and so implied — to talk about leave with pay until this affair was settled, namely the Grand Jury appearance, which was forthcoming." The assumption was that the two women would agree to answer the questions before the Jury.

The Rev. Paul M. Washington, Philadelphia, commented, "I see this as being a rather unusual situation and I'm just wondering if some unusual settlement had not been called for rather than simply following personnel policies."

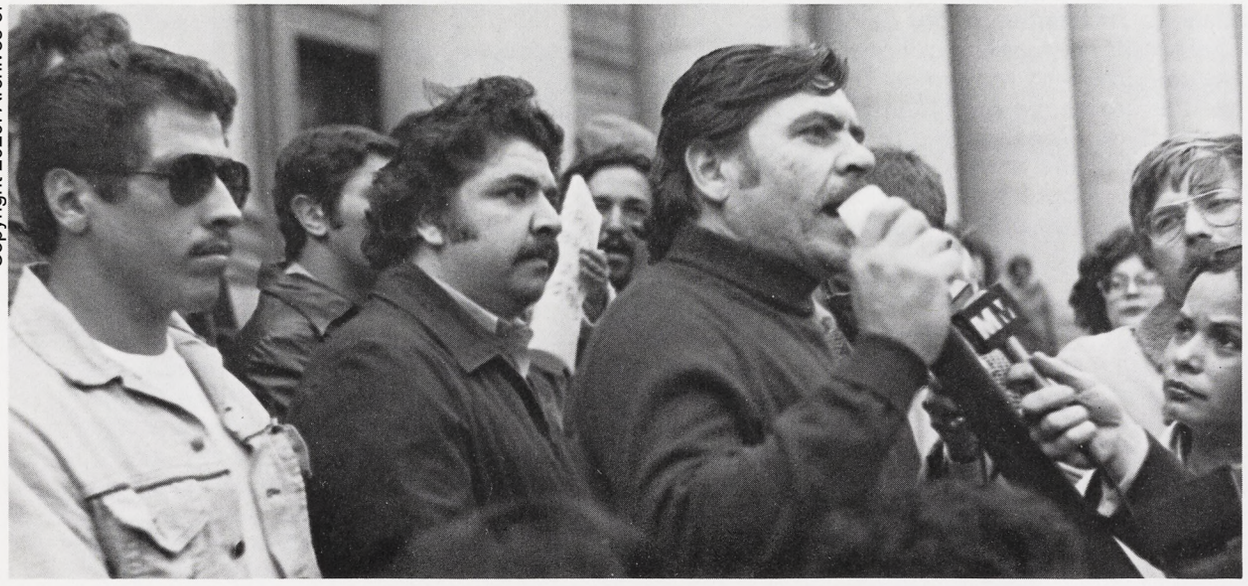
Bishop Wood responded, "When we start doing ad hoc things under the policies, you have a right to take us apart. That's quite different from pastoral financial help," he added. Even though the policies may define the limits, "that does not mean at the same time that if there's a need, something very special, that this cannot be done."

Fr. Washington said, "I think this whole thing is so unusual that even though a decision has been made, I would certainly like to see a discussion of can we somehow bring another spirit and another understanding to this unusual situation."

Bishop Allin said, "I really can't express to you how much I would like to be able to do just that." With regard to his handling of this situation, Bishop Allin said, "I've been lectured on my naivete and my stupidity." He said that his purpose has been "not simply to protect the establishment."

Rather, he said, "At this very moment, if there were a way that we could open up the communication person to person and really deal with the need, there is nothing I would welcome more."

He went on to speak of being in "the complicated arena" in which he is reminded of intricate legal problems and in which he is told "what your motives are,



From left, at a press conference on the court house steps following their release from prison: Pedro Archuleta, Andres and Julio Rosado. Missing from photo, Luis Rosado. The four charged that the Grand Jury was raising the spectre of "terrorism" to discredit the Puerto Rican Independence movement and other Hispanic groups.

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and how little you understand." This, he said, "makes it damn nigh impossible to operate."

He said two side agendas had been raised: first, grand jury abuse — which he termed "a major problem this Church has to be concerned with and respond to" — and second, that the "establishment has no capacity to respond to human need."

"I deny that fact," he said. "I won't claim whole knowledge. I'll accept the charge and judgment of stupidity and naivete, but lack of concern I will not accept."

"If I had all power," he added, "with the ability to make all decisions to spend the money of this Church the way I wanted to, that's a different proposition, but we don't operate that way."

After some debate the Council voted not to ask Mr. Potter to address them.

The Rev. Robert M. Wainwright of Rochester, N.Y., chairman of Council's Administration Committee, said that his committee recommended that Mr. Potter not be asked to speak since his negotiations should be with the Council's attorneys, not the body itself.

Some members, such as the Hon. Chester Byrns of St. Joseph, Mich., and Harrison Tillman of Valdosta, Ga., felt that the Council should follow the advice of its legal counsel in denying the invitation.

Other members said "this body should listen to any arguments and not just put the matter in the hands of lawyers," as expressed by the Rev. Canon W. Ebert Hobbs of Cleveland, Ohio.

Several members of Council, such as Dr. Paul Neuhauser of Iowa City, Iowa, Dr. Charles R. Lawrence of Pomona, N.Y. and the Rev. William V. Powell of Stillwater, Okla., spoke of their mixed feelings and of the difficulty in deciding how to vote.

When the vote to accept Bishop Allin's report was taken, Mrs. Virginia Ram of Los Angeles, Calif., asked that her negative vote be recorded. The motion to deny an invitation for Mr. Potter to speak was approved with several audible negative votes. ■

A Minority View:

Presbyterian Gay Affirmation

The United Presbyterian Church in reports adopted at its recent General Assembly concluded that "homosexuality is not God's wish for humanity," that it is "a result of our living in a fallen world." Although the Assembly affirmed that homosexuals "are to be treated with the profound respect and pastoral tenderness due all people of God," the Commissioners responded "no" when asked by the New York Presbytery if William Silver, a homosexual candidate for ordination, might be ordained.

"Unrepentant homosexual practice," the Assembly said, "does not accord with the requirements for ordination set forth in the Book of Order." It did approve the ordination of "repentant" homosexuals who adopt celibacy or whose orientation is redirected to heterosexual marriage.

In response to the above, one group supportive of homosexual persons drafted the following Affirmation of Conscience, which was signed by several Commissioners and observers at the Assembly.

The 190th General assembly of the United Presbyterian Church (1978) has spoken. Let us acknowledge that among the United Presbyterians gathered here are self-affirming homosexual persons who will be most damaged by this action. Other homosexual persons did not or could not speak out, recognizing the depth of condemnation by our church. Many beloved members of this church who affirm members of their own families who are gay sat among us in quiet agony as their loved ones were judged. In addition, some heterosexual commissioners have not spoken or voted their conscience for fear of loss of standing in the church. Others who have taken a position of advocacy for homosexual persons may pay a price.

The statement adopted imposes a specific theological and scriptural interpretation upon our church. It declares that homosexual persons stand in a special situation of alienation from the grace of God by virture of their sexual orientation and practice. A remnant of commissioners, and many of us assembled who are members of the church, must dissent.

The principle of scriptural interpretation adopted in the statement on homosexuality violates our conscience. We view it to be a perversion of the gos-

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pel of grace, and a repudiation of our Reformed theological tradition. Our understanding of scripture leads us to deny that homosexual orientation and the responsible, loving expression thereof is sinful *per se.* The saving and healing Word, to which scripture testifies, has been sacrificed on the altar of legalism, divorced from grace.

Scripture testifies to the One, Holy and Living God. Jesus Christ is the Liberator who bears good news to any and all oppressed under the law. Fidelity to scripture is answering the call of Jesus to be his followers, living in the liberating power of the Holy Spirit. Faithfulness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ requires that in each and every epoch of history those who name the name of Christ must go outside the gate with him and stand with those who are unacceptable under the law. As Jesus was made scapegoat, rejected because he threatened the power of the old order and those who sought justification under the law, so homosexual persons in our church are being asked to bear the burden of sin for our unrighteousness. The preoccupation with homosexual relationships in our church reflects our unwillingness to examine the confusions and distortions in all human relationships and sexuality — exploitation, violence, domination, commercialization.

We remind United Presbyterians that in this culture, self-affirming homosexual persons are becoming the group most actively singled out as victims of political repression. In many places our brothers and sisters are being denied full standing as citizens under the law. Harrassment, acts of discrimination, and violent crimes against their persons are increasing. Recent repeals of civil rights ordinances in Miami, St. Paul, and Wichita are a deplorable offense against human dignity. It is urgent that those of us who follow Jesus Christ the Liberator resist this growing oppression, and reject the culture of fear and death which is enshrouding us. This Assembly has used gentle tones to condemn, and has invoked the rhetoric of love to exclude homosexual persons from institutional participation in a ministry already theirs. To those who have sought bread, we have offered a stone, nurturing dishonesty instead of truthfulness in the church. We have spoken no word of hope. We have asked, absurdly, the culture to be more gracious and free than we are willing to be ourselves. To speak this way compounds our church's complicity in oppression.

Commissioners at this General Assembly who affirm a gospel of liberation appear to be a minority. Substantial numbers in our church, however, do not live under the theological limitations of the statement adopted here. Those of us who dissent pledge ourselves to return to our communities and congregations committed to work for liberation, continuing to struggle together with our gay sisters and brothers, ordained or not, who are already ministers of Christ with us. We join hands with them and with all others who are the victims of injustice and ostracism at the hands of the powerful.

We affirm a vision of the church where all may be free in Christ because none are made victims, where oppressors will know that their deliverance is given through the oppressed, for a family of God so full of the power to practice love and justice that all may name God's holy name and receive and celebrate one another in the fullness of our common humanity.

In a Nazi occupied land when Jews were forced to wear the yellow star of David, the King of Denmark wore and urged other Christians of his nation to wear that symbol as a mark of solidarity until all Danes could be free. During that time, homosexual persons were forced to wear a pink triangle as their badge of shame and persecution. In expression of solidarity with our gay sisters and brothers, we invite members of this assembly who share these concerns to wear this symbol through the remainder of this General Assembly. ■

Gays in the Church Speak for Themselves

- ellen barrett
- malcolm boyd
- ron wesner
- louie crew

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Continued from page 2

System/Probing Alternatives, and your magazine. ("Like the Guide, THE WITNESS focuses on pressing contemporay social and economic issues from a Christian perspective.")

I cannot state too strongly my idea that publications and people such as you have undermined the institution of the "church" and society.

Joe Gardner
Houston, Tex.

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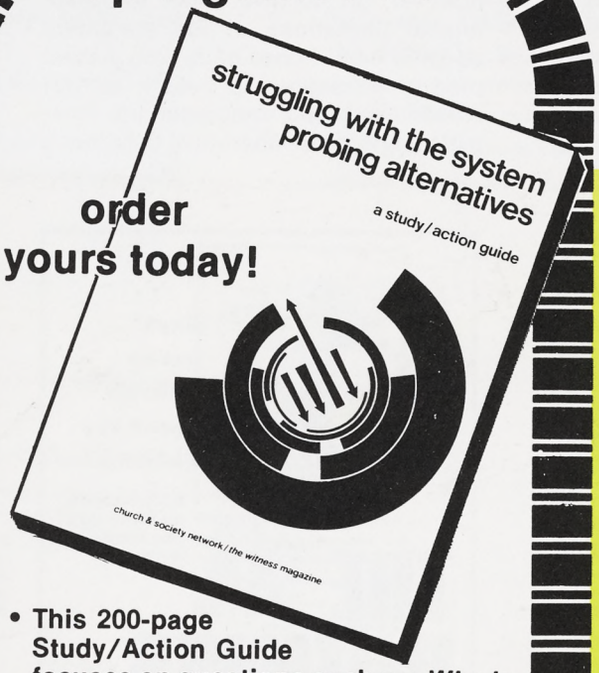
Up Against It?



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THE WITNESS

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Youngstown Fights Back
John H. Burt
Brian McNaught

Maggie Kuhn on Aging
Lockwood Hoehl

The Gospel of the Poor
Gustavo Gutierrez

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A Priest Is a Priest

An article in the June WITNESS ("Women Priests, Good News and Bad News") states that the Rev. Alison Palmer acted in contravention of "the laws of the Church of England." I do not understand how this can be. Was not the Rev. Palmer a priest in good standing in the Diocese of Washington when she celebrated the Eucharist at the invitation of an English parish priest? Are not the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in Communion with each other? If so, how can there be laws in the Church of England that prevent an Episcopal priest from celebrating in an English church at the invitation of its rector?

The fact that the Church of England does not itself ordain women is irrelevant. A priest is a priest. To say otherwise is to impugn the Apostolic Authority of Episcopal bishops. The situation would seem to be comparable to a priest celebrating the Eucharist in an Episcopal diocese where the bishop refuses to ordain women. No bishop has to ordain anyone, male or female, at any time. No bishop is obligated to give any reason for refusal to ordain. On the other hand a bishop must recognize and license a priest coming from another diocese, male or female. (Article III, Canon 20, Sec. 6 & 7) I do not see how the Rev. Palmer can have in any way violated the laws of the Church of England if we and they are in Communion with each other.

The Episcopal Church does not compel the English Church to ordain women. They should be willing to recognize and accept our doing so. The genius of the Anglican Communion is diversity in unity. Without diversity there can be no unity, only uniformity.

The Rev. Jeannette Piccard
Minneapolis, Minn.

Palmer Re Her Ban

I am sure THE WITNESS is fed up with hearing from me about my ban, but I must say that I was appalled at how you handled it. Look, friends, on Feb. 18 Bishop Walker had *his* say by having the statement prohibiting me from preaching and celebrating read publily at the cathedral. Ever since then I have been trying to have *my* say, at least in the sense of correcting errors, giving a context, etc.

I was hoping that THE WITNESS story might show the injustice (or at least the illogic and irrationality) of what Bishop Walker did. But THE WITNESS gave Walker his say again. Without comment, correction, criticism and without giving me any say at all.

Placing the coverage of Canon Mary Simpson next to me only gives the impression that good girls get rewarded by preaching at Westminster and bad girls who break the law (*there is no law involved*) get punished. Is that the message you wanted to convey?

Of course you have the authority to cover any event any way you want, but surely something more than just publishing the bishop's point of view was justified. I know THE WITNESS and Church and Society are deeply involved in the Urban Coalition which Bishop Walker leads, and it might be awkward to get involved in a confrontation with him. But I don't think even he would have been upset had you put in something like:

Palmer pointed out with regard to her ban that the following issues were at stake:

1. If a bishop is concerned about the past, present, or future actions of a priest, shouldn't the bishop afford that priest due process by discussing the problem with the priest before inhibiting that priest from functioning, and shouldn't the bishop himself inform the priest of his decision?

2. What are the "policies for the cathedral" to which all people must conform? Shouldn't we have an open cathedral where controversial persons and statements are accepted as a healthy part of the life of the Episcopal Church?

3. Should bishops penalize priests for "acts of conscience" when bishops are exempt from penalties if they follow their *consciences?*

Bishop Walker voted for the 1977 House of Bishops conscience resolution which allows bishops to reject women priests without penalty. My 'active conscience' in England last October supported women priests by challenging an interpretation of English canon law which said that overseas priests traditionally have been male, and therefore female priests should not be permitted to function in England. The English priests who invited me to celebrate in their parish churches have not been penalized.

Oh, well.

The Rev. Alison Palmer
Washington, D.C.

Gay Analysis Challenged

Quoting from Gregory Baum, John M. Gessell writes (February WITNESS) that "human nature as it is at present is not normative . . . What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned." This is surely correct. Laying aside whether this view differs significantly from the humanistic Christian view of natural law — which consistently interpreted "nature" as meaning *ideal* human nature rather than actual nature — the important question is how we arrive at an adequate conception of this ideal. Unless we can frame an adequate conception and test it for coherence and consistency, we have no guidance.

Quoting further from the same source, Dr. Gessell says that the ideal human nature to which we are divinely

Continued on page 18

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THE WITNESS

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Analyzing Our Horror

Robert L. DeWitt

It happened in June in Rhodesia. A group of African nationalists descended upon a mission station of the Elim Missions of England, a pentecostal group, and ruthlessly murdered 12 people. A shocked world took note of this, outraged particularly by the fact that among those murdered was a mother and her three-week-old infant. In the century of the holocaust we do well to note such tragedies with horror. May we be delivered from losing our capacity for outrage at the senseless squandering of human life. We can afford to stumble and suffer and endure shifting attitudes and estimates toward many of our traditional values in human society. But not that one. People are made in the image of God. "God" is cognate with "good." Human life is, simply, the highest good we know.

Having said all that, there is something else that is disturbing about the episode in Rhodesia. White, middle class U.S. citizens are beginning to emerge from their age of innocence. They are beginning to become more aware of what Reinhold Niebuhr used to refer to as the tragic and ambiguous factors in the life of human society, and of the ways in which the self interest of nations, of class, of race, can condition our outrage. Many have been helped to this awareness by writers who have pointed out that much of what is reported as "violence" is more accurately described as "counter-violence," a response to a prior violence of which one was the victim. This is, perhaps, a clue to what happened in Rhodesia. We are amply aware of the systematic oppression and exploitation of blacks by a white minority in South Africa.

In a more innocent day, people of good will could simply deplore violence. But our coming of age has meant the necessity of seeing the pervasiveness of violence in the "normal" workings of the political, economic and other institutions of our society. If we are to be outraged, let us be so about what is most outrageous. If we are to note with horror, let us also note what is most horrible.

Is it inordinate to suspect that the lamentable incident in Rhodesia received so much attention from the press and other media because of an unspoken recognition that the victims were people with whom we could identify? They were of European stock, white, and Christian. What we are most easily outraged by is a clue to who we are, where we are positioned in society. If the color of the attackers and victims in Rhodesia were reversed, would we be as horrified?

Can we conceive of a God adequate to the parental task of loving both the oppressor and the oppressed? Both those who hold in their control the institutionalized instruments of violence throughout our society, and also those who resist by lashing out blindly with the bludgeons of counter-violence. The very contemplation of the kind of love which that would require fills one with awe at the magnitude of the love attributed to God. It also moves us to contemplate the investment that God must have in seeing justice on earth, a justice in the affairs of people that would eliminate institutionalized violence, and therefore the inevitability of counter-violence. ■

What Does a Community Do . . .

by John H. Burt

All the King's horses and all the King's men, couldn't put Humpty together again.

Or can they? Whether the old nursery rhyme will prove to be true in the steel communities of Ohio's Mahoning Valley is being tested these days by some servants of another King, who have banded together ecumenically to restore the community of Youngstown, badly broken by the avarice of a relatively recent phenomenon on the American economic scene — the corporate conglomerate.

The Rt. Rev. John H. Burt is Episcopal Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio.

The acute heart attack for Youngstown came last Sept. 19 when high-flying Lykes was forced to close permanently the giant Campbell Works with permanent layoffs for 5,000 wage earners. The ripple effect of that decision directly affected nearly 50,000 men, women and children.

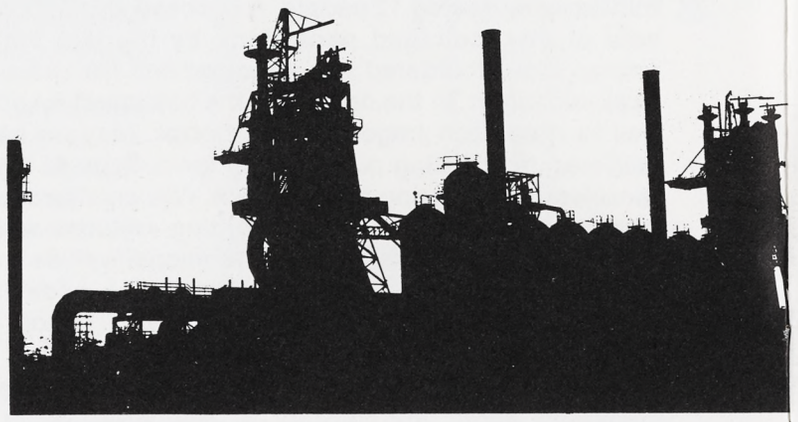
What does a community do when the fortunes of industry milk a town of its life blood and leave it to die? Creative solutions did not come forth in Youngstown from the traditional sources — the industrial diversifiers, entrepreneurs with new technology, the Chamber of Commerce, the politicians.

But the religious leaders, both Christian and Jewish, felt the biblical imperative would not allow churches to limit their response to pastoral pablum for the

Youngstown Fights Back:

Coalition Seeks New Model for Ownership

by Brian McNaught



Youngstown, Ohio — today it's a name which means more than a Midwestern industrial town specializing in steel production. "Youngstown" is now thought of in connection with the formation of a dynamic ecumenical coalition of denominational heads who are fighting a David and Goliath showdown with big business and politicians over the closing of a steel mill. Because of that, Youngstown may be considered the beginning of a new era in ecumenical consciousness and endeavors, a turning point in Church history when religious institutions began to grasp the role economics plays in the spiritual lives of working people and the role spiritual values should play in economic decisions.

Brian McNaught is a Boston-based free-lance writer and frequent contributor to THE WITNESS.

It began in September, 1977 with a quickly-placed phone call by Ohio Episcopal Bishop John Burt to Roman Catholic Bishop James Malone. One of the major plants had just made a last minute announcement. It was closing its doors, and 5,000 people would be jobless. Thousands of others would soon follow. What could they do about it?

Bishop Burt described it as "the largest shutdown of a non-military plant in American history. It seemed to Bishop Malone and me that we ought to do more than wring our hands."

The two men immediately assembled other concerned religious leaders and formed the Ecumenical Coalition of the Mahoning Valley. On its Executive Committee

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When Industry Leaves It to Die?

unemployed. The prophetic demand for justice, Christ's compassionate concern for the victims of man's inhumanity to man, the need for hope laid upon them a sense of responsibility to address the crisis, the human suffering it entailed and the forces which created it. So they forged an Ecumenical Coalition of the Mahoning Valley.

It was not and is not the aim of the clergy themselves to buy and run a steel mill. Rather it is the intention of the Ecumenical Coalition to stimulate the community to get a new sense of confidence that it can take charge of its own destiny — at least to the degree that it need not again be the pawn of industrial decision-makers in some far-off place.

What the Coalition proposes is a form of "Plymouth Rock capitalism" in which the people of the Youngstown community and the men and women who work in the mill will have a balance of power in the industrial ownership. Studies show that worker productivity (not so much working harder as working "smarter") will go up as members of the work force themselves have a stake in the quality of the product and its profitability. With modernization and a boost from Uncle Sam by means of government guaranteed loans, the Campbell Works (so say the Coalition's economic advisors) can be bought, reopened and operated to meet the test of the market.

To be sure, the Coalition continues to wrestle with the "principalities and powers," of which St. Paul spoke. The owners of the Campbell plant have shown

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were Methodist Bishop James S. Thomas, Presbyterian Executive John Sharick and Rabbi Sidney Berkowitz. In the last nine tumultuous months, the Coalition and steering committee have: Devised a plan to buy back the steel mill facility and put it under community/worker ownership and management; commissioned a study, for which they received a major HUD grant to detail the feasibility of the purchase and the approximate cost; amassed major public awareness of the issue, considerable funds from a variety of sources and the respect from some politicians who originally opposed them; ignited community hope, organized community support, and at least partially offset the predictable sense of despair on the part of the workers.

Beyond the realm of Youngstown, the efforts of the Coalition and the media coverage are prompting other religious leaders to think seriously about the responsibility of the international business world to the people it hires for production.

The Youngstown facility in question is Campbell Works, an operation of Youngstown Sheet and Tube, one of the many large steel companies which fill the Mahoning Valley. Youngstown Sheet and Tube is owned by the Lykes Corporation in New Orleans. Against the advice of the Justice Department in 1969, the financially-troubled Lykes corporation acquired enough stock to merge with the financially secure Sheet and Tube. That was when the future of Campbell Works was dramatically affected. "It cannot seriously be doubted that Youngstown is slated to be an appendage of Lykes," wrote the Justice Department, "even though this is a case of the tail wagging the dog — and steel-making interests will not be paramount in the new company's conduct." The merger, it said, "jeopardizes Youngstown's competitive viability in terms of finances required for technological improvements and innovations in its steel production facilities."

The Department's prophecy was realized. Lykes began using the Sheet and Tube assets to pay off debts. Originally, the money was earmarked for sorely needed improvements. These were never made. Campbell Works began to show major losses. Second and third generation steel workers watched their factory and their enthusiasm deteriorate. The banks which originally financed Lykes' loan withdrew and invested their money in Japanese steel mills.

Fifteen minutes before the day shift ended on Sept. 19, employees were informed the plant was closing. Management cited low import steel prices, lack of government incentives and other related factors as the cause.

Angered most by the arbitrary manner in which the closing was handled, the Ecumenical Coalition initially collected enough money to investigate the economic implications of the decision and to address the effect it was having on the psychological stability of the

reluctance to sell the shut-down facilities (for competition is not often welcomed even by those who extol the virtues of "free enterprise"). Only proddings from the U.S. Attorney General, who has been pressed by the Coalition, has brought them to the bargaining table.

Civic leaders and politicans, too, have been footdraggers: reluctant to endorse the jeremiad critiques of the system which the Pastoral Letter identified; dubious that anyone else could find ways to make steel profitably in Youngstown if the great corporations cannot do it.

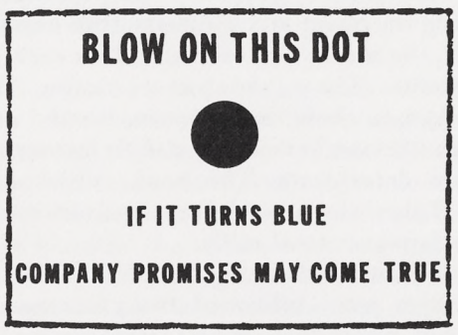
Equally skeptical have been rank and file of church members, many of them so accustomed to thinking of Christianity in the institutional terms of their local church that to see their bishops out in the arena of controversial community issues actually makes them hostile.

But there is a positive side, too: the posture of church and synagogue demonstrating that the religious concern for community is real and not so much pious talk; the revelation that the ache and pain of the unemployed steel workers and their families is as serious a focus of the church's mission as the well-being of the religious institution; the vision of an earlier American dream that workers can feel a closer relation to the purpose of their labor.

Isaiah (in Chapter 58) put the rationale for the Coalition's efforts in powerful words long ago: "Look . . . you oppress all your workers and strike the poor with your fist. Let the oppressed go free and break every yoke. . . Then will your light shine like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over . . . You will rebuild the ancient ruins, build upon the old foundations. You will be called *Conciliator, restorer of households.*" ■

community. Bishop Burt contacted the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies, where Dr. Richard Barnet organized political and economic experts for consultation. The Roman Catholic diocese released the Rev. Edward Stanton to work as full-time director of the Coalition.

"We are not experts in steel production or economic matters," the religious leaders said in a pastoral letter. But, ". . . the decision is the result of a way of doing business in this country that too often fails to take into account the human dimensions of economic action . . .



The costs of this decision are overwhelming. The loss of jobs, income and production is enormous. No less clear, on reflection, are the human and community consequences of these losses — the strains on marriage and family life, increased depression, alcoholism and alienation, as well as lost confidence, ambition and selfrespect. . . Behind the statistics and headlines lie individuals, families and communities left vulnerable and fearful by this decision. This is not in any sense a purely economic problem."

Within weeks of the closing, Bishop Burt, Father Stanton, Presbyterian minister Charles Rawlings (an aide to Burt) and Gerald Dickey, editor of the local steel workers union newspaper, flew to Washington to meet with the Institute for Policy Studies. There they met Dr. Gar Alperovitz of the Exploratory Project on Economic Alternatives. At that meeting, Dickey suggested the plant be bought by the workers and the community. The idea caught fire and received major support from Alperovitz, who saw change as coming from the bottom up. To effect this, he said, there would have to be a "powerful mobilization of community, national religious and other sentiment." Otherwise, private investors would be unwilling to buy and reopen the plant and "very little is likely to occur."

The Ohio delegation left Washington with a "Save Our Valley" campaign plan. They would seek the cooperation of banks in establishing "no risk" accounts for people wanting to pledge "earnest money"; solicit the cooperation of all area clergy in an effort to bring the message to the people; conduct a major study on the feasibility of purchasing the Campbell Works; raise money from the various denominations and make Youngstown a national media event.

Members of the Coalition's Executive Board each put up $10,000. After hearing from a HUD-financed study

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team that the total package would be $535 million, substantial sums were raised by national and state denominational headquarters. The Ohio Baptist Convention contributed $10,000; the American Baptist National Ministries gave $25,000. The Presbyterian Board of Pensions provided $200,000 with an additional $500,000 speculated. Episcopalians at a New York Coalition meeting pledged $60,000 and Riverside Church earmarked $100,000.

Breakdown on expenses includes: Purchase, $120 million; renewing the plant, $65 million; cost reduction improvements, $40 million; replacement of major facilities (including coke plant and blast furnaces), $160 million; environmental protection measures, $40 million.

On June 21, U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell approved the merger of Lykes Corporation and LTV Corporation, despite the recommendations of his antitrust division and the request by the Coalition that any merger carry the stipulation that the new corporation cooperate with efforts to buy the Campbell Works. Bell approved the merger without stipulation.

LTV owns Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation, the seventh-largest producer in the country. Sheet and Tube is the eighth largest. Both companies are financially troubled, and observers indicated the merger would mean more closings in the Youngstown area.

Bell said his department's study of the merger "led me to conclude that Lykes faced a grave probability of a business failure in the near future and that the prospects for turning the situation around, absent of the proposed merger, were highly speculative."

In response to the merger, Father Stanton said that either LTV will bargain with the Coalition or public pressure would be mounted to force them to do so. "The pressure of public opinion would crucify them," he said.

Public opinion plays a major role in the Coalition's ability to be successful. According to one source on the Coalition's steering committee, the situation in Youngstown has gotten to the stage of "push and shove." Area union leaders have assured the Coalition that if the Campbell Works were reopened, rank and file members would eliminate much of the goldbricking and stealing that takes place in steel mills, thereby increasing worker productivity by at least 15 percent. An estimated 200 clergy are working in support of the Coalition. Yet, reports the steering committee source, there is an attempt by some politicians and business people to undermine the necessity of reopening the Campbell Works. They are saying other industry is being invited into the Valley and that the religious leaders are out of their field of expertise. The situation is frequently testy and the cutting edge on the future will be, according to the source, whether or not the "religious leaders have the gumption" to stick with it. Even more vulnerable, he said, are the clergy. "In the midst of this political struggle," he queried, will the clergy hang tough?"

"The ultimate goal of purchasing Campbell Works is to put the jobless back to work and to give the local community greater control of its economic destiny. It also hopes to be a model for other communities that want to fight back when giant companies close their plants and abandon their workers.

"We believe that industrial investment decisions ought to take into account the needs and desires of employees and the community at large," the pastoral letter declared. ". . . Our traditional teaching points out that economic decisions ought not to be left to the judgment of a few persons with economic power, but should be shared with the larger community which is affected by the decisions."

In the proposal for support from national denominations, the Coalition stated their desire to "encourage consultations within the U.S. Catholic Conference, the National Council of Churches and its member denominations . . . and the appropriate national Jewish structures, concerning how the focus on Youngstown can be used as a national strategy to develop effective responses and solutions to the increasingly pervasive crisis of escaping capital and rising unemployment." These consultations would provide coordination of the resources of the religious community in support of Youngstown and national policy; provide a national interfaith presentation to President Carter and Congress on concerns for the need of public policy support of the Youngstown and other similar struggles; consider with more urgency the need for a National Interfaith Commission which would focus on the plight of the cities and the crisis caused by the flight of capital and jobs.

As THE WITNESS goes to press, representatives of the Coalition will be meeting with Vice President Mondale in an effort to solicit interest and support. Ultimately they hope to meet with President Carter, who, according to Bishop Burt, "must be persuaded that the Youngstown situation is a kind of showcase of communities which must be run by community people, not the multinational conglomerates. This town has been shocked and disheartened about its financial future. It's a matter of helping a community to have faith in itself." ■

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Maria, Raisa Receive $38,000

The sum of approximately $38,000 was received from the Episcopal Church last month by Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, the two former staffers on the National Commission for Hispanic Affairs who spent more than 10 months in prison for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury.

The women had hoped that their salaries and legal fees would have been covered — a hope also shared by a commission from the National Council of Churches which voiced it in an appeal to Presiding Bishop John Allin.

"But our salaries alone would have amounted to some $28,000-$29,000," said Maria Cueto. "We will have to try to divide the sum in an equitable way to pay our lawyers."

"People may think that we gave up too quickly," Maria added. "But when we saw the humiliating way that Bob Potter was treated at the last Executive Council meeting, we felt that nobody should be put through the mill like that just for the sake of money. (See Diocesan Press Story, July WITNESS).

"And if you read or heard about what went on in the Council, it was all centered around dollars and cents. The deeper issues concerning the jeopardizing of the Hispanic ministry through Grand Jury abuse were totally lost. Raisa and I felt that it was wrong to drag out the debate in those terms. It was weighing too much on us."

The settlement, made on condition that the women sign release papers, came in a check for $35,000 labeled the Suffragan Bishops Discretionary Fund. It was sent by Bishop Quintin Primo, chairman of the Division for Church and Society, who mediated the negotiations. Checks totaling a little more than $3,000 were also received by the two women from the Domestic and Foreign Mission Society as severance pay.

Concerning the final settlement, Attorney Robert Potter commented, "I regret that the full costs of the women's defense were not borne by the National Church, and that general releases running to the National Church were required of them before payment. I do believe that the latter is not the usual procedure on termination of employment either by the church or any other organization."

The financial settlement ended a long saga that began at the end of 1976 when FBI agents queried Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin during an investigation around the FALN, a militant Puerto Rican group which has claimed responsibility for a number of bombings. During the course of the investigation, the two women and seven others — all somehow connected with the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs — were jailed for refusing to testify before Grand Juries in Chicago and New York, claiming that the investigation was being used to harass Hispanics and to destroy the Puerto Rican Independence movement in the United States.

An attorney close to the investigation from its inception — Linda Backiel of the Grand Jury Project — traced the history of the affair in poetry:

For Raisa, For Maria
with all due respect

The man in black robes
finds himself addressing
a simple case: "If there were
a murder in the cathedral
and I asked the priest . . .
it would be a simple case."

With all due respect,
I must dissent
with your Honor
as to whether the subject
is murder in the cathedral
or justice
in the city halls.
Let me propose to you another
equally hypothetical case.

Let us imagine
we are someplace
safely long ago and far
away
in a nation ripped with strife
and inequality. On the one side
is a small minority of people
recently transplanted from a warm island
to the tin and cardboard boxes of this city;
they are for the most part poor. Unemployed.
They do not have university educations.
The women of this people
have been made sterile. They speak
a different language.

A small but growing minority
within this minority

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has been raising its voice
now and again raising the standard of freedom
and justice for all.
From time to time incendiary devices
are planted, bearing this message and from time
to time priests climb into the pulpit
bearing this message.

Few people listen to the priests
but they are pulled out of the pulpits.
The priest continues to preach; she preaches
to schoolchildren and to women washing clothes
she teaches songs bright with the promise
of freedom, and justice for all
but the bombs speak louder; the lords
and their masters listen; even judges
can hear the bombs
and they remember the words
of the priest they silenced.

They call her back to a room full of faces;
Inquisitors. They speak
a different language. They are armed
with the power of the majority.
They do not need bombs.
One is a jailer with keys to the open door
and the steeltrap in his boyish pockets.
"You must answer our questions," he begins.
"This will be painless, if you are anaesthetized
to the cries of women
for freedom and justice
for their children.

"This will be painless.
I will administer the anaesthetic.
You will feel
nothing
from now on;
the operation is painless
and perfectly legal.
You will answer all our questions
and your dreams
will bear no promises; no flowers
of freedom equality justice
and liberty.

Now.
You must answer all our questions
in the language WE understand;
the clearcut simple truths
of those who are pleased
with the platitudes; butter our wonder-
bread with the simple truths
of things as they are;
give us the smooth easy words
of those who wear the overcoat
of confidence in the majority.
Just fulfill these, our simple requests
and you will go free."

Did they guarantee
a job? Food for the table? A place to sleep? Peace
of mind? A free
spirit?
Did they promise not to rob her
of her children?
Can they guarantee
her liberty?
They are not interested in these questions.
They are accustomed to easy answers
served quickly with their scrambled eggs.
"This man, this picture of a man the prosecutor
is showing you now. Do you know his face
his habits his children his wife is he
hiding under your bed does he build
dreams at night? Believe
in freedom justice for all
equality?

"We have information
and reason to believe
those dreams are in fact a sinister disguise
under which he is hiding the bombs
that disturb us so.
We have information
and reason to believe you know. And we know
only the guilty
keep silent.
You must have something to hide.
Is he under your bed does he
wear a disquise is he wearing the dress
of freedom equality and fraternity?

We have reason to suspect
you are not telling all that you know.
Do I seem to detect
some hostility in your reply?
You do not trust us to protect
your children your dreams your lives?

"We are being very patient.
We will give you one more chance.
You must answer all our questions:
Feel nothing, answer
directly now
or be put to the test:
and the witches
always
drown."

— **Linda Backiel**

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Maggie Kuhn, Founder
Gray Panthers

"I'd like to think the Christian Church does indeed affirm life as a continuum, not just in little segments," says Margaret E. Kuhn, 73, founder of the Gray Panthers. "But the church is just as age-segregated and as ageist as any other group in society. It thinks in ageist terms."

Eight years ago, Maggie, as she prefers to be called, was a victim of ageism — society's segregation of and discrimination against people because of their age. The United Presbyterian Church forced her to retire. The implication was that she was too old to be a productive, creative worker in its Office of Church and Society.

Today Maggie views that decision as a reflection of attitudes in the broader society, where aging itself is largely a dehumanizing affair. An automobile graveyard is Maggie's favorite image of the treatment of old people in the United States: "Get what you can from 'em, and once they have no more utility, put 'em in a heap with the others and let 'em rust." She believes that as long as a person's worth is measured solely in economic terms, this country will continue to cast aside the aged, and people will continue to fear the aging process.

But growing old has not deterred Maggie Kuhn. Since her "retirement" she has become the personification of the 10,000 member Gray Panther organization. It's her voice most often heard denouncing ageism. She travels about 100,000 miles a year speaking to various groups, including Congressional Committees. But she's not content to complain about what is. Maggie also has ideas about what might be.

"I think of aging as a universal force, because it happens to all of us," Maggie says. "I believe very profoundly that it's a celebration of life. Aging is the one fact

Growing Old Alo

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of life human beings enjoy that relates us to the whole created order. Every living thing ages and dies. And when you get that view of it, age is no longer something to be feared."

Maggie believes the church and the rest of society need old peoples' insight and experience as the United States faces an enormous increase in old age population in the next 50 years. She calls this future population distribution the "new demography."

The postwar baby boom is behind the new demography. It's represented by a bulge on the population curve that is slowly moving toward the older age groups. The Senate Committee on Aging says one of every nine (23 million) Americans is 65 years or older now. By 2030, the ratio is expected to drop to one in five (52 million), with numbers distributed fairly evenly among all age groups.

Because of the new demography, Maggie thinks society must adjust to allow old people to participate. She calls on the church to do some self-examination.

"The denominations should look at the structure and governance of their 'protective care' institutions: nursing and retirement homes, retirement communities and hospitals. This is the age of self-determination. How democratic are they? My observation is they're run by the judicatory in a very high-handed, paternalistic fashion without much input from the people who live there."

Maggie suggests, as an example, that Pacific Homes — seven Methodist-related retirement communities with about 1,850 members — may not have gone bankrupt if the residents had been more in control.

"If the residents had been serving on the board, if those homes had been operating on a cooperative basis, they might have saved a lot of heartaches. The residents would have been making decisions on how the money was to be spent. And perhaps agreeing along the line that something could be cut back, or some other funding could be found."

Nevertheless, Maggie believes the whole idea of age-segregated housing has questionable sociological value.

"The new programs the churches are now dreaming up should not go that old route," she says. "We have found that 'ghettoizing' people on the basis of income does not work. And, I think we will find in the next 20 years that 'ghettoization' on the basis of age is also a failure."

As one alternative, she proposes the churches open the dormitories of their colleges and seminaries to old people. By 1992, the number of 18 year olds will decrease 26 percent. Many schools will close if they don't adapt the use of their facilities and their educational programs to include older people.

"There are waiting lists to get into retirement homes, so why not use that dormitory space?" she asks. "It's projected that hundreds of liberal arts colleges are going to be bankrupt by the end of the century because of population changes. The wise ones are going to attract old and middle-aged students."

Maggie calls this programming and use of facilities "cross-generational." The Gray Panthers are, in fact, a cross-generational group. Their slogan is *"Age and Youth in Action."* The coalition is based on similar need — affordable housing, for example — usually arising from low incomes.

According to the Senate Committee on Aging, a typical family head 65 or older earns only $6,292, or less than half the income of a family head younger than 65. Unemployment rates of young people are among the highest in the country. Old people and youth have little to lose and much to gain by being allied activists.

"The middle age group is oppressed," Maggie says, "because they are locked into a system they can't change or escape from."

Cross-generational programming is the direction Maggie thinks education should go. She questions the assumption of Western education that students learn best with their peer group. Education, including religious education, needs to be more integrative by age.

"Age segregation starts at nursery school. I think the learning process is enhanced when people of different ages are learning together — when you've got learners of all ages being a part of the teaching-learning situation, and alternating roles."

Professional education could be expanded to include not only cross-generational learning, but also interdisciplinary study. Maggie believes this two-pronged innovation is particularly important for seminaries.

"There ought to be discussions in the seminaries among retired clergy and seminarians in their early 20's," she says. "For clergy in continuing education and seminarians, I'd like to see seminaries develop some interdisciplinary courses with medical, law and nursing schools, and schools of social work."

Maggie points to seminarians she has taught who work in nursing homes. They've been "appalled" by the conditions of the homes and the treatment of the old people. But they've had little support, if any, from their schools.

"Seminarians need to be advocates within the nursing homes, to know how

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Along With Maggie Kuhn

by Lockwood Hoehl

to complain, to be aware of abuse and neglect, and to be aware of the standards that ought to be enforced. Those ministers-in-training ought not to be captive to the system. They ought to be changing that system."

She adds that in private nursing homes especially it is imperative that a seminarian have counsel — through interdisciplinary courses — so that the student knows the law and what his or her rights are as an advocate for the residents.

A spin-off of such education would be the sensitizing of attorneys, doctors, nurses, and social workers to the special needs and problems of old peole. Maggie is encouraged by the American Medical Students Association which established last March a task force on geriatric medicine. She's less pleased with lawyers.

"Few lawyers recognize that justice is the right of the people, and not just the privilege of rich clients and large corporations," she says. "The laws old people encounter are technical. We don't know what our rights are, and the law mystifies the whole system.

"The attorneys, after you've got them, are not aware of the intricacies of the law as it pertains to pensions, Social Security benefits, guardianships, trusteeships, and the question of being admitted to an institution in the case of incompetency. All these matters are extraordinarily complex.

"And a corporation or constitutional lawyer doesn't know anything about that. He isn't an advocate. We old people would like to see a lot less lawyering."

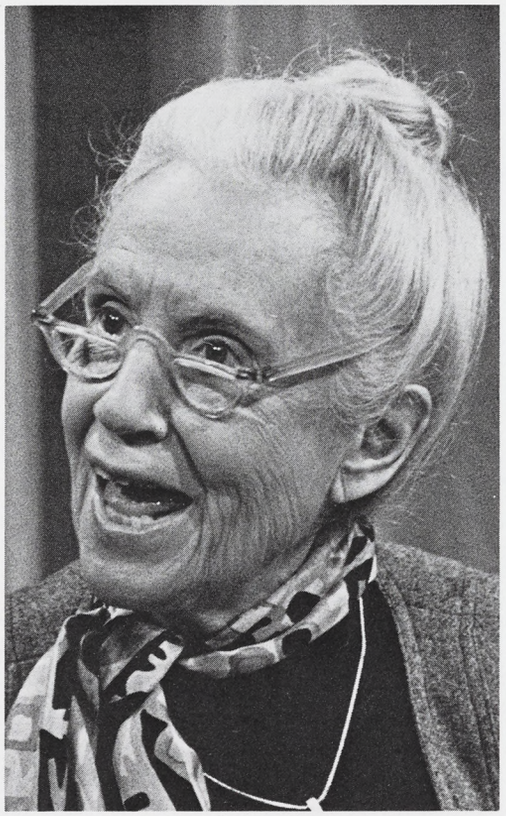
One thing they are glad to see is a study conducted by the American Bar Association of 38 countries where there are alternatives to the courts for resolving legal conflicts. In many of the countries old people make the judgments.

"That's the way it is in China," Maggie says. "There's a peoples' tribunal system. This is being done in only a small way in the United States."

One way old people can get legal assistance from qualified and sympathetic attorneys is through the Senior Citizens Law Center in California, a clearing house for about 3,000 public interest lawyers.

Helping old people with legal problems, such as drafting a simple will, is just one of the many services Maggie suggests parishes could provide for them.

"A lot of people die without wills," she says. "And they are scared of lawyers,



"I think of aging as a universal force because it happens to all of us. I believe very profoundly that it's a celebration of life."

scared of lawyers' fees. But you don't need to have a lawyer. A group of people within a congregation could get together with a person who has a paralegal background."

She'd like to see local churches become neighborhood centers serving old peoples' needs, such as health care, housing, and companionship.

"The congregation itself could constitute an extended family and bring people together — not just couples and families — on the basis of common interest, a common concern, and a common love of Jesus Christ. The churches must get off that family fixation."

The emphasis put on families and couples by parishes in worship, study, and social activities excludes single old people, like Maggie, for instance. A minister of a Presbyterian Church in Columbus, Ohio told Maggie there were 50 widows in his congregation. Each of them lived alone.

"All of them were lonely. Many were afraid. And many of them were having a hard time maintaining their homes. But none of them considered sharing. They hadn't thought about it! Now, the church could enable that to occur."

"Enabling" is the important word for Maggie. Programs that congregations develop can be established and continued by laypersons.

A young Methodist minister in Philadelphia started, almost inadvertantly, a team ministry of laywomen to widows. There were three women in his congregation whose husbands died about the same time. He called on them and buried their husbands. But he felt more was needed, so he decided to get them together.

"They now have an outreach that involves about 60 women of all ages who have been widowed," Maggie says. "It even includes other congregations. And *the women* have done it. The core group look to the minister for technical assistance, so to speak, but it's *their* ministry."

Often widows are left without help tc make the adjustment to life as a single, and without models other than those Maggie calls "professional widows" perpetually in mourning.

Widows and other single old women are a minority within a minority requiring special attention. Many have never worked outside their homes, confronted bureaucracies, or had to make their way on their own. They are among the poorest of the poor. According to New York City's Department of the Aging, in 1975 the median income of women older than 65

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was $2,642. Typically, women receive the minimum Social Security payments.

Low income is frequently a barrier to old peoples' receiving adequate health care. Maggie's ideal health program would emphasize prevention of illness and disease, and aim at what she calls "holistic health" — physical, mental, spiritual, and environmental well-being. As she sees it, new programs, local and national, need to be established.

Churches fit into her vision of neighborhood health care called the "Healthy Block."

"A church could enable self-help groups set up a good-health center using church facilities," she says. "Good-health means people who are healthy come in to stay healthy. A Lutheran minister in Springfield, Ohio has established a good-health center that has been run very successfully by the congregation, the minister, a nurse, and a general practitioner. It's open every day to the neighborhood. And the doctor makes house calls."

Neighborhood health care is the core of the Gray Panther supported National Health Service (NHS). This program has been proposed to Congress by Rep. Ronald V. Dellums of California. According to the Gray Panthers quarterly newspaper NETWORK, "National Health Service stresses government responsibility for health care as a public service."

The Dellums bill calls for the NHS to be an independent agency reporting to the President and a National Health Board. NETWORK says the NHS will provide "health education, diagnosis and treatment of illness and injury, prevention measures, rehabilitation programs, and drugs, supplies and appliances." Supplemental services like child care, ambulance, and home health care are included.

"Basic Health Rights" are a revolutionary part of the Dellums legislation. These rights would guarantee "paid leave to workers to receive health services, no treatment without prior written consent, and the right to death with dignity, including the right to die at home."

As head of the 10,000-member Gray Panther organization, Maggie travels some 100,000 miles a year to speak to various groups, including Congressional Committees.

Death and dying are, of course, important issues for old people. Maggie wants the churches to get the issues into the open to help people prepare for their own and others' deaths.

"The churches need to be working with their members on the idea of grieving," she says, "and making it possible for people to cry and to comfort each other. Men need that particularly."

She suggests churches could get parishioners to write "living wills." These documents instruct a person's family, clergy, physician, and attorney not to use extraordinary measures to prolong her or his own life. In many states living wills are not yet legally binding. Lobbying in support of them could be an ongoing church project.

Maggie thinks churches also could organize memorial societies in their communities as an alternative to the $4 billion funeral business.

"A memorial society is a group of people concerned about the exploitation of death. They want to memorialize life — celebrate life — rather than to exploit grief and pretty up the corpse. We support efforts to take the exorbitant profits out of the funeral industry. Who needs a $4,000 casket? Not the corpse!"

Preparation for death can go a long way toward avoiding the exploitation of grief. The hospice movement, started in England, stresses compassionate care for the dying and terminally ill. Medical treatment is mostly limited to comforting the dying person physically. Drugs may be used to relieve pain. There are no machines to prolong life. Psychologists and social workers help the dying and the family share the dying process.

"What is important is surrounding the dying and the family with comfort, compassionate care, with an opportunity to review life and to prepare for leaving this world in a dignified way," Maggie says. "Many things can be learned in that process. And the goal is to have people die at home. The death that occurs in a hospital is not a good death. It's violent, and it's largely a lonely, dehumanizing affair. We need to rob death of its terror." ■

Lockwood Hoehl is a free-lance writer and photographer who lives in Pittsburgh, Pa.

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Resources for and About Old People

(From NETWORK, Spring, 1978)

Gray Panther National Office
Edith Giese, Coordinator
Jean Hopper, Librarian
3700 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Chairperson, National Steering Committee
Alice Adler
2834 Birchwood
Wilmette, IL 60091

National Task Force on a New Economic Order
S. Shubert Frye
Hortonville, NY 12745

National Task Force on Health
Frances Klafter
1734 P Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
or
Glen Gersmehl
525 E. 5th Street
New York, NY 10009

National Task Force on Minority Outreach
Irving Wiesenfeld
609 Columbus Avenue, #6Q
New York, NY 10024

National Task Force on Older Women
Rita Wreck
c/o National Office

National Task Force on Youth
Sarah Luria
c/o National Office
or
Steve Wayne
912 Lido Nord
Newport Beach, CA 92663

Media Watch (detects and publicizes stereotyping of old people in media)
Lydia Bragger
475 Riverside Drive, Room 861
New York, NY 10027

National Senior Citizens Law Center
1709 W. 8th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017
or
1200 15th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20005

Gray Panther NETWORK
Chuck Preston, Editor
411 Lakeview Drive
York, PA 17403
Subscriptions: $3 individuals; $6 for institutions/libraries and foreign address.

Continental Association of Funeral and Memorial Societies
Elizabeth Clemmer, Executive Director
1828 L Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

The Honorable Ronald V. Dellums
House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Claude Pepper
Chairman, House Select Committee on Aging
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senate Committee on Aging
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

BOOKS

Maggie Kuhn on Aging; A Dialogue, **edited by Dieter Hessel (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1977). Available from Gray Panther National Office, $4.45, including postage.**

Nursing Homes: A Citizens' Action Guide **by Linda Horn and Elma Griesel. Available from Gray Panther National Office, $4.20, including postage.**

A Healthy State **by Victor W. Sidel and Ruth Sidel (Pantheon Books, New York). International perspective on success and failure of American Medical System.**

Love and Sex in the Sixties **by Robert N. Butler.**

The Disabling Professions, **essays by Ivan Illich and others on how the professions make and keep us powerless and dependent on them.**

Of Youth & Old Age

A sermon preached recently at St. Stephen and the Incarnation, Washington, D.C. by William MacKaye, who identifies himself as "a veteran Episcopalian" and former religion editor of the Washington Post, *was built around a Hasidic story. The story goes like this:*

Once there was a very old, very wise rabbi, who was famous in his part of the world for his ability to answer difficult questions.

One day there came to him a troubled young man, who said to him, "Rabbi, Scripture teaches us that God is a good and loving creator. How can this be, when all around me I see sickness and cruelty and destruction?"

The rabbi replied, "Young man, I listen to you, and I think I hear you saying that you believe that maybe you could make a better creation than God."

The young man thought about this a bit, then confessed, "Yes, I do think so."

The rabbi said, "So begin."

— Quoted in *Bread* 6/25/78

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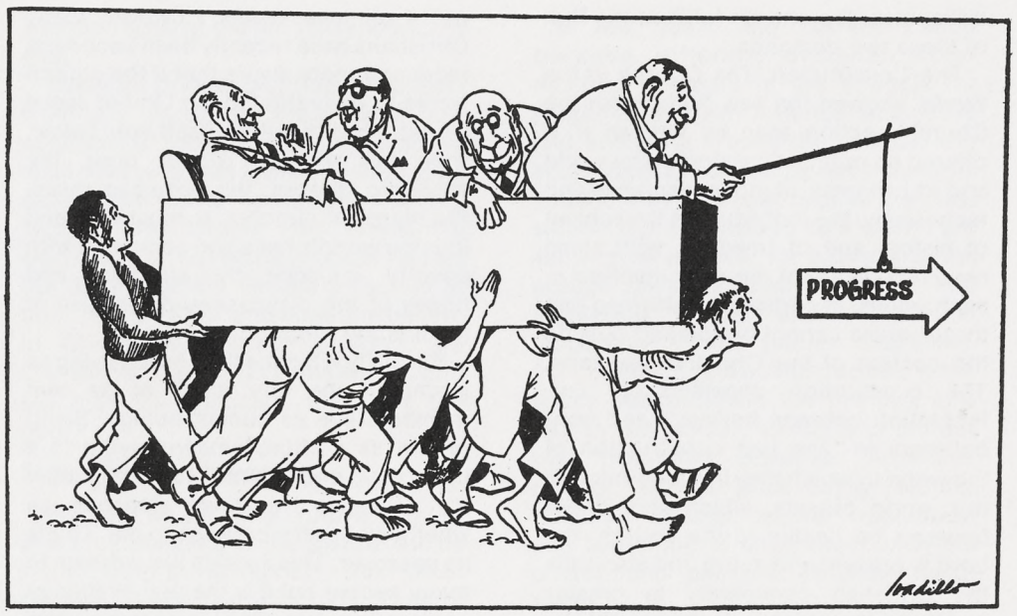

The Gospel According to the Poor

by Gustavo Gutierrez

I should make the point at the beginning that the church is not involved in the question of poverty by the fact that it is present in a poor country. It is involved primarily and fundamentally by the God of the Bible to whom it wants to, and must, be faithful. The fact that the church is present in a poor country can indeed provide the whole church with the opportunity better to understand its responsibility to be a community bearing witness to God, who became poor in Jesus Christ. This leads to a second point. The expression "poor countries" is ambiguous. Strictly speaking I mean countries where the great majority of the population live in poverty caused by an unjust social order. This means that the question of the poor in the church involves not only the God we believe in but the social conflict we live in.

Bearing this in mind I'd like to suggest some of the thoughts which have arisen in the course of our life experiences and discussions in Peru. These lead to the conclusion that the poor today rather than being regarded merely as a "problem for the church" raise the question of what "being the church" really means.

For most of its history, the church has been working out how it sees itself. From within, so to speak. Supernatural salvation is an absolute value of which the church is the sole guardian. Western Christianity is constructed pastorally and theologically in relation to the believer, the Christian. In order to understand itself the church looks inwards. This has been called ecclesiocentrism.

The historical reasons for this attitude are obvious. When new countries were discovered the task of incorporating them into the church was seen as a mission of salvation. The church was historically bound up with Western culture, the white race and the ruling class of European society and its extension throughout the world was in these Western terms. The missionaries followed in the tracks of the colonialists. Ecclesiocentrism savored of Westernization.

It is a cliche to say that Vatican II put an end to the "Christendom" mentality. The time has come for dialogue and service to the world. This world is hostile to the church, existed centuries before it, and is proud of its own values. Pope John XXIII gave the Council the task of opening the church to the world, finding an appropriate theological language, and bearing witness to a church for the poor. After it had overcome its initial

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The Rev. Gustavo Gutierrez, author of "A Theology of Liberation," is part Quechuan Indian, and exercises his ministry in Lima, Peru. This article is reprinted from *Concilium,* Volume 104, edited by N. Greinacher/A. Muller, The Seabury Press.

difficulties, the church fulfilled the first of these two demands.

The Constitution, *The Church in the World,* showed the new horizon for the Church's action seen by Vatican II. It offered an optimistic vision of the world and its progress, of modern science and technology, the individual as the subject of history and of freedom, with some reservations about the risks involved in such values. In particular it affirmed that these values cannot be fulfilled outside the context of the Christian message. The constitution appealed for collaboration between believers and non-believers in "the just construction of the world in which they live together." In this world outside, which should not however be hostile to the church, the Lord is present and active and also calls the Christian community to greater loyalty to the Gospel. In this world the church must fulfill its mission as a sign, a universal sacrament of salvation.

The great claims of the modern world are recognized, but with due moderation. On the other hand social conflicts are only mentioned in general terms of the existence of poverty and injustice in the world, and the necessity for the development of the poor countries. The individualistic root of bourgeois society is also maintained to a certain extent.

There is no serious criticism of the effects of domination by monopolistic capitalism on the working classes, particularly in the poor countries. Nor is there any clear realization of the new forms of oppression and exploitation perpetrated in the name of these modern world values. The Council is concerned with something else: the time has come for dialogue between the church and modern society. That this society is not homogeneous, but divided into conflicting social classes does not come within the scope of Vatican II. The world to which it is "opening up" is bourgeois society.

The third task given by John XXIII to the Council barely appears in its texts. The theme of poverty, "Schema 14" as it was called in the Council corridors, knocked on the Council's door but only got a glimpse inside. However, many Christians have recently been becoming more and more aware that if the church wants to be faithful to the God of Jesus Christ, it has to rethink itself *from below,* from the position of the poor, the exploited classes, the despised races, the marginal cultures. It must descend into the world's hells and commune with poverty, injustice, the struggles and hopes of the dispossessed because of them is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Basically it means the church living as a church the way many of its own members live as human beings. Being reborn as a church means dying to a history of oppression and complicity. It's power to live anew depends on whether it has the courage to die. This is its passover. This sounds like a dream to many people but it is the real challenge confronting the Christian community today. The time will come when any other way of talking by the church will sound hollow and meaningless.

There are now many people working along these lines, in various and perhaps modest ways (the political dimension of the Gospel, involvement in the struggle of the poor, defense of human rights, Africanization of the Christian faith, breaking with the colonial past, and so on). The aim is to be faithful to the Gospel and the constant renewal of God's call. Gradually people are realizing that in the last restort it is not a question of the church being poor, but of the poor of this world being the People of God, the disturbing witness to the God who sets free.

Viewpoint of Underdogs

Human history is where we encounter the God of Jesus Christ. And in Jesus Christ we proclaim God's love for all human beings. As we have already mentioned, this history is a history of conflict, but we cannot leave it at that. We must also insist that history (in which God is revealed and proclaimed) must be *re-read from the viewpoint of the poor.* Human history has been written, as a Brazilian theologian has put it, "with a white hand." The point of view of the "underdogs" of history is quite different. History must be re-read from this viewpoint of their struggles, resistances and hopes.

Great efforts have been made to blot out the memory of the oppressed. This deprives them of a source of energy, historical will and rebellion. Today the humilliated nations are trying to understand their past in order to build their present on solid bases. The history of Christianity has also been written with a white, western, bourgeois hand. We must recall to mind the "scourged Christs of the Indies," as Bartolome de las Casas called the Indians of the American continent, and with them all the other poor people who have been victims of the lords of this world. Their memory still lives in cultural expressions, popular religion and the resistance to impositions by the church bureaucracy. The memory of Christ is present in every hungry, thirsty, oppressed and humiliated person, in the despised races and the exploited classes.

Re-Making History

But the phrase "re-reading history" I have used might sound like a mere intellectual exercise if I did not mean it as a *re-making of history.* It is not possible to re-read history unless we enter into the successes and failures of the fight for freedom. Re-making history means subverting it, that is to say, "turning it upside down, and seeing it from below instead of from above. The established order has taught us to think of subversion as something bad, because it threatens it. But contrariwise it is bad to be and perhaps go on being a "super-versive," supporting the ruling power and seeing history from the standpoint of the great of this world.

This subversive history involves a new experience of faith, a new spirituality and a new proclamation of the gospel. Understanding the faith in terms of the historical praxis of liberation leads to the proclamation of the Gospel as the very heart of this praxis. This proclamation is a watchguard, an active involvement and solidarity with the interests and struggles of the working classes, the

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word which becomes effective in action, defines attitudes and is celebrated in thanksgiving.

The Gospel proclaims liberation in Jesus Christ, liberation which uproots all injustice and exploitation and brings friendship and love. I do not mean a liberation which could be interpreted "spiritually," still so dear to certain Christian circles. Hunger and injustice are not merely economic and social problems but human ones and they challenge the very basis on which we live our Christian faith. As Berdyaev put it, reinterpreting terms frequently used in such circles, "If I'm hungry, it's a material problem, but if someone else is hungry it's a spiritual problem."

Love and sin are historical realities which take place in real situations. That is why the Bible speaks of liberation and justice as opposed to the slavery and humiliation of the poor in history. The *gift of sonship* is accomplished in history. By accepting others as our brothers and sisters we accept this free gift not in word but in deed. This is living God's love and bearing witness to it. The proclamation of a God who loves all human beings equally must be embodied in history, become history. Proclaiming this liberating love in a society ruled by injustice and the exploitation of one social class by another, turns this "becoming history" into an appeal and a conflict.

Within a society where social classes conflict we are true to God when we side with the poor, the working classes, the despised races, the marginal cultures. This is the position whence to live and proclaim the Gospel. Proclaiming it to the oppressed of this world will show them that their situation is against God's will which is enacted in liberating events. This will help them realize the vile injustice of their situation.

The Gospel read from the point of view of the poor and the exploited and militant in their struggles for freedom requires a people's church: a church which arises from the people, a people who wrest the Gospel from the hands of the great ones of this world and thus prevent it being used to justify a situation against the will of the liberating God.

When the poor expropriate the gospel from the hands of those who now consider it their private property, we shall have what has recently begun to be called "the social appreciation of the Gospel." The Gospel tells us that the sign of the arrival of the Kingdom is that the poor have the Gospel preached to them. It is the poor who hope and believe in Christ, or, strictly speaking, are Christians. Can we turn this around and say that the Christians today are the poor?

Poor Must Preach

Perhaps we should go further and say that the preaching of the Gospel will be truly liberating when the poor themselves are the preachers. Then of course the proclamation of the Gospel will be a stumbling block, it will be a Gospel "unacceptable to society" and expressed in the vernacular. Thus the Lord will speak to us. Only by listening to this voice will we recognize our saviour. This voice speaks "in ecclesia" with a different tone.

Thus the poor of this world are working out their "historical credo," telling themselves and others why they believe in the Lord who sets free. Because they believe in him in communion with a whole historical past, in the social conditions in which they are living now. In various places many attempts have been made and continue to be made in this direction. It is a mistake to think that Latin America today is totally submerged under repression and fascism. Moreover, for the people of the subcontinent, suffering is not something new; it has always been there, but so too have hope and the will to rebel.

For a long time these people have been exiles in their own land, but also making the exodus to regain it. The workers' power of resistance and creativity are incomprehensible to the defenders of the established order, and also disconcerting to those who have recently regarded themselves as their spokesmen.

A few years ago communication between different Christian communities engaged in the struggle for liberation in Latin America was active and enriching. Today the political and ecclesiastical conditions have changed and the lines have been broken to a great extent. But everywhere new efforts are starting: let us think, for example, of the groups being formed in Brazil. The increasing hunger and exploitation (especially in the poorer countries), imprisonment (the political arrests in the whole subcontinent, the bishops who met in Riobamba), torture and murder (the Honduran peasants, Argentine priests), are the price being paid for rebelling against secular oppression and beginning to understand what the church and being a Christian mean today.

But these lives and this bloodshed are a radical challenge to the whole church, not just the church in Latin America, requiring more than mere analysis. Its response to this challenge will decide how faithful it is to its own authentic tradition and thus to the God who "establishes justice and right."

How can I sing to God in a foreign land, asked the psalmist in exile. There can be no Christian life without "songs" to God, celebrations of his liberating love. But how can we sing to God in a world full of oppression and repression? This is a painful question for the Christian, involving the whole basis of his faith, requiring something like a new covenant "with us who are all of us here alive this day" (Deut. 5:3), breaking the historical covenant made with the ruling culture, race and class.

It requires a covenant with the poor of this world, a new kind of universality. This creates a feeling of panic in some; others lose their old securities, but many feel a disturbing sense of hope. As Jose Maria Arguedas puts it, it is a journey in which "we feel little knowledge but great hope." ■

CREDITS

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Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 2

summoned "is defined in terms of mutuality," observing that this is an attempt to move "beyond the theological pitfalls" involved in appeals to authority or nature. But he seems to have exchanged one set of pitfalls for a deeper one. Mutuality, which characterizes human *relationships* of various types rather than human nature, is notably ambivalent. If mutuality is added to any of the destructive potentialities of human nature, such as fear, distrust, envy or malice, the resultant evils are not cured but increased.

On the other hand, if we take mutuality to imply or presuppose relations of love and affection, there are still types of mutuality which are generally regarded as undesirable, as, for example, in cases of incest or adultery. Again, in the kind of love exemplified in the parable of the good Samaritan, mutuality (in the sense of reciprocity) is irrelevant. Indeed, if we bear in mind the fact that some kinds of love are exclusive while others are universal, we may note that mutual affection can sometimes generate what Erich Fromm has called *egotism a deux*. Hence, despite current loose talk about the significance of "mutuality," it cannot possibly define the ideal.

Dr. Gessell also claims that no theological judgment must ever have the consequence of "de-personalization" or of rendering anybody "less than fully human." If he means that only *favorable* judgments about human conduct are allowable, lest unfavorable judgments should lessen the agent's sense of self-worth, the result would be to eliminate theological ethics entirely, since it would be idle to talk about norms of behavior if we could never take note of their violation or register disapproval. It looks as if Dr. Gessell has overlooked the distinction between judgments concerning (a) proper norms of conduct and their violation, (b) the imputation of responsibility when violations occur, and (c) the imposition of sanctions or penalties. Sanctions or penalities can be regarded as dehumanizing or depersonalizing where they are cruel (as in the case of torture or mutilation) or vengefully severe (as in the case of imprisonment for dissent.) Also, an imputation of responsibility for a wholly involuntary action or condition might be so characterized. But a judgment that certain kinds of voluntary conduct are not exemplary for Christians cannot, in itself, be depersonalizing or de-humanizing — though it might be wrong on other grounds — since such a judgment necessarily *affirms* the full human personality of the agent or agents judged. This follows from the simple fact, recognized since Aristotle, that moral judgments of approval or disapproval apply only to the voluntary acts or dispositions of human beings. If imposing or maintaining norms of exemplary behavior could be depersonalizing or dehumanizing, there could be no norms at all.

In this connection it is especially important to recognize the difference between homosexual *orientation* and homosexual *conduct.* Because of the Christian doctrine that all persons, as human beings, are of equal worth in the sight of God, it is required that nobody be penalized or disqualified by reason of orientation alone. The considerations here are the same as those forbidding discrimination against racial minorities or women. But actual behavior is a different matter. There is no principal that all *conduct* is alike in the sight of God.

Hence, if homosexual *conduct* is to be protected, it must be on the grounds taken in the British Wolfenden Report, — i.e., that *private* sexual conduct between consenting adults is not a matter of *public* concern. This position can be universalized and rests on strong legal and moral ground; I strongly support it. But if one departs from this position by demanding public approval or endorsement of homosexual practices or life-styles, one thereby accepts the view of such figures as Lord Devlin who, arguing against the Wolfenden recommendation, claimed that private homosexual conduct *is* a matter of public concern and thus properly subject to regulation or prohibition in case the public is so minded. This happened last year in Florida. To recognize this aspect of the problem poses no "theological snarl," as Dr. Gessell says, but should help to remove one.

We must also bear in mind, as Abraham Maslow points out, that the ethical perspective, from which conduct is judged acceptable or unacceptable, is different from the perspective of the rapist or pastor, the functions being distinct. Now it might conceivably be argued that the church should engage *only* in pastoral or therapeutic functions for the benefit of particular individuals and should avoid moral judgments altogether. But to take such a position would mean an end to theological ethics and an end to any concern for social justice or social renewal. I don't think Dr. Gessell fully grasps this aspect of the problem. In short, while Dr. Gessell's "perplexity" is made plain, it seems to be largely self-induced, or at least to reflect some rather serious misconceptions both as to the issues and as to the implications of his own views. I venture these comments because I consider that questions of theological ethics call for the best analysis we can give them, since otherwise there is only the destructive mutuality of misunderstanding and recrimination.

Philip H. Rhinelander
Stanford University
Stanford, Cal.

John Gessell Responds

As a careful reading will show, I am of course not arguing for the substitution of pastoral or therapeutic functions for moral judgments. I welcome Dr. Rhinelander's response, but I think that

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it is important to point out that in moral discourse *all* criteria are ambivalent because historically conditioned, including those of classical natural law theory. However, the term "mutuality" *is* defined as Baum uses it as that covenant relationship which exists between God and his people. The term purposefully leaves the future open, since one of the sources for ethical reflection is the eschatological, which brings all present and partial judgments under question.

With reference to my claim that theological judgments suffering from cognitive dissonance must be called into question if such judgment has as its consequence the "depersonalization" of a *class of people,* I do not think that Dr. Rhinelander has grasped my point. Perhaps I should have used the word "oppressive" to describe the consequence of such a judgment. I am speaking here, of course, not to the question of the norms of conduct and the sanctions and penalties for wrongdoing, but *a priori* judgments about a class of people defined by their behavior. These judgments have the effect of denying them participation in decisions about themselves and about their future. Such decisions are by definition unjust.

I do not believe that the difference between "orientation" and "conduct" is a meaningful distinction. It tends toward that fatal split between act and being. It assumes that sin is in the act and is defined by the physical or biological structure of the act. This is, of course, what is under debate in the field of ethics at this time. I reject the classical view that defines sin as in the biological or physical act. It reduces human action to animal behavior, a naturalistic fallacy. We know that persons are more than a bundle of animal acts. The holistic and integrative view of persons requires us to deal with human reason and imagination, with human experience and reflection on that experience, if we are to determine what is constitutive of moral behavior. The earliest Christian revision of the classical view was that of Jesus, who transferred the locus of moral reflection from the external act to the inner intention and disposition.

Finally, it is important to name the source of the differences in the current ethical debate. This is the disagreement about the status of absolute behavioral norms, about the possibility of exceptionless moral norms in which moral action is described in terms of external acts. I contend that this view makes sin more a thing than a relationship, and that acts, out of the context of human relationships, are too ambiguous to give helpful moral guidance.

John M. Gessell
University of the South
Sewanee, Tenn.

Issues Open Invitation

(In June, 1977, THE WITNESS published an appeal for funds to help relocate the Rev. George and the Rev. Katrina Swanson to the Diocese of Newark, since Katrina's bishop would not recognize her priesthood in the Diocese of Kansas. With this move, she was able to be licensed, and was recently appointed rector of St. John's, Union City. She asked THE WITNESS to publish the following as a Letter to the Editor.)

Dear Friends,

Just about a year after you helped us move from our mid-western ministry to our new work in the Diocese of Newark, I accepted a call to become rector of St. John's Parish, Union City.

George will continue to serve as rector of Ascension Parish, Jersey City only one mile from St. John's and we will continue to live at 555 Palisade Ave. in Jersey City.

I will begin ministering with the people of St. John's on Sept. 1 and Bishop Spong will institute me as rector at 8 p.m. on Sept. 24. We would love to see anyone who could be with us that evening.

The Swanson family remains continually grateful for the prayerful and financial support given by many people (known and unknown to us) over the past years in our struggle to find a place in which we could both minister.

The Rev. Katrina Martha Swanson
Jersey City, N.J.

Seeks Heyward Reprints

May I order 25 reprints of Carter Heyward's "Enigmatic God" in the April issue of THE WITNESS for distribution in the First Presbyterian Church here?

The Rev. Gilbert J. Horn
Whippany, N.J.

Gay Ad Bold

I send my heartiest thanks for your boldness in using your Gay issue (October, 1977) in your world-wide ads!

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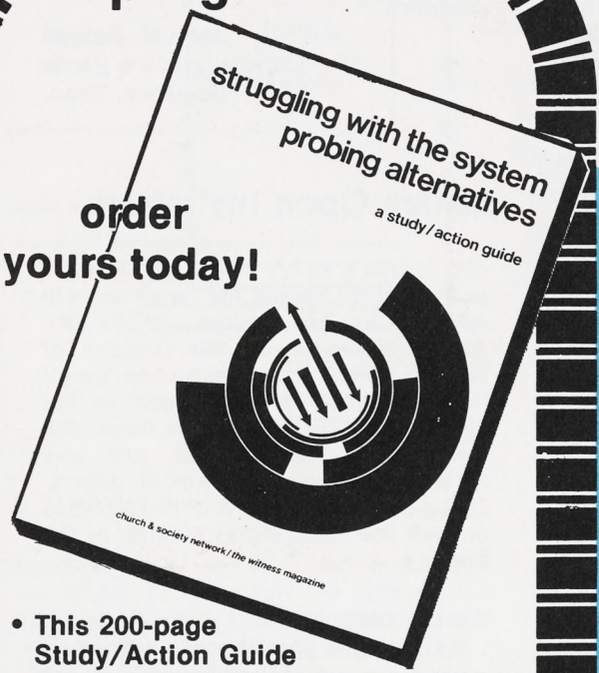

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Womanview of Lambeth
Pat Park

Why Extend the ERA?
Joan W. Howarth

Reclaiming the Bible
Sheila Collins

Seminaries: Hazardous To Women's Health?
Beverly W. Harrison
W. Robert Martin, Jr.

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Church Flouts Boycott

I read with interest the article by Mary Lou Suhor on her experiences with the Associated Church Press around their holding a meeting in a state which had not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment (June WITNESS). I agree that it is most important that Christians listen to the importance being placed on the boycott of these states and act on it.

But now the Episcopal Church itself is breaking the boycott! Flagrantly and knowingly. The Office of the General Convention has announced that we will meet in 1982 not in Milwaukee in ratified Wisconsin, but in New Orleans in non-ratified Louisiana.

What can we do? Certainly, at least, we must write, we must protest, we must make our voices heard. And we have leaders who are supposed to be committed to this very issue: Bishops Paul Moore, Otis Charles and Coleman McGehee are all three sponsors of the Religious Committee for the ERA. We need to turn to them to ask them to make their membership on this important committee not just a signature on a letterhead, but a primary focus of their work with the Church.

Ms. Suhor has certainly shown us how and why the issue is so important. But why is the General Convention, in particular, such a priority?

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church is one of the largest denominational meetings held in this country. Its very size and the large amount of publicity it generates will all the more focus attention upon our meeting in an unratified state.

The size of the General Convention is so large that only a few cities can accommodate the meeting. It also follows that New Orleans has only a limited number of conventions this size which it can draw. The presence or the absence of the General Convention will be much more impressive financially to the city and the state than will the smaller conferences that might boycott the city.

The timing of the change in meeting site is of great importance. The resistance for other groups to change the site of meetings in the past has come from the difficulty of planning for such events and the impossibilities of changes once decisions have been made. We can stop that planning now.

One of the most important issues is that the site is being changed from a ratified state to an un-ratified state. If the Episcopal Church supports such a change now, it gives credence to the expressed belief of the leaders in these states that churches will treat ERA and women's rights as a passing fad. The change will have terribly disheartening meanings for those in denominations such as the American Baptists who are trying to have their conventions moved out of unratified states.

I am horrified at the prospect of the ERA winning extension and our finding ourselves one state short of ratification at the end of the extension period in 1982 with one of the holdouts being Louisiana.

John Preston
New York, N.Y.

(For those who wish to write concerning the General Convention's flaunting of the ERA boycott: the Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Diocese of New York, 1047 Amsterdam Ave., New York, N.Y. 10024; the Rt. Rev. Otis Charles, Diocese of Utah, 231 East 1st Street, South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111; the Rt. Rev. Coleman McGehee, Diocese of Michigan, 4800 Woodward Blvd., Detroit, Mich. 48201).

Intends to Quote

I'm forwarding a copy of the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation resolution on Religion and Human Dignity adopted by the membership at the UUWF Biennial convention in Chicago last year. A nearly identical resolution on Women and Religion was subsequently adopted at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

You can see why the article by Barbara Brown Zikmund, "Women's Reformation in Motion," (May WITNESS) is one I would like permission to copy for circulation to the UUWF Administrative Board and to Paul Carnes, president of the UUA. Meanwhile, I intend to quote from it, in a speech I'm giving next week, and to use that wonderful sentence from Georgia Fuller's article in the same issue: "We believe that our living and thinking is the raw data for theology."

I'm also enclosing my check for a subscription.

Nancy S. Prichard
Executive Director, UUWF
Boston, Mass.

Martyrdom Revisited

Your July issue moved me to write. That may be your best yet. I read, in sequence, Berrigan's letter from jail, your editorial on the Council action re Cueto/Nemikin. The Skinner and Thorman articles which followed were excellent, but Stringfellow's related exactly to what I was thinking — one of the best things I've read in years.

But my thoughts involve the issues raised by your article about the Council's treatment of Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin. I think the Presiding Bishop and Council are failing to recognize what, in this area of the Law vs. the Individual Conscience, is of prime importance.

The Anglo- American law system, one of the glories of Western Civilization, has established basic principles concerning the authority to demand truth, openness and cooperation from citizens called upon to testify before courts. Without these, the judicial system could not possibly function. Thus, the finding of contempt and the severe sentencing of the two women is understandable. But the courts are, and must be, much concerned with

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Puebla: 'Twixt Fear & Hope

Robert L. DeWitt

With the passing of Pope Paul VI, a dramatic chapter in history has come to an end and an even more crucial one is about to begin. The unique influence of that office and its incumbent on world affairs and on public opinion is difficult to exaggerate. As THE WITNESS goes to press, the process is already underway for the election of a new pope.

One of the legacies which Paul leaves to his successor is the dynamic, indeed, volatile situation of the church in Latin America. Traditionally, that church has been one of established privilege, with little concern for the great majority of its people — the wretched, the campesinos, the Indians.

But the church through its apostolic traditions and scriptures always bears within it the seed of its own reform. So it is that in Latin America, a major reformation may be in the making — a sign of which is the Conference of Latin American Bishops in October in Puebla, Mexico. It is not solely a "religious" reformation, but one which sees religion as incarnational, that the concerns of faithful piety cannot be divorced from the injustices that afflict people's lives. Church and society alike are the domain of God.

Such concerns can be counted upon to elicit opposition from the established order. There was considerable unease in the Vatican under Pope Paul and elsewhere throughout the Roman Catholic Church over how "radical" the documents issuing from Puebla might be. Efforts have been made to influence that conference toward moderation, lest it precipitate changes both in church and state which would not be welcomed by those in positions of power.

But the church in Latin America has not quite reached the point of reformation. It is in a situation similar to that period which preceded the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. Long before Luther's time, the Waldensians and the Albigensians with their doughty communalism were groping toward a way of reforming the church. So also were the Lollards in 14th century England, with Wycliffe and his restoration of the Bible to the common people. Even the winsome and obedient Franciscans in the 13th century were knocking humbly at the gates of structures and practices which were demeaning the people of God. In the 15th century, strident figures like Savonarola were storming those same gates. The church is properly and always in a process of reformation.

So it is, vividly, in the church of Latin America. As some have said, in that vast area there was not class conflict so much as the continuing collision of two civilizations, two races: the conquistadores from Spain and Portugal who preempted the people and their land some centuries ago, and the Indians of those ancient tribes who have been in a condition of servitude ever since the conquest. Yet, regardless of the genesis of the conflict, it paid its inevitable and tragic tribute in the familiar coinage of marginalized humanity — poverty, hunger, disease, illiterarcy, loss of freedom. As can so commonly be traced in the annals of colonial conquest in the Western world, the cross accompanied the sword, and has been its beneficiary ever since.

Then in recent years we have learned how the historic diplomacy of the sword has been augmented by the dollar diplomacy of modern giant corporations, making even more tragic the oppression under which the Third World struggles. Consequently, in Latin America conditions are crying for reform. Forerunniners of such a reformation have been in evidence. The Cuban revolution has given hope to many in other countries of Latin America. The revolutionary Che Guevara of Argentina and the guerrilla priest, Camilo Torres of Colombia, have become folk heroes. And a rising crescendo of meetings, papers, speeches, and actions by both bishops and priests have with increasing daring

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Reclaiming the Bible Through Storytelling

by Sheila D. Collins

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When I attended seminary, theology began deductively, with abstract syllogisms composed by men, usually with German names — men who had never had to change and wash dirty diapers, sit for six hours in the welfare office, stay up all night with a sick child, pick cotton in a dusty field, sell their bodies for a living, or work all day in the mills and then come home to do the dinner, the laundry, and the dishes.

Such men had wives and secretaries to take care of their bodily needs. Their sons and daughters went to Harvard and Oberlin (or their German equivalents), not to Pleiku or the Scotia mine pits. There were paid handsomely to spin out beautiful theories which only their peers could understand. They claimed that their theories were derived from the Bible, and it took them hundreds of pages to explain why. I believe it took them hundreds of pages because their process was inherently unbiblical.

If theology is to be meaningful for us, it must not start with abstractions, but with *our stories* — just as the early Hebrews and Christians of the Bible began with theirs. Somehow, our churches got the order reversed. How many of us were taught as children to memorize Bible stories and verses before we ever understood or had a chance to articulate our own story? We cannot appreciate the meaning of another's experience — especially if that experience occurred two and three thousand years ago — until we have asked the right questions of our own.

I see the Bible, not as a set of facts or propositions to which we must twist our experience to fit, but as a guide or primer to participating in the creation of our own biblical history. The mistake (or perhaps the deliberate tactic) of the official Christian church was to make us believe that biblical history stopped at the end of the first century A.D., just as our schools have taught us that American history began with Columbus or the Mayflower. To the extent that those of us who call ourselves Christian still find important the cluster of meanings surrounding the Exodus, the entry into the Promised Land, the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus, we participate in shaping the continuation of that story, just as surely as did Moses and Miriam, Peter, Priscilla and Paul.

Theology begins with our stories: What we do with our time; how we feel about our children, our husbands, our bosses; how we feel about money and who gets it; what we do when we get up in the morning; how we make it through the day; what pains us, enrages us, saddens and humiliates us; what makes us laugh; what enlightens and empowers us; what keeps us holding on in moments of despair; where we find separation and alienation; where we find true community and trust.

When I say that theology starts with our stories I am not saying anything new. Testifying is a cherished tradition and telling our stories to one another is what women have always done — over the garden fence, at the food co-op, down at the pump. The tradition is the same, only the structure and significance we give to it are different.

Testifying in church usually signifies you've already been saved. One isn't supposed to talk about troubles unless one's already found Jesus and arrived in the Promised Land. But if you're still in the Wilderness, it's pretty hard to see your way through. And if you're still in bondage back in Egypt, you might not even know there is a liberator who has just been found among the bullrushes. Yet if the Hebrews had not preserved the stories as they went along — stories of groaning and complaining; stories of despair — if they had had no rich oral tradition to preserve the sting of the lash, the memory of having sown while another reaped, how would they have known what the taste of liberation was all about? How would they have recognized it when it came?

Our churches, promulgating a pietism which is false to the continuous reversals of our experience and to the experience of those in the Bible, have not offered us women a place to speak our bitterness. And if we have not been able to name our pain, to see the collective parameters of our oppression, how shall we be able to name the Kingdom which lies past our suffering except as that "Jubilee Land" to which we return beyond the veil of death?

By telling our stories we must force our churches to hear what we have suffered and the ways in which we have gotten through. We must pull them away from their domesticity and otherworldly preoccupations and force them to deal

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Sheila Collins is with the National Division of the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The above is excerpted from Document #3 of a series distributed by the Secretariat of Theology in the Americas in New York, and is a result of Ms. Collins work with the TIA Women's Project, "Women, Work and the Economy."

with the nitty gritty of bread and justice. But we cannot tell our stories as we have done in the past — as an endless litany of individual disasters and unimportant gossip. We must come together in a new way: consciously, politically. Our stories are of individuals, but only as they are told collectively do they move us forward.

In the process of telling our stories as a conscious, political act, we begin to define ourselves and our reality. We cease, thenceforth, to be defined by the men who run our churches, by the corporations who project our images, or by the men in Washington who seek to control our destinies.

The Hebrews told their stories as a conscious political act in order to define themselves over against the dominant cultures of their day. The early Christians who preserved the stories of Jesus paid for these political acts with their lives. They told the story of Jesus in such a way as to set him over against the imperial, emperor worshipping cult of Rome. The story was so powerful that Rome had finally to coopt it in establishing Christianity as a state religion under the emperor Constantine. Women were part of the power of that early story. Perhaps that is why it was so subversive of both established religion and the state. Women were the first to tell the world of the events of the resurrection. They traveled around as preachers and teachers of the new message, refusing to play the tradition-bound roles of breeder and domestic.

Subversive language, however, has to be constantly reinvented because it is continually being coopted by the powerful. We can no longer afford to use some of this language; for example, the royal male language for God, nor the language of the "blood of the lamb" or the "suffering servant" for Jesus. Cut off from the socio-political context which charged original Christian language with its significance, that language, in the hands of a male-dominated clergy, used by a church which reinforces powerful business interests and allies itself with the state, has become a weapon of cultural imperialism. Notice how the emerging coalition of the Right — composed of John Birchers, the Ku Klux Klan, large insurance companies and frightened housewives — is using the language and institutions of Christianity against everything that Jesus stood for: against the implicit faithfulness found among the pariahs of his time (in our age it is the gays); against the strength, courage and independence of women; against the rights of the poor and oppressed; against communities of new families, formed for the purpose of sustaining one another even though they may not be related by blood.

So much of the old language has been corrupted beyond recognition that we must write our own dictionary from the words which express best our own experience and the experience of the as yet unarticulated lives of our sisters past and present. This does not mean that we throw out the Christian tradition. On the contrary, what we must do is learn to reappropriate that faith history in a new way. Some language will have to be discarded; other language turned inside out. But we cannot find the handles of reappropriation until we have gone through the process of collective, politicized storytelling and the collection of language for a new dictionary.

In the process of collective storytelling we begin to see patterns; networks of oppression connecting women in Harlan, Ky. with women in Altoona, Pa. and upstate New York. If we go far enough, we unravel the skein which leads us back to our great grandmothers, across the country to women in Chicago and on the Cheyenne Indian reservation in Wyoming, to women in the Bantustans of South Africa and women in the countrysides of Puerto Rico and Chile. We begin to ask ourselves: Why these patterns of defeat? Why after a century of struggle is our land more devastated than ever; why after the advent of birth control and women's liberation are more 13, 14, and 15 year olds having babies than ever before and why are women in Puerto Rico, New York, on Indian reservations and in Appalachia being sterilized in large numbers? Why are women, as a group, losing ground according to every socio-economic indicator available? Recognizing that our oppression is so widespread, our defeats so redundant, relativizes our suffering. We no longer feel ashamed of our failure to live up to the individualized standards set by the men in Washington or Madison Avenue, knowing that our oppression is a small part of the systematized repression of the majority of the earth's people.

Such knowledge is powerful. We begin to identify not with the privileged, whom we have always been taught to emulate, but with the common people of the earth. It was such identification Jesus talked about in his Sermon on the Mount. A colonialist church has never been able to understand the meaning of those passages which speak of the first being last and the meek inheriting the earth. Such knowledge is the beginning of Wisdom, who is personified in the Old Testament as a woman, wild and unladylike, shouting aloud in the streets for bread and justice because no one in the synagogues, the courts or the legislature would listen.

As we collect our stories they begin to shape themselves into a body of experience — a kind of litany — which can no longer be denied. They become the means for a collective self-expression which feeds and strengthens those who are able to hear, just as the

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stories of the Hebrews in bondage in Egypt, in flight and in temporary restitution, repeated generation after generation, have strengthened the diaspora. Just as the stories of Jesus, told and retold, sustained the early Christian community through persecution.

Through the telling and retelling of our stories the inessentials are gradually sloughed off — those inessentials like varied colors and shapes of leaves — until only the veins, the life-bearing vessels remain. It is then that we begin to see the patterns of triumph, steadfastness, salvation, and liberation inherent in them. As the early Hebrews and early Christians looked back over their lives and discovered these patterns, so we discover what it was in women's experience which has kept women going through tragedy and devastation, through the daily rituals of feeding and caring. We discover the secret which keeps hope more alive in the oppressed who are conscious of the source of their oppression than in those who do the oppressing. Only then can we name that which has brought us through as the God of our experience, and distinguish with any clarity the true prophets from the false.

The process of discovering and naming that God is the process of our own liberation or salvation. It is the Kingdom of God Jesus spoke about as being like a mustard seed in our midst. Salvation for us is dynamic, this worldly. It is not a static, blissful realm beyond the cares of this earth. We were never promised a life free from fear and struggle. We were offered the hope that by committing ourselves to the struggle for a righteous society in solidarity with the wretched of the earth we would discover the secret of life. Remember what Jesus said to his disciples?

> *Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes and in various places famines and pestilences; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be a time for you to bear testimony. Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair on your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.*

"By your endurance you will gain your lives." Jesus didn't mean by that that we would gain individual wealth and prosperity as so many pseudo-Christian evangelists would like us to believe. Rather, it is in the midst of the struggle against debased and deformed human existence with its demands for moral sensitivity, self-discipline, solidarity and the constant resetting of one's sights upon the vision of liberation that one is closest to the pulse of the universe, to the secret of human life. Feminist theologian, Rosemary Ruether, has pointed out in her book, *The Radical Kingdom,* that "such a struggle even in its outward failure and disappointment, is recollected as a time of fellowship, commitment and ecstatic hopefulness as the highest point of living."

As we redefine ourselves through the telling of our stories, discover the sources and patterns of our oppression, and name the God of *our* salvation, we begin to reappropriate the Christian tradition and the special folkways in which it was transmitted in a way which is truly empowering and liberating.

Perhaps when Appalachian women begin to share the stories of how their sons were dragged off to a war in South East Asia, fought to propitiate the American male God of power, they can identify with that Sarah of ancient times who watched in the same immobilized way as her husband, Abraham, took the son of her old age to the mountains as an offering, in the mistaken notion that God demands the sacrifice of the innocents for the sins of the guilty.

Perhaps when Black women share stories of how their sons and husbands were taken from them through slavery, hunger, dope, war and the criminal justice system, they can gain strength through remembering Hagar, Abraham's concubine, who, through the jealousy of Sarah, was banished to the wilderness with her infant son but because of her faithfulness was promised by God that her son would live to establish a nation.

Perhaps when Appalachian women begin to share stories of their aunts who, driven from the farms to the cities during

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Filmstrip Features 4 Women's Stories

"Come a Long Way to Stand Here", an hour long filmstrip and cassette tape through which four poor women tell their stories, has been developed by the Project on Women, Work and the Economy of the Theology in the Americas. Aimed at exploring the relationship between Christian faith and the economic and political realities facing women today, the filmstrip comes with operating instructions and an extensive discussion guide. The guide includes Bible study material and action suggestions.

Funded by Church Women United and the National YWCA, "Come a Long Way to Stand Here" is designed for use with small groups of women. It may be ordered from the Project on Women, Work and the Economy, Theology in the Americas, 475 Riverside Drive Room 1268, New York, New York 10027. Rental fee is $30. The filmstrip and materials may be purchased for $60.

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Why Extend the ERA?

by Joan Whipple Howarth

The Equal Rights Amendment is in trouble. The proposed amendment would correct the 200 year injustice of Thomas Jefferson's *"all men are created equal"* by adding to the constitution the simple principle of equality between men and women. The ERA was passed by well over two-thirds of Congress and sent to the states for ratification six-and-a-half years ago. Thirty-five states have ratified it, but three more are needed to meet the requirement of endorsement by three-fourths of the states. Public support for the ERA is growing (recent polls indicate that majorities in both ratified and unratified states support it). Votes in the legislatures of as yet unratified states are becoming increasingly close.

The ERA is in trouble, however, because in its resolving clause Congress included the "traditional" seven year limit for ratification by the states. That seven year period will be up on March 22, 1979. The realities of state legislative calendars mean that the ERA will not be voted on in even one non-ratified state between now and then, let alone three. In other words, unless Congress votes to extend the seven year limit, time has already run out for the ERA.

Some 90,000 people marched in Washington on July 9 to show that the issue is alive and to demand that Congress vote the extension. Backers of the ERA extension concede that it will not be easy to convince enough of the 98 men in the Senate to withstand the pressure of the threatened anti-ERA filibuster. (Senator Muriel Humphrey is a firm supporter of the ERA and the extension. Senator Maryon Allen of Alabama, who also replaced her husband, James, in the Senate following his death recently, is opposed.) The key to building public pressure is to explain the extension issue for those who support the ERA principle but are hesitant, distrustful, or just plain confused about the extension.

Even before discussing extension, however, it is important to put to rest the myth that passage of the ERA is not really needed, since women's rights have been and can be advanced through anti-discrimination legislation. Certainly important victories have been made, but this piecemeal approach has left gaping holes. For instance, in many states today the common possessions of a married couple are legally considered the property of the husband, resulting in countless economic inequities. Consider, for example, the family farmers, who together spent a lifetime working a farm. If the wife dies first, the husband keeps the property without problem. But if the husband dies first, the wife must pay inheritance tax on her own farm, often an amount so large that she is forced to sell.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act, often cited as a reason that the ERA is unnecessary, prohibits sex discrimination in employment but does *not* include the federal government. Last year, the Supreme Court upheld the right of a *public* technological school in Philadelphia to deny admission to Susan Vorshheimer *solely* because she is female, in spite of the fact that there is no other comparable school open to her. No wonder the gap in pay scales between men and women continues to widen. The ERA is more than a symbolic issue. It is the necessary first step toward correcting these pervasive patterns of economic injustice. An extension of the ratification period is the necessary next step for survival of the ERA.

The ERA passed by Congress is in two parts: The substantive text that the states are considering (see box), and a procedural "resolving clause" which sets out the mechanism for ratification, namely that the ERA would become part of the Constitution when ratified by three-fourths of the states, which had seven years to consider it. The issue, then, is simply whether Congress has the authority under the Constitution to extend the ratification period it set in 1972.

This question has never been raised before. In the past 100 years, only one other amendment has been seriously considered by Congress but not ratified by the states. That was the Child Labor Amendment, which was dropped when Supreme Court rulings made it unnecessary. Also, the tradition of the seven year limit has relatively recent origins. It was first attached to the 18th Amendment (Prohibition), and has been attached to all amendments since, except for the 19th. (The ERA will be the 27th Amendment.)

The House Judiciary subcommittee charged with investigating the possibility of extension called on constitutional experts to analyze the issue, as well as ERA advocates and attackers to present their points of view. A majority of the subcommittee and later the full Judiciary Committee were convinced by scholars from Harvard, Yale, Columbia and other law schools, as well as lawyers from the Justice Department, that an ERA extension is not only legal, but also desirable.

Starting point of the testimony was that the Supreme Court has already interpreted the Constitution to give

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THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Section 1.
Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
Section 2.
The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.
Section 3.
This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

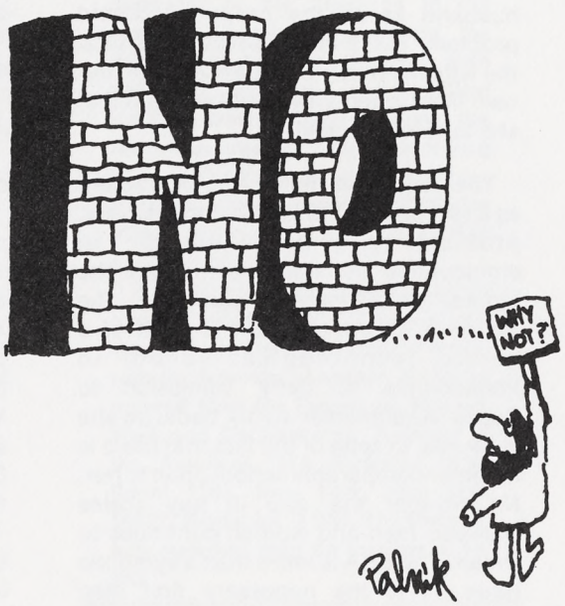
Congress control over setting ratification periods, limited only by a standard of "reasonableness" which reflects "an appraisal of a great variety of relevant conditions, political, social and economic . . ." Certainly the same political, social, and economic conditions that prompted Congress to propose the ERA in 1972 are just as reasonable today.

Equally compelling legal arguments for extension come out of an examination of the purpose of the seven year limit. When Congress attached the seven year period to the ERA, it did so almost without discussion, merely following the tradition started with the 18th Amendment. When the limit was first attached, however, it was discussed in detail. The stated purpose was to prevent the free-floating through state legislatures of proposals that had gone stale and lost vitality. It was essentially a housekeeping measure. One Senator pressed for a time limitation "so that we will not hand down to posterity a conglomerate mass of amendments floating around in a cloudy, nebulous, hazy way." When members of the 91st Congress discussed attaching the seven year period to the ERA it was for the same purpose — to prevent a proposal from "roaming" around the states indefinitely.

Phyllis Schlafly and other ERA opponents characterize the ratification process as something like a timed race, a constitutional Beat-the-Clock, where the point of the deadline is to make the task at hand more difficult. Certainly the limitation has had that effect in this case, but the *purpose* is to ensure that state legislatures will consider the amendment while it is still a matter of national concern and interest. Active interest in and support for the ERA is probably at its highest level since it was introduced. Since the ERA has not grown stale, the ratification period should be extended, to allow the debate to run its course.

The history of the seven year limit reveals two more interesting legal points for extension. When the seven year period was first used, it was incorporated right into the text of the amendment, which was voted on by the states. Beginning with the 23rd Amendment however, Congress removed the seven year provision from the text, placing it in a procedural "resolving clause." The ERA takes this form. The state legislatures consider only the substance of the amendment; Congress retained consideration of the time period for itself.

Legal scholars point to yet another indication in the language of the ERA that extension is entirely appropriate. When the seven year period was first used, the language stipulated that the amendment would become part of the Constitution *"only if"* ratified within seven years. Congress eliminated the "only if" language in the 25th and 26th Amendments, and in the ERA. The clause simply states that the amendment would be valid "when ratified . . . within seven years . . ." Government testimony suggested that this revision reflects the change from using the seven year limit as a deadline, to understanding it as setting out a guaranteed minimum period in which states may act.



All of this shows that Congress has the *power* to extend the ratification period. Even after understanding the legalities involved, some supporters of the ERA *principle* remain unconvinced about *extension.* It is, after all, a new idea. Some fear that extension could set a dangerous precedent to come back to haunt us if, for example, an anti-busing or anti-abortion amendment is ever passed by Congress.

If that fear is realistic, the damage has already been done. Should the time come when support in Congress for an anti-busing amendment is so strong that Congress wants to extend its ratification period, it will know that it has the power to do it. A troop of constitutional scholars has already testified that extension is legal. In the current debate, the only question is whether Congress supports the ERA enough to want to give it this extra push. In the horrendous possibility of a similarly worded anti-busing amendment, extension would be decided by the degree of Congressional opposition to busing, and by the corresponding willingness to give the amendment the extra support of an extension. The way to defeat an anti-busing amendment is to build support for integration, not defeat the ERA extension. It is the height of naivete to expect that busing foes would oppose an anti-busing amendment extension, merely because the ERA extension was never passed. Defeat of the ERA is too great a price for such illusory protection.

In fact, concern about the apparent growing strength of conservative politics is another reason for vigorous

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support of the ERA extension. Defeat of the ERA would be the great victory yet for those who are fighting for the "good old days," when labor unions were powerless and abortions illegal; when gays were institutionalized or jailed, and different races never mixed, certainly not in school. To withhold support from the ERA extension procedure in order to prevent possible future injustice is like burning a Vietnamese village in order to save it; it just doesn't make sense.

Conservatives have succeeded in holding back the ERA with well-financed campaigns that play on fears and insecurities while confusing and distorting the issues. Thousands of voters are only now understanding that the ERA is not about unisex toilets.

ERA opponents have not only distorted the issues, but they have had perhaps unprecedented success in manipulating legislators' capacities for opportunism. The prime tool has been the March 22 deadline. The deadline creates the perfect situation for stalling by ERA opponents, joined by those undeclared legislators who instinctively avoid having to vote on anything controversial. Instead of debating the issue, they are running out the clock.

Equally significant, the deadline has turned the ERA into a "tradeable" issue. Legislators believe they will not be held accountable by the ERA lobby because the issue will have disappeared on March 22. This explains why so many state legislators who were publicly on record for the ERA (including several who campaigned as pro-ERA candidates with pro-ERA money) felt safe to trade off their ERA commitments when the time came to vote, in exchange for support from ERA opponents on other issues. For instance, in North Carolina, where four publicly committed pro-ERA votes switched at the last moment, two will not be up for re-election until 1980; in South Carolina, where three switched, none will be up for re-election before 1979; in Florida, where four switched, two will not be up until 1980. *In each of those states, it was the switched votes that made the difference.* In Nevada, after the Senate unexpectedly passed the ERA, 11 publicly committed pro-ERA legislators switched sides to defeat it in the House. Eight of the 11 were elected with the help of pro-ERA money. An extension will allow time for the defeat and replacement of these turncoats, who believed themselves shielded by the March 22 deadline.

Extension will also heighten the economic impact of the boycott of the 15 non-ERA states. The National Organization for Women (NOW) has been joined by over 200 organizations (including the Episcopal Church Publishing Co., publishers of THE WITNESS) in refusing to bring conferences or conventions to non-ratified states. The impact of the boycott has been staggering; both Louisiana and Missouri have tried court action to force NOW to stop it. One Illinois state legislator testifying against the extension, complained that the state was already losing too much money because of the boycott, and the extension would only prolong the losses. (In Illinois, by the way, the ERA has been passed by a majority of both houses, but a new state constitutional provision requires a three-fifths margin.)

Those who say that the ERA has had its chance should look again at the history of this country, and remember that justice for oppressed groups has never been won quickly or easily. The first organizing conference for women's suffrage was in Seneca Falls in 1848; the suffrage amendment was not finally incorporated until 1920, after 72 years of struggle. Of the 15 states that have not yet ratified the ERA, seven did not ratify the women's suffrage amendment until several decades after it was certified as part of the Constitution. In fact, five of those states have only endorsed it within the last 10 years. Mississippi to this day has not ratified the women's suffrage amendment. Abolition of slavery was debated for decades, and the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments were won only after Civil War.

The ERA was first introduced in Congress in 1923. It took almost a half-century of pressure to get it passed. In the six-and-a-half years since being proposed by Congress it has been ratified by two-thirds of the states, representing 75% of the country's population. It is now only a handful of votes away from final ratification.

Today's extension drive is the culmination of all those years of struggle. If Congress does not pass the ERA extension, the women's movement will not pack up and fade away, but equality between women and men will have been dealt a serious blow. As NOW has declared, this is truly a state of emergency for women's rights. Friends and colleagues must be alerted; sermons delivered, letters written. Now is the time to write women into the Constitution. Write, phone, or telegram Washington today.

DATES OF RATIFICATION
NINETEENTH AMENDMENT
(Women's Suffrage)
BY NON-ERA STATES

Alabama	1953*
Arizona	1920
Arkansas	1919
Florida	1969*
Georgia	1970*
Illinois	1919
Louisiana	1970*
Mississippi	Never
Missouri	1919
Nevada	1920
North Carolina	1971*
Oklahoma	1920
South Carolina	1969*
Utah	1919
Virginia	1952*

*Ratified only after the amendment had been certified as part of the Constitution in 1920.

— NOW/ERA Information Packet

Mailing addresses for Congress are:

Sen. _____
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Rep. _____
House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Lambeth: An Outsider Looks Inside

The Rev. Patricia Park is on the staff of St. Paul's Church Richmond, Va. She traveled extensively prior to the Minneapolis General Convention of the Episcopal Church on behalf of women's ordination. She recently attended the Lambeth Conference and was interviewed by THE WITNESS upon her return from England.

Pat, invitations to Lambeth were not easily come by. How did you happen to get there?

It all goes back to the Episcopal Women's Caucus meetings earlier this year. Our agenda included discussion of bishops and what, if anything, Lambeth might say about women's ordination and women and the episcopacy. After the debacle of Port St. Lucie our fears were that when the bishops gathered, our liberal friendly supporters would forget women. It became clear that we needed to send women, particularly women priests, to Lambeth. It was agreed that I should go and that we would ask Martha Blacklock (Archdeacon, Newark) if she would go too. How we got the money, press credentials, tickets and accommodations would take too long to tell. Suffice to say that in six weeks it was all accomplished.

Were you there in time for the opening?

Yes, and would you believe that Martha and I were randomly assigned front row seats in the Cathedral for the opening Eucharist? One of the many "acts of God" while I was there! We were in our collars, which obviously made people nervous. Our seats were in the west end, facing toward the middle, and as the bishops processed by we greeted each other eye-to-eye. They moved past us quickly, into the inner sanctum. Archbishop Donald Coggan preached, calling upon the bishops to listen to God and what God has to say about the world and the church.

There was evidence of sexism at Lambeth?

From the beginning it was clear that women — wives, presswomen, laywomen, and certainly ordained women made the conference uneasy. Marion Kelleran, Cynthia Wedel, Barbara Ward, and an Indian M.D., Dr. Lucie Oommen, who was an observer, were the only women participating in the conference. Some others served as interpreters.

But sexism is not yet a conscious sin of the church. During the two weeks I was at Lambeth it was interesting to note that speakers became aware of their sexist language only toward the end. In England, sexist advertising is much more obvious than it is in the United States. For instance, the British Railway had a billboard telling the businessman how to keep his wife from spending too much money in London by buying her a round trip ticket for one day.

The Church of England will be voting on ordination of women in November. Because of their unresolvedness there seemed to be a desire to keep the issue as low key as possible, so as not to pressure the church. On the other hand, the secular press was very interested. Both the *London Times* and the *Telegraph* ended up running editorials opposing, albeit gently, women priests.

Did the press interview you?

Yes. On Monday, the press arrived — BBC, the *Times,* the *Telegraph,* the

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Guardian, radio, and even *Time* magazine. Both Martha and I gave many interviews and answered questions all day. When I was on BBC, the interviewer asked if I thought that God, when he was creating the world, wanted women priests. I was so offended by the way he stated the question that I simply said I didn't believe God was a "he." The interviewer was so thrown by this that it completely broke down the conversation. And someone had told me, "This guy is cool. You can't say anything to throw him. If you want, you can even be a little exciting." So I felt free to say what I thought — which I didn't think was all that bad! Yet this thought that God wasn't a "he" threw him. He said, "Well, I guess I've been wrong all these years." And I replied, "I guess you have!"

What else did the press ask?

One of the Rhodesian bishops had told them that women couldn't be priests because it took "blood, sweat and tears," and only men could take that. And besides, he said, men needed women to be their helpers. When I was interviewed right after that, they asked if I knew that in South Africa, women cannot go into the mines, just as they cannot be priests. The press asked those sorts of questions — like vintage 1973 in the States — reducing the issue to sex roles and jokes. The questions concerning ordination were not about sincere commitment within a theological perspective. And I find those "joking" questions very offensive. On the other hand, I feel that you shouldn't take yourselves so damn seriously that you can't even laugh. But frequently when the level of the questions is so superficial you feel that when you answer, you've been had. And I'm an expert on that! I spoke in so many churches in the United States between 1973 and 1976! I find the attitude in England very similar to "before Philadelphia" in the States. Remember, when Philadelphia and the first women's ordination hit, people began to say, "They are not joking!"

How was Lambeth structured?

Each day was the same. Eucharist began the day at 7:15 a.m. followed by breakfast, coffee, devotional lecture, plenary group, break for lunch at 12:30; picking up again at 3 p.m., with of course, a break at 4:15 for tea, evensong at 5:45 and dinner at 6:30. Weekends were free.

It was clear from the beginning that outsiders were not welcome. Press accommodations were minimal. We were only allowed into plenary meetings and on some days, the conference did not meet at all in plenary session. No one from the outside could even eat a meal at the university with the bishops. There was no message center for them to receive incoming calls. They had to make all their calls from various phone booths. I describe this to point out the highly controlled setting. One bishop told me it was very confusing. He wondered whether they were there to pray and be a semi-monastic community, or to work hard to provide courageous leadership to the Anglican community. This created a great deal of frustration.

What about the bishops' wives?

Well, in the evenings in downtown Canterbury there could be found the other side of the conference. Occasionally bishops could be seen shyly meeting their wives for dinner. Many of the wives were staying in Canterbury or in the surrounding area, since they were not allowed to stay with their husbands. The Chancellor of the University of Kent remarked that the celibate arrangements had not been because of the university's limitations; in fact, he questioned the rationale for it. The living arrangements would have been tolerable, I believe, if some effort had been made to accommodate the women at the plenary sessions. On several occasions bishops' wives came and were escorted out of the building and told to leave.

What Is Lambeth?

The Lambeth Conference is a conclave of bishops of the Anglican Communion. That communion consists of 40 national churches from all continents, in communion with each other and with the See of Canterbury (church of England). The Archbishop of Canterbury is President of the Council.

The member churches, such as the Episcopal Church in the United States, the Anglican Church of Canada, etc. are called provinces. Lambeth does not have legislative authority over the provinces, but its pronouncements exercise considerable influence. The first Lambeth Conference was held in 1867, and it has met at 10 year intervals ever since.

Back to structure, were there any small group discussions?

Yes. The three sections which had individual groups in them were Section 1, *What Is the Church For?,* dealing basically with roots of sexuality, socialism, Marxism, family, and 20th-century technology in relation to human life. Section 2 was entitled *The People of God and Ministry,* and groups in it dealt with training for ministry and the ordination of women, worship and liturgical revision, as well as the function of bishops in the church. Section 3 was called *The Role of the Anglican Church Among the Churches.* Its groups dealt with the authority and independence of the Anglican community and the stance of the Anglican communion in ecumenical relations. The small groups met and reported to the section, then the section back to the plenary for any resolutions dealing with the Lambeth Conference.

Which speakers impressed you?

On July 24, the devotional lecture was led by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, known to many Americans as Anthony Bloom. He was followed by the noted economist Barbara Ward, the first and one of the few feminine voices at Lambeth. Her address was called "The

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Conserving Society." It was a passionate, hard-hitting call for a reordering of the world's economy and value systems, particularly with regard to disarmament. The next morning she was followed by the Rev. Dr. Charles Elliott, Welsh professor of economics, who laid out the moral choices of society with regard to the future. I believe that these lectures clearly set the tone for Lambeth — the need for the church to become the advocate of the poor.

What about the hearings around women's ordination?

Chairman of these hearings was Archbishop Gwilym Williams of Wales. He announced that there were 50 speakers lined up, each limited to 5 minutes. First was Canon John MacQuarrie of the University of Oxford, who said that he was personally in favor of ordaining women but in typical Anglican compromise hoped that the communion would wait until there was consensus. He was followed by Bishop John Krumm of Southern Ohio, who spoke clearly and well for ordination, followed by Bishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa who spoke, as a black person who has known oppression, for the liberation and recognition of women. Bishop John Walker and Bishop Stanley Atkins were the additional U.S. speakers. In summary, the African bishops were supportive, the English bishops cautious and divided.

The observers from the Roman and Orthodox Churches repeated their positions which had been written and distributed in advance. The Roman Catholic statement was a firm expression of the difficulties surrounding the ordination of women in ecumenical discussions with Rome, but ended on a promising note to continue the dialogue. The Orthodox statement was more strongly worded. It stated that the two subjects to be discussed were "the removal of the *filioque* clause from the text of the Creed used in the Anglican communion, and the ordination of women. The second of these questions has brought our ecumenical dialogue to a point of acute crisis."

The Orthodox speaker got very emotional. He pointed his finger and talked about how the church should keep women humble.

The hearing brought nothing new.

During the tea break, an African bishop came over to me and said, "Your presence makes our debate more intense." When I told him that I was glad, his face lit up and he said, "Good luck."

Were there any socials?

Oh, yes. On Tuesday the bishops went to London. To Lambeth Palace for lunch, to the Abbey for festal evensong, and to Buckingham Palace for a garden party. They were in their purple cassocks, and their wives were in afternoon frocks and hats. The expansive lawn at Buckingham palace filled with color and pageantry. As much as I hate to admit it, I enjoyed the whole tea party immensely. Watching everyone jockey to shake hands with the Queen Mother and watching Bishop Horace Donnegan (retired Bishop of New York) entertain Princess Margaret was worth the afternoon and the hat I had to wear.

Did any sidebar issues impress you?

Yes, a message sent by the bishops at Lambeth to a service being held at Crossroads in South Africa, which was read at a service being held simultaneously at St. Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, supporting black South Africans. Most blacks in South Africa are welcome in what is called white South Africa as long as they are physcially able to provide labor. These men are contract laborers who go home for three weeks a year. This makes a farce of their marriage vows. Recently their wives began to move their families into squatter camps to be near their husbands. The authorities demolished these camps, such as Modderdam, without any compunction, during the rainy and winter seasons. The Crossroads Community is a viable community of 20,000 people with a school and a church. The bishops' message read in part, "We support your struggle for the right to a stable family life and pray that the authorities will not demolish your homes until they have provided you with adequate alternative housing near the place of work of the breadwinner." The service was moving, and nostalgic of the race and peace demonstrations in the United States. The most beautiful part was when Bishop Tutu sang the plaintive Black African National Anthem and the people joined in.

Then we journeyed to Westminster Abbey to lend support to the prayer vigil for women's ordination. At the Abbey the Christian Parity group was beginning a 24-hour prayer and fast vigil for the hearing on women's ordination. Led by the invincible Una Kroll, the group spent the night in St. Margaret's Church and stayed throughout the rain all day Monday. We couldn't help joking about the exhaustion of being a liberal!

How do you assess the role of the U.S. bishops at Lambeth?

The bishops I had contact with — about 20 — were very concerned about what the people thought back home — which seemed to me like a new tune! The July issue of THE WITNESS carried articles on authority. The difference in the authority of American bishops was that they were a lot more concerned and caring about how their constituencies felt than were bishops from other provinces. There seemed to be much more of a dialogue and a concern going both ways among American bishops, which seemed a different style of authority, say, than English or African bishops. U.S. and Canadian bishops have much more shared leadership.

Pat, some say that Lambeth should be abolished, that it has outlived its usefulness, that it is too expensive. What do you think?

I don't think there should be another Lambeth if it is just going to be a gathering of monarchial bishops representing themselves. But I feel there could be another Lambeth, for two reasons. One is that it should represent

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lay people, clergy and bishops throughout the world. It really raised my consciousness in terms of Christian commitment and added an international dimension to my perspective, making me feel I was part of a world-wide church. And I think that this is an important value, particularly today when it is so easy not to have any concern about anything else outside of, say, Richmond, Va.

The other reason is that the Anglican Communion does have political power, but it has to get its act together in order to use it effectively. And our act is not together. It seems to me that people don't understand what is going on throughout the entire Anglican Communion, and barely understand their own province. If we got together, say, every five years and people really knew what was going on throughout the Anglican communion, we could use that power to effect change in the world. But if you don't meet, and you don't even know who people are, and contempt and competition are evident — as I think existed among the bishops . . . Well, it takes time for people to get over that, and to come on with some sense of cohesiveness and togetherness. That may be an idealistic dream. But it is for those reasons that I feel that some kind of international meeting of the Anglican Communion should happen. Whether it should be called "Lambeth" or not, I don't know. ■

Lambeth for Women Priests

As THE WITNESS went to press, the bishops at Lambeth had just approved an affirmative position on the ordination of women. By a vote of 316 "yesses," 37 "no's" and 17 abstentions, they asserted that the Lambeth Conference saw no objection to women's ordination and that it is the prerogative of any province to proceed on the matter.

In response to the known opposition of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Lambeth noted that it is in the tradition of Anglicanism to hold together in unity a diversity of opinions and practices.

U.S. Support for Puebla

The editorial in this issue of THE WITNESS sketches some of the background of the meeting of the Council of Latin American Bishops to be held in Puebla, Mexico in October. Sixty-one prominent U.S. Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians and church representatives, aware of the importance of that meeting, directed the following letter to their "Brothers and Sisters of Latin America."

We have been following with care the news accounts of the forthcoming meeting of Latin American bishops which will take place in Puebla, Mexico, on the 10th anniversary of the CELAM Conference of Medellin. We wish to share with you our enthusiasm for this meeting and our realization of how crucial it will be in the growth of the Latin American church and our own. Growth is always difficult, sometimes painful. It has been so and continues to be so for us in the church of North America. So we recognize that the road to Puebla may not always be smooth. But because our churches are so interdependent, we wish you to know that you do not travel alone on the road to Puebla.

What we have learned from you over the last decade is vitally important to our own growth toward the fullness of life in Christ Jesus. Following your initiative at Medellin, we, too, are discovering that the Gospel takes on entirely new meaning for us when we read it through the eyes of the poor. We, too, are recognizing the dimensions of credibility and authenticity in that style of episcopal leadership which grows from identification with the poor at the base. We, too, are now learning to create basic Christian communities.

As a result, a whole new vision of how the church is translated into pastoral activity is growing up among us; your own prophetic actions have helped us discover new relations between Christian ministry and appropriate political action. Finally, and perhaps most important, we recognize how costly all this has been and still is for you. Yet the sign of its authenticity and the seal of its godliness is precisely the growing list of martyrs who testify with their blood that the new church in Latin America is of the poor. For all of this we express our profound gratitude in the name of the first Christian martyr whose Body and Blood we share.

We know that some fear this new course taken by much of the Latin American church. This fear comes both from within the Latin American church and from the wider Catholic world. Yet we pray that your assembly will address our human history with the same greeting the Angel Gabriel brought to the young Mary: "Fear not . . . for you have found favor with God!"

As you prepare for the meeting at Puebla, therefore, we hope you will continue to share with us your experiences among the poor, your creative efforts in basic Christian communities, your commitment to relating theology and political life, your theological reflections on the role of local churches within the unity of the universal church and the sometimes conflictual situations which emerge from that new thrust in the Body of Christ.

We reach out to you in solidarity, aware that we still have so much to learn from you about how involved we are in those very structures of society which have become instruments of your oppression. In a true sense, you have become our conscience. As we move together toward Puebla and beyond, as we learn better how to engage in the world-wide struggle for justice, as we respond in humility to our own need to be evangelized by you, we assure you that we will continue to work with you in the structuring of a new humanity in the Americas: a kingdom of justice, freedom, holiness and peace.

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Is Theological Education Good For Any Woman's Health?

by Beverly W. Harrison and W. Robert Martin, Jr.

Beverly W. Harrison, feminist theologian and associate professor of social ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York:

"For me, the initial transformation to what I call "feminist consciousness" was a gift of grace which came in the nick of time, and in spite of some pain, it came easily. What had earlier seemed only my "personal pains" were, in fact, systemic and pervasive realities which had shaped my life below the level of my conscious awareness. Taking the feminist analysis seriously was for me, a way of taking myself seriously for the first time. . .

"As a theologian and professional theological educator, my coming of age as a feminist continuously forces reconsideration of my professional commitments. Short of a genuine transformation of the ongoing enterprise of theological education, any continuing effective work in theological education on my part is always, and necessarily, a co-optation of me by the dominant (white-male) power configuration which controls the enterprise. The abiding, haunting question I live with daily is whether the ongoing enterprise of theological education really can be made to be good for any woman's health."

W. Robert Martin, Jr., former dean of students, Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, and director, Fund for Theological Education:

"My life has been affected by women and my perspective on what is essential and imperative is being formed continuously. Anyone with any intelligence at all knows that theological education is in no way limited to or just synonymous with seminaries or Departments of Religion. Rather, substantive theological reflection is what broods in and bursts from folk struggling with what it means to be faithful in their time amid their experiences. That is the education that has redemptive currency and theological clout . . .

"The impact of women shaping the very substance of Christian nurture above ground and underground is as massive in contribution as it is consistent in quality. The signal role of women of religious conviction shaping consciousness regarding real liberty, real justice, real commitments to civil and religious equity and real stands for peace is incalculably rich and illustrative for each and every person who dares to take up the ministry on this page of history."

To put the matter bluntly, seminaries and theological schools today must be willing to ask: *Is Christianity misogynist to the core?* And if not, then what sorts of transformations in the substance of Christian self-understanding and teaching would have to follow from a serious address of theological education to questions many women are pressing?

It may be that the inability of many men in seminaries and theological schools to recognize the gift of women's power of vocation arises from unfaced anxieties about the truthfulness of feminist claims that Christianity *is* misogynist to the core. If this is so, then the half-hearted response that men in theological education are willing to make to women is an evasion of substantive intellectual issues.

The conventional tendency to identify theological seminaries and theological schools with theological education as such is a grave error which, for us, has mostly negative consequences in the churches. The forthcoming Auburn report on theological study in America will document the way in which eliding the model of theological education to the model of professional education eroded other patterns for the practice of Christian ministry. Some alternative patterns of an earlier period were more inclusive of women. The merging of the scholar-pastor tradition to

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the university-based tradition of professional expertise had fateful consequences which we can mention only in passing. For women, already excluded with respect both to ordination and to access to higher education these historical developments only served to prolong exclusion.

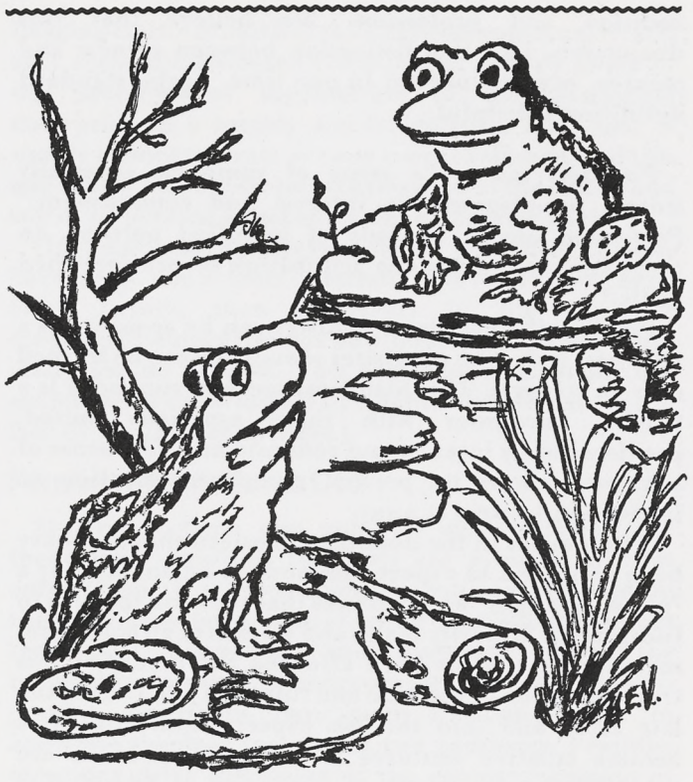
As barriers to women's participation in theological education give way, we acknowledge that women, far more than men, resist easy socialization into existing patterns for ordained ministry and also resist the deeper presuppositions on which existing pedagogy and conceptions of ministry are based. The tension which women's presence creates can be envisaged by contrasting prevailing patterns of *mentor-relations* with the biblical image of *the witness.*

Early on in the Western Church, to become a *mentor* was a cherished quest. Major energies were expended to "shape up" *men* in these ways and amid the wisdom of their *masters.* By contrast, from biblical times forward there is plentiful evidence of the presence of *witnesses* to the present meaning of faithfulness to the Lord, and many of these witnesses were women. Since much depends upon catching the powerful contrast between *mentor* and *witness,* a quick rendering of dictionary definition is helpful: *Mentor* means "advisor, counselor, wise*man* always to be modeled." *Witness* means "one who furnishes evidence, a sign, possessor of full knowledge of the matter awaiting judgment."

Mentor obviously underpins movements toward and developments of hierarchical structures and hierarchical justification. *Witness* focuses on faithfulness, not control; on comprehension rather than condescension; on common task, not relegated responsibility.

The valued testimony of true witness and the marked witness of women throughout religious history serves as an appropriate and highly significant base upon which the contribution of women's studies is firmly anchored. The clear connection many women make between witness and ministry can be discerned in the way they describe what it means to struggle to learn the meaning of ministry. A former Roman Catholic woman described her first year in a theological seminary this way:

> *I have learned that I want my life to be a ministry. The "whys" are often vague and elusive but that awareness is now constant. I suppose I could wish for it all to be clear, for an absence of doubt. But the question refuses to become static and I'm glad for it. I stumble only to discover I am standing on firm ground. When I least expect it, I find I really am Christ's, not abandoned at all.*



"I told them I'm enchanted, and they believed. I told them I'm a good, Christian woman, and they believed. I told them I'm a God-fearing, Bible-quoting, volunteering, Presbyterian elder, and they believed. Then I told them I wanted power in the church, and they called me a toad."

> *This year I have re-met myself as a women. The women here are impressive in their awareness and strength. I read diaries and social, political and theological works by women. I recognized myself. My vision expanded. My confidence grew. I had been preceded along the way by sisters and I found it to be good.*

What women have contributed throughout religious history is a genuine feeling for community and an abiding commitment toward the establishment of community. This is not a history of mentoring; rather the image is of deep sharing and mutuality, of giving and receiving. It is a history of the praxis of faith, not a history of detached reflection. Indeed, it illumines the possibility of folk in ministry being preachers and prophets, all the while true to their own witness and not just functioning within an expected role.

Through the same sweep of history and into the present women have had to differentiate between

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vocation and *profession.* We believe that this distinction, like the distinction between *witness* and *mentor,* is much needed in our time. Again, standard definition is helpful.

Vocation means "a sense of summons especially suited, pre-disposed by interest and commitment." *Profession* means "a body of qualified persons, an occupation requiring the acquisition of pre-described skills."

Pre-described skills of ministry can be acquired as a technical task. The requisites of vocation can be learned only in struggle. This historical sense of summons is a moving encounter with those especially suited, predisposed by interest and commitment. This sense of summons allows no person, group, organization or institution to strip it away.

White males in the dominant Western churches have been socialized to expect summons to be honored by a "place" or a "job" which carries that vocation forward to fulfillment. Minority males and women of all colors and societies have never been afforded the luxury of this tragic equation of vocation and full-time job. During the late 1950s and into the '60s experimental ministries became creative ventures for many men. If we are painfully honest about it, we have to admit that specialized ministries were an appealing phenomenon that offered many white males the occasion to prove their capacity to function in a secular arena, not validate their deeper sense of summons.

Parallel with that were blacks and Hispanics, women, and storefront sectarian ministers holding down at least one other job as their chief economic mainstay, doing so not as testimony of their ability to "make it," outside the church, but as a commitment to enable them to get at and get on with their primary sense of summons to ministry as the church.

In a time of economic shrinkage and institutional bewilderment, much is to be learned from this history of summons, not just because it helps us make do in an economic crunch but because it has much to teach us about the genesis and care of vocation. The experience of women and previously excluded men offers up the data that contributes to enhancing an understanding of vocation which is not merely equatable to "guild" or "professional group." Women's active and full participation in theological education then, puts a content of reality and vocation into every person's context for ministerial readiness.

All of this should make clear that we are not speaking merely of a survival offering for the growing number of women who are enrolled and will be enrolling in seminaries. We speak rather of a body of substantial knowledge and experience, discipline of mind and vocation, that can provide a redeeming and holistic right of passage for every woman and man and a feminist perspective for each student enroute to the days of their ministries.

If the deep connection women in theological schools are making between ministry and life as summons and witness is so obvious — and we believe it is — why does resistance to serious discussion of women's studies persist in theological education? Even in the best of circumstances, women's studies are relegated to the margins of the ongoing educational enterprise. At worst, any claims women make upon either the content or structure of the curriculum or on the modes of pedagogy used in the teaching-learning process are treated as rude intrusions or distractions from the serious business at hand.

Admittedly, all educational institutions are slow to change, but institutional resistance at this point can hardly be accounted for simply in terms of general sociological lag. After all, the percentage of women students has risen dramatically each year even in seminaries which do not recruit women (and in some where women's enrollment is explicitly discouraged by "realistic" caution about lack of professional options). One would think the urgency of the matter would be hard to ignore. Furthermore, there is some evidence that in other graduate and professional schools the presence of a critical mass of women is itself sufficient to overcome the wariness and lower expectations which white male faculty have regarding women's motivation and capacity for achievement.

Defensiveness Persists

In theological schools, however, while one hears testimonials to the quality and ability of individual women, a general defensiveness persists. One rarely encounters enthusiasm about the large numbers of qualified applicants who are female. And at the administrative and faculty level, resistance to affirmative action is even more pronounced. As one national report has it, "The good news is that more women and minority males are being interviewed for positions than ever before. The bad news is that very few are being hired."

We give credence to women's accounts of the *Catch-22* treatment which they encounter in theological schools: Individual women are being affirmed and supported in efforts to ministry; but *if* these women then use this institutionally-bestowed empowerment to raise

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women's issues, attitudes toward them change. Everywhere in seminaries women are claiming that support and acceptance is in inverse proportion to a woman's articulateness about issues of sexism. The "good girls" are being rewarded and used against their sisters as evidence that probing questions about what is going on are the result of disturbed femininity.

Another widespread strategy reported across theological education involves discrediting women's questions because they involve "shoddy scholarship" (as if the merit of any question rested entirely on the accuracy of historical detail about how the issue emerged in the past). If that were sufficient grounds for dismissal, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, not to mention many of the so-called modern giants of theology should stand discredited for historical ineptitude and overgeneralization.

Such charges are accompanied often by demurrers that no resources are available institutionally to help women gain the scholarly skills aimed at clarifying their concerns. The suspicion dawns that many seminary faculty and administrators hope that feminist women will fail in their quest to sharpen their powers to carry on their critique of the dominant Christian tradition more rigorously.

This deep level resistance to the implications of women's presence clearly arises from the fact that that presence involves not only a positive claim upon the religious understanding of vocation but a negative judgment on the dominant and established traditions of Christianity as well. Women in the 20th century who have experienced the shock of recognition which comes with raised consciousness are hurled into a hermeneutics of suspicion which makes it impossible for them to suppress awareness of the power of misogyny, and patriarchal exclusivism in shaping both Christian communal praxis and proclaimed message.

Our view is that the bluntness of feminist women's "*J'accuse. .*" is the source of much of the anxiety about what women's studies mean for theological education. The fact is that feminist Christian women and post-Christian feminists are *not* divided in their diagnosis of the dominance of patriarchal images, the negative effects of that dominance on women, or the strength of misogyny in the history of Christianity. To both groups, misogyny is sin, and patriarchal exclusivism, palpable idolatry.

Clearly, women's hermeneutics of suspicion involve reopening some assumedly long-settled issues of theological consensus in the Christian community. The lingering fear seems to be that such reopening of issues would be bad for the church, bad for the supposed flagging clarity of faith of the Christian community. It is as if academically-based Christianity, already aware of the problems of legitimation of the theological enterprise in a largely secular culture, feels that it simply cannot tolerate yet one more challenge, and this one visibly and concretely represented in the bodies and voices of persons engaged in the enterprise itself!

(It should also be observed that if women's criticisms have merit, and if their questions have really never been faced before, then everybody in the academic theological enterprise has new homework to do; there really are no experts. This too, may account for the anxiety level experienced by established scholars in the face of feminist challenges.)

Feminist Questions Old

Looked at from one point of view, many of the theological questions feminists are pressing are not entirely new. Questions about the sources for Christian theology have been central to all post-enlightenment theological discussion, and questions about the normative character of scripture and tradition vis-a-vis present experience have been front-and-center in academic theology for almost two centuries. Feminist questions drive discussion of the contextualization of theology to a new level of concreteness. They require that the ideological critique of Christian theology be pressed yet a step further; that a conscious disentanglement be made, not only from taken-for-granted dominant political and economic assumptions, but also from the deepest imagery of sexual identity which is closest to all of us.

If patriarchal exclusivism has distorted Christian theological visions of divine presence and divine agency (i.e., revelation), then our basic images of the meaning of divine transcendence and immanence really have been distorted. And if our understanding of the work of Jesus of Nazareth has been totally entwined in our preoccupation with patriarchal exclusivism, and the interpretation of his meaning and message systematically distorted by growing misogyny in the Christian community, is any of the supposed Christological consensus defended with such sagacity in the theological schools really a closed issue? The answer is "*no.*" The truth is that the quietest, most unassuming woman cannot ask her questions, borne of self-respect, gently enough, unthreatening enough to prevent some glimmer of awareness that those questions portend a shaking of the foundations.

It is hardly any wonder that some established male theologians, themselves once known for stirring the waters theologically, have taken to the barricades to

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proclaim that feminism is the cult of Baal reincarnate. We might well wish that other male theologians, those honest enough to notice in other contexts that in the modern world the label of "orthodoxy" is used less as a truth claim than as a boast, would bestir themselves to resist this *a priori* discrediting manuever aimed at refusing the urgency of new questions.

So far, few male theologians have sensed the positive possibility for new intellectual challenge posed by the presence of women in theological education. It is this fact, we submit, which is causing women in theological education so much pain. It is this reality, we insist, which endangers their deep biblical sense of answering to God's summons to stand, against all odds, as witnesses to God's presence and continuing disclosure.

From our perspective the real danger is that women's presence in theological education will be domesticated, successfully channeled into patterns of business as usual in the uncritical work of reinforcing existing patterns of professionalization; above all, that the resources for new intellectual ferment which these women's presence portends will be resisted, and a *kairos* destroyed. We submit that dominant contemporary theology is more endangered by complacency and conventionality than by controversy or intellectual ferment.

The greatest tragedy in a life is not death. It is what we allow to die within us or never get born while we still live. The death of genuine feeling and imagination is a death that sucks us down into inhuman disregard for creatures and creation. That is why in the midst of gloom and total despair, the Old Testament prophets spoke of a way opening in the wilderness, of rivers springing out in the desert. The New Testament's ringing benediction is "Behold, I make all things new. Write this down for these words are trustworthy and they are true."

We advocate the particularity of women's studies, the knowledge to be encountered, the wisdom to be experienced, the perspective to be shaped. The urgency focuses not on the *need* for women's studies; rather the urgency is lodged on the *kairos* that requires we terminate the loss to and inadequacy of any formative process for ministry that dares exclude such study. We expect ways to show in the wilderness. We anticipate rivers to flow in what has been a desert. Just imagine!

(The above article is excerpted from a paper delivered at a Consultation on Women's Studies in Theological Education at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Cal. It first appeared in the newsletter of the Center for Women and Religion, Graduate Theological Union.)

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identified the injustices and called for a faithful response by the church. Gustavo Gutierrez of Peru, Juan Luis Segundo of Uruguay, Jose Miguez-Bonino of Argentina and other liberation theologians have been the theoreticians of this ferment.

These were some of the marks of a movement which reached a dramatic pitch in 1968 at the preceding meeting of the Latin American prelates in Medellin, Colombia, That meeting followed closely on the Vatican Council and the exciting days of Pope John XXIII. His successor, Paul, was uneasy about where the tumultuous issues of Latin America, fanned by the liberating breezes of Vatican II, might lead. Paul's unprecedented visit to Colombia just in advance of the meeting was seen by many as an attempt to establish "safe" parameters for the deliberations. Despite that precaution, the documents issuing from Medellin gave expression to the social concerns of the church in strong tones which greatly encouraged those committed to reform. It did much to authenticate the theology of liberation, which understands the mission of the church to be identified with the needs of the poor.

Small wonder, then, that Puebla is attracting a great deal of attention. And it is not surprising that many in authority wish to see the bishops at Puebla back down from the forthrightness of their statements of a decade ago. On the other hand, many who have been taking great risks for reform both in church and in state are looking anxiously to Puebla to confirm and endorse their efforts. It is not yet evident whether the advent of the new pope, such a short time in office, will be a factor in influencing Puebla one way or the other.

Elsewhere in this issue of THE WITNESS there appears a letter of encouragement from North American Christians to the church in Latin America. It is a statement which links the concerns of Latin America to those of both church and society in North America. Are the churches of this continent ready or willing to participate signifiantly in the pre-reformation movements of our time? For example, is it likely or possible that the deliberations and pronouncements of the Anglican bishops at the Lambeth Conference will anticipate any of the deep themes of reform to be weighed at Puebla? The realities of oppression and poverty seen so vividly in Latin America are no strangers to the other continents of this globe. The agonizing options for reformation pressing upon the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America are equally options for the Anglican Church throughout the world.

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the Depression, ended up as prostitutes — the only job they could get which would pay them enough to send some back home — only then perhaps will we truly identify with the woman of ill-repute, who bathes Jesus' feet with her tears and whose implicit faithfulness has become a part of the record of salvation.

Perhaps when the day comes that Black and white women, poor and middle class women are able to share their stories — and through that sharing to discover the painful contradictions of women's existence in a patriarchal, competitive and profit-oriented society — then, perhaps, there can be a reconciliation between Sarah the wife, and Hagar, the concubine.

When we have brought to consciousness, articulated, and honed to the essentials the stories of our bondage and liberation, then we can reconnect with the buried traditions in our own folk history. No people is ever willingly, or without resistance, colonized. We should learn to look for those remnants of resistance which are often disguised as passivity, stubborness, hostility, and superstition. We can use that wonderful democratic tradition of "testifying" in church to talk about how the coal and textile companies, the family planning experts and the welfare officials are keeping women down, and how, by participating in that sit-in at the welfare office, we are able to get food in our stomachs and spirit for our souls. We can take all those marvelous hymns which give us the shivers when we sing them and change the words around: changing the "I's" to "we's," the male pronouns to generic ones, the "blood of the Savior," to the blood of our sisters and brothers killed in the mines and the floods, and those mansions in the sky by-and-by to the green rolling hills of West Virginia. We can rediscover the forgotten heroines imbedded in our history and name them in our services when it comes time for a recollection of the saints.

A past is important for people who are living in bondage. But it must be their own consciously claimed heritage, not a tradition imposed by their captors. In thinking about my own faith tradition, I prefer to think of Jesus, the Liberator, Jesus the representative of the common people. The term, "Son of Man," it seems to me, originally signified something like "Son of the People." I prefer to remember that throughout the Gospels it was women who held fast to the essentials, as one by one Jesus' male followers betrayed him, disowned him, and finally disbelieved the evidence of his ultimate victory over death and defeat. This is the kind of faith remembrance that gives me strength. ■

Exposure Is Not Always a Negative Word . . .

Some time in the months ahead, when your subscription is about to expire, every subscriber to THE WITNESS will receive regular renewal notices, but with a new twist. You will have a chance to deduct 20% from your renewal charge by giving us the name of two friends or acquaintances, to whom we will in turn send free copies of the current issue. Since our readership is predominantly Episcopalian, and we are hoping to reach out to other constituencies, we hope you will think about giving us these names from among your non-Episcopal friends. And so the circle grows . . .

Of course, if you know people who should be receiving THE WITNESS, you can send us their names at *any* time and we'll send them an introductory copy. You don't have to wait until renewal time.

Continued from page 2

precedent. What is given liberally to two church employees must also be given to a runner for the numbers racket. The judicial system must in its own Godgiven recognition of equal justice for all, work with a broad brush among priests, prostitutes, nuns and drug peddlers.

But justification of the legal action taken by the court should by no means be a controlling factor in determining what is felt or done by people or institutions more directly involved in the lives of the two young women. The court delivered a broad brush ruling based on long-established basic principles of judicial justice. It had not considered and could not, what may have been entirely justifiable personal and religious reasons the women had for doing what they did.

The church has the ability to fine-tune the ethical aspects of the action of human beings. To take the position that what Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin did was somehow wrong in the eyes of the church solely because it was declared civilly wrong in the eyes of the court is a cop-out, and a reprehensible one.

This refers me back to the Berrigan letter. He illustrates in a more obvious way than do Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin, one thing that must be recognized! Civil and criminal law are facts of our life. On the whole, they are currently functioning, I think, as well or better than at any time in our history. If we are going to violate the law deliberately, we must recognize and be ready to accept the consequences. If I am going to be a martyr in that fashion, perhaps for good and valid reasons, let me be a martyr and not cry about it.

Thomas O. Hunter
Peoria, Ill.

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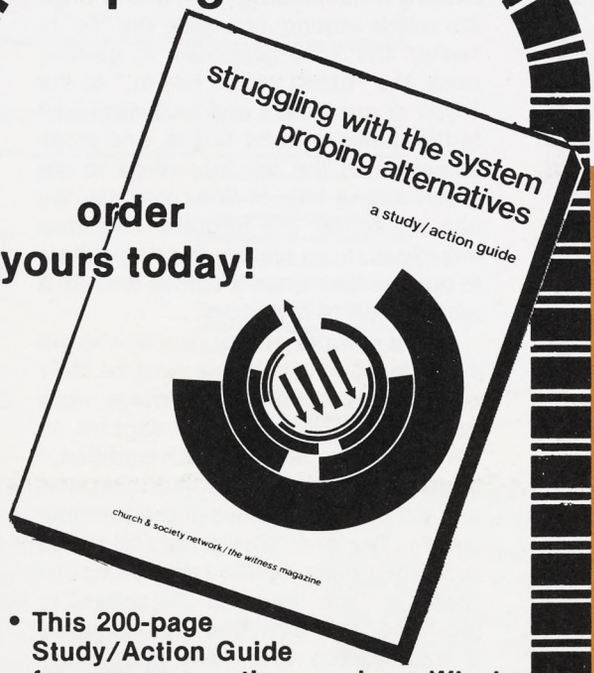

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THE WITNESS

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Gays in the Church: Is there a place?

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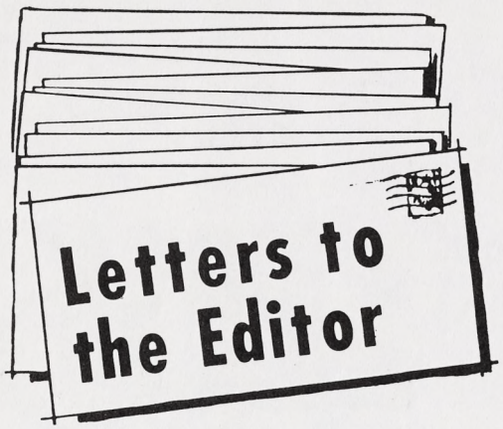

Will it Play in Philly?

I appreciated your short but very well-aimed comments on the role of the bishop in continually introducing the hard teachings of the Gospel into the Church as a whole ("Will it Play in Peoria") in the June WITNESS). It is certainly clear to me that Church members are not immune to being swept into the same prejudices and class biases that affect our neighbors; and that any sense of immunity we hold will simply make us more vulnerable, through the blindness of self-satisfaction and pride.

I want to take strong issue with one aspect of your article, however, for I think it demonstrates your own prejudices and class bias. The title of the article, "Will it Play in Peoria?" builds on the common stereotype of midwestern small town dwellers as morally conservative and conventional, as compared with those of us living in the east or west coasts, in Cambridge, New York or Philadelphia. The implication is that the more radical and biblical perspectives that bishops might introduce would most disturb these stereotyped and distant middle-class midwesterners. But I wonder. . . . You rightly single out the injustices of our economic system as the crucial issue of our time. My experience is that those most threatened by hard teaching in this area are those who benefit most from the present system: upper- and upper-middle-class members of our Church, who are often quite active in Church affairs and who also contribute substantial sums of money for the continuance of our very conventional Church.

It may be convenient for Church officials to beg that they are afraid of "middle class reaction" — something rather distant and hard to define. My sense is that they are afraid of reaction much, much closer to home: the reaction of the affluent and well-educated members who in fact are often the mainstays of our local and national Church organizations. I doubt very much that the question asked by Church officials in relation to economic matters is often "Will it Play in Peoria?" The question is much more likely to be "Will it Play in Greenwich (where our presiding bishop lives), will it play in Cambridge, Newton and Wellesley; will it play in the upper east side of Manhattan; will it play in Philadelphia and San Francisco suburbs; will it play in Grosse Point, MacLean, and Lake Forest?"

James Moore
Cambridge, MA

Share Your Distaste

The Rev. James Moodey has a good point when he asks why the bishops should presume "to devise new and effective strategies for the Church in its urban mission." (May WITNESS, Letters to the Editor). I share his distaste for such a thought.

I believe most of the bishops share it also. It is not our desire to think and act unilaterally in this matter. We hope that from our petty efforts a much wider movement will emerge, something that will be at least an Episcopal Urban Coalition, involving a wide spectrum of concerned persons.

But the fact remains that at the moment there seems to be no other Episcopal movement in these directions that is well enough organized to get the show on the road. The bishops did help to arrange a meeting with the Church and City conference last January and our hopes were high that we would at that time launch a united effort of clergy and laity that might be called The Episcopal Urban Coalition. But the Church and City folks would not have it so. Some members even resented the suggestion, as if the bishops were moving in on their turf. Which, of course, is understandable. We were. But we wanted to move on from that turf and have a united movement.

At any rate, the impression was strong that the Church and City conference was a diaphanous collection of committed and pleasant people who were not likely to be organized for action in the near future. So we moved ahead to do our little thing, but always with the firm expectation that doors will open for us in the future to help create and maintain a wider movement.

I have agreed to do what I can to pull some of this together — not even knowing what that means. I have resigned from a number of activities here at home and outside the diocese; I have had the affirmation and encouragement of the Standing Committee and the Diocesan Council to add this ministry to my schedule; and am now just beginning, in close touch with the UBC Steering Committee, to put together a "Policy Action Committee." This will be made up of three bishops, four clergy, four laypersons, and five non-Episcopalians who are experts in urban affairs. We shall try to arrange a meeting of this new group in September and look forward to what, if anything, happens next.

The Rt. Rev. Brooke Mosley
Philadelphia, Pa.

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THE WITNESS

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Dropping Slingshots

by Brian McNaught

In the August edition of the *U. S. Catholic*, Fr. Henry Fehren asked his readers to "Consider the Sparrow". It was a fine article which compared the alienated of the Church to the sparrow, a bird which has traditionally been considered without much value and the acceptable target for blue jays, cats and children's slingshots.

When asked by the editor to respond to the article, I wrote that recently I found two dozen sparrows strewn throughout the back yard. A frantic call to the Audubon Society revealed that the blue jays had committed the atrocity. "They attack without provocation", I was told. I concluded my comments by stating I would have to call the Audubon Society again because I didn't know the difference between a blue jay and a cardinal. It was perhaps a "cheep" shot, but the pun was too inviting. Moreover, there is frequently little space and opportunity offered to damaged and hurting persons to express their frustrations and pain. When the time does come, it is "recognized authority" which rightly or wrongly becomes the target of primal screams.

In truth, it is ignorance which mandates that gay men and lesbians will endure alienation and the pain of a double life. It is ignorance which closes doors and hearts thereby forcing the homosexual community to seek a fringe community of support, all the while dodging blue jays, cats and children's slingshots.

In this edition of THE WITNESS, we will attempt to neutralize the weaponry of ignorance by listening to the voices of persons who, as heterosexuals, have dropped their slingshots and who, as homosexuals, share with us the agony of knowing their service to the Church is constantly threatened by "attack without provocation."

Fr. Fehren stated "The sparrow, since it was commonplace, drab in appearance, small in size and untalented in musical ability, was deemed the least of the birds." As a gay Christian who doesn't consider himself commonplace, drab in appearance, small in size and untalented, I hesitate to offer the sparrow as a perfect metaphor, yet where there is alienation there is a sense of commonality and community. ■

Since last October when THE WITNESS invited "Gays in the Church" to "Speak for Themselves" (Vol. 60, No. 10), ordinances protecting the rights of lesbians and gay men have been overturned by popular vote in three cities. Every major denomination continues to wrestle in pain with the question of moral tradition, justice and the calling to community. Most apparent is our need for more information and for more sensitivity in this area which so critically affects the lives of so many persons. We are thankful to guest editor Brian McNaught for again offering us that input. Mr. McNaught is a Boston based editor and award-winning freelance writer.

Robert L. DeWitt

Gay People and Parish Life

by John Hall Snow

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When straight people write about gay people the question of the authenticity of their observations is raised immediately for both gays and straights. If they write as social scientists or psychiatrists, the issue is resolved for straights. It is clearly the realm of these disciplines to understand and explain all aspects of psycho-social deviance. For gay people, even where the social scientist or psychiatrist is writing from a sympathetic point of view, the question of authenticity is compounded. The very choice of homosexuality as an object of concern places it in the realm of deviance and presents what for the gay person is a state of being as a psycho-social problem.

My own reason for writing this article about gay people and parish life has nothing to do with psychiatry or the social sciences. It is personal and subjective and comes out of my gratitude to some homosexual friends who were very helpful to me during a painful period of my life during which I learned more than I wanted to know about being harassed for something which was not of my own choosing.

For the first two years of the Second World War, I was 4-F, rejected by the Armed Forces. The rejection itself came as a shock. I had thought of myself as a healthy person. I immediately set about trying to join the American Field Service, the Merchant Marine — anything related to the war, a war I very much wanted to fight. But I had no luck with any of them, and in the meantime more and more young men were going into uniform until I began (as black people say) to take on high visibility. Suddenly I began to find myself in very unpleasant situations. I would be in a restaurant with a woman friend, and a sailor would stagger over to our table and say in a nasty voice, "Look, honey, why don't you leave this faggot and come with me. I'll show you a really good time." Or I could be walking down the street in the middle of the afternoon and be faced with three or four servicemen, drunk, who would encounter me with an array of insults ranging from "draft-dodger" to "fairy," to the most irrational of all, "4-F!" My reaction, at first, was to fight, but since a major reason for my rejection by the army was being underweight, the satisfaction I got from landing a few punches was hardly worth ending up totaled. I took to staying home at night, or to slinking away from encounters with service men, turning my rage inward. I finally landed a job as a laborer on the west coast in a navy yard, and soon after at the Pearl Harbor Navy yard in Honolulu.

For the next two years, first in the tolerant atmosphere of wartime California, and later, in the traditionally tolerant ambience of Honolulu, many of my friends were black, or gay, or both. In white, middle class, pre-war America, straight whites had little overt, conscious communication with black people or gay people. With blacks, it was obvious. With gays, it was a matter of avoiding anyone who seemed gay or was rumored to be gay. Where a friend "confessed" to being gay, or was "exposed" as gay, one avoided that person from then on.

These rigid communications barriers broke down among younger civilians in war time, especially if they left home and moved to the major defense centers. Our sense of being rejected and held in contempt by the rest of the world tended to give us something in common around which friendships were often built. Certain black people and some gays had developed rather sophisticated and healthy defenses against social rejection, and with a kind of rueful cynicism they were willing to share their survival skills with us straight whites, reeling as we were from a rejection with which we had had no experience at all. The two most significant defenses were community-building and the cultivation of a cathartically hostile sense of humor. The defenses were learned in that order, since to laugh or joke requires the kind of self-esteem only a felt membership in a community can provide.

There is no room here to deal with the complexities of the kinds of community which were being built. Suffice it to say they were at their best consciously and carefully worked at to provide support, sensitivity and outright help. Where gays were concerned, the community I'm referring to here has nothing to do with the so-called gay sub-culture. Gays commit-

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ted to this kind of community building kept it, for the most past, quite separate from their sex lives and open to anyone (regardless of sexual orientation, race or class) who was hurting and looking for friends and not so damaged by their experience of rejection that they could no longer give at all or function socially in any way. Obviously, not all blacks or gays or straight whites alienated for whatever reason, had learned, or could learn, to stay sane, or even alive, as members of a minority held in contempt. A kind of social triangle went on which, however un-Christian, was more Christian than anything I saw the Church doing as the Church. Many of the blacks and a few of the gays engaged in this community building were church-going Christians, but there was never any explicit witness to this fact.

And so, during this time, I came to know a number of gay people very well indeed as friends when I needed friends badly; as mentors in a situation for which I had no preparation. From these gay friends, as well as from black friends, I learned that a supportive and trustworthy community was necessary to make sense out of existence in an absurd situation, and I learned to perceive and appreciate the comic dimen-

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sion of absurdity, and to be able to laugh at it, even at my own contributions to it.

Later, when I became a Christian, I found no conflict between what I had learned then and Christianity. But laughter, mockery and cynicism serve only to distance one from one's pain and give one some perspective and room for maneuver. The community built as a kind of secondary adjustment to the mainstream of society tends continually to fall apart, and its continuous rebuilding in new situations of absurdity tends to wear one down. If life is to make any continuing and sustaining sense, one must feel the support of a continuing and sustaining community.

After the war, black community building, helped by the Supreme Court, became politicized, and the Civil Rights Movement began to establish a legal and political structure to give blacks an assured place in the national life. No such thing happened for gays, probably because it was beyond anyone's imagination to politicize sexuality at that time. It was not until American society began to feel the effects of women's new control over their own procreativity through the diaphragm and the pill, that sexuality itself became a political and economic issue. When women were freed to decide whether or when or under what circumstances they would have children and the vulnerability which had made them existentially dependent on males was removed, the politics of sex became an explicit agendum in our national life. Homosexuality became a part of this political agendum, albeit tentative and embarrassing.

Birth control and safe legal abortion had suddenly made sexual intercourse, marriage and having children into three separate issues, a situation for which no one was prepared by precedent or experience. No one, that is, but homosexuals, some of whom have always had the choice of marrying for reasons of prudence and companionship, the choice, if they were not too fastidious, of siring or conceiving children and parenting them, and, of course, the choice of a sex life utterly separated from marriage or family. But since all of this was covering over a dark secret, it was often as not experienced as a painful and maladaptive way of life lived in constant fear of exposure or blackmail. What the homosexual, the mature and healthy homosexual, knew for sure was the pain of many discontinuous sexual liaisons utterly unrelated to a long term faithful intimacy. But what the mature homosexual knew also was that where, for whatever reason, sex, intimacy and continuity were broken off from one another, a person facing this predicament must, to remain sane and whole, cultivate a network of trustworthy friendships and build an accepting and supportive community where the sexual ingredient is incidental and manageable. The gift of the healthy gay person is the capacity to carefully cultivate friendships, not only with other homosexuals, but with a wide range of individuals of both sexes and with families. Within my acquaintance, it was gay people with this gift who were most likely to eventually manage stable long term sexual relationships as well.

When I returned to college, my primary interest was in literature, theater, and the arts. Within these areas, again, gay people moved with a certain assurance and absence of secrecy, but again, a college community is a community in transit, like a wartime community. Within such a community, tolerance is an easy virtue. When I finished my education and went to work in elementary school teaching, gays seemed to vanish from the face of the earth. Among my colleagues, or in my church and community involvement, gays were nowhere to be seen. Even when I went to seminary in 1955, there was no evidence of gays apart from occasional rumors. To be gay, during those days, was to be incredibly vulnerable. One looks back with amazement and a rueful admiration on those gay seminarians who survived the intensive group dynamic sessions of Clinical Training with their pressure towards self disclosure, and emerged sane and still in the closet. It must have seemed cruel and unusual punishment, particularly since one clear purpose of Clinical Training as it was perceived by many of us in practice, was to root homosexuals out of the clergy, or, in particular programs, to get them into therapy. I remember vividly in one program hearing a psychiatrist describe homosexuality as a character disorder which was by its very nature untreatable, and warning us to distrust any psychiatrist who claimed to treat homosexuals successfully. In another program we were informed by another psychiatrist that homosexuality was often a form of neurosis and thoroughly treatable. In both cases, homosexuality was presented to us as a disease, but in the second case an aggressive young psychiatrist was setting us up to send to him and his colleagues a rich harvest of prosperous gay men and women who desperately needed one continuing intimate relationship out of the closet, and were willing to pay for it endlessly. Clergy have proved very cooperative in this respect since, albeit naively cooperative.

Indeed, I believe, looking back on it, that it was the almost consciously cultivated naivete of the seminary experience in the matter of homosexuality which has caused gays in the Church so much grief. It was a common enough experience in bull sessions to hear every known banality presented, every vicious stereotype hilariously proclaimed, and to know for sure that two members of the group were gay, and that if you were to argue with the stereotypes and banalities of the straights, the gays would not support you with as much as a quiet nod. Many a seminarian in those days graduated from seminary without ever discovering that his closest and most trusted friend was gay.

Gay people have told me since that although it would have been impossible

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to let it generally be known that one was gay then without being expelled from seminary on the spot, it was, perhaps, a paranoid miscalculation on the part of gays not to have informed close friends of their homosexuality. This often occurs in our more liberated decade, and although the straight person's first response is usually one of coolness and distancing, if the gay person persists in working at the relationship a new friendship often results along with considerable reassessment of values on the part of the straight friend. The result of more private self-disclosure, though it would have been risky, might have been a less naive parish clergy. As it was, most of us left seminary with the same irrational fear of homosexuality we had come with, but with these fears rationalized by a lot of inaccurate and conflicting psychoanalytic theory.

But one thing we all knew, and that was that any kind of homosexual scandal in the parish was professionally dangerous. A gay organist caught in the act, a vestryman arrested after indiscreetly propositioning a police officer in plain clothes, charges brought by the parents of teenagers against a youth leader, any of these events could turn out to be the trickiest of parish problems for a minister, or so we were led to believe. On those rare occasions when such scandals did occur our most frequent reaction was a rush to closure. We fired the organist, asked the vestryman to resign and made it clear that his presence was not acceptable in the parish. We quickly, any way we could, got rid of the youth leader. Anything having to do with homosexuality we dealt with fearfully. If the organist had injured several people in an automobile accident while drunk, or the vestryman had been arrested for embezzlement, or the youth leader was discovered teaching reincarnation, we would have dealt with any of these things pastorally.

The message of the parish minister's phobic reaction to anything touching on homosexuality sent a clear message to the parish — homosexuals are not welcome in the Church. Gay people got this message and straight people got this message. This was not the message we clergy intended to give, since most of us believed that homosexuality was a disease, perhaps even a treatable disease, and we were aware that Christ came not to heal the healthy. Our real fear was not so much of homosexuality as it was of the professional consequence of a homosexual scandal.

In the '50s and '60s, then, homosexuality never became a part of the parish agenda except through scandal, and consequently within a climate of fear and anger. Before the late '60s or early '70s the parish was simply never considered as a place where straight people might be regularly in contact with people professing to be gay, and clearly, until this happened, there was no way to get rid of the high level of anxiety which surrounded the issue of homosexuality. Very few straight people ever get over their fear and distrust of gays until they have come to know one explicitly gay person well and have come to trust that person as a responsible and trustworthy human being.

Gay people in the parish then were in a classical double bind. Until they could make themselves known as gay to their friends in the parish, there was no way to get rid of the climate of anxiety around the whole issue. Yet if they let it be known in the parish that they were gay, there was the real possibility that they could be so damaged professionally and socially that they might have to leave not only the parish, but the community as well.

Since the early '70s some indeterminate number of gay people have made it public knowledge in their parishes that they are gay. I haven't been a member of such a parish and have no way of monitoring the ongoing results of such revelations, but I have heard the initial parish reactions discussed by some people involved. The results were neither so bad as parish ministers and gay people anticipated, nor as good as an idealist might want. There was a good deal of distancing from the gay person, a kind of embarrassment and fearfulness in his or her presence, a surprising amount of determined tolerance, a general willingness to listen to arguments for the acceptance of gay people, some curiosity about the gay life style, and, of course, a small, loud group of the loud and outraged, most often, not to the gay person, but to the parish minister or to other parishioners.

Actual public confrontation has, to my knowledge, happened only where a group of gay people in a parish emerged as a quasi-ideological group, and even here, the confrontation has largely been reduced to dialogue. In such parish situations the only thing that can be said for sure is that an issue traditionally avoided like the plague is now being discussed openly and rationally and there is some honest dialogue between openly gay people and straight people. How much real attitude change is taking place is impossible to tell, and the phenomenon is happening in so few parishes that its significance is hard to estimate for the whole Church. Generally, there is no reason to believe that the Church will be more accepting of homosexuality than the society in general, and the society seems to be going through an anti-gay backlash which is religiously led. Many people feel that the Episcopal Church will follow the lead of the Presbyterian Church and make homosexuality the place where it draws the sexual line in the matter of ordination. The best anyone can hope for is that the issue will not be raised at convention until more parishes have entered into open dialogue with their own gay members. This is bound to be a slow process, since it requires extraordinary courage, patience and determination on the part of gay people with no assurance yet that the results will not be, for them, disastrous. To the token gay in a parish, who must perforce begin by being treated politely, coolly, distantly and with curiosity as some exotic object, at best,

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is an unpleasant situation.

To be a token gay in a parish, to be a witness, a martyr to the gay cause, is not why gay people want to be in a parish. Like the rest of us, they want to be in the parish because they hope that precisely there, growing around the hearing of the Gospel and the making of Eucharist they will discover a non-predatory, trustworthy, forgiving straightforward community which will help make sense out of their lives in a world which from day to day reveals itself to be ever more radically absurd. Like the rest of us, gays would like the parish, through its worship and its community, to support them and inspire them to help work some meaningful order into the social chaos within which we all must exist at this particular moment in history. Perhaps more intensely than the rest of us, gay people need such a community, and God knows (if few other persons are aware) that they have made a lively and spirited contribution to such a community over the years.

The double bind, then, is still there, or a new double bind takes its place when people declare themselves to be gay in a parish. The absurdity of having to publicly justify one's sexual orientation automatically destroys the sense of meaningful community which the gay person seeks in parish life, and it is hard for the gay person to understand why this burden should be placed on him or her.

The logic of it is not immediately apparent. Probably 80 per cent of today's heterosexual sexual practice was regarded 20 years ago as sick and 40 years ago as sinful. Sexually-active teenagers and college students, swinging singles, swinging couples, open marriages, multiple divorces — for none of these have heterosexuals been held morally accountable although each of these practices were regarded by the Church as aberrations from what the Church and Scripture taught when they first became, as social scientists say, statistically significant on the American scene. An incredible amount of clergy and psychiatric energy went into trying to counsel these practices away until suddenly we found them fast approaching the norm, and the function of counseling to adapt heterosexuals to this norm. What happened, of course, was that when effective birth control managed by women and safe, legal abortion became easily available, sexual intercourse was separated from procreation and ceased to have any immediate or inevitable economic or social consequence. Logically, this should have put homosexuality in a new light. The classical moral objection to homosexuality, that it removed sexual intercourse from its natural purpose of procreation and was therefore an unnatural act, lost its edge. Where we have succeeded in removing procreation entirely to the laboratory in recent days, and sexual intercourse can be watched at the movies for entertainment, we are hard put to it to blame gay people for being unnatural.

In the past, before modern medicine, it was, humanly speaking, as true of human beings as it was of all other living creatures, that the most important thing they did was the procreation and raising of the next generation. Where this was the case and humans were very vulnerable creatures in a dangerous and only barely managed environment, sexuality was and had to be rigorously organized and controlled for purely survival purposes. When one remembers the historical circumstances within which Christian sexual morality held sway until the mid-20th Century, that morality was every bit as rational as it was Biblically revealed. The runaway progress of medical-biological technology during and after World War II ranging from D.D.T. and the antibiotics to the pill and open heart surgery threw the whole system of human procreativity into violent disequilibrium and with it, the morality of human sexuality. This is where we are today.

In a curious way, sexuality has become for Christians rather like that most irrational aspect of the human enterprise, war. It is totally impossible to justify war from anything said in the New Testament, yet Christians have engaged in war throughout most of the history of Christianity, trying to temper their disobedience by concepts of a just war, or by prescribing what can and can not be done in the process of waging a war, regarding prisoners, civilians, etc. As a result, war was not, until recently, the final degradation and brutalizing of human beings. As the most morally ambiguous of Christian activities, war was still a situation within which one discovered compassion, sacrifice, kindness, faithfulness and other human virtues.

What may be required of Christians in the area of sexuality is what Kierkegaard called "the teleological suspension of the ethical" — to remove all sexual practices between consenting adults from the realm of the ethical or the moral simply as behavior, and to observe them closely and prayerfully for their results, for their human outcome in community.

For gay people in the parish, this would mean, or might mean, that neither their sexuality nor anyone else's would be isolated for moral opprobrium. The moral and ethical issue would be the quality of community relationships within the parish household, the serious commitment of each parishioner to a non-exploitative, supportive, cooperative trustworthy spirited life together as all work as a family in Christ's name to build a consensus about the nature of reality as the Gospel illuminates reality.

Having said this, it is necessary honestly to look at the parish as family, for it is precisely in this metaphor, the family metaphor, that so much anxiety resides. Many Christians, perhaps a majority of them still, are deeply committed to a life-long monogamous marriage, having as its central worldly purpose the raising of healthy children. They see that the world is conspiring against this happening. They see the wide range of addictive choices presented to their children and themselves

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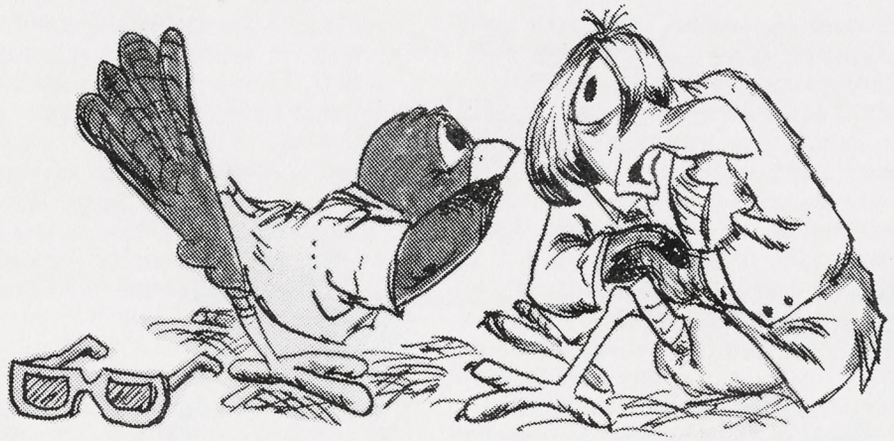
from televison to drug addiction, from sex as a mechanism of exploitation to violence as a proof of manhood. As Christians, they are sickened by what they perceive to be the runaway decadence of the society within which they would work out their marriage and raise their children. What, reasonably and understandably, they would like the Church to be is an alternative community which would support and help them in what they see quite rightly as a serious human task always blessed by the Church. To the extent that the main line Churches have been neglecting the needs of these people, they have been losing them to the more strictly literalist or fundamentalist Churches whose attitude towards anyone deviating from the middle class, nuclear family norm is simply "Get out!" One of the sad ironies of being gay is that possibly a higher percentage of gays than straights are the products of such families, share their values of faithfulness, have a nice regard for the proprieties, are conservative in politics, and see the parish as their only family, banned as they so often are from creating one of their own, and until quite recently, most often banned from their family of origin to the extent that that family perceived them as gay.

That gay people, like anyone else, need a healthy family atmosphere in which to realize their potential as human beings, and that they can make important contributions to creating this atmosphere, are two things which most straight people don't know, or don't believe.

One reason straight people are so distrustful of the idea of a gay commitment to family life is the result of a mischievous notion of Gay Liberation ideology one sometimes hears which claims that gayness is a chosen lifestyle, a sexual preference. To the extent that straight people believe this, they ask themselves, "why would people in their right minds choose to be alienated from their parents and siblings? Why would people choose to be insulted, degraded, persecuted, harassed and generally ridiculed and held in contempt by society at large? These people are either lying or crazy, and in either case I would leave a parish where their life style was held up as normal. What a role model for my children!"



When I was 4-F, any time I was where servicemen were there was a high possibility that one would ask, "Hey, Buddy, why aren't you in uniform?" At first I had a wide range of answers which varied according to my mood. I could lie, and say that I had my orders to leave for basic training in two weeks. Or, I could grovel. I could explain that I was 4-F and that I'd tried to get in all the services but they wouldn't take me and neither would the Merchant Marine, and . . . and . . . and. . . . The serviceman would often interrupt, "Stop! You're breaking my heart, you lucky bastard."

But sometimes I would be feeling aggressive, and come back, "I'm dodging the draft, sucker!" On the surface this was, curiously enough, the most successful answer. The soldier or sailor would slap me on the back, amused by my chutzpah, and reply, "Keep it up, Jack. If I had it to do over again, I'd join you." Afterwards, I felt good about myself. "If you got it, flaunt it!"

Yet, in the long run this answer was the worst. I lied, and the service man lied, and all possibility of dialogue or communication stopped. I had given the "dignity" of conscious choice to a painful situation over which I had no control and yet which in many ways served my interest. But I had to lie to do it.

After I had been in Honolulu a while, I asked a gay friend what to do. "Just give the facts. Don't interpret. Don't lie," he replied. "Just answer his questions briefly and honestly."

I tried it. "Why aren't you in the service, Buddy?"

"I'm 4-F."

"Why are you 4-F?"

"I'm 38 pounds underweight, and I have 20/400 vision."

I discovered that such an encounter could either develop into a conversation or simply end in a neutral way. I saw my friend a while later and thanked him for his advice.

"What do *you* say when they ask you?" I asked him.

"First, I say 4-F. If they ask me why, I say, 'I'm a homosexual'."

"What happens then?"

"They strike up a conversation or they go away."

"Isn't it painful to say that?"

"Isn't it painful for you to admit you're 4-F?"

"Yeah. It's still painful, even if it's not my fault."

"Remember that. It's not your fault. You didn't make the world."

"Who made the world?"

"God made the world. It's his fault. I suggest you take the issue up with him." ■

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"A Welcome to (Not) All Persons"

by Gregor W. Pinney

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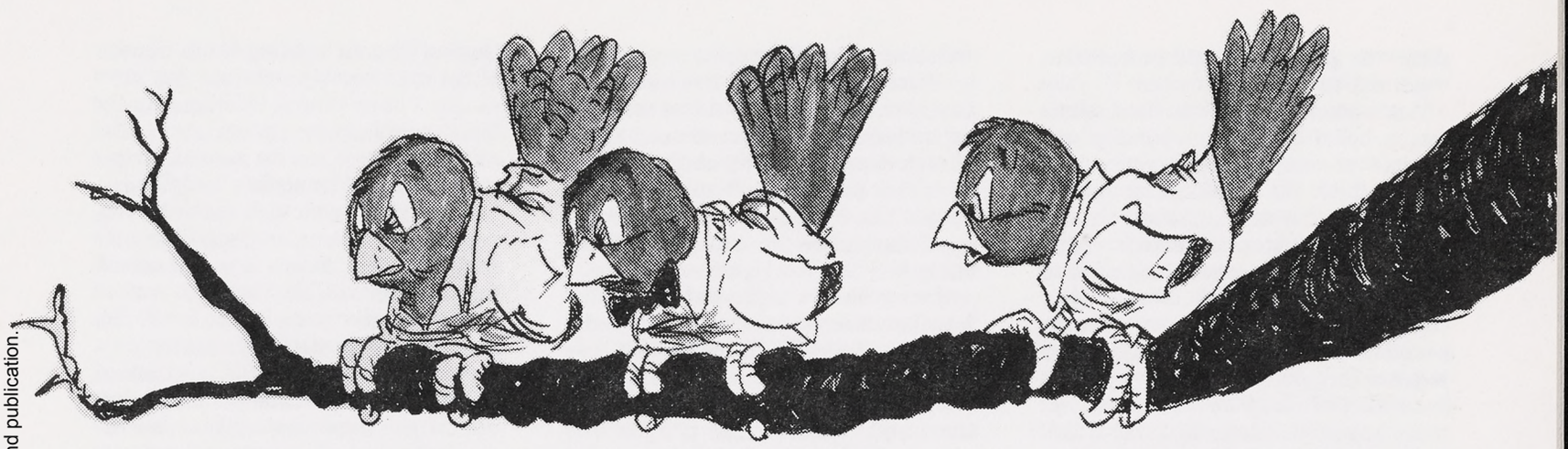

Every Sunday morning, one of the largest churches in Minnesota proclaims "A Welcome To All Persons." It is a sincere slogan, but it has become an impossible one because it ultimately threatens the church members' deepest ideas of Christianity.

The slogan is printed on the weekly bulletin of the Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church in Minneapolis. But the same slogan and the same conflicting values could exist in any church in any denomination. Hennepin Church is an imposing institution, with its congregation of more than three thousand members and its massive Gothic building whose slender spire towers over the treetops on Minneapolis' Lowry Hill.

Lowry Hill, however, is known for more than Hennepin Church. It is known also as the home of the largest gay community in the Twin Cities area. Hundreds of gays live there. Maybe thousands. But very few of those gays ever come to Hennepin Church. It is as if a great chasm had opened in the ground at the edge of the church property and separated the church from its neighbors.

How could such a chasm exist at Hennepin, a cosmopolitan church that truly believes it welcomes all people? Hadn't Hennepin's liberal credentials been established beyond question 20 years ago when it took in the entire congregation of a small, nearby black church? This riddle puzzled the Social Concerns Commission, a group of 10 or 15 people at Hennepin who like to think of themselves as the church's social conscience. So, the commission set out in the summer of 1972 to see how much of a chasm existed and how it could be bridged. I proposed the project and became chairman of a five-member task force.

We probably did not need a study to tell us what we were going to find out, but we did need some way of convincing the power structure of the church that we were serious. A painstaking study was just the thing. Besides, we were going through one of our periodic identity crises ("We keep having meetings, but are we accomplishing anything?"), and we needed something to justify our existence.

Our congregation probably had some secret gay members, but naturally we did not know who they were. And certainly there were no openly gay persons at Hennepin. So we had to go outside the church to find some gays to talk with us about religion.

The first place we looked was Gay House, a neighborhood social service agency. Trying to conceal our trepidations, we walked up to the front door one hot evening in July and asked if we could interview some of the men and women who happened to be sitting around the living room. They agreed and indeed were eager to talk with us. Many seemed genuinely interested in religion. They had grown up in devout churchgoing families of Methodists, Catholics, Episcopalians. But now they felt rejected. None of them had been kicked out of any Church, but they felt unwanted nevertheless because Churches stood for the idea that homosexuality was a sin. They found that judgment too much to bear.

"There's a general tendency to equate the Church with God," said one young man who lived in an apartment near the church. "And in view of what the Church's past position has been with gays, a good share of gay people feel cut off from God."

Cut off from God. Had we Church people committed such a crime? I couldn't believe it — not at that point.

Justified or not, these people felt separated from organized religion. So, next we went to the establishment — our own staff of ministers and the leading laity of our church — to see how much resistance lay ahead if we tried to close the gap.

Not much, it seemed. None of the ministers or laypersons showed any open hostility of gays. None said keep them out. And to varying degrees, they all seemed willing to accept gays as individuals and Christians. But still, they were not eager to take any definite steps. We should not "single out" gays, they said. We should not invite

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Gregor Pinney is the education writer for the *Minneapolis Tribune.*

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them "as gays." It would be better to reach out to everyone instead.

And somewhere back in their minds was a belief that homosexuality was wrong, or maybe the practice was wrong, if not the condition, not necessarily a sin, but still, somehow wrong.

That did not stop us because we believed that, in the end, the desire to welcome would triumph. We failed to comprehend how deeply our church people believed in their authority to judge others. But those ideas were not in conflict yet, and we went ahead because no one was stopping us. Our task force drafted its final report in 1975, and the Social Concerns Commission adopted it unanimously.

Things began to fall apart quickly, however. We took our plan to the staff ministers, and over a meat pie luncheon one day at the church, we got a taste of how little progress we had made. According to our plan, the Social Concerns Committee would look for gays who wanted a church home but did not have one. We would try to find something at Hennepin to interest them.

"But why do we have to make a special appeal to the gays?" asked the associate pastor. "Nobody's keeping them out."

It was a beguiling argument which we had heard from the beginning. The fact that we still were hearing it nearly three years later meant that we had failed to prove that a problem really existed. We had failed to prove that it takes more than just an open door to welcome alienated people.

There were other reasons for caution, too, as the business manager explained at the luncheon: "This church depends heavily on the support of a few prominent families. If they should be offended by this thing about gays, the church would be hurt financially."

Two members of the staff, nevertheless, volunteered to work with us, and we moved ahead. By early 1976, we had drafted a set of letters to gay organizations and counselors, figuring they might know of gay persons who were looking for a church home. But we hit a snag when the two ministers working with us declined to sign the letters because they specified that we were looking for gays. So *they* rewrote the letters, purging them of all mention of gays and making them look like nothing more than an ordinary membership campaign.

No one ever responded to the letters. The chasm is difficult to cross, and gays must be told directly that they are wanted. It is not enough to welcome "all persons" because gays know that "all persons" usually leaves them out.

We did not have much time to agonize over the letter episode, however, because another pot was brewing and soon would boil over and ruin our project before we could make any further progress. The other pot was the Metropolitan Community Church of the Twin Cities, a small congregation composed mostly of gays. The MCC had been meeting at an out-of-the-way Quaker Church building for its Sunday afternoon worship services but now sought a more central location. So, the MCC people came to our ministerial staff and asked to rent a small chapel at the rear of Hennepin's building.

A harmless request, it seemed. Hennepin routinely rents its building to secular groups. Surely it would not refuse a group of Christians who wanted to gather in the name of the Lord! But it did. All the ministers, except one, came out against the MCC request.

"The United Methodist Church does not affirm homosexuality as an authentic lifestyle," said the senior pastor in a mimeographed statement. And the MCC's use of our building "would inevitably be construed as an affirmation of the appropriateness of homosexuality."

The Social Concerns Commission had watched all of this from the sidelines, but we decided to get involved at that point and take the MCC request to the top lay governing body, the Administrative Board. For nearly four years we had managed to confine the gay issue to subdued discussion, but now it had all come out into the open. A major debate preceded the board's decision on Sept. 14, 1976, during which it became clear we had touched nerves we had not known existed.

"The chapel is not just space; it's consecrated space," said one woman. "My daughters were baptized there; my husband was buried from that chapel, and I don't want it defiled by *these* people."

One man declared, "It's been made clear from the time of Sodom that it (homosexuality) is against the law of God."

But they were not willing to let God make His own judgments. They had decided what was right and wrong for themselves as well as others, and they felt the institution of the Church must back up those individual judgments.

"We do make judgments," said the senior pastor. "We've judged segregation wrong; we also judge homosexuality wrong." It cannot be proclaimed

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The art work in this edition was created by **David Woodford,** *a St. John's seminarian in Boston.*

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as right in our church, he said, because "It's contrary to the disposition of the congregation."

The chairperson of the Administrative Board put homosexuality into the same bag of sins as adultery and concluded that, with either one, "If we sidestep judgment and refuse to give guidance, we're failing as a Church."

They made no distinctions between human actions that hurt other people — like stealing and discriminating and committing adultery — and actions that do not necessarily hurt others, like homosexuality. And they made no distinction between matters of choice — like theft, discrimination and adultery — and matters of no choice — like homosexuality. They did not actually say that gays have chosen to be gay, but they held gays accountable for their condition nevertheless.

"If they'd just shut up, they could go to any church," asserted one woman. "I'd rather not know what their sexuality is," said another.

Keep sex a secret, they said. But hasn't the Church itself raised the issue by saying that homosexual practice is wrong? And hasn't the Church itself promoted sex constantly, albeit the family-oriented hetero kind? It all seemed inconsistent.

Those were the voices of the majority. But the minority also spoke.

The chairperson of the Adult Studies Commission, and his fiancee wrote and produced a play that cut to the core. It portrayed Christ rebuking a Hennepin churchgoer for failing to recognize God's purposes in all of us, even in a young gay man. The individual, who played the young gay man, said later, during the debate, "So long as I feel they don't have any choice (about being gay) then I must extend my love to them. If it is no choice, then the last ten thousand years have been full of discrimination."

One gentleman, who held one of the highest lay positions in the church as chairman of the Council on Ministries, took the microphone and spoke "partly to clear my conscience" for his own acquiescence to racial discrimination when he lived in the South. Referring to what he had heard in the debate at Hennepin, he said, "The intolerance, bigotry and unwillingness to learn about homosexuality rivaled anything I witnessed in the Deep South in the 1950s and 1960s. We welcome all persons, but we single out one group and say it's incompatible with Christianity. That judgment should be left to God."

One woman said, "I think we should ask what Jesus would have done. I think he would have allowed it (use of the chapel). By allowing it, we could have some interchange, some interaction."

Indeed, some of the opponents had argued that the two churches should not be separate. Why can't the MCC people simply come to our regular worship services? they asked.

They got their answer from a woman who nearly cried as she took the microphone late in the debate and asked incredulously, "We expect these people to come and be a part of us? How can they, with what we have been hearing tonight? These people are not asking to have an orgy in our church. They are asking to worship God. How can we deny them that?"

We could deny it, and we did — by a vote of 19 in favor and 65 against. That left us wondering where we stood with our Task Force project of reaching out to the gay community. Did we have the support of the church? We asked the Administrative Board and received our answer on Jan. 11, 1977.

This time the crowd was smaller, the tension lower. And our request was much tamer — merely support us for an evangelism project. No one could accuse us this time of fostering a separate church. But other arguments were available.

"I know several homosexuals," said one man. "They never bother me. I don't see any problem if they joined. But I see something different in going out and seeking them. Even though there's probably no harm in it, it may stir up dissension."

One longtime Hennepin member, said, "I don't see how we can tap them on the head and drag them in here. We don't do it for anyone else."

She was right, and that was a big part of the problem. We don't go out actively looking for new members. Our sense of evangelism has become so passive that any aggressive outreach would sound threatening, whether to gays or straights.

"It may be true that there needs to be more vigorous action," the senior pastor allowed. "But we don't want to affirm the homosexual lifestyle."

Our margin of defeat was not so bad this time — something like 17 to 35 — but it was defeat nevertheless. Our project was dead. The Social Concerns Committee met the next evening and officially put the project to rest.

But the gay issue will never rest. It still gnaws at our soul. One night last summer, a gang of vandals defaced the Quaker Church in Minneapolis where the Metropolitan Community Church meets each week. The words "queers" and "fags" were painted on the wall of the church. The incident moved the Methodist Bishop of Minnesota to issue a statement. While he acknowledged that the Methodist Church opposes homosexual practice, he decried the vandalism at the Quaker Church and warned Methodists "not to get caught up in this spirit which is so alien to the love of God."

What the bishop did not mention was that his own church had turned away the MCC when it wanted a new place to worship. Perhaps he did not consider that this act of rejection, like every act of rejection, might also be alien to the love of God.

Our church bulletin still proclaims every Sunday morning, "A Welcome to All Persons." And that is true, in a sense. Gay men and women are free to come if they wish. The door is not barred. But beyond that door lies judgment. It might as well be barred. A welcome with judgment is no welcome.

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Clergy in the Closet Live Double Lives

by William Doubleday

"No man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true."

Nathaniel Hawthorne

The presence of a substantial number of homosexual persons among the clergy of the Episcopal Church and among the active laity has long constituted a little-publicized and rarely recognized fact of life. Although some people may have been aware at some level of the presence of a few homosexual persons among the Church's clergy, most people would be shocked — if not horrified — by educated estimates that suggest between 10 and 30 per cent of all of the clergy in the Episcopal Church are homosexual or bisexual in their orientation. Such a possibility escapes the suspicion of most people because all but a very few of those clergy are secretive or "closeted" about their sexuality. This fact has been well hidden except on the rare occasions when some sort of "scandal" resulted in a resignation, a suicide or a deposition.

The situation of "closeted" ordained homosexual persons has never been exactly enviable. The Church does not wish to deal honestly or openly with the sexual lives of its clergy. But, at the same time, psychological examinations, curious vestries, amorous parishioners and hostile bishops have caused considerable tension, anxiety and fear. If clergy act upon their homosexual feelings or deal with their sexual or relational needs — as most do from time to time — they are invariably forced to lead something of a double life. Life, by its very nature, is of necessity divided rather than whole, in conflict rather than in congruence, based upon some significant and necessary elements of lying and deception rather than being based on a consistent undergirding of truth and openness. One might then wonder why homosexual persons tolerate the tensions involved in serving within an essentially hostile institutional Church.

It was our intention to offer input on that question by presenting three brief "testimonies" by prominent gay clergypersons whose service to the Church has been made more difficult by their need to live double lives. We are delighted to share two such testimonies, one by a well-known parish priest and the other by a highly-acclaimed liturgist. The third was to be written by a bishop but was made impossible by the fear of exposure under which they live.

As dioceses throughout the country attempt to educate themselves to the many facets of the homosexual dilemma, they quickly become aware of the difficulty inherent in hearing from the victims of homophobia. For too many, the risk of exposure is too great. For that reason, our testimonies are by persons who, in order to protect the integrity of their ministry, must remain anonymous. ■

William Doubleday is Education Director of the National Gay Task Force and Convenor of Integrity/ New York City.

Not Solely a "Gay Priest"

"Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, . . . And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of his holy Sacraments; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Thus culminated the hopes and dreams of several years, years full of humor and happiness, of tears and pain. With the great words of the Anglican liturgical tradition and with the imposition of espiscopal hands, the Church had merely given assent to something I had known for some time: That I had been called to serve God in an unusual way, as one who is called to love.

Like all vocations, it had been tested at every turn. Only love could have conquered the obstacles which lay between me and priesthood. In addition to hurdling the standard set of stumbling blocks set up by life itself, I also had to make the perilous journey through the rockslide of sexuality. I call it a rockslide, for when one suddenly realizes that one is not what one assumed oneself to be, that all of one's relationships might be affected by this revelation, and that one is suddenly persona non grata in the midst of a culture, the image of a rockslide begins to convey the feeling of the situation.

I suppose that the first battle, and the last, is one of honesty. As I reflect upon the few years since that first self-revelation which unmasked my true feelings for members of my own sex, I realize that the struggle then, as now, is one of honesty. Integrity was a word I had used long before Louie Crew made it a rallying-cry for gay Episcopalians. It was integrity which had forced me to delay my ordination after a fine seminary experience marked with solid academic achievement and much personal growth. I had known a good many gay priests in the Episcopal Church. Each and every one had attained their places by subterfuge. I mean no indictment of these men. I only knew that I could not do what they had done. When I was ordained, I maintained, my bishops would know upon whom they had placed their hands. And they did.

My ministry has been guided by the principles of love and honesty. That my name does not appear with this sketch bespeaks my love for a family whose sensitivities would be assailed, for the Church whose members would be scandalized, and for myself, whose privacy would be assaulted. My sexuality is but a part of my life. I wish not to be identified solely as a "gay priest". Thus, I refrain from assisting those who would so label me. Those who are in authority over me are aware of my homosexuality and they are aware that I make no pretense to being celibate — the usual condition placed upon ordination of homosexuals. Yet, neither are they aware of any particulars beyond that admission. They may infer what they will from what they see and hear of my life and ministry. But there are certain matters which I believe to be beyond the right of even those in such authority. My personal life, the persons I love and the manner in which I choose to express that love, is no more open for public display than are the bedrooms and quiet words shared by my married brothers and sisters.

When asked about my sexuality, my answers are always honest and forthright. If I choose to share this personal part of my life with another, it is done in love. Sometimes it is to simply let another know that I, too, am human and share the same burdens and joys common to us all. Sometimes it is shared simply to let the other know how very much I trust him

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or her. It is unfortunate that such a simple admission could be so dangerous a weapon, but to place this truth in the hands of another is not unlike handing one's unsheathed sword to the enemy as a sign of one's peaceful intentions. (Please enter into the record that the sword has never been lifted against me by those to whom it has been entrusted.)

Perhaps it is my belief in the supremacy of truth, my unusual slant on honesty, which best characterizes my ministry and best describes my impatience with hypocrisy. While I am aware that some will read this and think me hypocritical for speaking about honesty under an unsigned article, I trust that most will understand why I have chosen to do so. I am not winking at the public, nor am I winking at the Church. I have faced, and continue to face, the eyes of all with an unflinching veracity which has won the admiration of many and the scorn of some. I have done so with assurance in Him who was Himself Truth incarnate. And that has been the model I have followed: Sometimes enigmatic, sometimes bold, but in all things concerned to love and committed to the revealing of that which is good and truthful. That I have failed on many occasions to fulfill this goal is an admission I make with all sincerity. That I have tried always to achieve that goal, however, makes the honest admission of that failure easier to bear. For I do not believe I have failed those who love me, nor shall I, God being my helper.

My ministry is an active one. It keeps me busy and happy and hopeful. I am a parish priest by training and, though I

Testimony by NOW Representative

(Editor's Note: The following testimony was given by Georgia Fuller before the Committee on the Homophile in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.)

by Georgia Fuller

I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk with you this evening. While I am going to speak as an individual, I cannot completely separate myself from my role with the National Organization for Women. Indeed, that role is part of what brings me here. To many Christian homosexuals, my NOW position makes me safe — safe to contact by letter, by phone or in person — safe to listen spiritually to their pain, anger and anxiety. Because I worship within the Episcopal community, most of these contacts are Episcopalian. I want to talk with you specifically about these sisters and brothers and not about the scores of gays I know and work with politically who are unchurched or practicing some form of separatist spirituality.

The tragedy of most gay Christians is that socially they are very straight. They want to be honest about who they are. They want to be with people, gay and non-gay, who can give them friendship, warmth and understanding. They want to publicly struggle with the risks entailed in *any* long-term commitment of love. They want jobs that use their gifts. They want nice, comfortable homes to share with their family and friends, maybe even with a dog or a cat and two rose bushes. Gay Episcopalians, in particular, want to image God in their daily living and have that affirmed by their Church. Instead, gay Christians are encouraged by others, including their Church, to lie about who they are. Their struggles for friendship and for long-term love are consigned to the dark and dangerous alleyways of paranoia, exploitation and self-hatred.

As Christians we must ask why. And as Christians we must be the first to stop asking homosexuals and begin asking heterosexuals. For it is the social laws and moral values of the heterosexual life style that keep our gay brothers and sisters from leaving those dark alleys. Heterosexual laws and values, by restricting the freedom of gay sisters and brothers, force many of them to live in those alleyways *as if by choice.* They are funneled into acting out the stereotypes about gay behavior, which then become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Fortunately, many of our gay brothers and sisters have refused to acquiesce to the power of this self-fulfilling prophecy.

For years, gay Christians have continued to pound on the Church door. For years they have been trying to tell us, "We don't bite. We're not contagious. We are children of God, just as you are. We want to stand in God's light, side by side with you." As Christians with a heterosexual life style we have not always said "no," but we have never said "yes." Let us now ask why. Let us especially ask why in view of Anita Bryant and her gospel of hate. For us to remain passive and tentative at this moment in history is to allow Anita Bryant to redefine not only homosexuality but also Christianity, in terms of her own pathologies.

Still we hesitate. Why? The affirmation and consecration of heterosexual relationships does not include the affirmation and consecration of heterosex-

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have had specialized ministries, I shall always believe in the parish model — the family of the faithful — as the heart of the Church. I love those whom I serve and they love me. Simplistic? Not really. I would prefere to think of it as Christian — profoundly Christian. There is not a total harmony in my present situation, nor shall there ever be. But we are a family living in faith, in trust, and trying with all our might to love as we have been called. That we do not agree in all particulars gives our family an exciting dimension. That we reverence unity above uniformity makes of our life a living witness to this world. I can get excited when I speak of my ministry and I see joy and excitement in the faces of those among whom I live as they share their life together with others in this community.

I suppose I shall have some difficult decisions to make after the General Convention in 1979, especially if the Episcopal Church decides to emulate the Presbyterians' recent stance. Duplicity does not sit well with me. It may be the way of the world. It may very well be the wave of the future. But it was not the way of Christ, not as I perceive Him. My life and ministry have proven that one can live with integrity as a gay priest, fully expressing that sexuality, and preaching the gospel of Christ in thought, word, and deed. Regardless of any action by any General Convention, I shall rest upon that truth with the sure and certain knowledge that truth will outlast all else. And upon that truth I believe I shall be judged.

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ual pornography, prostitution or rape. Yet the fear that is ever present, and sometimes even surfaced, is that by publicly opening our ministry to our gay sisters and brothers, we are somehow accepting sleazy bars and exploitive sexual relationships. Yet it is precisely those sleazy bars and that exploitation of the dark alleyways from which gay Christians have turned to their Church for liberation. At first the Church responded by calling them sinners. Fortunately for us the homosexual replied "I am who I am" and did not go away. Then the Church called them sick. Fortunately for us the homosexual replied "I am who I am" and did not go away. When the medical establishment declared that homosexuality was not a disease, the Church responded, "Let's study it."

Unfortunately, the Church is studying the wrong question. The problem is not the homosexual who wants an honest and open life. The problem is the heterosexual who denies that possibility.

Throughout history every group in power has arrogated to itself all desirable social traits while stereotyping the powerless with the opposite traits. This stereotyping then became the rational for separation and ultimately oppression. I say this as a professional whose doctoral minor is in cultural anthropology. Thus southern whites have called blacks promiscuous, sexually predatory and unnatural or somehow less than human. Historically the same has been charged by the English against the Irish, by the rich against the poor, by men against women and by non-gays against gays.

This group then, should change its name, or at least its focus. It should become a Committee on Homophobia, for homophobia, not homophilia, is the problem. A Committee on Homophobia could enable those of us with a heterosexual life style to openly ask why we cannot affirm the gay dimension of sexuality. Is it because we cannot really affirm the goodness of our own sexuality? Must we, therefore, maintain an opposite, negative standard to define ourselves against? A Committee on Homophobia could enable those of us with a heterosexual life style to openly ask if we have projected the fears of our own sexuality on our gay brothers and sisters. Are we placing our fears of personal promiscuity and unnatural behavior on our sisters and brothers and then casting them out of society in an effort to cast out our own demons?

The key to any successful inquiry is an accurate definition of the problem. A Committee on the Homophile, by its very name, is focusing on the victim, not the cause. With such a focus, it can only collect stories of fear and pain, particularly of gay Christians. As such it remains an instrument of the status quo, joining the status quo in perpetuating fear and generating pain. That will, of course give the Committee more stories to collect, which could keep it quite busy for many years. It could be busy enough to divert its attention from the possibilities of genuine reconciliation of our Christian family which has been separated by sexuality labels. It could be busy enough to divert its attention from real justice for the oppressed and healing for the oppressor.

I would urge you, in the name of my gay Episcopalian sisters and brothers, several of whom have said this week, "Georgia, testify if *you* want to but I can't go through that," to make a commitment. That commitment would be to investigate the homophobic causes of gay pain and oppression. Such a commitment would also benefit those of us who lead a heterosexual life style. It could enable us to liberate ourselves from the fear that separates us from deep meaningful love — love of God, love of *all* our neighbors and love of ourselves. Unfortunately, many of us have grown comfortable with that separation. We have wrapped that separating fear around us like a security blanket. To give it up will be a painful Leap of Faith. The call to do justice and reconcile with our gay brothers and sisters is, for non-gay Christians, a supreme call to Faith. Let us finally say "yes."

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"...the Church is poorer because of it."

I went off to seminary with words of my parish priest ringing in my ears, "Watch out for the high churchman and anyone who pays too much attention to liturgy; they're all queer." I had been a music major in college, for years had been interested in the liturgy of the church and was an unabashed "high churchman", but until I arrived at seminary I never suspected that I was also homosexual. During Spring vacation of my first year, I "came out" and began a discovery of the gay underground of the Episcopal Church.

In the years since graduation I have been ordained as deacon and priest. I have served in a number of parishes and have tried to share my talents and insights as a liturgist, musician and artist. I have never flaunted my sexual identity before people in the Church. I have tried to be a faithful priest and pastor working with musicians, altar guilds, educators, lay readers, acolytes and arts and furnishings committees. I have had a great affection for the people with whom I have worked and lived and I have received much love and affection from them. I have enjoyed my ministry and I am most thankful that Christ has given me a share in his ministry.

But as a specialist in the liturgical arts I have also come to know and minister to a large homosexual and bisexual community that serves the musical, liturgical and artistic needs of the Church.

I remember a straight priest commenting at a reception for a national gathering of the American Guild of Organists, "This is the first time I've been in a gay bar." The humor was well taken but the truth was painfully apparent for those who knew the people present. I don't suggest that all male organists in the Episcopal Church are homosexual. They aren't, but 70 percent of the good ones I have known are either homosexual or bisexual. I say this in print not to excite witch hunts or to cause suspicion. To the contrary, I dare say it in hope that Church people will become more sensitive to those who serve Christ in his Church, and more concerned as to how the Church can minister to them and their needs.

What I have said of organists and choir directors can also be said of singers. If homosexuals make up 10 percent of the male population in general, I would estimate that they make up 20 percent to 30 percent of the men's sections of our parish and cathedral choirs. In the best parish choir in the city where I now serve 70 percent of the men are homosexual or bisexual. The bass and tenor section is the finest in the diocese but lately a Warden's wife has been complaining publicly that there are "too many of *them*" in the choir. Having sung with major urban parish and cathedral choirs across the country, I know only too well the pain which many musicians feel in being excluded from parish life because they are different. I have spent many hours listening to organists, choir directors and singers anguish over the repression, rejection and hatred they hear from pulpits and experience from the parishioners of the churches where they serve.

The observations I have made of gay lay people are perhaps even more true of clergy. I do not equate artistic gifts with homosexual proclivity. But a large percentage of the clergy are gay (Malcolm Boyd estimated that in some of the large urban dioceses over 50 percent of the priests are homosexual), and included among them are persons of great talent and skill in liturgy and the liturgical arts. Some keep a distance between themselves and their people for fear they will be found out and defrocked. Many take refuge in facades of bravado and machismo to be above suspect. Others have marriages of convenience. And because of suspicion, repression and mistrust, these people are prevented from offering their particular God-given gifts for the benefit of all. And the Church is poorer because of it.

The list of composers, artists, architects, liturgists, poets and craftspeople who have enriched the life of the Church throughout history is enormous. That since the Renaissance many of them were known to also be homosexual is considered by most heterosexuals to be insignificant. But for those who were homosexual, that part of their life was not an incidental flaw to be dismissed, but a very significant part of the fiber of their being and their identity . . . a deep and important aspect with which most of them fought, wrestled and agonized for the majority of their lives.

Take for instance W. H. Auden. During the revision of the Prayer Book in America in the last decade, those who decried the loss of Elizabethan English clamoured for contemporary poets like Auden to come to the rescue of our liturgical language. Auden did serve on the committee to revise the Psalter until the time of his death. A closer look at this genius reveals him to not only be one of the greatest poets of the English language in our century and a faithful Anglican, but also a well-known homosexual. He often referred to himself as "the doubting fish", a play on the ancient Christian symbol and the astrological sign under which he was born. Auden considered these items: Sexual identity, vocation and religion to be the three most vital elements of his nature.

Sigmund Freud taught that the sex drive was the most powerful force in the life of the individual. C. G. Jung disagreed and wrote that the most important drive is the quest for meaning. I prefer Jung's insights for myself but I recognize my sex drive as a very significant force in my life. Like Auden, I have often thought religion, sex and the arts were the key factors in my identity. If I were to scribble my own epitaph, I debate in which order I would place them.

But it is religion which plays the key role in the quest for meaning. It is the binder which holds together the fragmented parts of our contemporary lives. And as long as gay clergy and musicians and liturgical artists, indeed anyone, must deny their sexuality in the Church they are only partly present as persons. Much of them is being denied and excluded in the quest for meaning. The denial of sexuality can create a kind of schizophrenia where a person lives one life around the church, another in gay circles and perhaps a third in the secularized arena of their profession. And we wonder why people seem unhappy and appear to be falling apart! The Church is often actively engaged in tearing them apart!

In a sacramental universe the Church cannot exist without the ministry of artists, musicians, dancers, poets, dramatists and all those whose gifts reveal so poignantly that we are created in the image of God. The Church cannot continue to require that these people be "church eunuchs" in order to share their gifts. There was a day when homosexuality was widely tolerated (but never mentioned) in the Episcopal Church partly out of deference to an English heritage (public schools, well-mannered, slightly effete vicars and choirs of gentlemen and boys) and a necessity understood by those of means that many of the people with certain skills and talents which the Church needed happened to be "that" way. But the subject of homosexuality was never discussed. If an incident occurred with the vicar or organist, they quietly disappeared in the middle of the night and little or nothing was ever said.

Well, the times are changing. Thank God. And in not a few places clergy, organists, singers, artists, poets and those working in the liturgical arts are wanting to live and work in situations that allow them more wholeness. And in their search for wholeness gay people are increasingly seeing the church as "the enemy" which they will not continue to support.

Some will continue to reconcile their professional work for the Church as a job which they do for pay and nothing more. But most, like myself, prefer to identify themselves with the on-going life of their parish and know that we are involved in an important pastoral ministry in Christ through the arts. Many have and will continue to work far in excess of the pay they receive. They will continue to invest immense personal time and energy. And these "ministers" need to be ministered to. They need the support of a loving and reconciling community which can help them grow in wholeness in all aspects of their lives, so that they too can know life in its fullness as Christ offers it. ■

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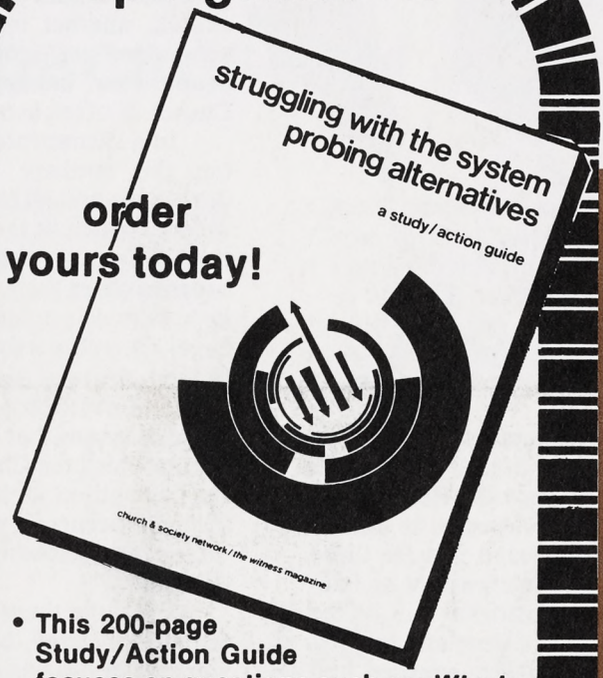
Up Against It?



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Wherein Lies Authority?
Marion Kelleran

Racism in the Church

Louie Crew
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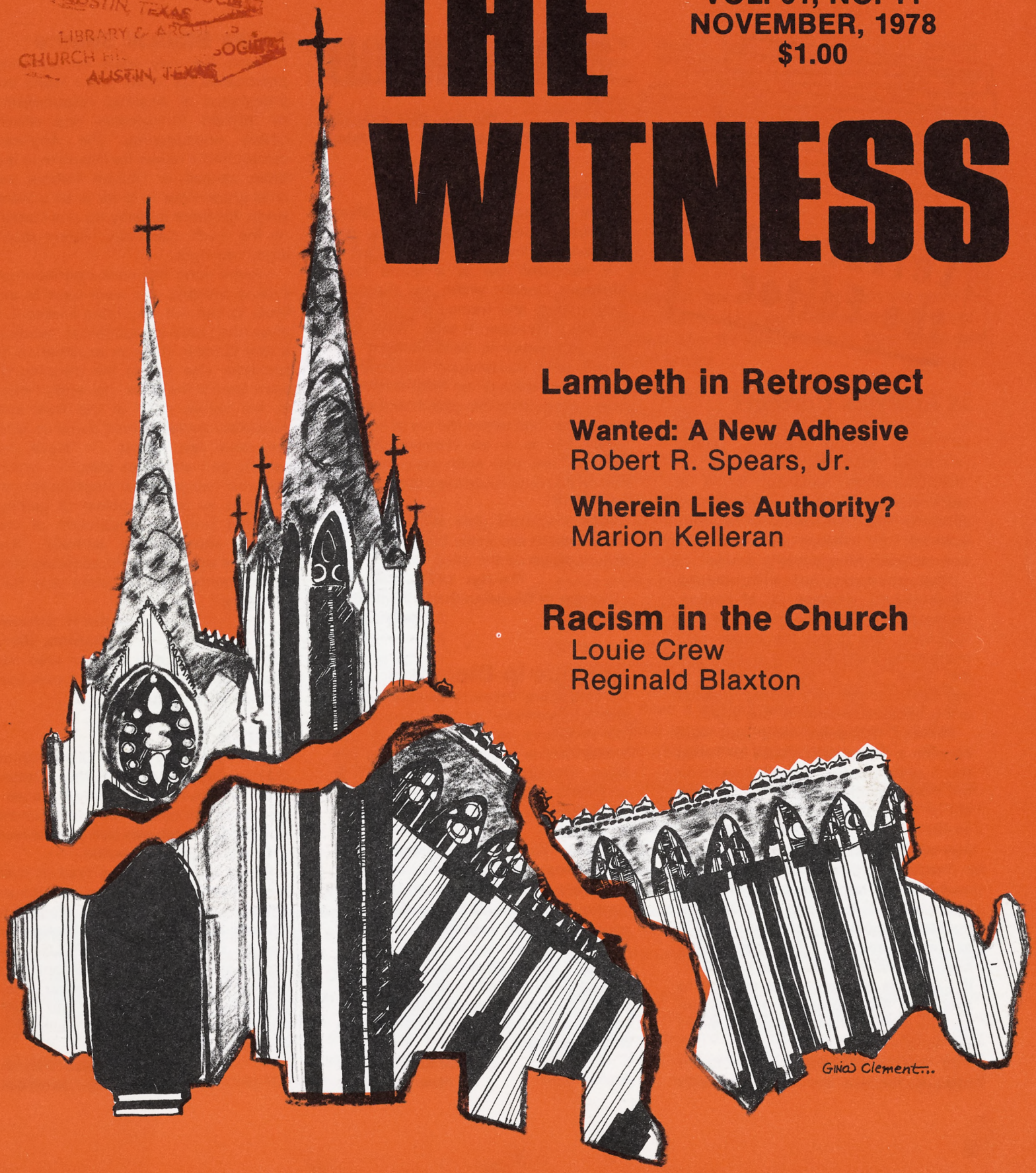

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Is Analysis Correct?

In "Analyzing our Horror," (August WITNESS) Bishop Robert L. DeWitt concludes that the elimination of "institutionalized violence" as it is manifested in Rhodesia, would in turn eliminate "the inevitability of counter-violence" by African nationalists. I wonder if this idea is totally correct.

The necessity of eliminating "institutional" violence is, of course, unquestioned. But what produced that violence? Was it not the innate self-centeredness which infects us all? When the "outs" are in, the temptation to oppress becomes very strong. Uganda is a graphic illustration of this point.

Perhaps Rhodesia one day will become a democratic model for Africa much as Kenya. But that will depend on the motives of the leader. One can come out of the ranks of the oppressed with mixed ones. One is not born relatively free of sin because he is oppressed.

The bishop views the murder of a mother and her 3-year-old child as horrible, but he sees the "institutionalized" violence which provoked it as "more horrible." Tell that to the husband and father. In the eyes of God, if I may be presumptuous enough to speculate, the oppression of Ian Smith and the murder of the mother and infant are equally tragic.

At the bar of Judgment, I doubt seriously the plea "the devil made me do it" will get me very far. I don't think the cruelty of African nationalists will entirely be laid at the feet of the whites either.

The Rev. Paul Kendall
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Editorial First-Rate

I have just read your editorial entitled "Analyzing our Horror" and in my opinion, it is first-rate.

It reminded me of a quote from Abraham Lincoln which my daughter hand-copied and framed for me when she was a teenager. It says, "When you have succeeded in dehumanizing the Negro, when you have put him down to be but the beasts of the field; when you have extinguished his soul in this world and placed him where the ray of hope is blown out as in the darkness of the damned, are you quite sure that the demon you have roused will not turn and rend you?"

Alas, corporate guilt still lives even though there are times the flags try to deny it. Keep up the good work.

The Rev. Lex S. Mathews
Director of Christian Social Ministries
Raleigh, N.C.

Anxious to Dialogue

We here at the "Project on Women, Work and the Economy" of the Theology in the Americas were delighted to see Sheila Collins' article "Reclaiming the Bible Through Storytelling" in THE WITNESS (September). It is your type of audience with whom we are anxious to dialogue.

Thank you for advertising our filmstrip-cassette program "Come a Long Way To Stand Here." It is an excellent educational tool that some of your readers will want to use. I do want to correct some misinformation included in our advertising blurb. Our program was funded by Church Women United but not by the National YWCA. If you could indicate this correction we would be grateful.

Julia McComiskey
New York, N.Y.

Seeks Biblical Source

I found the July issue on authority provocative, as usual, and I found the articulation of Anglican responsibility by William Stringfellow and Alison Cheek encouraging. The Anglican cannot find a recipe for living life in the Bible, canons, or Church Fathers, yet must know these in order to be a living stone, for there is really no one Corner on the Truth. Can't say "Father said," ergo, I do right.

I found John Skinner's translation of Ezekiel brilliant, and went back to my Bible to find out why I had missed it. I often find I have missed things, needing a new context in life or explanation of someone else to get the meaning of some part of the Book. Yet when I went to the verses cited in the RSV and Jerusalem Bibles I didn't come up with the same last phrase — "leave the healthy and strong to play," — which was what had particular meaning for me. It seems to be a problem of getting meaning from the separation of the various sheep-related animals. The footnotes were of no help, speaking only of judgment. Might someone clear this up for me?

Douglas H. Schewe
Madison, Wisc.

(Editor's Note: John Skinner used the New English Bible for the translation referred to in his article).

Wants Out

I ordered a copy of the Study/Action Guide, *Struggling With the System, Probing Alternatives* mainly because I wanted to find out in which direction the Episcopal Church was going. I also read THE WITNESS for a period.

Based on what I have read in both these publications, I can no longer affiliate myself with the Episcopal Church. I feel that these publications as well as the direction of PECUSA are expounding social involvement and conforming to society rather than preaching the Gospel of Our Lord. Please remove me from all mailings of your trash.

Dale H. Swanson, Jr.
La Habra, Cal.

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THE WITNESS

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gift comes from you.

Probing Alternatives

Robert L. DeWitt

The Anglican bishops at Lambeth this past summer called upon leaders and governments of the world "to participate actively in the establishment of a new economic order aimed at securing fair prices for raw materials, maintaining fair prices for manufactured goods, and reversing the process by which the rich become richer and the poor poorer."

The Puebla Conference of the Roman Catholic bishops of Latin America was scheduled, until the untimely death of Pope John Paul, to be held in October. When the postponed meeting is held, it too will deal with an agenda very parallel: The response of the church to the clamoring crises produced by economic and political systems which are not functioning for the people they are meant to serve.

What leads these prelates from Latin America to this deep concern? What brings Anglican bishops from all quarters of the globe, including the quarter in which we live, to call for the establishment of a new economic order? Could it be the Gospel and the teachings of the historic Christian faith? They seem to think so.

Then what of the insistent claim — heard particularly in our time and in our country — that Jesus was not a political agitator, that he did not espouse any particular political or economic system? New Testament scholars seem in agreement that Jesus was not a Marxist, not a socialist, nor a capitalist. He was about something different. His sole and central concern was to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of love, based on the infinite importance of every person. God's eye is on the sparrow, he said. In that kingdom, there is an inexorable requirement for justice. Consequently, Christians must be against injustice in any form. They are to "make no peace with oppression," in the words of the Prayer Book. And, therefore, they must be against any economic or political system which is based on injustice, or assumes it, or promotes it.

By this standard, the economic system we have in this country, loosely called capitalism, stands indicted. Forty-four years ago William Spofford, then editor of THE WITNESS wrote:

> *"I have spent long hours with employers, decent men for the most part, who deplore conditions quite as much as the next man, but who insist, with many facts available to support their contention, that 'competition is so ruthless that my workers have to be treated this way if I am to stay in business.' And so I conclude that it is not bad men messing up a good system, but rather, even good men finding it utterly impossible to make a bad system work. And so I say, because I believe in God, that all this must be changed. The Christian church cannot allow man to be treated as an instrument . . . There is but one solution: the recognition of the Christian doctrine that goods should be made for man and not man for goods. We must have a system whereby the goods we can produce in such abundance are distributed among the people that need them . . ."*

Myriad changes in production, distribution, technology and corporate structure have taken place since those words were written, but unemployment, inflation, poverty, and the concomitants of hunger, crime, disease are still endemic. And the rich become richer and the poor poorer. Forty-four years later, it seems that the Anglican bishops are drawing the same conclusion as Spofford, and from the same biblical base, and are urging that we make no peace with those oppressions.

Jesus did not espouse any particular political system — except one which treats all people with the dignity they deserve. As Christians, we are being called to "participate actively in the establishment of a new economic order . . ." ■

Wanted: A New Adhesive

by Robert R. Spears, Jr.

Unless a new adhesive is discovered and applied, the Anglican Communion is going to come unglued. That's the single most important finding of the Lambeth Conference, although no resolution says so. The discovery of this hard truth came in a number of other ways.

To start with, the appearance of the assembly, just the plain physical look of Lambeth as it sat in plenary session or marched in procession, conveyed a new situation. By their numbers and actions, Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Polynesians and Orientals in the ranks of bishops demonstrated this was a post-empire gathering; the colonial day was over and gone. While the Whites who reflect the Communion's Anglo-Saxon roots were still in the majority, the peoples of Africa and Asia, of Pacific and Latin America islands, and the minority populations of western countries were more fully represented by bishops than they had ever been previously. This Anglican conference, with the fruits of the "African revival" represented by large numbers of senior and younger bishops who are natives of Africa but missionaries for the world, looked less like the Church of

The Rt. Rev. Robert R. Spears, Jr., bishop of the Diocese of Rochester, is presently serving as chairperson of the Joint Commission on the Church and Health and Human Affairs.

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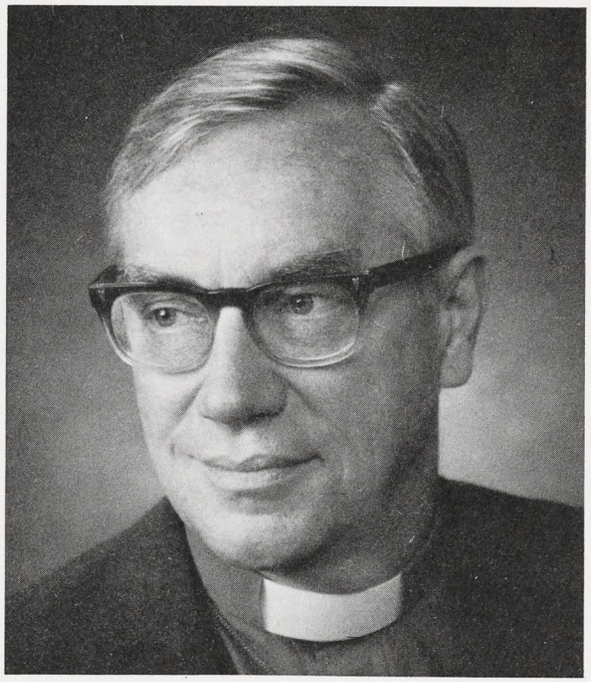

Robert R. Spears, Jr.

England and more like the multi-national assembly which, in fact, it was.

The implication of this was not so immediately apparent, but when the many references to freedom, which appear in working papers, section discussion and resolutions, are noted, the right to self-determination and free exercise of decision is seen as the most valued right of all. No Province, on any issue, wishes any more to be told what it must think or do, and even the most gracious and affectionate help is rejected if it is attached to any measure of control. Independence has dissolved the old colonial glue, which seems to have been more the product of an *imposed* culture than any other single thing.

Another unifying factor, which the Anglican Communion counts on and which was a by-product of imposed culture, was the use of one Book of Common Prayer. This meant in fact the practice of liturgical uniformity. The effect of recent and continuing liturgical renewal is to eliminate one uniform Book of Common Prayer. This is probably the inevitable result of paying respectful attention to the linguistic and cultural context in which a rite is to be used. The variations are not great and the rites of the separate Provinces are clearly the children of the same liturgical parents. But liturgical diversity, itself a proper and valued development, removes another of those bonds of uniformity once cherished. As in the world-wide Roman Catholic Communion, which can no longer claim the uniformity of Latin, the new liturgical results can be treasured for many reasons, but not as a method of producing identical worship everywhere.

So, two parts of the old Anglican structure, colonialism and liturgical uniformity, have disappeared, never to return. One other tie that still binds is also threatened, and Lambeth made a valiant effort to retain it. This is the acceptance of ordinations done in one Province (or, even, in Canada and the U.S.A. in one diocese) by all the others. Some years ago it was the entrance into new and organic ecumenical unions which threatened this principle of uniform acceptance of ordinations. It took the Church of South India 30 years (1947-1977) to have its unified ministry accepted throughout the Anglican Communion. That battle seems now to be over not just for the Church in South India but for similar unions elsewhere. But the division over the ordination of women as priests has raised the same issue with uncertain results to date.

What the bishops did at Lambeth about the matter of women functioning as priests, now, in parts of the Anglican Communion, and being firmly resisted in other parts, now,

was to buy time and hope that reason will yet overtake the resisters. Those among the Provinces who already have women priests made it clear enough that this ministry is as valid and as valued as any others, and that there will be no reversal of policy or decision. That leaves the rest to decide whether this witness will be heard and this example followed, in due course (overly due, probably), or whether they, too, will ultimately withdraw from the association of Anglican independent Provinces. Lambeth 1978 pledged not to scold, threaten, or interfere while the Provinces decide whether and when to come to uniformity of practice and acceptance, and to help one another when such help is asked for. But, meantime, the glue of uniformity of orders is gone; women who are duly ordained as priests in their resident dioceses in accordance with duly-established diocesan and episcopal procedure and action, cannot be certain about where else in the Anglican Church, including the diocese next door, their orders will be recognized and accepted.

Three, therefore, of the most powerful adhesives of the Anglican Communion were found to be missing in this 11th Lambeth Conference. Colonialism is no more, and the control which existed in the relationship of empire (political or economic or both) is gone with the system. It will not return.

The liturgical uniformity which had long ago begun to disappear under obedience to the principle of worship offered in the language of the worshipper, now, under the pressure of the liturgical renewal movement in all parts of the world, has taken the first steps down the rich variety of paths open to the Christian liturgist. In another 25 years it may be impossible to claim even a common skeletal structure for the rites of Anglican Provinces. Indeed, some of them may be using a common liturgy with other churches as ecumenical exploration and activity continue.

The acceptance of ordinations among the churches of the Anglican family becomes a more crucial issue than it may have seemed. Much attention has been given to the matter of conscience, and to the importance of free exercise of conscience as persons and ecclesiastical units relate to one another. Unfortunately, not enough attention has been paid to the necessity of conscience being fully informed in its exercise, or to the corporate consequences of the individual exercise of conscience. It is still not recognized, for instance, that separation is a justifiable and honorable outcome of the exercise of conscience, especially in the kind of voluntary association which the Church always represents. However this still active struggle comes out, for the moment ordinations to the priesthood are not uniformly acceptable throughout the Anglican Communion. Another formerly unifying principle is not operating.

What hope is there of finding other ways of preserving the "Anglican" community? The personal relationship among bishops which was so valuable a part of the Lambeth experience can hardly be trusted as glue since it is hard to establish and maintain, and since it depends on the same people remaining in their present posts. The office of bishop will remain, but the occupants change too often to be heavily relied upon to hold together long-term associations among dioceses. The same objection can be made of international assemblies of Provincial representatives; large gatherings of laity and clergy are too expensive for frequent meeting and too cumbersome for tactical and strategic decision-making. Lambeth Conferences, Anglican Congresses, Anglican Consultative Councils, meetings of Primates, Partners in Mission Consultations — all these may play a part in the actual formulation of policy which is the common program of the Anglican Communion. But none of these structures will have life and purpose without the discovery of a more essential reason for the existence of Anglicanism itself as part of Christendom.

Perhaps that reason for being will emerge as the Anglican churches address themselves to the challenging and hopeful series of questions posed by Archbishop Ted Scott of Canada in his address at Lambeth on the future of the Anglican Communion. His suggestion was that we recognize that the future relationship of our respective Provinces is being forged, or neglected, by our present decisions, and that we focus on such questions as these:

Are we now engaged in discovering the resources which will enable and motivate us for ministry to this world, the one in which we now live and work.

Are we able to face the realities of racism and brutality and greed in this world and still respond creatively?

Have we found a basis other than habit for community?

Have we found ways of upholding basic Christian values and standards without condemnation or arrogance?

Can we respond to others' needs because we see and understand those needs and the persons who have them?

Do we find the resources which enable us to remain faithful when there are no immediate answers?

That series of questions reveals a desire to face the world as it is, to engage in ministry in that world and not some other, and to build for the future on the basis of present relationships and realities.

Should it develop that enough persons share that kind of hope and motivation, the new glue for Anglican identity and relationship may emerge. ■

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Lambeth Pastoral Calls For New Economic Order

The following is an excerpt from the final section of the pastoral letter issued by the Anglican bishops at Lambeth:

We believe that time is running out. Beneath all the choices lies the ultimate choice of life or death. We join with all men of goodwill in appealing that we shall choose life. We know that tasks and situations which to human view seem hopeless can, with the boundless resources of God's grace, be transformed.

We believe that a response needs to be made on three levels:

FIRST we appeal to leaders and governments of the world

1. to participate actively in the establishment of a new economic order aimed at securing fair prices for raw materials, maintaining fair prices for manufactured goods, and reversing the process by which the rich become richer and the poor poorer;
2. to consider seriously all efforts towards a peaceful settlement of international disputes;
3. to persist in the search for ways leading to progressive world disarmament, in particular limiting and reducing the production of, and commerce in, arms;
4. so to limit the development of nuclear energy that they guard against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, at the same time applying every effort to the development of alternative sources of energy;
5. aware that the world is one indivisible system in its operation, to provide that those whose lives are affected by global decisions should be heard in the formulation of policies;
6. to pay attention to human needs in the planning of cities, especially in those places where growing industrialisation brings people together in such numbers that human dignity is at risk;
7. to make provision for a new understanding of the place of work in the life of individuals. If the human race as a whole is to reassess its philosophy of economic growth in order to conserve our environment, we will have to find new ways of human fulfillment, paying as much attention to leisure as to paid employment. This needs re-education and a re-distribution of resources at national and international levels.

SECOND we call on the churches and in particular the Anglican Communion

1. to make provision locally to educate their membership into an understanding of these issues;
2. in the face of growing urbanization all over the world to make urgent provision for the training of lay and pastoral leadership in urban mission and to concentrate the use of their personnel and financial resources ecumenically in order to minister to the growing number of urban people with little hope or freedom of choice.

We recommend that greater attention be paid to the work already being done by agencies both within and outside the churches, that provision be made for communicating their findings in appropriate forms, and that greater use be made of the specialist skills of our lay members to inform the church's decision-making on social, economic and technological issues.

THIRD we call upon members to exercise their rights as citizens of their respective countries:

1. to create a moral climate which enables governments to act for the benefit of the world community rather than sectional interests;
2. in situations where the interests of minorities are in conflict with large scale development schemes to give consideration to the needs of persons rather than economic advantage;
3. to review their life-style and use of the world's resources so that the service and well-being of the whole human family comes before the enjoyment of over-indulgent forms of affluence.

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'Where Bishops Are . . .' Is *That* the Church?

by Marion Kelleran

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It's a truism that a bird's eye view of anything depends on the bird. Most comments on Lambeth will be made by bishops, a few by laymen, even fewer by laywomen. This is in the last category, with the accent on the first syllable — lay. I was at Lambeth 1978 because I was chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council, a by-product of Lambeth 1968. The Archbishop of Canterbury had invited eight members of the ACC Standing Committee to be full participants.

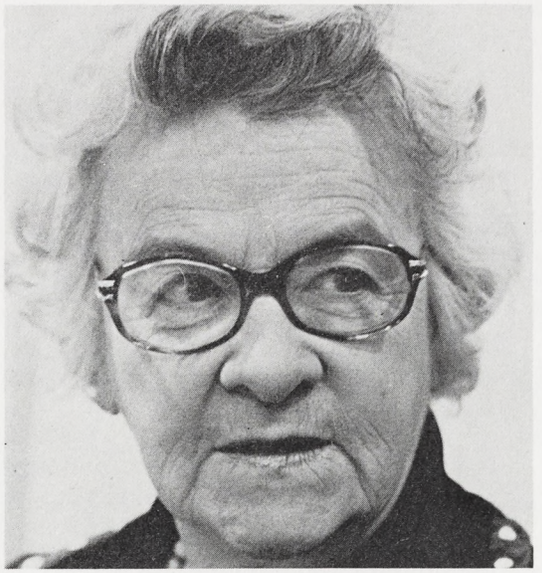
For this layperson, fully aware of the responsibility and honor of being there, it was an exhilarating and exhausting experience. And occasionally puzzling, as this article will indicate.

1. Is Lambeth necessary? Will it meet again?

There's a kind of double-talk about Lambeth Conferences, of which this was the 11th, the first having met only in 1867. The double-talk is that each Lambeth is wholly independent of any other, has no carry-over group except the churches which comprise the Anglican Communion. Yet in the debate over advising the Archbishop on whether or not to call another Lambeth Conference the forceful argument was that only a Lambeth could say, *"No more Lambeths."* Several resolutions this year restate verbatim resolutions of earlier Lambeths. Others register the emphatic conviction of '78 that there must be another not later than '88. There were suggestions of only a five-year period between conferences, though the final resolution added the words, "it need not be in England."

What Lambeth costs is staggering, and had it been in other than a university setting the costs would have been astronomical at present day hotel rates. Out of whose pockets did this money come? Is it worth it? Can the church afford it?

I am convinced that some world-wide meeting is essential for an incarnational church. I recognize that, to quote an esteemed friend, "Bishops have a right to meet as bishops." But I have to add that I am not sure that the Anglican Communion met this summer. Reared in the tradition of *"Ubi episcopus, ibi ecclesia,"* ("Where the bishop is, there is the church"), associated always with great bishops from my confirmation by Charles Henry Brent through a lifetime of incredible riches in Christ and his church, I am at home with the realities of episcopacy. But I confess that my theology of



Marion Kelleran

the church is such that *"Ubi episcopus, ibi ecclesia"* is a very partial truth. Is it heresy to say that where a faithful priest is, there is the church? Or that where a layperson ministers there is the church?

2. Has the Anglican Communion changed?

Indeed, the Anglican Communion *has* changed. No longer can one think of it as the British Comonwealth at prayer. Nor is it the Church of England's children coming home to Mother Church for advice and comfort. Lambeth '78 was diocesan bishops only: 46 from the Church of England; 89 Americans, the largest group though far from the largest church; 87 Africans, not a comparable figure as they were from many nations and churches. The center of Anglicanism today has moved from what we think of as Anglo-Saxon nations. Lambeth had no colonials; that is finally dead — though of economic neo-colonialism more later.

Archbishop William Temple once said something to the effect that "the business of the Anglican Communion is to go out of business," visualizing, as we all do, one church. While great strides have been taken in ecumenism, we are less sanguine about the immediacy of the one great church for

which we pray and work. Lambeth '78 took some positions which affirm its own witness. In the careful, irenic resolution on the Ordination of Women it noted that Rome, the Orthodox, the Old Catholics might well be disappointed by their action (which all three had officially disapproved in advance, the Orthodox in a monolithic way, Rome more equivocally in the Versailles statement), but that Anglicans affirm their witness to diversity in unity, the famed Anglican comprehensiveness. There is clearly now an Anglican way, not a careful Anglican via media. We may have come of age. It is even possible that the phrase "a bridge church" is less than felicitous as a description of today's Anglicanism.

The Anglican Communion is a loose federation — for some too loose — of autonomous churches. Their autonomy is confirmed both by what Lambeth did, (as in the affirmation of the rights of churches to make their own decisions in full recognition that all are affected by what any one church does, and that consultation with other churches is important) and by what it did not do.

3. Is the world in the church?

Some had thought that a residential conference might shut out the world, only to discover that in fact they were living *with* the world. Newspaper/media problems were incarnated in Rhodesian bishops or Ugandans or South Africans or Taiwanese. Politically exiled bishops were present, and Burmese and Chinese People's Republic bishops were absent. All sides of the vexed problems of multinational corporations were present, and the New International Economic Order had to be considered. Human rights were no abstraction, nor apartheid a far off mystery. Bishops who knew in their flesh what it is to live in a police state under repressive governments or with suspended civil rights were a substantial group. A resolution on violence, which Lambeth deplores and denies as an instrument of civil action, passed easily, though it contains the assurance that "should violence become necessary" we will not desert our brethren caught in its tragic inevitability. The resolution on public ministry of a bishop might have raised objections in an earlier conference. Not now. The church has subtly passed from being seen as a bastion of privilege to a defender of the poor, the oppressed, and the voiceless.

The Africans prepared a human rights statement, courageous and costly. Lambeth made it its own, fully conscious that the human rights battle is on *every* continent and has to be fought and refought.

4. Wherein lies authority in Anglicanism?

Lambeth 1968, where a strong current of this-has-to-be-the-last-Lambeth apparently prevailed, set up a continuing group subject to the approval of the 24 autonomous churches, which avoids some of the Lambeth problems — too large, too infrequent, too costly, too unrepresentative of the total church. This alternative was the Anglican Consultative Council. Its meetings were to be at two to three year intervals, its members elected representatives of the autonomous churches, including bishops, priests, laity. Clear terms of reference set forth its activities. The member churches voted for the ACC, its first meeting was in 1971 (Limuru), followed by Dublin in 1973 and Trinidad in 1976. Its next meeting will be in Canada in May, 1979.

Its function, like Lambeth's, is consultative, as its name implies. Its president is always the Archbishop of Canterbury. Its chair, elected by the ACC itself, has been laypersons, first an African, at present this American. (In a lifetime of experiences in the church, the ACC has been the most mind-stretching, Spirit-filled, Gospel-confronting I have known.)

Many resolutions presented to Lambeth 1978 read "to be referred to the ACC for action." Almost all of them were changed to "referred to the committee of Primates." (Primates are the heads of the constituent churches such as the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States).

Occasionally the change was prefaced by the comment that the ACC was "too small" for this important action. Too *small?* We are 50-60, the Primates' Committee (a new concept) will be 24. But we are not all bishops. Wow. That hurts! Do they mean "too many small people" when they say "too small?" All right, I'm prejudiced; what *do* they mean?

This layperson wonders what happened to the 1968 Lambeth Resolution 26: No decision will be taken without consulting laity. The reversion to dependence on primates alone is to me very bad news. It reached its nadir in a resolution ending "referred to the committee of Primates, who should consult their episcopates." Archbishop Ted Scott of Canada rose to say that he would want to consult informed laity and clergy and thought the resolution should say so. He did not prevail.

This appeal to authority is common in our culture and in the church. I was amazed to find it in a group of leaders. It was remarkably general. Resolutions now provide for a meeting of Primates not less than every two years, with consultation with the ACC provided for. There is strong feeling that we need more central power, that a more active secretariat (therefore larger) must inevitably develop.

Canterbury produced a helpful statement on authority, a kind of guideline, which tended to satisfy the Conference. But enough conversation continued to make one realize that freedom has its perils. Lambeth 1978 proved that freedom sometimes even threatens bishops. ■

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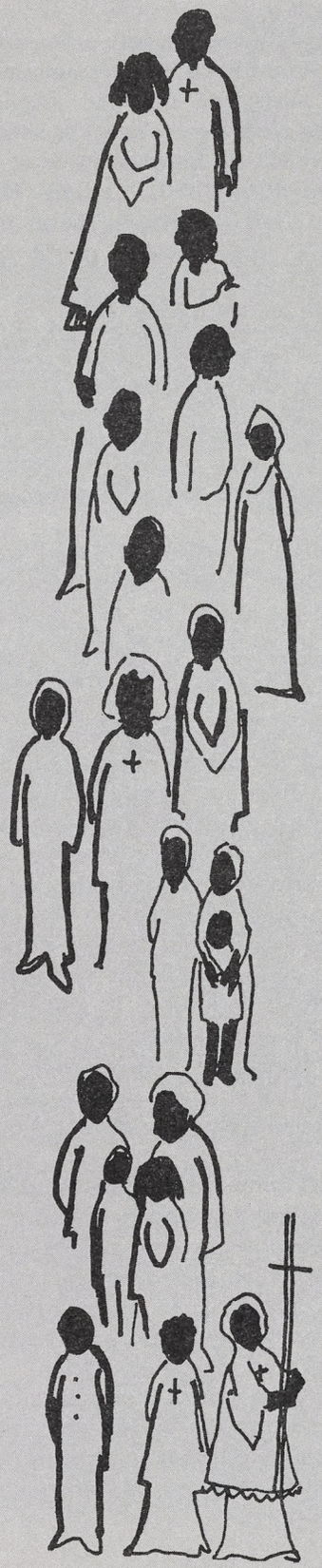

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Absalom Jones/Alexander Crummell/W.E.B. DuBois

Lessons From a Shabby Histo

As a black seminarian, I was presumably trained to follow, indeed, to pursue the One who is the truth. Seminary should be a place in which men and women preparing for the ministry learn to appreciate the difference between partial perceptions of truth and the deliberate telling of half truths.

But let's take the story of Absalom Jones, black priest of the church. Contrary to the biographical notes in *Revised Lesser Feasts and Fasts,* one of the guides to the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church, my brother Absalom was not simply a former slave who suddenly found himself with a desire to be a priest. Neither is Absalom Jones' novel status " . . . the just black who" the most compelling reason that he and others of his race be included in the liturgical calendar.

Absalom's story and the story of his friend and colleague Richard Allen go back to the year 1787:

"Both these men worshipped at St. George's Methodist Church, then at 4th and Vine Streets in Philadelphia. For years they had been made welcome, but as gradual emancipation progressed in Pennsylvania, black people, black Christians, became too numerous for St. George's. On Sunday morning during prayer, Jones and Allen were on their knees when they were told that they must get up and go to the gallery — which would come to be known as 'nigger heaven' — where hereafter black folk would worship. They refused to stir until the prayer was over, and then they got up and left the church. They never went back."

Reginald G. Blaxton is a recent graduate of Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge.

These are the roots of black Episcopalians in this country — one racist act in a Christian church in the city of brotherly love. W.E.B. DuBois, himself baptized a Christian at the font of St. Luke's Church, New Haven, put it most clearly many years later. He wrote:

"The excluded Negroes found themselves in a dilemma. They could do one of two things: They could ask to be admitted as a segregated group in some white organization, or they could form their own organization. It was an historic decision and they did both."

Richard Allen founded and became the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Absalom Jones formed St. Thomas' African Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, the first black parish in this country. But the story does not end there.

The Episcopal Church was faced with a novel situation. A group of black people wished to be admitted to the fellowship, the communion of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church. The Episcopalians of the Diocese of Pennsylvania with Bishop William White at their head did what white Christians have generally done in dealing with their black sisters and brothers. They blushed — and then passed the following resolution:

"It was moved and seconded that the knowledge of Greek and Latin languages, in the examination for Holy Orders of Absalom Jones, a black man belonging to the African Church of St. Thomas, be dispensed with agreeably to the canon made and provided. Resolved that the same be granted provided it is not to be understood to entitle the African Church to send a clergyman or deputies to the Convention or to

story

by Reginald G. Blaxton

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interfere with the general government of the Episcopal Church, this condition being made because of their peculiar circumstances at present."

The Episcopal community does not gather today simply to recall and celebrate the life and ministry of Absalom Jones. We gather to repent of the racism that has — from the beginning — played so great a part in the life of the Episcopal Church. Other stories could be told. Take Alexander Crummell, for example.

Crummell was baptized a Christian by the second black priest in this country, the Rev. Peter Williams, Jr., at the font of St. Phillip's Church, Harlem. Alexander wanted to be a priest so he applied for admission to the General Theological Seminary. And the good bishops and priests who ran the place followed the example set by their brethren in Philadelphia some years before. They blushed at the application and admitted Alexander to the General Seminary on three conditions.

First, Alexander would have to sit outside the door of the classrooms when lectures were given. Second, Alexander would not be able to eat in the refectory. Third, Alexander would have to receive the communion cup after everyone else had received.

When Alexander persisted in pursuing admission to the seminary, Bishop Orderdonk of New York terminated his candidacy for Holy Orders. But Alexander persevered. He was given a letter of introduction to Dr. Croswell, the first rector of the Church of the Advent, Boston, and was finally ordained by Bishop Griswald in what is now St. Paul's Cathedral. Alexander received his theological training at Andover Seminary, and in 1853 he took his bachelor's degree from Queens College, Cambridge.

The Episcopal Community does not gather today simply to recall the lives and ministries of men like the venerable Alexander Crummell. We gather to repent of the racism that has — from the beginning — played so great a part in the institutional life of the seminaries of the Episcopal Church.

And, then, again, there's a story of William Edward Burghardt DuBois, as I have said, baptized a Christian in an Episcopal Church. DuBois, the first black doctor of Harvard University and a pioneer in the field of sociology even before it was called by that name, was privileged to have a longer view of history than either Absalom or Alexander. He knew that unlike most denominations the Episcopal Church did not divide over the issue of slavery at the time of the Civil War. He knew that all the Southern bishops, and prominent clergy and laymen gathered at Sewanee, Tenn. in 1883 to formulate a canon that would legitimate racial segregation in the Episcopal Church. He even wrote a memorial of Crummell, so that Alexander's name and example might not be forgotten.

One thing DuBois could not understand: Why could not the good, apostolic bishops of the Episcopal Church bring themselves to condemn so simple a miscarriage of justice as lynching, which had become a national pastime at the turn of the century? DuBois, who had one of the finest intellects and prophetic voices in the history of this country, publicly cursed the House of Bishops, and left the church. He died in self-imposed exile in Ghana on the first day of the March on Washington in 1963.

The Episcopal community does not gather simply to remember the lives of all those human beings who have felt a fundamental contradiction between a belief in the love of God that is in Christ Jesus on the one hand, and a racist, self-serving church on the other. We gather to repent of the racism that has driven and continues to drive people out of the church's so-called communion.

Does anyone doubt — despite the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. and James Forman — that 11 a.m. on Sunday is not still the most segregated hour of American life? Can we learn anything from a church history that is so shabby as to be shameful? Is there anything of meaning in the lives of black men and women, clergy and laity, who have witnessed in times past to the reality of Christian love and the necessity of human suffering? Yes. Two things.

First, the God who brought the Hebrew people out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage, judges and redeems sinful lives — our lives. Salvation may be found in the church, but salvation is not of the church. The church had not the power to save in Absalom Jones' day, and it has not the power to save now. Rather, black people have understood the ancient wisdom of Israel: "When your child asks you in time to come, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances which the Lord our God has commanded you?' then you shall say to your child: 'We were Pharoah's slaves in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.' " (*Deut. 6:20*)

The ancient writer said nothing about apostolic succession. Nothing about styles of churchmanship. Nothing about theological education, or liturgical

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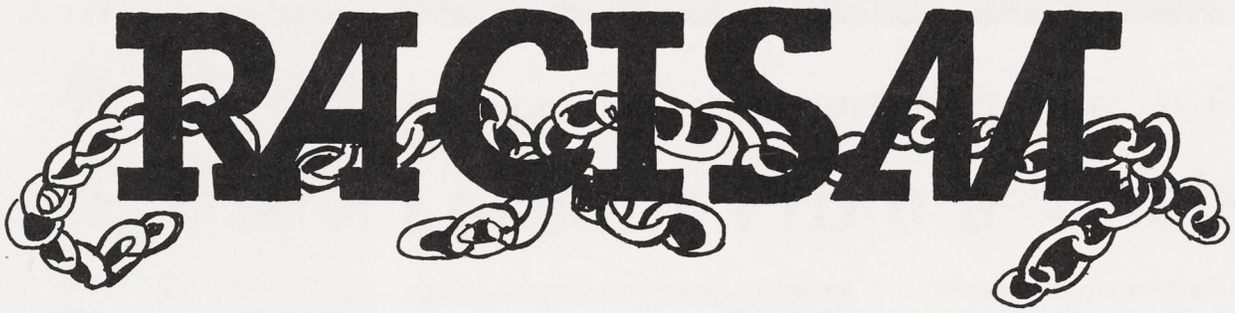

Alive and Well In the Episcopal Church

by Louie Crew

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- *"Bishop Walker is spooking the choir at the National Cathedral, so I worship elsewhere now."* (Senior aide in the U.S. Senate, in private conversation).
- *"Don't tell me about the challenge of our new black students. I call them 'gravel in the rough.' "* (An Episcopalian professor).
- *"Isn't it disappointing how middle class the blacks are!"* (A guest Anglican Marxist driving his new Volvo out of the parking lot of a black parish, with no evidence that the communicants there are any more fashion-conscious than the people leaving the nearby all-white parish who escape his notice as he drives past).

No amount of such real evidence of residual personal racism in the Episcopal Church in 1978 is likely to dispel the conviction of typical white communicants that racism is "something we solved back in the 1960s, except for a few unrepentant stragglers." Basically such folk feel that "we treat our Negroes well, certainly better than the Baptists, Methodists, or Presbyterians do."

Most of our members would be shocked to know that in reality ours is a black church which tolerates such arrogance in "its whites" much too passively. This year at Lambeth, for the first time bishops of color outnumbered their white brothers, even as lay membership in the Anglican Communion has been for several years predominately non-white. The fastest growing parts of our church are in Africa. Yet in most of the Episcopal Church, *we* means "whites." The church maintains that complexion most conspicuously when confronting our sisters and brothers in the greater Anglican Communion in that we have only two black members on the Executive Council's Standing Committee on National and World Mission. Mission.

"In our church, racism is still more important than people," charges the Rev. Frank Turner, chief staff person for the Episcopal Commission for Black Ministries. "Racism pervades the whole church, as in continued widespread segregation, in the deployment of clergy, in church investments and legislation. . . ."

The Rt. Rev. Quintin E. Primo, Jr., the black Suffragan Bishop of Chicago, agrees, especially on the bleakness of clergy deployment: "I haven't seen any changes in the last 15 years. Bishops still want a traditional church and will not reorder priorities, preferring to drag their feet on the social gospel. We must simply insist that all search committees consider candidates without regard to race. Black priests don't want to be circumscribed in black parishes."

Very tellingly, we don't even have a concept of "laity deployment." As Turner has observed: "Most whites seem to find it impossible to worship in black settings with black leadership, even when, as is often the case, we blacks are better trained and more professional in our services. I now say, 'To hell with it, why should I make all the adjustments to someone else's culture?' Besides, while facing this sick mess, my people have a real need for a separate parish in which we can create a healthy climate where all are accepted as human beings."

The Rev. Joseph Green, black rector of Grace Church, Norfolk, and member of the Executive Council, shares Turner's pessimism: "You can bat your head only so many times before sensibly you conclude, 'Why bother?' More and more I see my job as the reclamation of our own black young people, so many of whom have turned away from the church. Of course racism is a big

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Dr. Louie Crew is an English professor and the only white communicant at St. Luke's, Fort Valley, Ga. Along with Ernest Clay, he co-founded *Integrity*, the national organization of gay Episcopalians.

problem, but whites have got to change it!"

Facing such witness, our church is foolish to believe that all is really okay now that a white Mississippian (Most Rev. John Allin, the Presiding Bishop) and a black New Yorker (Dr. Charles Lawrence, President of the House of Deputies) share our titular leadership, rather like an ecclesiastical version of the Jimmy Carter-Andrew Young team in secular leadership. Certainly all is not yet reconciled, as Young demonstrated by inflaming White House liberals by his seemingly obvious comment that racism is still at the heart of American life.

"In our system, the church merely reflects the system that is its setting," says Ms. Ida Miller, a black communicant in the Diocese of Atlanta: "The church has not been as responsive as some other institutions. Certainly there have been some surface changes, as in blacks' greater access to the market place; but those changes seem to serve our exploitation as much as our enfranchisement. Church racism is a subtle thing, deeply and complexly interwoven with potentially good things, as in Charles Lawrence's presidency, despite the obvious tokenism."

Many observers have stressed that to understand the subtlety of racism, one must distinguish between the racial discrimination perpetrated by individuals and that perpetrated by institutions. Though more accessible for easy judgment, the white hooligan who shouts "Nigger!" is often much less villainous, because much less powerful, than the church commissioner who votes not to invest diocesan funds with minority businesses. "The resistance to such investment can so readily be justified as a 'purely business decision' that the racist consequences are often overlooked by the commissioner, who feels that the decision has protected the church's best interests," observes the Rev. Henry Mitchell, Assistant for Urban Affairs in the Diocese of Michigan.

Dr. Joseph A. Pelham's important report presented recently to the Urban Bishops' Coalition documents many patterns of discrimination preserved by our church nationally. The Report and Recommendation of the Institutional Racism Project of the Diocese of Southern Ohio (April, 1974) is an excellent model of such a study at the diocesan level. Hopefully an increasing number of such studies will minimize the present problem of what the Rev. Richard Kerr, white rector of a predominately black parish in Denver, calls "the simple lack of persons informed about issues at the core of the church's life, as well as the widespread preoccupation with issues of fundamentalism to the ignoring of other issues."

Nevertheless, an easy dichotomy between institutional and personal racism runs a risk of obscuring rather than clarifying some of the issues. Once one can feel personally uninvolved — "Oh, it's just the way things are" — a member of the white majority too easily feels exculpated while still protecting and enjoying all of the spoils of the racist system. Ultimately Christians can't really pass the buck to the church, because individual Christians *are* the church and hence are accomplices in any discriminatory practices perpetrated by the church's policies.

The Rev. Sanford D. Smith, Canon for Metropolitan Affairs in the Diocese of Chicago, urges that we "find the clue to (racism's) identity on the spiritual level of individuals — their consciousness level if you will — (rather) than looking for it in accusations of various institutions as being its parent." He amplifies: "After all, what is institutionalized on one level begins in a person's understanding, his attitudes at a single level. Racism is a malignancy that grows and takes on a life of its own, by default more than by design."

Certainly many of the urgent facts about racial inequity have long been documented: The problem is to get those who share in white privilege to feel a long-term responsibility to reverse those inequities. Guilt is not needed so much as amendment of life.

Dr. David Snider, a longtime documenter of discrimination, has reported: "Poverty and hunger do not fall equally upon all groups. For example, by the 1974 government standard 56% of all poor persons were white, but only 8.1% of all whites were poor. In contrast, 31.4% of all blacks were poor, 24.1% of all Americans of Spanish origin were poor . . . Over 45% of all native Americans were poor, and 90% of all native Americans on reservations were poor" (*Life & Work,* vol. 16, no. 3, December 1977).

Our courts would have us believe we cannot prove discrimination from such results, but only from the intentions of those in charge of society; and very conveniently a country's collective intentions are inaccessible to all but God. By contrast, the New Testament response to such inequity is much clearer: "Bear one another's burdens"; "Go sell all you have, give to the poor, and follow me"; "For as much as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me" . . .

For many people the church is important precisely because it offers a retreat from the world, a refuge from secular concerns. To them, the Gospel injunction to demonstrate our faith in our lives in the full community is a threat, unless it is watered down to mean that we should deliver baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas and should dump some now unfashionable items on the Goodwill people occasionally.

On the other hand, Christians who make a secular commitment often seem much more in touch with the world's greater need, as revealed in this excerpt from a personal letter to me by the Rev. Austin Ford, who runs Emmaus House in Atlanta's ghetto: "We are facing problems: for example, four of the Dawson Five, who were visiting in the apartment of their lawyer in a white neighborhood, were recently picked up in their lawyer's absence for no other reason than that they were the wrong color and their presence was unaccounted for. Also, the conduct of the police during a recent pro-marijuana demonstration in Atlanta was exceptional. They disguised themselves and apparently deliberately provoked incidents. . . ."

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Compare Ford's pungent grasp of reality with that of the narrative in *The Episcopalian* for November 1977 about the Cathedral of St. Philip, the world's largest Episcopal parish, which is less than two miles from Emmaus House: "Last May (1977), for example, a group of black and white women arrived. The ushers were apprehensive and ran to tell (The Rev. Judson) Child (then the canon, now Suffragan Bishop of Atlanta). But, Child says, some older people, who 'five years ago would have called the police, . . . helped them find places in the Prayer Book and Hymnal and chatted with them afterward. Part of it is the new South. It also reflects the nature of the community here.' "

One can't resist imagining the response at St. Philip's if four of the Dawson Five had showed up! When I explained to Canon John Porter, then also at the Cathedral, why this "progress" report was heinously offensive, he counseled that I needed to be more patient and to see that, limited as it might be, welcoming a few blacks at the Cathedral does represent progress. "We don't all live in a black community as you do, Louie," he said.

But we do! Not only is the Anglican Communion predominately black, so too, is the city of Atlanta. It is dangerous to use the church to narrow rather than to enlarge the "community" in which we live; thereby we risk the blasphemy of suggesting that Christ's Great Commission is in reality a charter for a private club.

A big issue obfuscated by the white *we* in the Episcopal Church is our defaulting in the mission to black Americans. Increasing numbers of black people are disillusioned with the fundamentalism of their youth and will likely turn away from organized religion altogether if we do not reach out to them with our particular understanding of Christ's love. Historically ECUSA has had a very definite mission with many other persons to preserve for Christ's service the lives and talents of those who are no longer nourished by their different traditions. I speak not of sneaky proselytizing that denigrates other traditions, but of efforts to enlist persons for whom those other traditions are no longer effective. If the Episcopal Church really cared about the souls of black folks, black folks would know it and would be here with us in much greater numbers.

The black leaders with whom I have talked assure me that if change is to come, it must come at the local levels. Bishop Primo reminded me that of the $800 million annually given in ECUSA parishes, only 3% ever reaches the Executive Council, so "the leadership for change will not come from 815; the leadership must be at the diocesan level." Dr. Charles Lawrence warned me that even diocesan leadership is often vitiated: "Although our church is 'Episcopal,' bishops have very little real authority over parishes, in clergy employment or otherwise." Yet most parishes I know about are still rejoicing that the bigots are no longer likely to call the police if a few blacks show up next Sunday; and almost everyone wishes the subject of racism would remain politely buried. ■

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renewal, or ecumenism. The ancient writer said: Tell your child about the God of the oppressed, and what that God has done.

Second, Christians are specifically called to make no peace with oppression. In an Anglican communion in which people of color now constitute a majority, we must oppose all actions which place artificial, arbitrary, power-motivated limitations on the freedom of the human being. It does not matter whether these limitations pass under the guise of "conscience" statements issued by the House of Bishops, or the less harmful but hardly less offensive singing of the 51st psalm, which limns the asinine desire to be washed whiter than snow.

My people because of their peculiar circumstances have not been — generally speaking — and I thank God for it — a theologically sophisticated people. They knew the bible; not Barth and not Tillich. They prayed and preached and sang and shouted inside and outside of the church in this wilderness called America. And sometime, somewhere along the way one of their number — surely a genius — left for posterity all the reason I've needed to remain a part of this church and seek ordination in it. They sang out of their suffering and pain. They sang out of their knowledge that racism has no place in the kingdom of God because in Jesus Christ God finally set captivity itself captive. They sang: "God may not come when you want Him, but He's right on time." ■

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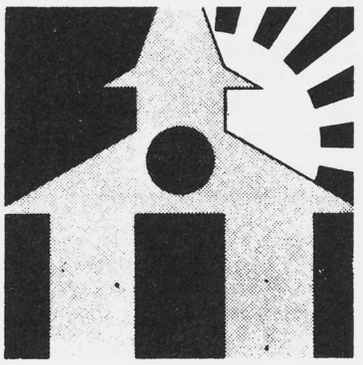
Switching Mentalities: From Campus to Parish

by John Crocker, Jr.



Before commenting on the differences between parish and college ministry it is important to say something about the similarities. In the first place, both ministries are carried out in the same culture and both are members of the same Body of Christ. They are, therefore, fundamentally one.

A lot could be said about the culture we live in, but one way to describe it in shorthand is to quote a passage from Thomas Merton:

> *There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist fighting for peace by non-violent methods most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything is to succumb to violence. More than that, it is cooperation in violence. The frenzy of the activist neutralizes his work for peace. It destroys his own inner capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of his own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.*

That describes the temptation not only of every college chaplain and parish priest but of every concerned lay man and woman. The same pressures work on people in the university and in our society at large.

Let me probe a bit deeper into this:

As aristocracy in our society has given way to meritocracy, more and more emphasis has been placed upon achievement, upon competence, and upon measuring human value in meritocratic terms.

A technological society, after all, needs technically competent people to service it. Education, especially higher education, has become technicalized to a frightening degree. The institutions of our society have become dedicated to the separation of winners from losers: Winners are useful and so have proven value, and losers don't; they are useless to a technical society and so are consigned to failure. Value has become largely technical and/or administrative. People have come to believe what society tells them: The winners are full of pride, the losers full of despair; both are hopelessly selfcentered, and neither able to imagine any other vision of themselves.

In a community like Princeton (as in Cambridge and in too much of our society) adults and children alike assume that they are, and are meant to be, winners. And, exactly like the Puritans who worked so hard to prove they were the saved, they work like crazy to prove it. In

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The Rev. John Crocker, Jr. was prominent in campus ministry for many years before assuming the post of rector of Trinity Church, Princeton, N.J., in September, 1977.

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school, in the university, in town; for the commuters off in New York and elsewhere; for women, both working and volunteering — for everyone, it's run, run, run.

To some degree it is the same in the church. Activity abounds to gain status and to prove "I'm okay." People are burning themselves out with good works.

And as a new rector, I'm having real trouble not just joining the rat race!

Now, the church is intended to stand four-square against all of this. Our doctrine of Baptism says that however important my family name, my nationality, my sex, my intelligence, my education, my success or failure, my attractiveness, my wealth or lack of it, my religion, my special gifts and talents, my achievements, and a thousand other things which make me unique and separate me from other people — all of these are less important than the one thing which *unites* me with all other people; namely, that we are human beings and children of God, equally loved by God and therefore equally valuable. We are, then, baptized out of all the provincial, separating communities we may be a part of and into God's human race, the race for whom Christ died.

Baptism is the sacramental confirmation in the life of one person of what we Christians believe is true for all people everywhere, baptized or not. We are all God's children and God's love is the source of our value. The Church is there to affirm God's love as the basis of our value and merit, and to insist that ultimately all other bases are false. This is our job on college campuses, in parishes, and everywhere. The core of our witness lies in the Eucharist. A group of 25 students and faculty, gathered weekly in the M.I.T. Chapel to hear the Word of God and to make Eucharist, is constituted in exactly the same way and is doing exactly the same thing as a similar gathering at Episcopal Divinity School or in parishes or at Trinity Church, Princeton. To serve as priest, celebrant, confessor, dispenser of blessing, then, is essentially the same.

In this my job has not changed at all.

There are differences between the parish and college ministries, however. My hypothesis is this: The average parish, especially the suburban parish, provides a specialized sort of ministry in that it deals with people primarily in their personal family relations — as sons and daughters, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, lovers, divorcees, friends, enemies — and in trouble of one kind or another. It is a magnificent ministry in this general area, but in most cases it has almost no contact with the *work life* of its people.

In the parish this happens by the very nature of the situation and it is hard for clergy and people not to be carried along by it. The theology, ethics, and teaching of the Church are more easily and directly applicable, it seems, to personal relations than they are to social, institutional, and work relationships. This may be one important reason why parishes stick primarily to personal religion and shy away from social issues.

One reflection of this has been the involvement of women in parishes, because the women are, or have been, the ones at home, while the men are away at work, breadwinners, involved in institutional life, fulfilling roles in institutions and confronted continually with institutional decisions, grievances, and so on.

In my experience, the personal identity of men (and, I must add, of many professional women) is very much tied up in their work, and their self-esteem in their success or failure in work, often far more than with their families. I have known men who could handle divorce, suicide of children and the like (family tragedies of all sorts), much more easily than failure in their work, or being fired and living through the agonies of unemployment.

What I am suggesting, then, is that the parish on the whole deals with persons in their personal and family relations. When I was a college chaplain, while I was dealing with my share of those personal and family issues, the context was entirely different — not the home, but the work place — for students, and even more so for faculty. So a great deal of my pastoral ministry was concerned with issues having to do with their work.

My pastoral ministry was with professional men and women as related to their functions in institutions, and dealt, therefore, continually with institutional issues. This meant getting into social ethics: questions of power, of economics, and of politics. And more often than not, the pastoral issue concerned the tension between the demands of one's profession or institutional responsibility and personal commitments, whether religious or not. My contacts were people who knew that business and technology demand competition, competence, efficiency, success, and "winning" (usually at the expense of others who are less competent, or less successful, or less efficient), and yet who cared for persons and refused to see them destroyed in a system which, by definition, does not care. People who, though technical experts, nevertheless cared about justice, affirmed the reality of human freedom and dignity, and insisted on a technology, an economics, and a politics which behaved "as though people mattered."

The chaplain's job is to confront and probe these tensions, for these are the lay people with both the hearts and the heads, the expertise and the care, to help resolve some of our societal problems. Our parishes

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most often do not help here. They really cannot — which is one reason why the university ministry is so crucial.

There is a great story in Kazantzakis' spiritual autobiography, called *Report to Greco*. Father Joachim, a wild monk on Mount Patmos, tells of a dream he has had:

> *I saw myself as a great sage in Jerusalem. I could cure many different diseases, but first and foremost I was able to remove demons from the possessed. People brought patients to me from all over Palestine, and one day Mary the wife of Joseph arrived from Nazareth, bringing her 12-year-old son Jesus. Falling at my feet, she cried out tearfully, "O illustrious sage, take pity on me and heal my son. He has many demons inside him."*
>
> *I had the parents go outside. When I remained alone with Jesus, I caressed his hand and asked him, "What is the matter, my child? Where does it hurt?"*
>
> *"Here, here . . ." he replied, pointing to his heart.*
>
> *"And what's wrong with you?"*
>
> *"I can't sleep, eat, or work. I roam the streets, wrestling."*
>
> *"Who are you wrestling with?"*
>
> *"With God. Who else do you expect me to be wrestling with?"*
>
> *I kept him near me for a month, addressed him ever so gently, gave him herbs to make him sleep. I placed him in a carpenter's shop to learn a trade. We went out for walks together and I spoke to him about God, as though He were a friend and neighbor who came in the evening to sit with us on our doorstep and chat. There was nothing impressive or difficult about these talks. We spoke of the weather, of the wheatfields and vineyards, the young girls who went to the fountain . . .*
>
> *At the end of a month's time, Jesus was completely cured. He no longer wrestled with God; he had become a man like all other men. He departed for Galilee, and I learned afterwards that he had become a fine carpenter, the best in Nazareth. . .*
>
> *Do you understand? . . . Jesus was cured. Instead of saving the world, he became the best carpenter in Nazareth! . . .*

That, it seems to me, is one of the most subtle temptations we clergy face: to relieve the struggle when we should be nourishing it, helping people identify it for what it is, and "hang in" with conflict and make their *own* decisions. It is much easier to support people in becoming experts in narrow little worlds, to give up the cause of changing — let alone saving — the world.

And here I am talking especially to myself. In the university ministry it is much easier to avoid that mistake. In the parish we make it, and often do not know that we have done so. Or we never enter with our people into that agony which goes with moral scruples about their work.

In this respect, the move I have made is not insignificant. At M.I.T., Christianity had to be made relevant to the social, political and economic issues of power and its use; social ethics, therefore, was everyday business. In the Princetons of this country — the suburbs — Christianity's relevance is seen primarily in personal terms. Social, political, and economic issues tend to be passively avoided as not being a primary responsibility of the church. In one sense, the suburbs exist for many as a sanctuary from public, social and institutional issues. The latter are part of people's world of work. The two worlds of home and work are kept separate; for many, commuting by train or automobile guarantees the separation.

Yet there is a symbiotic relationship between the Princetons of this world and the Trentons, the New Yorks, the Newarks, the Camdens, and the Philadelphias. Princeton "causes" Trenton, and Trenton "causes" Princeton. The salvation of each is integrally tied up with the salvation of the other. A significant proportion of Trinity Parish knows this, so I see an exciting ministry ahead. Not with the students, or "in the streets," but learning to be an informed interpreter of what is going on "in the streets" and in the city, especially of the predicament of the poor and the oppressed. An interpreter to those in the parish who can help do something about that predicament and have learned that it is their Christian responsibility to do so.

Finally, there is another major difference between being chaplain at M.I.T. and rector of Trinity Church, Princeton, worth mentioning. In a real sense I have "moved across the street." At M.I.T. my job was to be a gadfly, a loyal subversive, engaged as a representative of the Church in a lover's quarrel with the university, always needling *the institution* to be more human and more fully its best self. Again and again I had to explain this function to troubled administrators and faculty who could not for the life of them understand why I did not see things from their point of view! "I'm not dean of this place," I would say. "My job is to be a chaplain and that is different." Now I am "across the street" running an institution, a rather large one as such institutions go, and I am now the one needing to be needled! ■

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In Memoriam: To Rafe, With Love

The 10¢ postcard read:

Ms. Suhor:

It is with regret that I inform you of Raphael Toth's death on Sept. 9 resulting from drowning. Mrs. Santini of St. Louis mentioned you as a friend. Rafe and I had been sharing an apartment here since we moved to Denver from Washington, D.C. on Sept. 1.

Bob Nedick

In shocked disbelief, I looked at the calendar. It was Oct. 2. The card had been forwarded to me by my mother in Louisiana. It had my name on it, but my parents' address, with the bottom line directed to *Anthony, N.D. 70122.* Somehow the zip code had carried it to my father, Anthony's, home in New Orleans. As my mother noted, it was a miracle that it had arrived at all. But Rafe was named after Raphael, an angel-messenger. And Rafe somehow wanted me to know he was dead.

My early efforts to contact the people who were closest to him drew blanks. His sister had moved and left no forwarding address; our mutual friend Mrs. Santini was not listed in the St. Louis directory, and I could not reach the Bob Nedick who had sent the card. I spent a tearful weekend mourning Rafe's death, and wondering why it was so important to me to know the details. In the end I discovered that I loved him because he needed me. And I never really knew how much I needed him to need me, or how great a part of love that can be.

Rafe lived on the edge of life — on the edge of his race, his sanity, his sexuality. Born of a black father and white Bohemian mother, he was a "child of love," put up for adoption through Catholic Charities. His mulatto bearing was a frequent factor in his non-acceptance by either race.

His sorties into and out of my life took dramatic forms. I first met Rafe in St. Louis where we were both working in a Catholic publishing house. He had been promoted from the mail order section and as elevator operator to the editorial department where he typed magazine articles and did general office work. It changed his self-image and he grew in confidence.

A religious and sensitive human being, Rafe would frequently serve the staff Mass at which most of us gathered daily and communed together. His friends at this time were mostly white. The fact that "black is beautiful" had not yet hit St. Louis in those days, and it was only later that his consciousness was raised to be proud of that part of his being. His remarkable black foster mother, now 96, had taken him from the adoption home and raised him as her own.

At the publishing house, Rafe became treasurer of the Credit Union and enlivened meetings by reporting long figures from memory. He began to study German with a colleague on staff, Mrs. Santini — who had once translated for Eisenhower at a DP camp in Munich. He became great friends with her and her husband, a Marquis who had lost his possessions during the War and had come to the States. Rafe loved the old man and would say the rosary with him during home visits when he fell ill, praying the Hail Mary's in English while the Marquis responded in his native tongue. It was the Marquis who, before his death, counseled Rafe that he should choose either the priesthood or the army as a career. Rafe chose the army.

On the edge of sanity: Rafe did his basic training in Louisiana and showed up one day on the steps of my parents' home in New Orleans. They invited him in to dinner and he was a frequent visitor and loyal friend.

When the army found out that Rafe had studied German, he was assigned to Germany. Mrs. Santini later told me that she had received a visit from a Government agent asking if Rafe were trustworthy and checking his credentials. He had volunteered for Vietnam. Rafe rarely spoke of Vietnam, but from what little he said we pieced together that he had been assigned to run secret missions. At one point he was listed missing in action. His party had been ambushed and all its members killed but Rafe, who played dead and lost his rifle and shoes. He wandered through the jungle for four days until a U.S. helicopter found him.

But it was too late. His mind had flipped, and he was never the same, mentally, again.

Throughout the weekend that I desperately tried to reach someone about Rafe's death, flashbacks kept recurring.

I remembered when I was in Washington and got a call from Rafe in a Veteran's Hospital some three hours away. He had had an accident and totaled his car. I went to visit him and drove him home after he had recovered. He did not drive for a long time after that, realizing he was on so many drugs that his judgment was impaired.

At one time Mrs. Santini estimated he was taking 28 pills. She wrote that if the

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by Mary Lou Suhor

army doctor didn't cut the intake she would expose him for using Rafe as a guinea pig. The medication was suddenly cut to four.

I remembered providing references in Washington so Rafe could get a job. He had been depressed and restless, but his spirits picked up when he was employed. The job was short-lived. Reprimanded one day for a small mistake by a superior, and always one inch from popping his cork, Rafe had thrown the accounting books he was working on to the floor and stormed out.

I remembered, too, writing a letter interceding for him when the Government wanted to cut off his disability pay, saying he was now mentally and physically fit for work.

There were long phone calls during this period, and long distance calls after I moved away with Rafe spinning out his troubles and always ending, "But things are going pretty good, I can't complain . . ."

Just for listening and being there, I was rewarded every year with flowers or candy on Valentine's Day, with a birthday remembrance, and a spiritual bouquet of Masses at Christmas.

On the edge of sexuality: As with the War, Rafe rarely spoke of his sex life. At mid-30's, he had not married. There were a series of male roommates, good friends, periods of living at the Y, and a frustrated attempt to marry a German woman with whom he had fallen in love. Somehow here too, he always seemed on the edge of happiness.

Then at the end of this summer came his last long distance phone call to me. He was moving to Denver and seemed ecstatic about it. "A new life," he said. He told Mrs. Santini he was "off to Denver, off to Paradise." Rafe had previously spent some time there when he was assigned to Fitzsimmons Hospital following his stint in Vietnam.

Finally I reached his roommate in Denver. He said Rafe and he had gone shopping at the Commissary and stocked the refrigerator, had seen to changing the car's license plates, had a beer and had gone for a swim in the apartment pool.

Never a good swimmer, Rafe somehow decided to head for the deep end. He went down just short of the diving board. By the time they retrieved him, his heart had stopped. But they got it going and he lingered in the hospital for three days . . . on the edge.

Bob told me that a large number of Rafe's black friends and white friends had turned out at the parish church in St. Louis for his funeral. His coffin was draped with the U.S. flag. Bob offered to send me a photo of Rafe, taken just before they went swimming.

He gave me Mrs. Santini's phone number and I mourned Rafe's passing in an hour's long distance call with her. We agreed to visit his grave together when I go to St. Louis for Thanksgiving.

This is written, with love, for Rafe and all who live "on the edge," and who are missed by those of us who receive 10¢ postcards announcing their death. It is written this month of November, of the "poor souls" in the Liturgy, but introduced gloriously by the Feast of All Saints.

(Some names of persons in the article above have been changed to respect their privacy. M.L.S.)

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CREDITS

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CETUS

I contemplate the flood, yet hope to hope
(A flickering lamp of sperm oil in the dark)
Yes, hope against the coming tidal wave,
While knowing how the scarcity of whales
Will make uncertain new supplies for lights.
The flame, now faltering, threatened by the gales
Of murky maledictions in the steep
And murderous wind, still makes its mark
On night, will not go out, but seeks to cope
With forces well beyond its power to stave.
I count on unseen whales in soundless flights
Through skies of silent canyons in the deep
To hold the precious fluid for our lights,
To help us to renew our hope to hope.

— Warren H. Davis, Jr.

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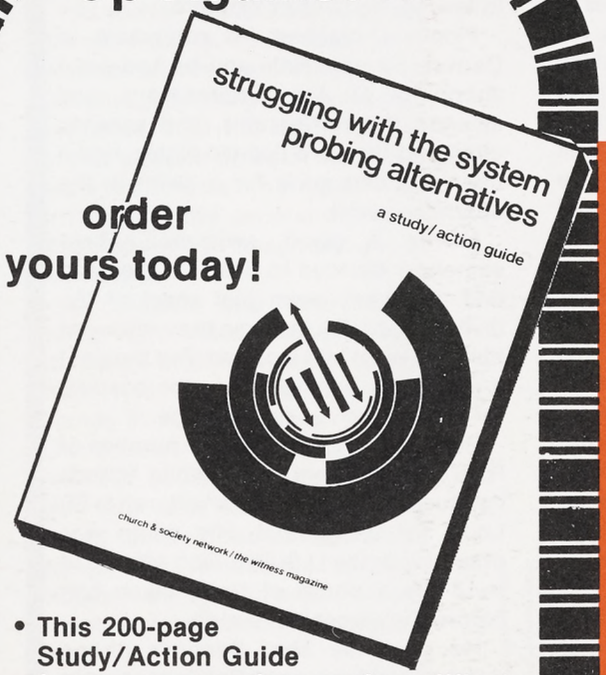
Up Against It?



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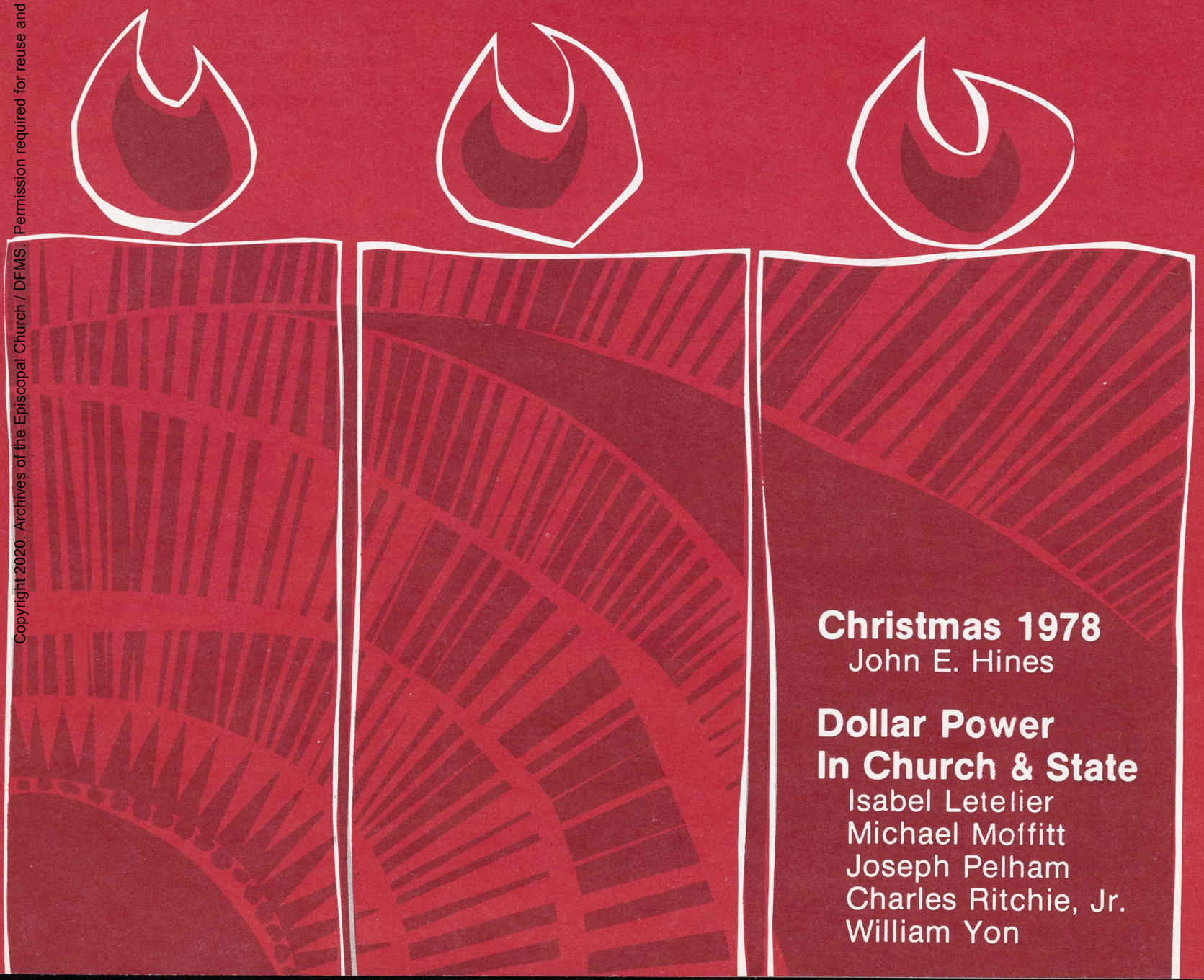

Christmas 1978
John E. Hines

Dollar Power In Church & State
Isabel Letelier
Michael Moffitt
Joseph Pelham
Charles Ritchie, Jr.
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ERA Brief Inadequate?

You can't vet every article but if any can be found wanting, that probably adversely impacts all others. I found the article on ERA, by your Board member Joan Howarth, wanting in that it failed even to mention what I believe probably to be the most crucial question, namely whether states which have already approved the amendment may withdraw the approval during the extended period. (September WITNESS).

Despite all the furor I doubt that there was ever much doubt that Congress would extend the period, as it did the other day. The real question and one that no lawyer or law student should fail to face is whether those states which have already approved could withdraw their approval during the extended period.

As you probably know, what Congress did — or perhaps it was only the Senate — was to extend the period with a specific priviso that no state could change its mind during the extended period. Four states have already acted to reverse their approvals.

If I had been advising the ERA people I would have urged them that the door should be kept open both ways, in their own long term interests. I don't want to debate the substantive point but I must say it seems to me grossly unfair, although very effective in view of the nature of our lobbying processes, to lock them up one by one and then move the artillery to the next one. I suspect a reaction against this may do ERA more harm than good and in any event the question is bound to reach the Supreme Court.

The purpose of this letter is simply to chide your young law student gently on what seems to me to be a rather bland and inadequate brief.

Carroll R. Wetzel, Esq.
Philadelphia, Pa.

P.S. If they can't make it under the Marquis of Queensbury Rules, they very likely may not make it at all, by a constitutional approach.

Ms. Howarth Replies

Rescission (a state's attempt to withdraw its ratification of an amendment) and extension (Congress' extension of the period in which states may ratify an amendment) are two separate issues. Contrary to Mr. Wetzel's understanding, the ERA Extension Resolution passed by Congress is completely silent on the question of rescission (as was I). Amendments specifically to allow rescission were defeated; no anti-rescission amendment was ever considered by ERA backers.

I feared that my goal of de-mystifying the ERA extension would be jeopardized if I added a discussion of this even thornier question, but as Mr. Wetzel suggests, recission is another important issue involving the ERA.

Extension is a new issue; rescission is not. The Supreme Court has held that rescission is a matter for Congress to decide. Congress has consistently taken the position (with the 14th, 15th, and 19th Amendments) that the constitution does not permit a state to rescind. This issue will be faced again by Congress when it must decide whether the 38 states have ratified. Meanwhile, anti-ERA forces have gone to the courts in an effort, so far unsuccessful, to have the rescission attempts of four states recognized. (They targeted 10 for rescission campaigns). The rescission attempt was vetoed in one of the four by the Lieutenant Governor, (a woman) during the Governor's absence. It does get thorny.

To say that the ERA extension vote was never in doubt is to make invisible (once again) the incredible achievements of women. Congress was turned around by the thousands of visitors, letters, phone calls, and telegrams that poured in. The ERA extension vote was a stunning upset victory, all the more impressive because the "artillery" was fired by groups like the National Organization for Women, the League of Women Voters, the YWCA, and the 90,000 who marched in July, none of whom are the traditional big guns in Washington. The ERA pressure has now returned to the unratified states. Until 38 are won, we live in an un-ratified country.

Joan Howarth
Los Angeles, Cal.

Re Male Resistance

Enclosed is a check for a subscription and also $6 more so you can send me individual issues from May through October. There seem to be articles in every one of those that I "ought" to read, so that really says something for your efforts at making the magazine relevant. I think you are really doing a good job and find most everything very provocative as I move deeper into thinking and doing in theological education.

This letter was prompted in part by my reading the Bob Martin - Beverly Harrison article, "Is Theological Education Good for any Woman's Health?" (September) and wondering what my own theological journey is and what "body of knowledge and experience" I bring through my teaching. Needless to say, teaching at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/ Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary and learning in theological schools (I'm also a doctoral candidate at Union Seminary) keeps one thinking, of necessity, about male resistance to women and theological education!

Sarah Bentley
New York, N.Y.

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gift comes from you.

Hope in a Handful of Dust

by John E. Hines

John E. Hines, our guest editorial writer for the December WITNESS, was presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church from 1965 until 1974.

If you have stood in "the field of the shepherds" and looked across at the expanse that separates it from the community of Bethlehem, you may have felt that, despite the recurring theme of "change" for the world of "now," very little of it has affected the area across which the shepherds gazed on the first Christmas morn.

St. Matthew's Gospel introduces the Christmas story in a simple, straightforward statement: *"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold there came wise men from the east . . ."* And with those words the image that comes to mind is that of a baby, in a crude shelter, in a time when kings were more a part of the political scenery, and the "wise men" moved across the landscape on camels or horses, which was top speed for travel in that era.

But Herod lived a long time ago. And even a word like "behold" sounds antiquated and unreal in our ears today. A world in which camels and horses were the speediest and most durable forms of transportation simply cannot keep pace with our world which measures distances in hours or moments, not miles any more. So that hearing described again the circumstances attending Jesus' birth seems to widen the time gap between Bethlehem, Judea, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, until we are brought up sharply by the imperviousness to change that seems to mark, at least, the physical characteristics of "the field of the shepherds," and the walls of Bethlehem.

What is being said in the vibrant Christmas story is that, in many respects, our world and the world of Herod and the innkeeper and the shepherds and the tax collectors are vastly different; not just two millenia and a dozen social revolutions apart. But what is also being said is the oft obscured fact that our world is painfully similar to that which saw the Living God incarnate in human flesh!

Specifically. Jesus was born into a land of conflict in which an uneasy peace was maintained more by the force of arms than by the reassuring relationships of mutual trust and good will. Is this a totally unfamiliar description of circumstances?

He was born into a world where success was measured by the affluence with which it was equated, an affluence which claimed the comfortable rooms in the inn while relegating the impoverished and the powerless to a cave which doubled as a stable. Can we

Continued on page 13

Who Knows What Good May Lurk in Bishops?

by Joseph A. Pelham

"After you deliberate and identify priorities, we'll be here and expecting to hear from you."

From testimony, Urban Bishops Public Hearing
Birmingham, December 1977

"Be our advocate" was a constant and continuing theme in testimony by victims of cities across the nation at public hearings sponsored this year by the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

Who knows what might happen if bishops of the church really become involved in advocacy?

As small a step as it might be, becoming an advocate for the cities could add a dimension to their way of "bishoping" which has been conspicuously absent to date. Urban bishops can be led into deep water by the very process of listening and making decisions about which of a multiplicity of issues and persons ought to become the focus of their advocacy.

It can also liberate them from their fear of involvement. It can introduce them to problems of which they have been unaware. It can bring them face to face with "the wretched of the cities" and with urban activists with whom they have had no previous experience. It can change the way they use their time. It can sharpen their skills of analysis, or drive them to develop further skills. It can confront them with the fact that by background, training and the demands placed upon them, they have not been prepared to be "advocates" of much beyond the institutional survival of the church.

It can even convince them that advocacy on behalf of the victims of the cities is not something which can simply be added onto everything else the church may be doing, but demands, in fact, a re-examination, critique and reassessment of everything else — a new set of priorities and a new ordering of the church's life.

Apparently the Urban Bishops' Coalition has launched out into such deep water, and that the Coalition is becoming

What Is the Urban Bishops' Coalition?

The Urban Bishops' Coalition, under the leadership of Bishop John T. Walker of Washington, D.C., includes more than 50 Episcopal bishops in whose dioceses are located most of the large and medium sized cities of the United States, as well as of Puerto Rico and Panama.

The Coalition surfaced at the 1976 General Convention in Minneapolis. At that time the UBC announced its intention to propose that half of the money to be raised in the church's $100 million Venture in Mission campaign be directed toward urban ministries.

Since its formation the Coalition has undertaken two major projects:

- A series of three Public Policy Institutes at the College of Preachers, Washington, D.C. Designed in cooperation with the Institute for Policy Studies, a Washington-based "think tank," the Institutes have introduced bishops, staff persons, clergy and laity to the way national public policies affect the welfare of the cities. The last of the three was oversubscribed.
- A series of seven public hearings at which

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a force to be reckoned with has surely occurred to the administration of the National Church.

It was reported that in the House of Bishops meeting recently, votes divided on most issues with some consistency, 60/40, with the latter figure representing the membership of the Coalition as a sizeable bloc. If this response runs true to form, Presiding Bishop John Allin and his staff and agents will move to reach out and claim for themselves the concerns of the Coalition, as has been done in the past in regard to women's issues and the social mission of the church. In the process, those concerns will be domesticated to proportions which the deeply conservative leadership of the National Church deems manageable. Without a staff of its own, and the permanency and continuity this could provide, the Coalition seems vulnerable to such manipulation.

The UBC members are, by and large, the most progressive men who sit in the House of Bishops. They are above all else, however, *bishops* — eager to play according to House rules, reluctant to exercise their muscle as a power bloc, hesitant, at least publicly, to tell it as it is, or perhaps even admit to themselves the way it is. Until the UBC decides that the reason it exists is *because* the kind of response which the crisis of the cities demands is not forthcoming through the National Church in the foreseeable future, its effectiveness will be severely impaired. Besides, rumors were rife at the House of Bishops meeting that the VIM program will produce only 25% of its original campaign goal.

New life surged through the UBC at its recent meeting when the newly created Policy and Action Committee nudged it into action. A paper prepared by Marcus Raskin, one of its members, reflected the PAC's discussion and suggested future courses of action. It declared:

"The judgment of the Committee is that the problems which beset society are integrally involved with religious institutions and the stance they take. Because of the power and comparative wealth of the Episcopal Church, it is integrally linked to these problems. They will continue to plague humankind, at least through the remainder of the 20th century.

"Therefore, a series of activities should now be undertaken by the church that are not *ad hoc* and open to fashion. They must be broad and long-term in concept. And they must be as much a part of the church's activities as prayer itself. This will require a newly defined relationship to civil and political authority which clarifies the church's special obligations for aiding and abetting humaneness, social justice and equity. Where necessary it will exercise its historic role in confronting state power when it is opposed to community and liberation."

Raskin's statement on behalf of the PAC indicated that its discussions had revolved around the four major issues which

testimony was solicited from victims of the crisis of the cities, and from those who work on their behalf. Hearings were held in Seattle, Birmingham, Newark, Chicago, Colon (Panama) and Washington, D.C., with an additional hearing on national issues in Washington.

The testimony of 150 persons at these Hearings, as well as implications for action were deliberated at a UBC meeting in March, 1978. The report which formed the basis of that deliberation, and actions to which UBC bishops committed themselves have now been published by Forward Movement under the title, *To Hear and To Heed.* The UBC bishops pledged to make available copies of it for study and discussion in their own dioceses.

Also authorized at this meeting was a Policy and Action Committee for the Coalition. It is now chaired by Bishop J. Brooke Mosley, who has been released from some of his duties as Assistant Bishop in Pennsylvania to give half-time to the work of the Committee.

Mosley has persuaded an impressive group of 15 persons, clerical and lay, Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians to be members of the PAC. They include: Rebecca Andrade, Tri-Citizens Union, Newark; the Rev. Craig Biddle, Richmond, Va.; Bishop John M. Burgess, professor, Yale-Berkeley Divinity School; Elvira Charles, Crossroads Urban Center, Salt Lake City; William Doubleday, National Gay Task Force; Steven Guerra, Chicago activist lawyer; Mattie Hopkins, public school teacher and Union of Black Episcopalians member, Chicago; John McKnight, Northwestern University; the Rev. Floyd James Naters-Gamarra, Republic of Panama; Marcus Raskin, Institute for Policy Studies; Bishop Francisco Reus-Froylan, Puerto Rico; Edward W. Rodman, assistant to the Bishop of Massachusetts; Harlan Stelmach, teacher and member of the Radical Religion Collective, Berkeley; the Rev. Tanya Vonnegut, Diocese of Indianapolis; and Odessa Woolfolk, Center for Urban Studies, University of Alabama.

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challenge modern times: economic justice and the common good, human rights and human dignity, the question of imperialism, and the issue of defense and nuclear war. It promised that the Coalition would be receiving action recommendations from the Committee in respect to each of these issues.

From this first glimpse of what its Policy and Action Committee is likely to produce, members of the Coalition should be prepared to consider the need to reorder the church's life and to act in a bold way with regard to the causal factors of the urban crisis.

Will the bishops hear, and if so, will they heed?

That constitutes a journey into unfamiliar territory for many members of the Coalition and, like their ancient Biblical forebears, they feel more comfortable at home.

When the Urban Bishops' Coalition gathered in Kansas City prior to the meeting of the full House of Bishops, it dealt with a modest agenda. Its decisions reflected both a good deal of caution and, underlying that caution, some uncertainty about what the coalition understands itself to be.

In organizational matters, UBC confronted the need to adopt a budget for ongoing work during the next two years. Since its formation, the Coalition has raised funds through contributions from member bishops, some of whom have access to considerable discretionary funds, many of whom do not; from grants received from three or four foundations, and from gifts contributed by a half dozen concerned individuals.

The figure set for the coming year was $182,000, with a 15% increase for inflation the following year. That represents, as one bishop who had hoped for somewhat bolder action commented, an amount less than the aggregate invested by parish churches throughout the country each year in altar flowers.

Sometime in the near future the Coalition will have to decide what claim, if any, the concerns so vividly presented in their Public Hearings may legitimately make on normal channels of diocesan or national program funding. If the bishops are to commit themselves to these concerns, as they said they would do earlier this year, much remains to be done to bring their dioceses on board, even in some instances in which diocesan interest was sparked by a local Public Hearing. In the absence of firm decisions on these two questions, the $182,000 budgeted for the next two years will be less than was spent during the preceding two.

Hesitancy was also expressed regarding staffing for the Coalition. A budget item for support services was retained, but with no commitment to the hiring of a permanent Executive Director.

The Coalition's work since 1976 has been accomplished largely on an *ad hoc* basis. Member bishops have made an in-kind contribution to the two projects which the Coalition has undertaken by releasing diocesan staff members to work for UBC. In other instances, short-term arrangements have been made through which specific projects such as the Public Hearings have been staffed. It is true, however, that without staff, neither the Public Policy Institutes nor the Public Hearings would have been possible. The question is not whether the Coalition needs staff or not, but whether the time has come for the Coalition to realize that it cannot respond adequately to the crisis of the cities on an *ad hoc* basis. Reluctance to face that realization may reveal, again, questions about the Coalition's self-understanding.

Yet the impact of the Coalition has already been felt on the full House of Bishops. That body at its meeting commended John Burt and other leaders of the Mahoning Valley Coalition for their leadership in one facet of the urban crisis and, in a move initiated at the UBC meeting, passed without dissent (and perhaps without full discussion of the meaning of what it was doing) a resolution urging President Carter to support a loan guarantee proposal which would enable the reopening of the Youngstown mill under community leadership. Bishop Burt himself attributes his involvement, now commended by the House of Bishops, to his participation in the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

The House of Bishops, also at the instigation of members of the Coalition, adopted as its own the Lambeth Conference's *Appeal to the World,* which calls for, among other things, a new economic order and a reversing of the process by which the rich become richer and the poor poorer. Such a call is hardly the stuff of which recent Pastoral Letters of the House of Bishops have been made!

However, the unanswered questions remain: How the Coalition understands itself, and the degree to which the UBC has become a body with a common belief about what it means to be a bishop called to respond to the crisis of the cities.

Throughout the Kansas City meeting, the attention of many of the bishops was diverted by concern about the score in the Red Sox and Yankees playoff. One bishop, arriving late for the Coalition meeting, discovered that it had already adjourned and its members had scattered to bars and lounges to watch the game. Perhaps this symbolizes that bishops are distracted men, and that those waiting to hear from them will have to wait a great deal longer. ■

Dean Joseph A. Pelham of the Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary is author of the deliberative document issuing from the Public Hearings sponsored by the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

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Why human rights activists are crying 'foul' to bold statements issued from the White House.

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U.S. Human Rights Record:

More Shadow Than Substance?

by Adam D. Finnerty

On a recent Saturday morning, I awoke early to the sound of a television set. I discovered in the next room an 8-year-old guest who was watching a cartoon about American history. Little smiling Pilgrims shook hands with little smiling Indians. Little pioneer wagons rolled happily across the Great Plains. And at one point a little smiling cowboy got hit by an arrow — but only in his 10-gallon hat. Blue, pink and green sections of the North American continent were miraculously transformed into portions of the U.S. polity, all without one shot being fired or one drop of blood spilled. In the background, a catchy ditty told how we Americans always needed elbow room, its lyrics extolling Manifest Destiny and the idea that one day we might just need to claim the moon.

I can remember similar happy portraits of U.S. history from my own grade-school years. The United States, we were told, was the Golden Door through which the wretched refuse of the world could enter and find happiness. We were the keepers of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution, and we reaped the joys of the free enterprise system. We maintained the "Arsenal of Democracy" and claimed the leadership of the "Free World."

All in all, it was a rosy picture of who we were as a people, and this image played an important role later in maintaining public support for a self-righteous foreign policy that backed brutal dictatorships in the Third World, and which led to the bombings and the burnings in Southeast Asia.

Today this rosy image is being revived under the guise of President Carter's "human rights" campaign. Once again, we Americans are being encouraged to think that we are better and wiser than we really are.

I must confess at the outset that I found President Carter's human rights campaign to be enormously refreshing. After Lyndon Johnson's "coonskin on the wall" approach to the war in Vietnam, and his invasion of the Dominican Republic; after Richard Nixon and his "withdrawal" from Vietnam while escalating the bombing; after Gerald Ford and his public justification of our "de-stabilization" program in Chile — Jimmy Carter has been a breath of fresh air.

But President Carter's human rights campaign has been accompanied by a surprising lack of candor. In his first two years in office, the President has chosen to mount a white horse on behalf of the American people. Armed with foreign aid cuts and plenty of media coverage, he has been busily pointing out the transgressions of others, while quietly ignoring our own.

Three dangers are inherent in President Carter's "white horse" approach to human rights. One is that, by focusing attention on the United States as a guarantor of others' rights, he detracts from the long and arduous task of developing international mechanisms for this work. A second is that by pursuing a policy of moral unilateralism — that is, setting this country up as a judge of behavior — he is continuing a pattern of U.S. intervention in the affairs of other nations. And third, he is contributing to the re-formation of illusions about ourselves as a people — and such illusions can be the basis of military adventures in the future.

To put it very bluntly, *the United States has been a major violator of human rights — both domestically and abroad* — and we need to be honest about our own record if we are now going to contribute to a new atmosphere.

During the first two years of the Carter Administration, it has become quite fashionable for Americans to give themselves verbal pats on the back over

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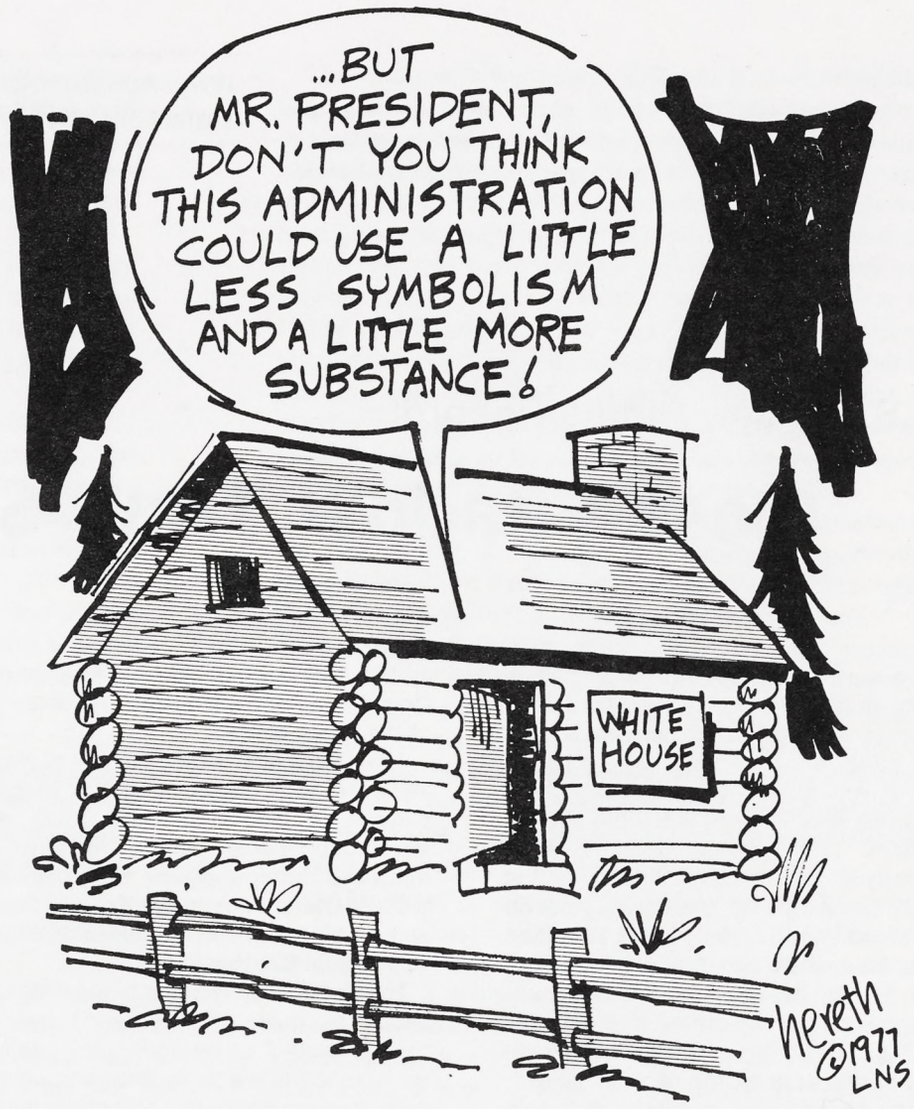
our wonderful record on human rights. As *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis put it, "he (President Carter) is giving not just Americans but people in the West generally a sense that their values are being asserted again, after years of silence in the face of tyranny and brutality." And Senator Daniel Moynihan, writing in *Commentary,* exclaimed, "what needs to be explained is not why the United States has raised this standard, but why it has taken so long."

Most of us know full well why the United States has taken so long to wax eloquent on the subject: For 14 years we supported torture, mass killings, political assassinations, napalm bombing, tiger cages, press censorship — all in the name of "freedom" for Vietnam.

But Vietnam is not the only foreign land in which the U.S. has abetted human rights violations. When the U.S.-trained and U.S.-supplied Chilean military took over and unleashed a program of terror, they did so against a clear background of official U.S. displeasure with the democratically-elected Allende regime — expressed through our attempts to hamstring Chile's economy in the international marketplace. And, as we later found out, our overt displeasure was matched by our covert funding of opposition groups and strikers.

Then there was Brazil. One of President Carter's early initiatives was to show the Administration's displeasure with the repressive military junta there. To this end, Rosalyn Carter and State Department Human Rights Secretary Patricia Derian each made trips to that country, protesting human rights violations, and the President himself met with six members of the opposition while he was in that country. But Jimmy Carter never mentioned that the U.S. Government had helped bring the generals to power in the first place.

Our Ambassador to Brazil, Lincoln Gordon, was in close touch with the military conspirators when they took power in 1964. In fact, he was personally in charge of "Project Brother Sam," an American plan to intervene with naval and airborne units if necessary in support of the military conspirators.



But the Brazilian military managed to take over without that boost from the U.S. Their junta was immediately recognized by our government, and plans for emergency and long-term economic aid were finalized — plans that had already been formulated by a special inter-agency task force, assembled prior to the coup.

These are just two of a very long list — the Philippines, South Korea, Iran, to name a few — of countries that are notorious for torture and other human rights violations, and whose rulers have been brought to power, or kept in power, with U.S. support.

Commenting on U.S.-Latin American policy in the Kissinger era, one career diplomat put it, "All (Kissinger) asked from the Latin Americans was that they be kept quiet so as not to interfere with his important matters. So he often backed the leaders who had the muscle to keep their people quiet."

If we add "maintaining a favorable investment climate," and "fighting Communism" to the desire to keep the people "quiet," then we have a pretty complete description of U.S. policy toward most of the Third World for the last 33 years.

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But what about conditions at home? Compared to other countries, isn't the U.S. record outstanding?

If we are frank about it, we can say that in our 200 years as a nation, the white people in the United States have treated the other white people fairly well. For non-whites the record has been close to abysmal.

Consider the history of Black Americans. In 1776, when the Declaration of Independence announced that "all men are created equal," it excluded the 500,000 black men and women who were held as slaves, and who represented one-sixth of the population. For the next 100 years, a goodly portion of the U.S. economy was dependent upon blacks who had been imported from Africa in a slave trade that claimed 5 million or more lives — an atrocity that ranks with those of Stalin or Hitler in the 20th century. And the succeeding patterns of racism and discrimination in the United States were as vicious as South Africa's *apartheid* policies are today.

Consider the history of the Native American population. White Americans are encouraged to accept a national self-image that is surprisingly similar to the smiling cowboy with the harmless arrow in his hat. We would like to think that the United States grew from 13 states to 50 through the simple efforts of little wagonloads of smiling pioneers, dancing and singing their way across the continent.

Of course, that's not how it happened. It happened through war and threat of war, and by systematically pushing the native population off its land and onto reservations.

Many human rights watchers see the Rev. Ben Chavis of the Wilmington 10 and Russell Means of the American Indian Movement as personifying the problem of human rights violations in this country. Circumstances surrounding their jailing are under investigation by Amnesty International and the National Council of Churches has taken up their causes.

The list of human rights violations could go on: the Palmer Raids of 1920, the Japanese-American internments of WWII, the McCarthy witch-hunts, the COINTELPRO activities of the FBI against civil rights, peace, ethnic and feminist activists. All of these should be a part of the sense of history that any American carries, in part so that we can keep a more watchful eye on our own government.

But the Carter Administration doesn't see itself as having this educational role. It prefers the "onward and upward" approach — or, when necessary, silence.

For example, Samuel Huntington, an advisor to the National Security Council, recently asserted that "the history of this century supports the proposition that the fortunes of liberty in the world are closely and positively associated with the exercise of American power in the world" — something that a Vietnamese or Brazilian or South Korean might find hard to swallow.

President Carter prefers the we're-getting-better-each-day portrayal:

> *Our Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights expressed a lofty standard of liberty and equality. But, in practice, these rights were enjoyed by only a small segment of our people. . . . Some of these hopes were 200 years in being realized. But ultimately these dreams have prevailed.*

We were promised more than this mild boosterism when Jimmy Carter was running for office. When campaigning in the fall of 1976, he was quick to mention our sorry history in Vietnam, our violations of the Cambodian frontier, CIA misconduct, and our attempt to oust Allende. As President, however, he finds that the risks of candor are many, and the rewards fewer.

In March of 1977, Brady Tyson, a member of the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. Human Rights Commission and a former missionary in Latin America, made the mistake of thinking that candor would carry over past the election. At a U.N. session on human rights violations in Chile, he shocked the representatives of other countries when he commented:

> *Our delegation would be less than candid and untrue to ourselves and our people if we did not express our profound regrets for the role some government officials, agencies and private groups played in the subversion of the previous democratically elected Chilean government . . .*

This was just what one might have hoped to hear from a new Administration determined to be honest about our past. But the State Department immediately repudiated the Tyson statement, and he was made to back down — much as happened with Ambassador Andrew Young when he remarked that there were "political prisoners" in the United States.

Young went on to say that he was referring especially to people who were in prison "much more because they are poor than because they are bad." He, too, was made to recant.

It is easy, I suppose, to forget the skeletons in our closet when one is launched upon a crusade to redeem the world from tyranny. And it is tempting to try to convince the American people, once again, that they are noble, selfless, valiant, and unstinting in their defense of freedom. But we are not all those wonderful things — at least not exclusively. Rather, we are a mixture of idealism and self-aggrandizement — which isn't all that different from other people in the world. And our human rights record is mixed, to say the least.

I think it would be appropriate for the President to get off his white horse. I do not begrudge him his attempt to set a new tone in our foreign policy, nor am I entirely critical of his public attempt to make human rights an international priority. There are many things that I can applaud. But when President Carter allows — nay, leads — us into seeing the world through red, white and blue lenses, then human rights activists need to cry "foul." Not to speak out, and in the strongest terms, can only lead us to future violations of what we supposedly hold most dear. ■

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The Case of Chile:

How Private Banks Foil Human Rights

Private U.S. banks have lent almost a billion dollars to prop up the Chilean economy at the very time U.S. government and multilateral loans to Chile were stopped because of continuing human rights violations. Chilean repression could continue only because the Chilean government did not need to depend upon U.S. government or international lending agencies for economic assistance.

Private multinational banks have, in effect, been financing the Pinochet dictatorship since 1976. While most governments have reduced or eliminated economic and military assitance to Chile because of the junta's human rights violations, the tremendous increase in private bank loans has made it possible for the junta to ignore international criticism and still have access to unlimited financial resources. Thus the lending operations of private multinational banks based in North America and Western Europe have directly circumvented the stated official policies of Chile's major creditors.

Most governments have reduced or eliminated assistance to Chile because of the junta's massive human rights violations. The Chilean junta has managed to ignore these pressures because private multinational banks were simultaneously funneling loans to Chile at unprecedented rates. These private bank loans have now far surpassed public assistance as Chile's major source of external financing. Utilizing new and previously unpublished data, we have demonstrated that the massive inflow of private bank loans since 1975 has made it possible for the junta to thumb its nose at the international human rights campaign and still receive massive inflows of resources from abroad.

In 1977, when "human rights" became the new watchword of U.S. foreign policy, more American dollars flowed to the Chilean government than ever before. There has been remarkably little discussion of the conflicts between the officially stated human rights policies of the U.S. government and the behavior of private U.S.-based corporations and banks. In June 1977, Pinochet rejected $27.5 million in U.S. economic assistance which the State Department temporarily held up to obtain human rights concessions, because he was confident that private banks would ultimately provide the loans.

- In 1976, when the U.S. Congress put a $27.5 million ceiling on future assistance to Chile, private bank loans to Chile increased more than 500 percent over the previous year to $520 million.
- Total private loans skyrocketed again to $858 million in 1977.
- In 1978, borrowing from private foreign sources will reach nearly $1 billion.
- U.S. private banks have provided $927 million of the approximately $1.5 billion of Chile's total private borrowing since 1973.
- In 1978, private creditors will account for over 90 percent of Chile's total borrowing.

Since the beginning of 1978, private multinational corporations, which have made few extensive direct investments in Chile since the coup, began to demonstrate renewed interest in Chilean investments. By far the largest investment in Chile since 1973 and certainly one of the largest in Chilean history, was Exxon's $107 million purchase last January of the state owned La Disputada copper mines. This investment came on the heels of Goodyear Tire's decision to purchase CORFOINSA for $36 million. The Exxon investment was significant not only because of the size of the transaction, but also because it may serve as an indication to other firms that the Chilean junta is now considered stable enough in financial circles to warrant large direct investments. Like the influx of private bank loans, increasing investments by multinational corporations will surely be exploited by the regime in its attempt to gain internal political legitimacy and diffuse international criticism of its human rights violations.

Until 1978, most multinational corporations which had projects approved by the Chilean government were still reluctant to commit funds. If a major foreign investment boom does come to Chile, it will likely be confined to the mining sector. Despite the fact that the government of Chile has done everything possible to attract foreign investment, including dropping out of the Andean Pact, the junta's policies of free trade virtually insure that a large part of

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by Isabel Letelier & Michael Moffitt

Chile's domestic market will be supplied by imports rather than local investment, and consequently, unemployment will remain at record levels.

What has clearly changed in Chile is the business climate. During the first three years of its existence, the junta was largely unable to attract private loans or investments. Now, however, private banks have lent the government enormous sums of money, suppliers credits have soared and multinational corporations have begun to return. According to U.S. Commerce Department figures, rates of return on U.S. investments in Chile have recovered from the low levels of 1974 and 1975 and now are comparable to rates of return in other Latin American countries. Chile has also sacrificed the welfare of its people and health of its industrial structure in order to give top priority to establishing its credit worthiness in private capital markets.

The improvement in the climate for foreign investors, however, should not be confused with a return to the prosperity and freedom which Chileans once enjoyed. Some observers have asserted that the slight recovery in Gross Domestic Product which occurred in 1977 is a sign that the economy is recovering from the deflationary policies of 1975-76 and that the economic recovery will hasten a return to democratic rule. But the kinds of economic policies which are the hallmarks of the Pinochet regime in Chile can only lead to a more rigid polarization of Chilean society. A small group of firms and individuals are in control of Chile's entire productive apparatus and the junta is attempting to auction the rest of the economy to foreign corporations. A tiny minority can avail themselves in conspicuous luxury consumption while the majority struggles to maintain a standard of living fit for human beings. Moreover, these acute social conditions are not the result of any preordained natural order, but are directly related to the policies of the military junta. That is the kind of economic strategy which requires a continuing *de jure* or *de facto* state of seige to exist.

Clearly, in the case of Chile, there is a direct conflict between the freedom of private enterprise and the international efforts to restore the human rights to a country

PETER BARRY CHOWKA

Michael Moffitt and Isabel Letelier at the grave of their murdered spouses.

In September 1976, the Washington, D.C. community was shocked by the assassination of Orlando Letelier, former Chilean ambassador to the United States, and a co-worker, Ronni Karpen Moffitt, when a bomb exploded in the car in which they were riding.

Ronni's husband, Michael, survived the explosion and has been working since with Letelier's widow, Isabel, to expose human rights violations in Chile.

Recently a U.S. Grand Jury indicted seven men in the murder case: three Chilean officials, including the former head of DINA, the Chilean secret police; and four right wing Cuban exiles. The indictment followed testimony by Michael Townley, who said that he had been hired as a DINA agent, assembled the bomb, and planted it under the car. Townley, an American, had lived in Chile since 1957 and has worked for the CIA.

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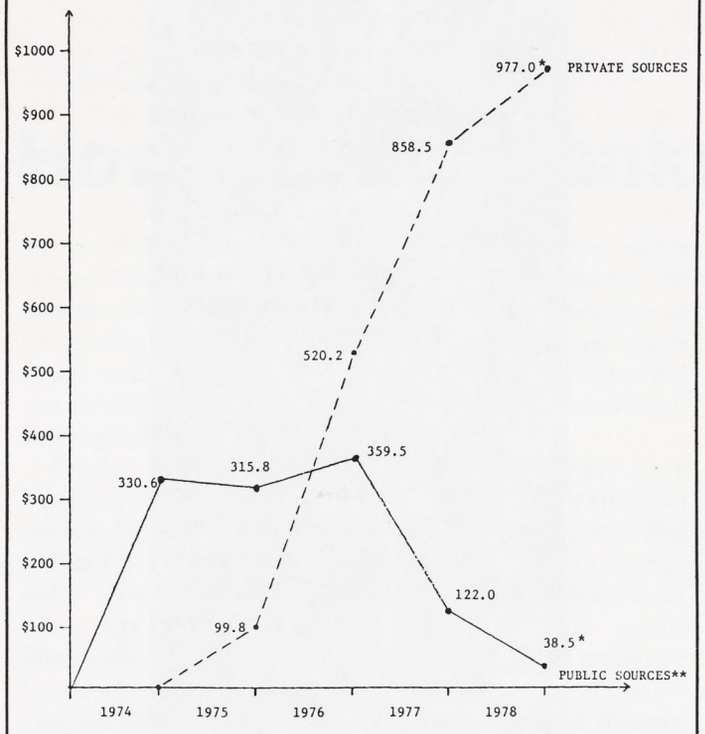
Chile's Foreign Borrowing, 1974-1978
(in millions of U.S. dollars)



*Projected.
**Public Sources include only U.S. bilateral aid, multi-lateral development assistance, and drawings on the resources of the IMF. Does not include non-U.S. bilateral assistance.

which enjoyed them for so long. It is a fact that in mid-1976, at a time when the human rights movement was becoming most effective in reducing the flow of resources to the junta, private banks began to loan on a large scale to the Chilean government—which gave the junta a green light to go on violating human rights. Freed from international pressure, Pinochet has acted with impunity, attempting to solidify and enhance his rule. While exercising all of the traditional levers which governments and international organizations have used effectively to influence the human rights situation in Chile, it has become necessary to broaden and deepen worldwide awareness of the unseemly flow of private dollars to finance the Chilean dictatorship with the same vigor. ■

(The above article was excerpted with permission from "Human Rights, Economic Aid & Private Banks: The Case of Chile," in the Chile Committee for Human Rights Newsletter. The complete newsletter can be ordered for 50¢ from the Chile Committee for Human Rights, 1901 Q St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.)

Human Rights Update

Congress has refused to extend human rights provisions to the U.S. Export-Import Bank and is balking at applying them to the International Monetary Fund. The Genocide Convention still has not received Senate approval, and the Human Rights Covenants languish in Committee. The U.S. still sends substantial military aid to repressive governments.

But we can identify certain hopeful signs:

President Carter, Patricia Derian, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and her staff continue to emphasize human rights. The State Department's human rights reports (a Congressional requirement), while inadequate in some degree, have highlighted this issue. The Carter Administration, in implementing the Harkin amendment on international financial institutions, has voted "no" on ll loans and abstained on 21 loans to human rights violators which could not be justified as serving basic human needs.

Religious and other organizations are now mobilizing a major campaign in support of Senate approval of the UN Human Rights Covenants. These Covenants stress economic and social rights in addition to civil and political rights — a significant new dimension to the traditional concept of human rights.

Human Rights Day (Dec. 10) and Week (Dec. 10-17) will mark the 30th anniversary of the signing of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and will be the occasion for much public activity.

Senate and House approval of a bill to require judicial authorization of most government wiretaps is a significant step forward in protecting citizens' privacy.

— FCNL Washington Newsletter

Salute to Michigan

We are happy to welcome as readers of THE WITNESS 1,000 individuals and families from the Diocese of Michigan, who are beginning a special six-month subscription with this current issue.

The circle grows ! ! !

CREDITS
Cover and pp. 13, 19 Vicky Reeves; cartoon p. 8, Hereth/LNS; photo p. 11, Peter Barry Chowka; graphic p. 14, Gina Clement.

Continued from page 3

think of a land near at hand in which the identical rules of hospitality apply?

Jesus came early to taste the bitterness of insecurity that accompanies absence of wealth, position and influence. For he was only a few days old when he found himself a refugee, not only with "no place to lay his head" but no country he could claim as his own — compelled to flee in order to escape the violence of a mindless terrorism. Would Vietnam refugees, and Thai refugees, and Palestinian refugees, and Jewish refugees understand this?

He was part of a mobile society whose forefathers endured wilderness wanderings, and whose great-great-grandchildren relived a nomadic heritage by participating in vast shifts of populations that stretched family ties to the breaking point. Can we in the neighborhood in which we now live identify with this?

He came early, this Jesus, to recognize the inhumanity of ethnic and racial discrimination, a discrimination more powerful than the Temple ceremonial was powerful, more divisive than the religious law was inclusive. Later he dramatized this, saying of a selfless minister on a violence-infested roadway, "And he was a Samaritan."

Reviewing a recent play, Walter Kerr wrote: "T.S. Eliot once said, 'I will show you fear in a handful of dust' — and he did it! In *A Delicate Balance* playwright Albee talks about it, sometimes wittingly, sometimes ruefully, sometimes truthfully. But showing might have been better." Apparently, that is what God thought also — not about fear, but about love. The prophets had spoken. And the angels had sung. But God acted! God acted in the person of a baby who could make sounds but not words; who could not even sing. But who had within himself the power to be . . . to show forth . . . to act . . . to live for others. And — to die for them as well.

In the Christmas baby God said, "You do not get peace and justice merely by talking about them. You get peace and justice by loving others more than you love yourself. Words are not enough." And that is the joyous trumpet with which St. John's Gospel opens, "In the beginning was action. That action was love. That action is God." Christmas is the deathless celebration of so great a gift. ■

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A Parish Looks at Its Money

by Charles L. Ritchie, Jr.

Through the smoked air of the meeting room Shirley Johnson glanced over her shoulder at the clock. *9:48.* "Vestry meetings should always end by 10 p.m.," she remembered being told. As a newcomer, only the second woman ever to be elected to the vestry, she knew she must not be responsible for prolonging the meeting.

Mr. Breakstone was winding up his lengthy answer about how the parish budget would be balanced. ". . . and so, you see, if we keep only the necessities of repairs and maintenance, on a very modest scale, and give our rector the 5% increase we all voted for, we will have to reduce our outreach program from $1,800 to $1,100. While I am reluctant to recommend such a reduction, I see no other recourse."

George Hennings spoke, stifling a yawn. "I move adoption of the budget as proposed." Somebody seconded, and it was quickly carried.

Shirley looked at the time again, but several persons had risen to put on their coats, and she could not see the clock. Her face flushed as she cleared her throat and rapped on the table. "Excuse me," she said loudly, "I know I am a new member of this vestry. I know you have just adopted a budget, and I didn't hear anyone say 'nay,' not even myself! But we just killed off the $350 that helped support the new co-op that many of us are deeply involved in and very hopeful about. I suspect we also have just reduced the day care center allotment. I'm sorry, I know it's late, but we really haven't discussed this enough."

"Shirley dear, if we don't have the money we can't very well do these things, can we? How would you propose we balance the budget?"

"Well, I have no solutions," Shirley replied. "I'm sure we all do the best we can in supporting the church, but surely we can't just let it *die.* I mean, next year we'll reduce it a little more and the year after we won't even be able to support ourselves, let alone any outreach. I mean, after all, the building and grounds already take about all we can raise beside the rector's salary."

Several people moved back, coats still on. Shirley saw the clock reading 10:15. "Oh, my God," she thought, "what a way to start on the vestry!"

"Look, Shirley, why don't you join us on the Budget Committee and you can bring up your recommendations about this at another meeting? It's past time for adjournment and we've already kept some people from — well, you know, it *is* the All-Stars game tonight. Thanks a lot, folks, and goodnight!"

Approximately one year later:

"Shirley, welcome to the Budget Committee meeting. I recall you had some observations at the Annual Budget Review meeting, and perhaps you can help solve some of the difficult problems we seem to have here at St. James! Once again we face a decline in attendance and therefore in income. Now, lady — and gentlemen, I have put together a tentative budget. I don't think it's too bad. We can make do

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for another year. The wall behind the sacristy needs to be repainted and we'll have to put a steel supporting brace on the steeple. Our endowments will just about take care of that. We can give the rector a 3% increase and I'm afraid we'll have to do without the luxury of our outreach program. Well, I don't mean 'luxury,' except in the sense that we cannot afford it at all."

Shirley blurted out, "Mr. Breakstone, we're dying faster than I thought. In fact, we're about to be dead!"

"Do you have some specific suggestions?"

"Take this city block, these bricks and mortar, and this petering-out, tired, scared congregation and give it a reason to live. This community has a need for space. We have some Sunday school rooms, the choir room, this room we meet in and the big kitchen. We have the small yard which could be a garden and a play area. And best of all we have a number of good people who need to live more usefully — who need to be needed, who I am sure would like to be involved. I mean, let's give the church, or at least open the church up, to the community! It could be a valuable resource for everyone, and everybody's life could be enriched."

"Oh, Shirley, interesting thoughts; you make it sound so simple. You know we have a charter and by-laws, and we operate under the laws and canons of the diocese as well as the national church. We can't do what you suggest. Besides, our endowment would be jeopardized. The terms under which the money was left to us in trust, are very clear: 'All of the funds must be used solely for the support of the congregation of the Church of St. James and nothing else.' Why, we could lose the endowment income entirely by following your suggestions."

"But why not?" asked Shirley, "Is it better to die with an endowment than to live without one?"

"Look, Shirley," Mr. Breakstone said, "There are all the people of this congregation for whom we are responsible. Take the Jepthams. They were married here 57 years ago; she was christened here and her brother and father and one son are buried here. There are many of them for whom we have the obligation to continue the *traditions,* and we have no right to make changes such as you suggest."

"But the Jepthams get to church only once a month, maybe. I mean, they moved from this community years ago; it's a long drive for them, and neither one, I gather, is able to drive their automobile. There are many of the congregation who have also moved from this neighborhood."

"Shirley, it was the Philstocks who built this church, and their family endowed it. They still come to church regularly. In fact, the new stained glass window is in memory of his old maiden aunt, who died last year. So you see, they are still active and deeply involved."

Shirley changed her tack. "I gather from the income statements that the offerings and pledges are down for the third year in a row, our costs are up because everything costs more. Where are we going without a change in direction, without a change in program?"

"Well, dear, I'm no seer — or should I say prophet? I wouldn't know. All we can do is what we perceive to be the work of the Lord in the vineyard in which we are placed. But we will certainly keep your observation in mind as we prayerfully put together our budget recommendations for the meeting next Monday night. Thank you so much for the honor of visiting with us, and goodnight, my dear."

"Oh," said Shirley, "I didn't realize I was just a guest tonight. I thought I was aked to *serve* on the Budget Committee."

"Well, perhaps there was a misunderstanding. We might clarify that on Monday night. See you then, eh?"

The following Monday night, vestry meeting:

"... and, oh yes, I should mention that Shirley was invited to attend the Budget Committee Meeting. I thought she would be here, of course. She had some rather unusual suggestions; the Budget Committee did not consider them practical or particularly pertinent. Well, gentlemen, I guess that completes your Budget Committee report."

"I move adoption of the budget for the coming year." There was a second.

"If there is no dissent, we'll consider the budget adopted unanimously." A moment later: "Oh Shirley, good evening."

"I'm sorry to be late. Mrs. MacIntyre's boiler exploded and we have been helping to get the children farmed out to neighbors. Mrs. MacIntyre had to be hospitalized. Father Whiteside, Mrs. Whiteside very kindly took one of the children into the rectory for the night."

"What a shame. Are they the MacIntyres whose boy was arrested for possession of drugs last month?"

"I don't know, really. Her husband died a year ago, and she works hard to make ends meet. She teaches at the public school across Pine Street and her youngest . . ."

Father Whiteside interrupted. "Ahem . . . Shirley, we have just adopted the budget for the next year. We're sorry you weren't here and we understand the delay. Mr. Breakstone said you might have some remarks. Would you care to say anything?"

"Well, I guess I was wondering if we could make better use of our church facilities and our church people, you know, get more involved in the community, help the community, and by doing so help ourselves, too."

After some discussion, Mr. Breakstone said "Shirley, you certainly have raised some interesting and complicated questions. If it is agreeable to everyone concerned I would like to ask you to serve on the Budget Committee for next year so that your ideas can be very carefully considered. Now if there is no further business I guess we can adjourn. If Father Whiteside would dismiss us . . ."

"Excuse me," said Shirley, "I'm afraid I don't want to serve on the Budget Committee. I don't think I can help very much. And I just heard the ambulance siren. It sounded like it stopped at the rectory. Mrs. MacIntyre's youngest child was pretty badly hurt in the explosion. I think I'd better go see if Mrs. Whiteside needs a hand." ■

WI$E A$ $ERPENT$

by William A. Yon

Through most of its recent history the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama has had in its table of organization an agency responsible for representing the church's concern for the life of our society. It was called Christian Social Relations and had a nominal appropriation of $2,000 or $3,000 a year, usually unspent. On the other hand, through the hotly controversial years of the General Convention Special Program, this diocese did without exception meet its full quota of financial participation and in at least two years went beyond what was called a "Faith" contribution.

At the beginning of 1977 a new Department of Church and Society was formed with a budget of $10,000 loosely designated for "responding to (society's) most urgent needs." We have had little difficulty finding individuals and organizations to which these funds could be allocated.

The Church and Society department has learned much during this year about what is being done and what remains undone in our society to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner." In speaking on behalf of this department, I will not be speaking about particular needs and priorities in our society. The variety, depth, and extent of these needs has been amply documented. My comments will focus on the readiness of this diocese to respond to such needs, and will make some suggestions about the nature of our response.

Our diocese has, perhaps more effectively than others, created and maintained an attitude among its members and parishes that money is a gift from God to be used by us as faithful stewards for the accomplishment of what God wants done in the world. If an average weekly contribution per communicant family of $7.20 does not in absolute dollar figures look like anything to crow about, it must be noted that this figure in the Diocese of Alabama is 79% higher than the average for the whole Episcopal Church, and has for a

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number of years been the highest of any diocese in the church.

Intelligent and effective stewardship education throughout the diocese has emphasized not only the importance of individuals giving as God has given to them, but also has stressed parish and diocesan policies regarding "outside giving" which would be supportive of and congruent with this claim upon the individual. Parishes are encouraged to adopt as a goal the use of 50% of their income for meeting the needs of those outside the parish. The diocese in 1976 adopted as a working policy to increase its outside giving by 5% per year until a goal of 50% is reached. If we are faithful to that intention, more than $1,000,000 in *new* money for outside purposes will be generated over the next five years.

IF we are faithful to that intention. The stumbling block which confronts the diocese is the same one that confronts the parish and the individual family as it weighs what it will spend on itself and what it will give away. The very strong tendency — I'll say the damn near irresistible tendency, rooted in our nature — is to decide *first* on what we want for ourselves, to label those wants as needs, to call them givens, to treat them as divinely mandated responsibilities — and then and only then to look at how much is left over to give away.

For example, Mr. Jones aspires to be a tither. But year before last he bought a new home. Last year he bought a new car. Next year his oldest child enrolls in college. There isn't 10% left over. Should he default on his mortgage? Let the bank take his car? Neglect his children's education? Obviously not. The sin of it is that he will go on year after year making new commitments which will ever preclude the fulfillment of his aspiration to become a tither. The pity of it is that he could have provided shelter and transportation and education for his family on 90% of his income if he had merely decided to do so; although admittedly not in precisely the same style.

I am laboring my point. Let me bring it home. The diocese will not succeed in fulfilling its intention to give away half its money as long as in its planning and decision-making processes it deal first with what it wants/needs/must have, and only then looks at what it has left to give away. It simply won't happen. The alternative is to set aside the outside money at the start, off the top, the "first fruits of the harvest." No generalized exhortations will actualize that alternative. It must be carefully built in to every step of the budgeting process where commitments are made that limit future options.

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Suppose, then, that this diocese is able through clear intentionality and careful planning to make available $1,000,000 new dollars in the next five years to address basic human need. What do we do? Where do we start? What style of response would be appropriate to the social condition we are addressing and congruent with the peculiar mandate we have as followers of Jesus?

I will suggest two styles of response, paradoxically related to each other on the order of our instruction to be on the one hand as *"innocent as doves"* and on the other to be *"wise as serpents."*

The first style that would seem to be an appropriate form of church response is that of gap-filler, utility infielder, or to use a somewhat more respectable image, servant.

As the Department of Church and Society set out to use its little $10,000 last year, we asked ourselves and others

simply, "what needs doing?" Some of the human service agencies which we approached seemed a bit disconcerted by the ingenuousness of the question. Accustomed to dealing with the predetermined guidelines, stipulations, conditions, limitations, criteria, and provisos of other grantors, the more successful agencies have developed the art of fitting their needs to the grantors' criteria. But we were simply asking, "Now, really, tell us what it is you think you need to do the job you want to be doing here?"

Many of them had gaps, unmet needs that fell through the cracks of other grantors' criteria. So we wound up buying a kitchen table for a half-way house for ex-offenders which received public funds for staff, house, and food, but not for anything on which to slice the onions. We provided a half-time salary for a driver and gas money to operate a van to transport old folks. The cost of the van had been funded, but nothing allocated to operate it. And so on.

This is the *innocent as doves* style, a servant church going and asking "what needs doing?" and offering its support and encouragement with the least red tape possible. I find it offensive to contemplate the possibility that as the church mounts a major new thrust to meet human need its means of doing so will become as controlling, as demeaning, as mechanistic, as bureaucratized as most such efforts already are. The only worse thing that I can imagine is for us to do nothing in order to avoid that possibility.

Innocent as doves, but also and paradoxically, *wise as serpents.* Several years ago, when I was standing on a corner waiting for the light to change, I recognized a familiar figure next to me. Not thinking that he would recognize me in spite of the fact that we are both Episcopalians, I stuck out my hand and said, "Afternoon, Mayor Siebels. I'm Bill Yon." After he returned my greeting, as the light changed to amber, I asked "How are things going?" What does one expect from such a question more than "Pretty good. How about you?" That was not his response. Frowning and shaking his head as we started across the street, he said, "I don't know. You try to do one thing and that gets half the people mad at you, and you try to do something else and that gets the other half mad. Well, I'll tell you one thing," he continued, "when I ran for mayor I said I was going to be mayor of all the people and that's what I'm trying to do."

What does one say to a man so obviously discouraged? "Well, Mayor Siebels, I think you're doing a good job. Hang in there!"

A shattering event, that little 90-second encounter. Things were not the way I thought. "The Power Elite" I had read about. The power structure, I had read about. I had thought this meant there was a little group of men (yes, *men*) who run things, who get together for lunch once a week or once a month and decide how things are going to be and then that's the way they are. All the rest of us just have to live with what they dish out.

Well, now, I knew that it was probably more important to be rich than to be mayor, but I would certainly have thought that if there is any such thing as a "power elite" the mayor would at least be on the list. But he seemed to be feeling just as impotent as I, just as trapped by conflicting forces and pressures, just as fated to cope with the way things are, just as powerless to shape them the way they ought to be.

• Reflection No. 1: If the mayor is not as powerful as I thought he was, maybe I'm not as powerless as I had thought I was.

• Reflection No. 2: Maybe, in a sprawling, complex urban setting, power is diffuse, rather than concentrated. No one can make happen what he wants to make happen on his own, but only as he forms effective alliances, hooking his little piece of power together with some others. Only later did I hear Alinsky's biting dictum, *"The isolated individual is social dust."*

I got together with some friends and we made a list of all the groups and organizations that were attempting in isolation, to "do good" for the city. Without much effort we convened an exciting evening meeting of some 60 persons representing over 30 of these organizations, including everything from the "foul-mouthed" Vista workers to the "refined" Junior Leaguers. It did neither of them any harm to be in the same room with the other. It was a good first step toward building a coalition, to combine the power of these otherwise relatively powerless agencies.

But that's the end of the story. That was the first and last meeting.

The hypothesis was sound. In their isolation these groups were ready and willing — even eager — to make common cause with each other to strengthen their impact on some of the intractable problems of our society. But it wasn't *my* job to organize that coalition and it wasn't anybody else's job either.

So, finally to my point. If this new response of the church to the urban crisis which we are contemplating is not only to be innocent, but also to be wise, it *must* include a clear commitment to invest staff resources and organizational support to the creation and maintenance of power coalitions. The cost of such a commitment is considerable. We give up unilateral control of some of our resources. The promise is also considerable. It is the promise of making a significant impact on those conditions in our society which rob Jesus' special friends of their humanity.

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Dear Folks

by Abbie Jane Wells

From Abbie Jane Wells of Juneau, Alaska, come these reflections of what Mary might have said in a pre-Holy Days letter from Egypt, after "Bethlehem plus 2 years and 9 months."

Dear Folks,

It is quite an experience to be an Israelite living among the Egyptians — trying to explain to the Boy about the history that informs our religious celebrations — trying to explain to him why the Egyptians don't do like we do — and at almost 3 years of age he can sure ask questions!

Trying to explain Passover will be worse next year than it was last, for he will ask more questions. How tell him so that he doesn't throw it up to the children he plays with, so he doesn't call them names because of what their ancestors did to our ancestors? Joseph and I talk long and hard about how to do it so as not to downgrade the people we live amongst and their children the Boy plays with.

I don't think I ever wrote in any of my letters about what a load off our shoulders it is no longer to have those priceless gifts the boy received. As I told you before, Joseph had to sell them in order for us to have something to live on until Joseph found some work. And what a relief it was no longer to have to worry about the gold, frankincense and myrrh being stolen as we did on the trip to Egypt when there was no way to keep them safe from robbers. The thing that saved us no doubt was the fact that we looked too poor to have anything of value. Instead, everybody felt sorry for us and fed us instead of trying to rob us. We would never have made it if it hadn't been for the people who shared what meager food they had with us.

I have been busy making cloth on the loom that Joseph finally made for me. So now we all have some clothes that aren't one patch on top of another. It took Joseph a long time to scrounge enough wood for the loom — wood is so expensive we couldn't buy any. And this place needed so much done to it to make it halfway comfortable.

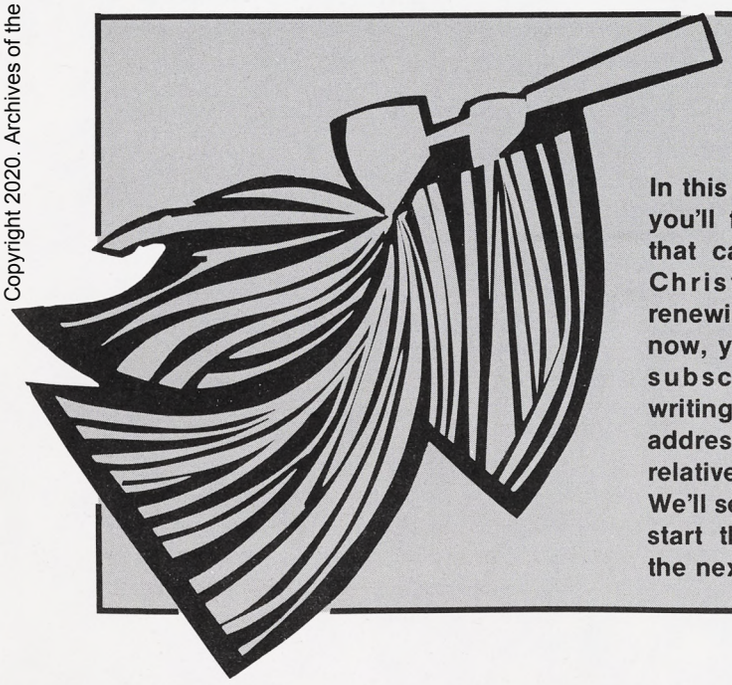
We were lucky to find this abandoned stable. Many people, especially refugees like us, are having to live in caves. There really isn't enough for the Eyptian poor and hungry, much less us.

Joseph and I are getting ready for the Holy Days, which means more questions from the people we live amongst — and from the Boy. And we will try to answer the questions and do our religious celebrations so as not to carry on the ancestral quarrels. It really is an ongoing challenge to try to keep the faith as we would in Israel. We do miss having family and religious community to worship with, and rabbis handy to give us answers when we are not sure what to do, to tell us how to answer the Boy's constant questions. We try our best to explain that "When in Egypt, do what the Egyptians do" isn't the right policy for us.

We look forward to the day when we can return and see you all.

Till then, I send our love,

Mary



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