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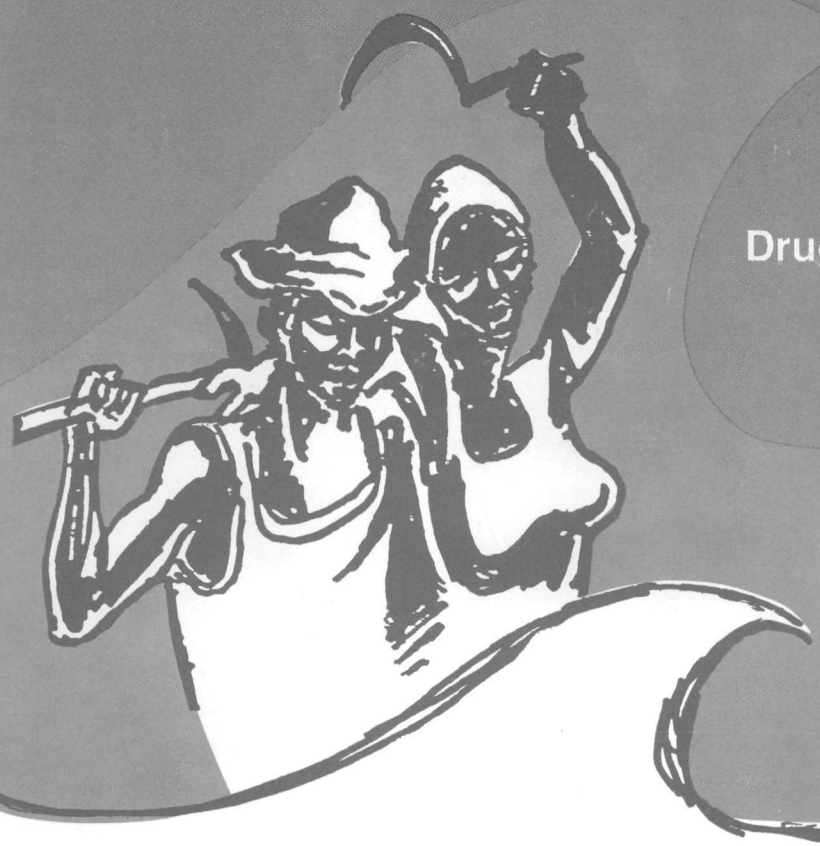
THE WITNESS

The anguish of Haiti
• Joan Chittister



Angela Davis: Evolution of an activist
• Anita Cornwell

Drugs: Legalize the supply?
• Edward Waldron

UNLESS WE ORGANIZE WE WILL BE WASHED AWAY JUST AS THE SOIL AND ROCK IS WASHED AWAY

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Letters

Offers Butlerisms

In your November issue I read Mary Miller's article, "Fifty years of peacemaking." As a marine who had enlisted in 1940, I knew many a leatherneck who had served in Nicaragua and regaled us with tales about Major General Smedley D. Butler, whom you quoted in the graphic which ran in that story.

Here are a few Butlerisms that may be of interest to your readers. He was one of the first Americans to denounce Benito Mussolini. He had quite a sense of loyalty. During the dark days of the depression, when Douglas Macarthur was chasing the "Bonus Army" out of Washington at bayonet point, "Old Gimlet Eye" Butler gave them sanctuary at Washington Navy Yard. When FDR took over, Macarthur was sent to the Philippines. Gen. Butler was one of the few officers who could be used to rally around as a genuine war hero (two Congressional medals). A secret cabal of millionaires tried to bribe him in 1934 to lead a military junta against President Roosevelt. He remained loyal to his oath to the Constitution. He took a leave of absence from the Marine Corps and cleaned up the Philadelphia Police Department.

Then he retired, never realizing his dream of being commandant of the Marine Corps. So he ran for Congress as a representative from Bucks County, Pa. and was beaten soundly, mostly by church people. Why? He had a real salty, profane and irreverent manner of speaking. "Nice" people didn't like that. At one point they limited him to five hells and five damns in a 15-minute broadcast. He used those words up in five minutes and was taken off the air.

This is one reason, as a Social Action-type Methodist, I well appreciate THE WITNESS for its pricking of stuffed shirts and getting people to think of the oppressed of the world, in spite of the brickbats and cancellations you get from some disgruntled souls. So again I'm taking advantage of your three subscriptions for one Christmas offer, only I'm doubling it to six.

Robert Keosian
Hawthorne, N.J.

Scouts and militarism

I was struck with the article by Jim Lewis, "Winning youth away from war," in November.

The article related how the annual Jamboree of the Boy Scouts of America was held at A. P. Hill military base in Virginia. The army went to great lengths to impress the boys with the charm and romance of militarism.

As a former scout and former scoutmaster of two troops I immediately wrote a letter of protest to the national scout headquarters. I pointed out that scouting wasn't founded to be a paramilitary outfit — that the spirit of scouting is based on respect for nature, compassion for the needy, good citizenship and international friendship.

I have a high regard for the scouting movement and trust it will remain true to the ideals upon which it was founded.

The Rev. Eldred Johnston
Columbus, Ohio

'Pro-choice' loses sub

I applaud you on your witness of human rights. However, your pro-choice stand on abortion rights would seem to me a less than adequate response to a most basic right — the right to live. Because of your stand on this issue, I must decline to subscribe to THE WITNESS.

Dan Becker
Keswick, Va.

No longer silent

We appreciated your pro-choice articles in the June WITNESS regarding the subject of abortion. Where is this kinder, gentler nation of which President Bush speaks? It is not in Philadelphia, where so-called Christians harass clients who attempt to enter Planned Parenthood and other clinics.

To gain safe entry into the clinic, clients must be escorted by volunteers. We are active in defending the clinic against these "religious" demonstrators who are mostly men. We clinic defenders are bordered on one side by rosary-waving Roman Catholics and on the other side by Protestant fundamentalists. The scene resembles a Fellini movie — bullhorns blaring, grossly graphic posters, two-foot high crucifixes, priests and pseudo-priests, kneeling, praying, evangelizing, pushing, shoving, and references to Hitler, "killing centers," Nazis, and "American Holocaust."

Abortion is not the issue. The issue is keeping women powerless by controlling the very personal decisions about their reproductive lives. The next thing on their agenda is to outlaw contraception and sex education.

In one breath, these people claim to be concerned about saving lives; with the next they support the use of tax dollars to kill people in El Salvador. Or how about their belief in the death penalty? It is OK that babies are abused and killed after they are born but "abortion is murder!"

Much reference has been made to the "silent majority" who support choice. The majority can no longer remain silent. The anti-choicers should be exposed for the violent individuals they are. Most of us believe the government has no business interfering in our private lives. We should live in a democracy and not a theocracy.

We can no longer allow ourselves to be intimidated; we must vote for pro-choice issues and candidates. Pennsylvania legislators recently passed the Abortion Control Act of 1989. Restric-

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tions on abortion in this state will be as damaging to the doctors as they are to women's lives. The media has never fully informed the public of the real intent and severity of the penalties and restrictions in this law.

Those who don't believe in abortions should not have one! But most importantly, the separation of church and state must be upheld.

Jeanne Bland
Carole and Ivor Witt
Ambler, Pa.

Amnesty advocate, too

Thank you for the November issue and the article about Bishop John Walker, "Requiem for a common man, an uncommon bishop" which caught much of the flavor of the Cathedral service and also of the St. Margaret's wake. We are all still suffering his loss.

One of the things I remember most vividly about John was his concern for the young men during the Vietnam war who were making the difficult decision to leave the country rather than serve in that unjust and unnecessary destruction. He worked with them, advising, listening, helping, just as he did so many people with other acute problems. He was also enormously helpful later when we were trying to have amnesty declared for those who had gone to Canada and elsewhere.

THE WITNESS continues to be a boon in bringing me good writing and exciting perspectives.

Nancy Montgomery
Washington, D.C.

Integrity addendum

Your memorial tribute to the Rt. Rev. John Walker was splendid and deeply appreciated with one exception. Not mentioned was Bishop Walker's inclusion of lesbians and gay men in his universe of caring.

He consistently spoke and voted against every reactionary homophobic resolution and supported every effort to recognize the wholeness of gay people, to assure their full membership and participation in the church, and to guarantee their civil rights.

In 1976 he supported Integrity's first call for a commission on human sexuality and served on the commission. In 1979 he courageously signed the Dissenting Bishops Statement opposing homophobic action taken by the General Convention.

Bishop Walker's commitment to the oppressed did not stop at the lavender line whereas your failure to mention this, however unintentional, buys into the heterosexist ploy to keep lesbians and gay men invisible, closeted and oppressed.

The finest tribute we could offer Bishop Walker would be, in 1991, after nine years of trying, to pass a civil rights canon which forbids discrimination in our church against marginalized persons including those of gay and lesbian orientation.

The Rev. Paul Woodrum, Treasurer
Integrity, Inc.

'Doing your job'

Congratulations on the self-righteous "Please cancel my subscription immediately" letters that you are getting. If you weren't, you would not be doing your job. Remember Mark Twain: "Whenever you find that you are on the side of the majority, it's time to pause and reflect."

The Rev. Alexander Seabrook
Joliet, Ill.

Rattles his cage

Your magazine continues to be a major source of inspiration to me in my ministry and life. Each and every month I find within its pages something to rattle my cage and to remind me of the saving power of the Gospel in all our lives. In effect, I read the Gospel for modern times every time I read THE WITNESS.

Thanks for your 'witness' to me and to the world.

The Rev. Jeffrey Paul
Ventura, Calif.

Ingle article poignant

Joseph B. Ingle's article on "Justice not vengeance: Death row must go, " in the November WITNESS was so very poignant and agonizing about society's inhumanity. I am sending copies to friends who favor capital punishment; now, if they will just read it. Love THE WITNESS.

Pat Grimala
Portland, Ore.

Appreciates WITNESS

Of the many periodicals which come in my mail, none is more appreciated than THE WITNESS. The graphics alone are worth the subscription price.

I have appreciated so many articles over the past months, most recently the two pieces by Ann Robb Smith (September and October) on Central America. Having returned recently from 10 days in Nicaragua, I heartily concur with her assessment of the situation.

The most difficult question I was asked while in Nicaragua was: "Why is the United States trying to destroy Nicaragua?" It is as much a cry of pain as a question. Nevertheless, it is a question we need to be asking our leaders in government continually.

Thank you for publishing THE WITNESS. I thought you might like to know that appreciative United Methodists are among your readers.

The Rev. Robert A. Moore
Providence, R.I.

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Editorial

Confronting 'lavish brutality'

Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning is to be commended for dispatching four Episcopal bishops to El Salvador to seek release of all detained church workers shortly after the "invasion" of an Episcopal church by the Salvadoran National Guard.

The bishops — William Frey of Colorado, David Reed of Kentucky, William Swing of California, and James Ottley of Panama — spent two hours with President Cristiani of El Salvador and met with U.S. Ambassador William Walker. They visited several Episcopal church workers in jail, including the Rev. Luis Serrano, rector of St. John the Evangelist Church, San Salvador, where government forces conducted a pre-dawn raid Nov. 20. At that time they swept into their net several foreign and indigenous church workers who were laboring to feed refugees in the compound. Josie Beecher, an Episcopal missionary from the Diocese of Olympia in Washington state, was among them. She was beaten and subjected to a harrrowing interrogation at the headquarters of the Treasury Police. (See story p. 17.) Beecher's dramatic account of a prior detention, along with her 5-year-old adopted daughter, appeared in THE WITNESS just a year ago. Among those still under detention at this writing is Juan Antonio Berti Quinonez, co-director of CREDHO, the church social service institution, as well as a number of other humanitarian and social service church workers. Quinonez was reported to have been badly beaten.

The bishops' trip is part of a continuing protest by the Episcopal Church and other church bodies regarding the escalation and harassment of church workers by the Army since Nov. 16 when six Jesuit priests and two women were executed "with lavish brutality — they took out their brains," in the words of the Rev. Jose Maria Tojeira, head of the Jesuit order in El Salvador. The crackdown is proceeding across denominational lines, and from the hierarchy to lay volunteers.

An outspoken human rights champion, Lutheran Bishop Ernesto Medardo Gomez, underground since his last public appearance at the funeral for the Jesuits, was spirited away to exile by plane recently.

Curiously, President George Bush, an Episcopalian, has not been available to meet with Browning, although it has been reported in the religious press that with the arrest of Luis Serrano and his co-workers, "the Episcopalians were being singled out because the Salvadoran government believes it had a strong case of subversion against them." (*National Catholic Reporter* 12/8/89). It would seem that the President would want to be helpful in putting that myth to rest.

El Salvador-watchers analyze the orchestrated persecution as an attempt to render the churches ineffective as a powerful mediating force. Some describe El Salvador as a country with two armies — regular and rebel — with no government.

On Nov. 21, Bishop Browning issued a memorandum to the bishops of the Episcopal Church, in which he said: "For more than a decade, and to the tune of approximately $1 million a day, our government has steadfastly supported the government of El Salvador. There comes a time when accountability must be demanded . . . The civil conflict which splits the nation of El Salvador must be adjudicated and negotiated in such a way that the need of the Salvadoran people for economic and political justice is not sacrificed to the supposed national security needs of our nation. *The people have suffered enough!*"

Over the past 10 years, 70,000 lives have been lost in the war in El Salvador, the church martyrs a small number of that total. Browning has called for an end to U.S. military aid to El Salvador.

The Presiding Bishop has also asked bishops and all others of good will to:

— Telephone the White House and the State Department, demanding that the President and Administration take action to secure the release of the Episcopal Church workers. The White House phone number is 202-456-1414. The State Department is 202-647-4910.

— Telephone the El Salvadoran Embassy in Washington, D.C. with the same demand — 202-265-3480.

— Write or telephone your congressional delegation, demanding an immediate re-assessment of U.S. military aid to the El Salvador government.

— Pray for the people of El Salvador, and all who suffer the terrors of war.

And we might add, contact Josie Beecher about the possibility of addressing your congregation. She will be in touch with the SHARE Foundation in Washington, D.C. at 202-635-5540.

Could be the beginning of a formidable list of New Year's Resolutions.

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The anguish of Haiti

by Joan Chittister

(Special to THE WITNESS; graphics by Helen David Brancato)

Sunday

When the plane left Miami for Port-au-Prince I was tired, hot and apprehensive at the thought of going to a country whose history is a series of private armies at war with one another and at odds with the people.

So why am I here? Bonhoeffer writes: "There is a meaning in every journey that is unknown to the traveler." I will have to let Haiti itself teach me why I'm here.

All the way down today I read and reviewed material on the country's history, political situation, and poverty. But in the United States, we hardly even know where Haiti is, let alone what it is. And worse, we don't care.

One thing I know for sure as the plane begins its descent: From the air, Haiti is beautiful — an island coast, rugged hills, and blue, blue water. The question is: What is its soul like?

Claudette Werleigh, director of ITECA, a church-funded adult education and development agency, and her husband Georges picked us up at the airport. The 12 of us in the Pax Christi delegation plus our luggage were packed into a Toyota van that clanged up one steep and winding road after another. People — all young — clogged the roads where no sidewalks ran, and the car lurched from one side to the other for miles. It was a tight, wet, jarring ride through a hot and humid night.

Foyer Solidarité, the place we are staying, is deceiving. It's a huge, plantation-style mansion at the top of a hill. At first I was almost shocked to see the marble and wrought iron and the open veranda. But inside, everything was large and bare. It's clean. There are art posters proclaiming the scriptures of the poor. There are wall frescoes in native style. But there's nothing else. No lovely furniture, no television, no hot water in the shower; the cold water a trickle. There were, however, beautiful flowers in each sparse bedroom.

We settled in to eat a light supper of soup and salad and then to study the agenda. By 11 p.m. it was finally cool enough to sleep.

Monday

It has been quite a morning. First we went to the clinic run by the radical priest Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide — if by radical you mean someone committed to the church of the beatitudes. He has denounced the government and challenged the bishops to speak for the poor. As a result, he has enemies in multiple places. But not among the poor. When church officials removed him from his parish, St. Jean Bosco, the poor converged *en masse* on the cathedral until Aristide was reinstated.

To neutralize his power they have taken away his parish and permit him to function only as a convent chaplain. After all, with no pulpit to preach from, what threat is he with the crowds?

Well, Jesus didn't have a synagogue to operate from either. Aristide is a figure to be reckoned with.

His clinic is a huge old house and courtyard on a side street of a lower-middle class section of Port-au-Prince. Over 2,000 people have come to the clinic for medical help. In addition, he has a work program for street children, boys who have no money, no job, no education. He also teaches them to read. Some sleep there on old bare mattresses on a wet concrete floor when there is nowhere else to go.

Aristide is clearly revolutionary, a prophet, a scourge of the system. There have been several attempts on his life and, as we sat on the veranda overlooking the playground and listened to him, it was clear why.

Aristide says that U.S. interests are Vatican interests, so whatever smacks of anti-Americanism — like attacking the assembly industry set up in Haiti by U.S. corporations — is branded as political or left-wing or even communist. When Aristide talks about the "expatriation of American profits" and the "new slavery of economic dependence," he becomes a threat to church and state. The church, after all, has privileges here that are not to be bartered for the people.

He's a very small, very intense man. I had no doubt that I was in the presence of a holy man who will probably die for Medellin and Puebla and Vatican II and the preferential option for the poor.

As we drove away from his damp, dark dormitory, the tiny classroom and the sparse pharmacy, I saw Aristide's

---

Joan Chittister, noted author and prioress of Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie, Pa., went to Haiti recently as part of a fact-finding delegation sponsored by Pax Christi USA. Part of the purpose of the trip was to produce a video entitled *Haiti: Voices of Misery, Voices of Promise.* Chittister did the videotaping and kept a journal of her experiences for simultaneous publication in *Pax Christi* and THE WITNESS.

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name painted on villa walls all over the hills.

Port-au-Prince is a tragic place. It is paradise on one hand and hell on the other. It sits overlooking the beautiful Caribbean on rolling green hills under the world's bluest sky. And it is a cesspool.

The poor are everywhere; the streets are gullies and the buildings are in various stages of collapse. Our four-wheel drive vehicle rocked from side to side as we maneuvered around pits on the main streets of town that were so deep they still held rain water from two days ago.

In the middle of all this sits the U.S. AID (Agency for International Development) building, which Haitians call, tongue in cheek, the "National Ministry of Finance." There is also a gleaming consulate surrounded by barbwire and a high-walled, perfectly manicured embassy. A sign under the window of the Marine receptionist's office says "America's Warriors."

The conversation with embassy staffers was, for want of a better word, sad. They didn't know anything about the CBI (Caribbean Basin Initiative). That's an economic doctrine and they're political attachés, they said.

Under the CBI, American businesses pay little or no taxes, provide wages of $3 a day and give no benefits. It is the new slavery, a Haitian told us, and this time the "massa" doesn't even supply house, land or protection. The people are free only to starve.

The embassy representatives don't speak Creole. They're short-term staffers trying to give continuity to a foreign policy that changes every four to eight years.

They are trying very hard, I'm convinced, but they're company men who see U.S. policy with a great deal more clarity than they see the Haitian people and our role in Haiti's present situation.

It was a somewhat tense but basically civil conversation. They defended American policy; we insisted that they make recommendations for change.

"Broaden your sources," we said. "Speak the language. Take an interest in Haiti instead of treating it as a necessary stopover on the road to a diplomatic promotion."

"America's Warriors" was still at the reception window when we left almost two hours later.

After lunch we went to St. Martin and Cité Soleil, the slum sections of Port-au-Prince.

Cardboard shacks lined mud paths barely more than a car-width wide. Children, literally thousands of them, played in the mud and dirt. The kitchens were burners at the front of the huts, the beds were old mattresses or pieces of cardboard. The roofs were corrugated metal and there were miles and miles of them. Women washed clothes in basins full of rainwater and dumped the suds into open ditches. Starving dogs moved slowly among the children. Men hacked sugar cane and dragged heavy loads on wooden flatbed wagons attached to their backs like yokes.

It was human degradation in slow motion. Post-puberty girls squatted against walls to urinate. Small boys had no clothes at all. Women my age had small children crawling all over them or huddled lifeless in the corners of cast-off packing boxes that had delivered the refrigerators of the rich.

The driver of the Land Rover that took us through the area was obviously nervous. I was too thunderstruck to be afraid, too numb to worry about myself. I put the video camera on my lap, torn between two values — take film home that would arouse U.S. consciences or sit quietly and respectfully in the presence of death. After all, what kind of person takes a picture of a corpse?

Here, surely, was living death without benefit of all the niceties. In funeral homes perhaps death can be ignored, but here? No, here it must be confronted.

On the docks of Cité Soleil the van broke down. We'd gotten out to take some footage of the boats and the laying of nets, but when we went to start the car, it was dead. Crowds gathered quickly, all young men and boys, pushing and asking for money, candy, pens, eyeglasses. Anything at all.

And so, this crowd of nuns and peace people began to give them things. David gave them magic tricks. Helen David gave them sketches of themselves, the kind you pay $25 or $50 each for on



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Jackson Square in New Orleans. Bernadette gave them lessons in the alphabet and I took pictures of them with a video camera. They loved it. The crowd got bigger and bigger.

In the evening we met with Haitian economists, church leaders and human rights activists to try to make sense of what we'd seen. Every lecture was brief but to the point:

The United States will support corruption in Haiti as long as Haiti remains a security item for the U.S. Given the fact that Haiti and Cuba share the sea lane that links the coast of Latin America to the U.S. eastern seaboard, that policy will continue to make certain Cuba does not attempt to close that passage.

Free elections and a civilian government endanger American influence and control of the passage, since civilians cannot be controlled like the military.

The papal nuncio and the church in Rome want privilege and a nice, peaceful celebration of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the New World. Since Haiti, where Columbus first landed, is key to that celebration, the church wants to erase all vestiges of liberation theology to assure a docile show of unity when the spotlights turn this way. "Normalization" is what they call it. What it means is that in the last two years all church programs that challenged social structures — literacy campaigns, peasant organizing, land reform — have been dismantled.

In fact, our hostess Claudette Werleigh just got word that the staff of the literacy program she founded has been dismissed for "radicalism." She is being given three months "to reflect on her situation," which seems to me a euphemism for "get in line, quit giving light to those in the darkness by teaching them to read and quit this foolishness called the Gospel."

"What can we do?" we asked the Haitians.

"Tell the American people what they are doing to us," they said.

As I write these memories and reflections Haitian radio has been playing the song "Freedom" in the background. Over 80% of Haitians are illiterate. Radio is very important in this culture, and through this medium Haitians are being schooled for freedom while I ride around their island reminding them of their captivity. I wondered what kind of match it would take to light this tinderbox.

I feel like I've been here for weeks.

Tuesday

We were supposed to leave for Papaye on the Central Plateau at 9 a.m., but changing a battery in Port-au-Prince is not the same as buying a new battery in Erie, Pa.

It's now 10:30 a.m. and we're still waiting, but we have to get to Papaye before dark or the danger from roving bands or the Tonton Macoute is serious. I'm not sure they will be looking for *us*, but they may well be hunting down our activist guides.

Wednesday

We have just ended one of the all-time worst/all-time best days of my life. Dante has never been where I have just been or there would have been another level added to his description of hell: the non-human, the never human, the pitifully human.

St. Martin and Cité Soleil were a frustration to me, but Hinche, the bush and the Central Plateau were a shock in the medical sense of the word — all my systems went into low just to survive.

In the first place, Hinche is 75 miles from Port-au-Prince. It took over six hours on Tuesday to get there and seven and a half today to get back. Every mile out of Port-au-Prince gets worse. Potholes turn to gulleys, gulleys turn to stones, and stones turn to flowing mud on the edge of a cliff. Houses turn to huts, huts turn to shacks and shacks turn to lean-tos. The trip up the mountain was a progressive, inexorable excursion into dehumanization.

We were stopped at five military checkpoints along the road. Clearly the peasants' movement is a great concern.

We were to have been in Hinche by 1 p.m. yesterday. It was almost 6 p.m. when we got there. It was the rainy season, and most of the peasants who had waited for us all afternoon had already left to begin the two-to-four hour walk home before the rains turned the mountain to mud and darkness doubled the danger.

The eight or nine who remained were intent on getting their story told. MPP, the peasant movement of Papaye, had started as part of *Ti Legliz*, a basic Christian community of the Haitian church. But the church has distanced itself from the more assertive reform movements since July 1987, when hundreds of peasants involved in organizing land reform actions were massacred in Jean-Rabel. MPP had also criticized Catholic Relief Services for its ties with AID whose policies they say are destructive to peasant agriculture.

The movement, they told us, started with two groups. There are now over 5,000 groups with 75,000 members.

The peasant leaders' faces were black, strong, soft and beautiful. They had been jailed, tortured and terrorized, they said, but they would not stop. They would rather lose their lives.

"If the government gave me 2,000 *gourdes* I would not quit the movement," one man said. "The money will disappear, but the movement gives me life. They can kill me but 10 more will rise to take my place."

They talked about how the movement had taught them to organize, given them a credit union, begun reforestation programs, and brought them support.

"Before," they said, "people didn't get married because they couldn't afford the wedding reception. They lost everything they had trying to pay for the funerals of

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Haiti: Among poorest of the poor

Strategically placed only 800 miles from Florida, Haiti has long been a pawn in the U.S. power play in the Caribbean. The 60-mile stretch of water between Haiti and Cuba known as the Windward Passage is an important U.S. strategic interest. Over 50% of all shipments from Latin America and the Panama Canal, commercial and military, travel through the Windward Passage to the U.S. east coast.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and one of the 25 poorest in the world. A former slave colony, Haiti won freedom from French rule in 1804. However, the world's first independent black republic was soon forced into economic dependence on its former rulers. The United States occupied Haiti from 1915 to 1934, allegedly because the instability of Haiti's government "posed a threat" to U.S. security concerns in the region. During the U.S. occupation, Haiti was opened up to foreign investment, revoking a century-old ban on foreign ownership of land and property.

Traditionally, Haitian society has been divided along colonial lines. The elite were light-skinned mulattos who controlled business and government, and blacks made up the powerless urban and rural poor and the middle class. The United States consistently backed the mulatto power elite, creating a resentment that led to the 1957 election of Francoise "Papa Doc" Duvalier, who skillfully exploited race and class differences. Duvalier instituted a brutally repressive regime, where opponents were silenced by murder or exile. He controlled the army and maintained power by creating a private presidential militia, the Volontaires de la Securité Nationale — better known as the Tonton Macoutes. The Tonton Macoutes acted as Duvalier's secret police and during his 14-year rule more than 50,000 Haitians are estimated to have been killed through state-sponsored terrorism.

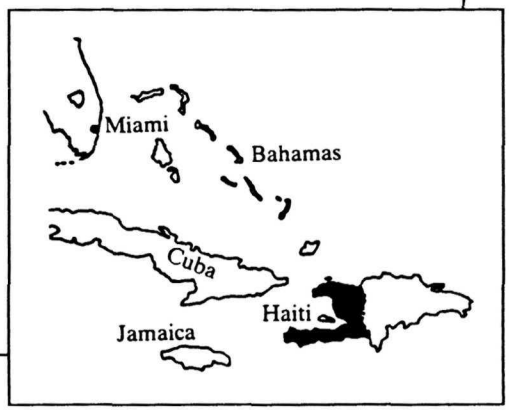
When Duvalier died in 1971, he was succeeded by his 19-year-old son, Jean-Claude or "Baby Doc." Under his rule the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty rose from 48% in 1976 to 81% in 1985. Jean-Claude is thought to have appropriated and sent abroad almost $600 million in state assets during his regime. He was overthrown by a popular revolution in 1986, his corrupt regime having lost the support of the United States and the Haitian military.

General Henri Namphy took power after Jean-Claude fled to France. Namphy promised to hold free elections, but on election day, Nov. 29, 1987, those waiting to vote were terrorized and killed by roving bands of Tonton Macoutes. Elections were called off after three hours. In 1988, a coup led by General Prosper Avril toppled Namphy. Avril, who was a trusted advisor under Baby Doc, remains in power today.

Haiti has a population of 6 million; 4,620,00 of the people live in rural areas. Half of 1% of the population owns 46% of the national income. Some 90% of the population earns less than $150 annually. Only 3 in 100 Haitian children finish primary school in rural areas and almost 80% of the population is illiterate. There is only one doctor or nurse for every 30,000 rural inhabitants. Life expectancy is 54 years. Infant mortality is the highest in the hemisphere — 135 per 1,000 live births compared to 13 in the United States. One Haitian child dies every five minutes from malnutrition, dehydration and diarrhea; 27% die before they reach the age of five.

Roman Catholicism is the state religion of Haiti, though it maintains a uneasy coexistence with voodoo. It is sometimes said that Haitians are 80% Catholic and 100% voodooist. Voodoo is an amalgam of West African religions brought over by slaves in the 18th century, combined with many of the symbols and ceremonies of the Catholic Church.

About 20% of Haitians are Protestant. After the U.S. Civil War, newly freed black Americans brought their Protestant faiths to Haiti. The Episcopal Church was an independent, native church from 1861 to 1911. Discussion is currently underway to create a new autonomous church province comprised of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Cuba.



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their children. But now we all help one another."

There was only one woman in the group. One of the wives, I thought, or a worker perhaps. Then, as the night got darker and the small, bare, yellowish bulb above our heads lost its strength, she began to speak, and she wasn't shy.

"The movement started with three women's groups and now there are 700, 14% of the MPP groups. The movement is good for women, too," she announced. "Men use women like brooms. When they're worn out, they just throw them away."

I winced at the image. I had seen the dry, old palm frond brooms standing beaten in corners. And I had seen the old women standing dull and sullen on the mountain roads, all used up too and thrown away.

"We want equality and dignity. We want the beatings to stop," she said. "We want men to stop leaving the women and children at home without food while they go out and spend the money."

Her voice got firmer. "Women's rights will benefit the whole family, but when the women made claims, the bishops repressed them. Some women were also jailed. But the movement is bearing fruit: Women are speaking out and I have seen them interpret the Gospel at Mass."

This universal voice of women is one great common cry of pain, I realized. I looked at her and smiled. She smiled back. But inside I was crying and so, I think, was she.

The building where we were meeting was a public school that had been open for a year and then abandoned as the state has abandoned all social programs in Haiti. The grass around the buildings was eight feet tall. The outhouse was overgrown and full of animal droppings. The residence halls — six dormitories around a center courtyard thick with high grass and brambles — were standing wide open, doors akimbo and locks



broken. There were sinks and toilets and showers, but none of them worked. A huge tarantula was in the dorm doorway; a smaller one was in the cupboard.

These were the worst living conditions I had ever been in, and they had been prepared especially for us with pride.

We strung our mosquito netting together, sharing bug sprays, laughing to keep spirits up. I found myself thinking of all those military checkpoints where they insisted on knowing where we would sleep that night, and thinking of Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, Maura Clark and Dorothy Kazel. It is astounding how average people like us can manage to get into situations like this. It is even more astounding that Haitian peasants cannot get out of them.

Morning couldn't come early enough. I lay and waited for dawn, hungry, dehydrated and apprehensive.

At breakfast, women in the kitchen were washing dirty plastic dishes in pans of dirty water. Eggs were cooking in dirty pans over charcoal burning in a washtub. Coffee was being strained through cloth. I realized I didn't have an appetite after all.

Before we returned to Port-au-Prince, we met with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Papaye, who clearly recognizes the plight of peasants and of the nation. But he said the greatest problem confronting the church in Haiti is "the criticism of the bishops' conference" and that the role of the bishop is "to be neutral because in the same church are people who are both very far right and very far left."

"How," I asked, "does the church in Haiti reconcile the two dimensions of the church, the institutional and the preferential option for the poor?"

With masterful church-ese, he managed to talk for over an hour and avoid answering the question. They say he's a good man, on the side of the peasants, but intent on making sure "the church does not take over the role of the state."

There are two very distinct churches in Haiti: the institutional church and "legliz populaire." It will take great saints to walk the tightrope between the two. But if someone doesn't, one or the other will surely be lost.

Outside the bishop's house, in the mud ruts, starving dogs moved among starving children to snatch pieces of meat at

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the town butchering block. Crowds circled the car with their hands open and their eyes sad while I turned away. The whole city squatted in the dirt like a huge junkyard, selling things we would not give away to the Salvation Army.

The bone-jarring trip down the mountain was even harder than going up had been. It was market day and burdened beasts and people were walking for miles.

The rains came early and slicked the shale roads. At the foot of each hill, water ran over the road up to the tailpipe of the van. Whole families gathered to wash their clothes and bathe their children at the waterfall where the road was supposed to be.

There are six months of rain and six months of dry weather in Haiti. During the rainy season, the roads are covered every day, and walking the mountain is both dangerous and impossible. During the dry season there is no water in the area at all. The peasant really never wins. Flat land in the valleys and plains belongs to the rich. The eroded mountain sides belong to the poor, who walk their crops down the steep slopes in the rain and up in the heat.

When we got a flat tire, a kind of poetic justice aimed at people in big cars who drive up and down mountains scattering donkeys, women and children, we stepped out of the van into mud over our shoes. Mountain mud, I discovered, is one of the great levelers of life.

People came out of their one-room shacks to stare, to pose for pictures, or ask for money. It was hard to tell who was the sideshow: the peasants and their nothingness or ourselves and our obscene affluence. Surely, somewhere there is a middle point. The ideal is not that no one should be rich, but no living being should be this poor.

It was dark when we got back to Foyer Solidarité, dirty, muddy and running with sweat. When I opened the jalousie window in our tiny room that night, I was thinking only of the people who were still and forever at the top of those mountains.

It occurred to me that if the United States had the same 80% illiteracy rate as Haiti, not one person in 40 of our 50 states would be able to write and read their own name. Now who do you think would have the money, the cars and the power?

Thursday

We criss-crossed Port-au-Prince all day long, meeting with officials of Caritas, the social service arm of the Catholic Church, plus officials from the Office of Peace and Justice, organizers of the fledgling Pax Christi group, and representatives from Catholic Relief Services.

We also met with past and present operators of Radio Soleil, the Catholic radio station that led the opposition to the Duvalier government, and was closed down twice. Now Radio Soleil is in turmoil. The bishop-directors have fired 25 people for "breaches of discipline" and those 25 intend to set up a rival communications system. It is just one more instance of a divided church in a country where the church and the military are the only two stable institutions.

Our Haitian guide was fond of repeating the axiom, "We see from where we stand." The wealthy property owners and the papal nuncio all live on a mountain high above the squalor and the struggle of the city below. What can these good people really see?

On our last afternoon, I drove around the city taking some final footage. *Camions*, huge open trucks in which people stood for the grueling trip to the mountains, lumbered one after another out of the city.



Men strained to pull wheelbarrows once dragged by mules or teams of oxen until the government outlawed pack animals on city streets. It is said that men who earn their living hauling other people's goods up the hilly terrain die within five years.

In a small hospice directed by an American priest and former associate director of Pax Christi USA, infant orphans, chronically-ill children and a 10-year-old feral girl found in the mountains subsisting on garbage are all waiting to die. And no one cares. The state doesn't provide a cent for the hospice. The church says its purpose is to lay out principles, not get involved with programs. Tourists on cruise liners eat their way across the Caribbean and never ever notice this little starving place, except perhaps to blame the victims for being lazy, ignorant and inept.

Friday

On the way to the airport this morning children in droves rushed the car to sell trinkets, wash windows or wipe down the car for a penny or a bite of food. And the *tap-taps*, brightly painted flatbed trucks with slatted sides and blinking lights that haul people like cattle in lieu of public transportation, drove by sporting their names: *Confiance en Dieu* — Confidence in God; *Merci Jesus* — Thank you, Jesus; *Esprit* — Hope; and, *Golgotha.*

White tourists, as few as there were, left Haiti carrying straw baskets, wearing straw hats, brandishing brightly-colored paintings from a drab, dark world. As we circled Miami, each of us descended from immigrant backgrounds of poverty and oppression, I knew with an awful awareness that the Statue of Liberty had turned out her light. TW

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La Tortue: Haven for the super-rich?

The island of La Tortue, six miles off Haiti's north coast, was once the home base of pirates who plundered 17th century European sailing ships laden with treasure from the Caribbean and South America. At night, the story goes, the mountainous 85-square-mile island would twinkle with hundreds of *boucans* — or campfires — of its marauding inhabitants. From this practice came their name, buccaneers.

More recently, the island has fallen prey to modern-day pirates of a different sort. They wear pin-striped suits and custom-made cowboy boots. They are multimillionaires who dream of buying La Tortue wholesale from the Haitian government and setting up a sovereign "tropical paradise" where Haitians would only visit with a passport or a work permit to provide cheap labor.

Such is the proposal of Lund International, Inc., an Orlando, Fla.-based concern, which has petitioned three Haitian governments in the past three years since the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier to lease Haitian territory for $250 million for 198 years — about $1.26 million a year. The proposal was first made for La Tortue in late 1986; at one point, the Namphy government proposed instead the Ile de Gonave in Port-au-Prince bay; afterwards, negotiations returned to La Tortue.

Lund International intends to invest between $14 and $20 billion, building over 20,000 high-priced condominium homes, luxury hotels, eight 18-hole golf courses, tidal power facilities, pharmaceutical plants, oil refineries, hospitals, schools, roads, and an international airport, among other things. Lund would also lease 20,000 acres along Haiti's northern coastline for a duty-free industrial park. Both the island and the territory on the Haitian mainland would be ceded to the newly formed "Republic of La Tortue," which would have its own laws, citizens, and flag.

The story, which broke over Port-au-Prince's Catholic station Radio Soleil in May of last year, aroused patriotic outrage, particularly when the weekly newspaper *Haiti Progres* published an interview with Norman Lund, the firm's president. "There are several reasons why we must have control of the island, such as autonomy, sovereignty, or however you want to call it. It all adds up to the same thing. We couldn't get a dime if we didn't," Lund said. "Our money people will not touch it unless we have full autonomy."

And who are Lund's "money people?"

"There are people all over this world, very wealthy people, very honorable people, very good people, who are looking for a place where they can be safe and have a home for the kids," Lund said. "There's been an awful lot of planning put into this. We have contacts with people in Japan, Hong Kong, and Europe who are ready, willing and able to move once we can provide a place for them to come.

"Most of us are former military people," Lund added. "One is the former president of a major university in the United States. One investor is the former chairman of the board of a division of the Federal Reserve under the Reagan Administration, a prominent government official. Another is the former governor of a state in the United States. One is also a Ph.D. nuclear physicist. As I say, most of these are very prominent people."

Lund makes it clear that Haitians, even those now living on the island, "are not citizens of this country. They would be there with work permits."

And no ordinary permits, at that.

"We anticipate using a card, pretty much like a credit card, as an ID card. And in there, there is a complete set of computer chips. We'll have all their history, their medical records and everything, right in that computer chip."

Lund went on to detail how he and his associates intend to create "a showcase, the first marriage between government, management — which is the corporation — and labor." It would be a country where "there will be no taxes, no import duties, and no export duties." But with no taxes, how can you build schools, roads, and the like? "The corporation is the government in effect, so any corporate profit reels off to government. The corporation spends all of 10% or more of its profits for the operations of the government for the island. The corporation is wearing more than two hats."

When asked how the interests of Haitian workers would be represented in this "marriage," Lund gave an example in which management might set up "a separate corporation owned by the master corporation," and the workers would be "profit-sharing in that corporation. The harder they work, the more they make. So they would share in the profit of that individual corporation, and the profits, after that, will go to the master corporation." In other words, the "master corporation" owns the pie, but charitably offers workers the proverbial crumb to "motivate" them and give them the illusion of "worker control." If in fact any workers were to object to the terms of this "marriage" and make demands, there would be a simple solution, according to Lund. "Those that don't work and don't want to work and cause trouble, we'll pull their permits and send them home."

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In short, what Lund describes is the ultimate profit-making fantasy: a sort of Caribbean "metropolis" with abundant cheap labor, no unions, and above all, no environmental, labor or tax regulations. He envisions ultimate "free private enterprise" unencumbered by government since "the corporation is the government." Labor would all be "foreign" and hence deportable if uncooperative.

Ironically, this is not the first time La Tortue has been targeted for such a project. No sooner had *Haiti Progres* published the Lund interview than the paper was contacted by a Texas businessman named Don Pierson who claimed that Lund's plans for La Tortue were impossible since his company, Dupont Caribbean, Inc. already held a 99-year lease to the island.

"We are going to develop almost the entire island," Pierson said in an interview published in *Haiti Progres.* "We had over $400 million in investment commitments (from U.S. corporations). The eastern part of the island was going to be the industrial tip. The tourist area was going to be toward the western side, and the central portion we were going to try to keep much as it is today; the native huts, the native style, the native way of life as much as possible."



Pierson signed the contract for La Tortue with Francois Duvalier's government on Dec. 4, 1970. About four months later, Papa Doc died. Under Jean-Claude Duvalier's regime, Pierson said, Dupont Caribbean continued its project, surveying the island, drilling wells, and building an airstrip. Heavy machinery and several pre-fab buildings were flown in. But in March 1973, the project was torpedoed, Pierson contends, by an unnamed minister to whom Dupont Caribbean refused to pay a $50,000 bribe. All the equipment was seized and the contract was annulled. Nonetheless, the U.S. State Department has ruled that the Haitian government breached the agreement, according to Pierson. Therefore "we actually still have a legal claim to La Tortue. Any company that might sign another contract for La Tortue, we could effectively block them from international financing of the project."

Meanwhile, some observers wondered if more than corporate greed might be behind this growing interest in La Tortue and the surrounding area. For years, reports have divulged U.S. interest in setting up a military base in Haiti's northwest. This region commands the eastern flank of the Windward Passage, the strategic deep-water channel between Cuba and Haiti, through which shipping to the U.S. eastern seaboard from the Panama Canal and oil-rich Venezuela must pass. The search for a new base site is becoming more urgent with the lease on the U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba (as well as those in the Panama Canal Zone) running out within the next decade.

Often cited as the ideal location is the natural deep-water harbor at Mole St. Nicolas, the location of Columbus' first landing on Hispaniola (the entire island and off-islands of Haiti and the Dominican Republic). U.S. military personnel have repeatedly been seen surveying the harbor area over the past 20 years, according to numerous reports in the Haitian and international press. The Mole is only 30 miles from La Tortue and could even be included in the ceding of mainland territory proposed by Lund International. Or La Tortue could be viewed as an alternate site itself, if Mole St. Nicolas is unobtainable.

The outcry raised by the popular sector against the sale of La Tortue can only give State Department strategists pause to reflect whether they have underestimated Haitian patriotism. Haitian Information Minister Leonce Thelusma felt compelled to issue two communiques denying that he had any knowledge of Lund International or the sale of La Tortue.

But Lund maintained, "I was down in Haiti about three months ago and met with most of the officials when I was there — Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Security — I may not have met with Thelusma. I was there for one day and I met with, I think, four or five of the ministers. We've forwarded this through channels for the president and the total cabinet, of course." (*Haiti Progres,* June 1989)

Whether four of five ministers or the entire government know of the Lund proposals is not the question. What does become clear is that corrupt government officials and the Haitian ruling class in general have been all too ready in past years to sell out Haiti for small change and personal profit. A growing popular movement and national consciousness is making such maneuvers harder for both the United States and its agents.

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Angela Davis: Evolution of an activist

by Anita Cornwell

It's not often that one has the chance to meet a living legend. That opportunity was presented to me recently when Angela Davis came to Philadelphia to give the Women of Color keynote address at the Conference of the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

Angela Davis was the first "great cause" I became associated with when I joined the Women's Movement in the early '70s. I still have my *Free Angela Davis* button that I wore, along with my anti-Vietnam War button and my *Free Joanne Little* button from some years later.

At that time, I knew very little of Davis' background. However, I did know that she was a black sister held captive in the white man's penal system, and was willing to bet my life that once again America had gone out of its way to entrap an innocent black person in its old trick bag.

As writer Marc Olden said in his book, *Angela Davis*: "In reading about militant blacks who taught in universities, bought guns, and admitted they were Communists, white America reacted predictably. A black, gun-toting red was Lucifer come up from below. The black view was different. All those opposing her were white. It was the white world that tried to stop her from teaching, that had threatened her life, and was now charging her with murder and kidnaping. Angela Davis was a black woman fighting back. Angela Davis was a sister in trouble."

To be sure, many white brothers and sisters joined the movement to free Davis that eventually spread around the world. But black support was nearly unanimous. Aretha Franklin said when she offered to put up bail for Davis, she wanted to do so "not because I believe in Communism but because she is a black woman and wants freedom for black people."

Reading about Angela Davis in later years, I was stunned to learn how, in so many instances, her early life history recalled my own. True, we are a generation apart. When Davis was born in Birmingham, Ala. in 1944, I was beginning my first year at Temple University. But some 20 years previous to that, I had first opened my eyes on an unfriendly world in Greenwood, S.C. As a child, Davis lived on "Dynamite Hill" in "Bombingham," so called because of frequent racially-motivated bombings. We both grew up in a world that never seemed to tire of finding ways to make

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life as miserable as possible for all people of color.

Davis left Birmingham at age 15 to live in Brooklyn, N.Y. in order to attend a private, nearly all-white high school in Greenwich Village. At 15, I too, fled to the North and found myself attending a nearly all-white school in the suburbs of Philadelphia. Years after her graduation from Elisabeth Irwin High School, Davis was quoted as saying she "felt her blackness more than in the South," not in the customary racist ways, but because of "effusive overtures" and awkward attempts by people to ignore that she was black.

During her first years at Elisabeth Irwin, Davis discovered the Utopian socialists. Also during that time, she wrote, "The Communist Manifesto hit me like a bolt of lightning. I read it avidly, finding in it answers to many of the seemingly unanswerable dilemmas which had plagued me. What struck me so emphatically was the idea that once the emancipation of the proletariat became a reality, the foundation was laid for the emancipation of all oppressed groups in the society. Like an expert surgeon, this document cut away cataracts from my eyes. The eyes heavy with hatred of Dynamite Hill, the roar of explosives, the fear, the hidden guns, the weeping black women . . . children without lunches, the back of the bus, the police searches. The final words of the Manifesto moved me to an overwhelming desire to throw myself into the Communist movement."

After high school, Davis went to Brandeis University, "the full scholarship bestowed upon me apparently a guilt-motivated attempt to increase their black freshmen population of two.

"We three were all female," she wrote in her autobiography. "I felt alienated, angry, alone. It didn't help that I had gotten very much involved in the writings of the so-called existentialists. I retreated into myself and rejected practically everything outside. Only in the artificial surroundings of an isolated, virtually all-white college campus could I have allowed myself to cultivate this nihilistic attitude."

Davis first met revolutionaries from the Third World in 1962 during two months of study in Paris at the Alliance Francaise after her first year at Brandeis. She felt a bond between herself and the Algerians, and a beginning desire to involve herself in some kind of effort to improve the world.

That summer, Davis attended the World Festival for Youth and Students in Helsinki, where she met revolutionaries from Cuba, Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. When she returned to the United States, she found an FBI agent waiting: "What were you doing at that Communist Youth Festival? Don't you know how we feel about Communists? Don't you know what we do to Communists?"

It was during her year of study in Paris that she learned of the four little Birmingham girls killed in the Sunday School bombing in September 1963.

"They were my friends," she tried to explain to her white companions that afternoon in Paris. But, "they knew nothing of racism and the only way they knew how to relate to me at that moment was to console me as if friends had just been killed in a plane crash." Later, Davis' mother told her that the mother of one of the murdered girls had called her, asking her "to drive her downtown to pick up Carole. She didn't find out . . . until they saw pieces of her body scattered about."

Actually, one could argue that the educational institutions Davis attended, or was otherwise associated with — Elisabeth Irwin, Brandeis, the Sorbonne, Goethe University in Frankfurt — played a pivotal role in her life and laid the groundwork for her becoming a revolutionary. But events at one institution, the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) were directly responsible for transforming her into the legendary figure that she is today.

Davis went to UCLA where she had hoped to settle down and teach philosophy while working on her Ph.D. with her mentor and former Brandeis professor, philosopher Herbert Marcuse. Davis was fired from her philosophy teaching post at UCLA in September 1969, because she was an admitted member of the Communist Party. Her dismissal soon took on a circus quality as zealots from the Right sought to discredit her while zealots from the Left clamored for her academic freedom. In October 1969, Davis was reinstated by court order, only to be dismissed again in June 1970. But by that time she had become a bonafide celebrity.

Then soon after, on Aug. 7, 1970, shots that would eventually resound around the world were fired when Jonathan Jackson — brother of George Jackson, one of the Soledad Brothers — walked into a courtroom in San Rafael, Cal., armed three prisoners from San Quentin in the courtroom, took several hostages, including the judge, and tried to escape in a van parked outside.

When the scenario had run its course, the judge and Jonathan Jackson, and two of the three prisoners were fatally wounded. The remaining prisoner, Ruchell Magee, was charged with kidnaping, murder and conspiracy. Because Davis had been speaking on behalf of the imprisoned Soledad Brothers, and had allegedly bought the guns that Jackson smuggled into the courtroom, she, too, was charged with kidnaping, murder and conspiracy.

When Davis learned of the charges against her, she did what I suppose any red-blooded African-American would have done — became a fugitive, thereby landing on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list. In October 1970, Davis was apprehended in New York City and placed in the Women's House of Detention, the very Greenwich Village jail that had of-

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ten frightened her as she made her way to and from Elisabeth Irwin High School just a few blocks away.

The two months that Davis spent in the Women's House of Detention where, she said in her prison memoirs, "women were heavily drugged or treated like children," marked the beginning of the final phase of her transformation into a true revolutionary.

As she wrote in prison, "Within the contained, coercive universe of the prison, the captive is confronted with the realities of racism, not simply as individual acts dictated by attitudinal bias; rather (s)he is compelled to come to grips with racism as an institutional phenomenon collectively experienced by the victims. The disproportionate representation of the black and brown communities, the manifest racism of parole boards, the intense brutality inherent in the relationship between prison guards and black and brown inmates — all this and more cause the prisoner to be confronted daily, hourly, with the concentrated systematic existence of racism."

In addition, black women prisoners are also subjected to the virulent sexism embedded in this same system. As Davis wrote in her autobiography, "Whether we are 16 or 70, we are girls. Any pastime that was intellectually demanding seemed suspect. The jailers in Marin County were extremely hostile to allowing a chess game in. One other jail 'outlet' was overwhelmingly sexist. It was the presence of the washing machine, clothes dryer and ironing paraphernalia which, discounting the metal tables and backless stools, were the sole furnishings of the day room. The men's linens and jail clothes were sent elsewhere for laundering; the women were expected to do their own. If they did not volunteer, a work schedule was imposed. When no one volunteered, black women were ordered to do it."

When Davis was finally acquitted of all charges against her on June 4, 1972, she thanked family, friends and supporters the world over who had made her freedom possible. She pledged to devote her life to the freeing of political prisoners, prison reform, and to making a difference for the oppressed people of the world.

In speaking of Davis, most people will mention her great intellect, her poise, her warmth, and her almost uncanny ability to relate to people from any strata of society. Others mention her shyness and wry humor, her great inner strength, her good looks, her verbal skills. A friend once said of the entire family, they have "that innate sense of dignity. It was programmed into all the kids, and they carry it with grace."

When I finally met and embraced Davis I could discern all of those qualities in her. Later, during a brief interview, Davis said she wanted to address the issue of women of color in the rape crisis movement because historically, women of color have been so routinely assaulted. She wants to help eradicate the stereotypes that the larger society has used to portray them as something other than human. If one is a thing, and not a person, "we can do with you what we please, as it is impossible to rape a thing," Davis explained.

In a more recent book, *Women, Race and Class*, she expanded on this concept: "As females, slave women were inherently vulnerable to all forms of sexual coercion. If the most violent punishments of men consisted in floggings and mutilations, women were flogged and mutilated, as well as raped. Rape, in fact, was an uncamouflaged expression of the slaveholder's economic mastery and the overseer's control over black women as workers."

Despite such atrocities, however, she is very optimistic concerning the future of women of color and oppressed people in general in America. When asked why she thought so many leaders of the '60s seem not to be coping very well today, and in some instances, "throwing in the towel," Davis said, "We must change with the times. I believe the reason some of the leaders of the '60s have not been able to cope with the '80s is because they are still living in the '60s."

Also, Davis does not share the dim view expressed by many that today's students and young people are apolitical and apathetic. "I am very much impressed by the students of today," she said. "I believe they are, for the most part, every bit as interested in change as the youth of the '60s were. It's just that they are not organized. They haven't found that great issue around which they can come together."

Davis is presently teaching Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Women's Studies — particularly the historical contributions of black women — at San Francisco State University and San Francisco Art Institute.

In addition to her strenuous speaking and teaching schedules, Davis has written several books, the latest being *Women, Culture & Politics*, published recently by Random House. Currently, she is finishing a book on black women singers and the socio-political and historical context of their music. The book will focus on Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, and will be a unique contribution from Davis' perspective, given her interest in aesthetics as well as philosophy and politics. According to Roberta Goodman, her administrative assistant, Davis herself plays the piano and a number of other instruments, but "just for recreation."

Davis still holds to her vow of devoting her life to ending oppression. As Yaniyah Pearson, a personal friend of hers, said to me, "Angela Davis just gives and gives and gives. Her spirit is constantly evolving. What activist do you know, besides Jesse Jackson, perhaps, who has managed to stay fresh and enthusiastic this long without burning out?"

Yes, who indeed? TW

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Church worker terrorized in El Salvador



Josie Beecher

"Anyone who works with the poor is considered subversive."

That was Josie Beecher's response when a reporter asked her at a Nov. 29 press conference in New York why government forces would arrest and threaten her and others in El Salvador working in the churches

"The church has a commitment to be with the poor, and to work for economic justice, so yes, it is true that we want a change in the existing order. But we are committed to peaceful alternatives. Removing the church means losing the only 'middle ground' in El Salvador that is seeking peace," she said. Beecher, a U.S. Episcopal church worker, was arrested by the Salvadoran National Guard in late November and later released. Her arrest came days after six priests and two women workers at a Jesuit university were killed by government troops.

Since mid-November, when rebels launched a major offensive in the neighborhoods of San Salvador, Beecher had been working with other Episcopal missionaries and church workers to house and feed refugees from all over the city at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church. On Nov. 20, before dawn, soldiers in the National Guard arrived at the makeshift shelter. They separated foreign church workers from the others and took them to headquarters of the Treasury Police, allegedly for the workers' "own security." They were told, said Beecher, that there were foreigners working with the insurgents, so the military wanted to verify credentials.

According to Beecher, as she was brought in, a U.S. consular official was present and called the consulate to say that she was there. Then she was taken away, handcuffed, blindfolded, hit on the head, and threatened with electric shock treatment. "It was a terrifying experience," she said. "They ran a hard object across my throat and told me, 'This is what is going to happen to you.' They said I would never get out of there, that I was a 'delinquent terrorist' who had planned the current insurgent offensive."

Five hours later, her handcuffs and blindfold were removed and she was told she could go with the U.S. official. He had been drinking coffee with the Salvadoran colonel in charge, she said, and was visibly irritated by the long wait caused by her interrogation. When Beecher balked at signing a release that stated she had been well treated, the official impatiently advised her to sign or he might have trouble getting her released. Later he told her that she had received treatment "normal for a prisoner of war."

"I was shocked to hear him say that," she recalled. "He seemed to assume that I was guilty." Beecher thought that the U.S. government, which pumps a million dollars a day into El Salvador, could influence the government's treatment of church workers if it wanted to do so.

When asked about Jennifer Casolo, the U.S. churchworker arrested by the Salvadoran government and accused of maintaining a cache of ammunition for the rebels, Beecher said she knew Casolo and that she was not involved with the rebels. Beecher thought the government had singled Casolo out because she works ecumenically with a number of churches in El Salvador. Discrediting Casolo as a rebel partisan "would be a perfect way of discrediting all church workers in El Salvador," she said.

Beecher estimated that from 30 to 40 foreign church workers have left the country, many under direct threat of death. She is concerned about the 12 Salvadoran church workers who were still being held — some of whom have reportedly been beaten — including the rector of St. John's, the Rev. Luis Serrano. "It's a situation of total terror for anyone who works with the churches," she stressed. "This makes it next to impossible to minister to the people we are there to serve."

Beecher chose to leave El Salvador so that she could work with the church at home to get her Salvadoran co-workers released and to insure that the Episcopal Church can continue to exist in El Salvador. Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning sent a team of four bishops — William Frey of Colorado, David Reed of Kentucky, William Swing of California, and James Ottley of Panama — to El Salvador to seek the release of all detained church workers. Browning and other U.S. religious leaders issued a statement expressing outrage at El Salvador's "deliberate and calculated campaign to intimidate and harass the churches."

At the press conference, Browning suggested that the United States "withdraw support in terms of military aid to the government of El Salvador." He criticized the U.S. Congress "for not wrestling with the issues deeply enough."

— Julie A. Wortman
Episcopal Church Center

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Drugs: Legalize the supply?

by Edward Waldron



"J.B., tell me what you hope to get out of life." It was not your textbook counseling scene; a middle-aged white priest, awkwardly trying to draw out a black teenager, whose parents were terrified about what was happening to their son. We sat on a broken bench in a barren Bronx playground strewn with debris, on a gray chilly October morning.

"I don't want much, Fada. A little happiness, a little peace."

"How are you going to get it?"

"I don't know."

"Supposing you don't?"

"Then I'll just have to look for some relief."

"Is that why you do drugs, J.B.?"

"Yeah, Fada, that's why."

J.B.'s parents had migrated from Barbados many years ago. They were both industrious, hard-working and punctual — loyal supporters of the American "work ethic." Winston worked for a publisher; Alice was a nurse. They worked overtime, night shifts and weekends, never refusing their employers' requests. J.B. was neither lazy nor belligerent. But he was definitely not inclined to slavishly serve any employer. He had held a dozen jobs in four years.

I thought of J.B. while listening to President George Bush declare his "War on Drugs." Where will J.B. fit into these programs? He has experienced de-tox

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and group counseling sessions several times. He is sincere while he's in the shelters. But once out, he again confronts painful reality. And he returns to the only source of relief he knows — drugs. J.B. is not vicious enough to succeed at crime. Prison is likely in his future. Or worse, he may end up sprawled out dead in the street, in a pool of blood. "A little happiness, a little peace." Those are not exorbitant demands for a young man to make on life. Why can't America deliver? Why do so many of our youth despair?

The J.B.s of America are part of the human destruction, the environmental devastation, the spiritual desolation of rampant "Mammon" worship. I have no ultimate hope that we can create "a thousand points of light"; figs do not grow on thistles. Our country, because of its Mammon commitments, is incapable of becoming "kinder and gentler." After a decade of deregulation, we are literally out of control. Our greed is rapacious; our avarice voracious. It's in our bones. Our children lose their innocence as soon as they experience the brutal competitiveness of society, in the corrupting schools we provide to teach them how to play the game — *ruthlessly*. And for the increasing numbers of those who fail, there is only the relief of drugs.

Nor are you safe if you "make it." Even the achievers in our rat-race society are finding the rewards sour; they, too, cruise the streets in our marginal neighborhoods, throwing money out the windows of their BMWs for the white powder of relief. To succeed in America is a Catch-22 — "Damned if you do," and "Damned if you don't."

What good are more prisons? More police? More courts? Another Vietnam in Colombia? We are afraid to ask the *real* question: "Why do we want drugs?"

The answer hurts — the demand is due to an increasing disgust with our values; a judgment on a life-style unattainable to many, and unsatisfying to the rest. Our young people, in effect, are saying, "Give us something more worthwhile to live for." Or they were; by now, they may have given up asking.

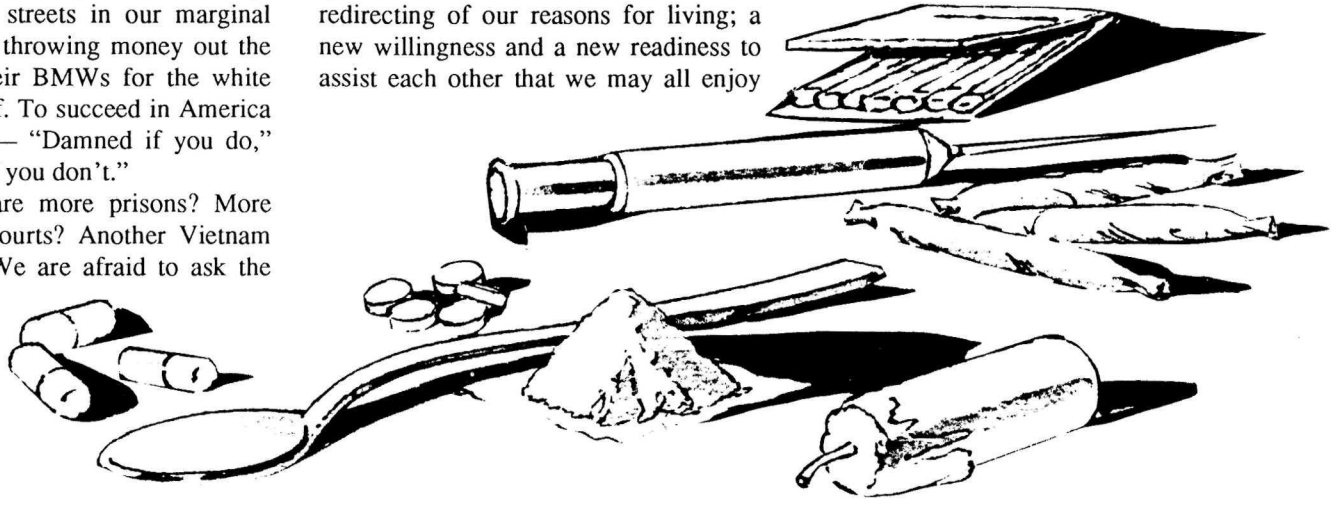
The only short-term solution to our nation's drug problem that makes any sense is to legalize the production and supervise the distribution of cocaine and the other illegal drugs, just as we have done with methadone. President Bush wants us to repeat the mistake we made with Prohibition. The only way to disarm the drug cartels and underworld thugs who manage so capably their international network is to make drugs legally available. This step would at least eliminate the crime and the violence. Legalization would not eliminate addiction, any more than the 21st Amendment eliminated alcoholism. Perhaps we should resign ourselves to always having alcoholics and addicts with us. But we can remove the terror from the traffic by legalizing drug production and controlling distribution.

The long-term solution will be much more painful; it will require broad, national repentance. We must confess that we have been spending our resources on bread which does not satisfy; *Isaiah 55:2* speaks to us. There has to be a radical redirecting of our reasons for living; a new willingness and a new readiness to assist each other that we may all enjoy "a little happiness, a little peace."

We casually dismiss *Acts 2:42-47* and *4:32-35* as an "interim ethic" or the freak behavior of a radical minority. We preach so seldom from these texts in the Episcopal Church that most of our members would attribute the writing to Karl Marx. But those earliest Christians had Mammon under control. They knew it was Satan in a fur coat. They lived out their theology of Christian stewardship. And there was no mention of nonachievers dropping out in search of some kind of relief from the emptiness of it all. Their corporate lifestyle was purposeful, creative, and richly satisfying. Nor is that lifestyle hopelessly obsolete; our monks and nuns have tried to live this way for centuries. Discarding the principle of private property is not necessarily communistic; exalting the principles of capitalism is not necessarily Christian. Archbishop Desmond Tutu can help us here:

> *"What I have seen of capitalism too heavily stresses the worst side of us; our competitiveness, our selfishness, our grasping for the most for ourselves — the survival of the fittest... I am looking for an ordering of society where compassion is more important that possession, and sharing is more important than success."*

I can't imagine such a society having a drug problem. TW



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Erasing Catholic-Protestant borders

by Robert Hirschfield

Mairead Corrigan Maguire shook herself free from the insistent tangle of her children and took my hand. The rain had stopped in Belfast, and the Peace People office on Lisburn Road was flooded with light. Fourteen years have passed since an IRA man, pursued by British soldiers, rammed his car into Maguire's sister Ann and three of her children. All three children were killed, giving birth to short-lived protests by outraged Catholics and Protestants demanding an end to the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland. The Peace People were born of that carnage — its founders, Maguire and Betty Williams, winning the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize.

Maguire, now 45, is small and girlish, with a joyful aura that has managed to outlast sorrow and controversy. She had just returned from Jerusalem where she had done a 40-day liquid fast with Melkite priest Charles McCarthy of Boston.

"The purpose of the fast was to call Christians to repent for the violence the churches have been guilty of over the centuries. It was also to call Christians and churches to come together ecumenically and return to the nonviolent message of Jesus."

Maguire no longer leads thousands of people on peace marches as she once did. She spends most of her time at home with her five children. Three are the surviving children of Ann Maguire, who committed suicide in 1981, following which Mairead married her brother-in-law, Jack Maguire. But she remains active in the Peace People. The organization now devotes itself to bringing together Catholic and Protestant youths, bussing prisoners' families to the prisons for weekly visits, and trying to keep alive the alternative of nonviolence.

"The sectarian violence continues," Maguire said, "but there are signs of hope. Shane Doherty, an IRA bomber in jail for 15 years, has become a Quaker and a pacifist while in prison. Protestant and Catholic bombers have come out of jail renouncing violence."

She saw another hopeful sign in the recent opening of four integrated schools in Belfast. Established by the ecumenical group All Children Together, the schools consist of 50% Catholic and 50% Protestant students. This is a major development in a country whose school system is largely segregated by religion.

"The church still opposes integrated schools," lamented Maguire, a devout Catholic from Andersonstown, an IRA stronghold in west Belfast. The daughter of a window cleaner, she grew up fearing the IRA and hating the British army.

"Because of personal experiences I had with British soldiers, I once seriously considered the use of violence against state violence. I prayed about it before the Blessed Sacrament. I felt God was saying to me — not in a dramatic way of course — that nonviolence was the way."

Consciously or unconsciously, Maguire echoes Elijah's challenge to Israel — "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow God; but if Baal, follow Baal." — with her own challenge to the churches of Ireland: "Did Jesus teach an ethic of nonviolence, the love of enemies and friends, or did he teach an ethic of justified violence? The churches should choose."



Mairead Corrigan Maguire

She observed, "though nonviolence is part of Christian culture, it is not taught to the priests and it is not taught to the people."

Maguire takes to task all those responsible for the violence in Northern Ireland. Of the British she says, "They have removed due process of law in Northern Ireland and in its place have imposed broad powers of detention." She is likewise critical of the UDA (Ulster Defense Association), largest of the Protestant paramilitaries: "The UDA forces shopkeepers to pay them money, or their shops will be incinerated. They are like racketeers who carry out sectarian killings of Catholics."

Maguire also has harsh words for the IRA. To her this group personifies Catholic violence, Catholic nationalism,

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Robert Hirschfield is a free-lance writer based in New York who recently spent two-and-a-half weeks in Ireland.

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and a distorted form of Catholic liberation. "I am against nationalism," she says emphatically.

"The IRA wants the British to respect human rights, but it does not respect human rights. It has been guilty of kneecapping and killing innocent people. And it is disruptive in other ways. In Lower Falls, west Belfast, on the 20th anniversary of British military occupation of Northern Ireland, the IRA left notices under people's doors telling them to keep their children in because they would be operating in the streets. Some parents did, and some didn't."

She claimed, "Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, doesn't allow people to speak out. Many Catholics do speak out against IRA violence. And many vote against Sinn Fein. The party most Catholics in the north vote for is the SDLP (Social Democratic and Labor Party)."

Later she relented a bit. "Many of the paramilitaries on both sides are young and idealistic. At least they are not apathetic like so much of the middle class."

The Nobel Peace Prize won by Maguire and Betty Williams came with a curse wrapped inside the blessing. The curse was the $80,000 cash award. Maguire initially intended to give her share to the movement. Then Williams decided, after publicly stating otherwise, to pocket her share, which however inappropriate, was legitimate. Maguire, not wanting to further strain an already troubled relationship, decided to do likewise. To this day, there are those who question her integrity for having kept the money. She admits, "It was the worst thing we ever did." She now works for the Peace People as an unpaid volunteer.

In evaluating the accomplishments of the Peace People, Maguire said simply, "We created an atmosphere that made it easier for people to move forward toward peace." But as if apologizing for it, she hastened to explain, "Success is not our business. God calls us to perseverance."

Second woman bishop elected

When the bishops of the Anglican Communion have their next international meeting, there will be at least two women bishops present. The Anglican Church in New Zealand recently elected the Rev. Dr. Penelope Ann Bansall Jamieson, 47, as bishop of the Diocese of Dunedin, one of the nine dioceses in the Church of New Zealand. Jamieson is the second Anglican woman bishop, and the first elected as a diocesan, with oversight of all parishes and priests in the diocese. The first woman bishop, the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, was elected as suffragan last year in Massachusetts.



The Rev. Dr. Penelope Bansall Jamieson

Jamieson said she was "very surprised indeed" about her election and that her priority would be to "get to know people in the diocese and to set down the roots of a good, strong pastoral ministry."

Responding to the news, Bishop Harris said, "Being the 'first' is both a joy and a challenge. I wish for her the same joy, support, and fulfillment that I have experienced here from the people of Massachusetts."

The election, Harris said, was a recognition of Jamieson's commitment and service and also a sign of the Anglican Communion's growing acceptance of women's ministry. "I hope her election may inspire all women to consider whatever service — ordained and lay — they can offer to the church. I pray that her election to head a diocese may be the occasion that crystallizes for the entire church the realization that God calls all men and women to equal responsibility for the church's ministry."

The Church of New Zealand has been ordaining women as priests since 1977. As of 1988, out of 800 clergy, 94 women serve as priests in the province, comprised of some 200,000 Anglicans. In 1986, the General Synod made a provision for a woman priest to be consecrated as bishop.

Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop of the U.S. Episcopal Church, lauded the news from New Zealand as "very good indeed. Their province has experienced the ministry of women as priests as has ours, and simply taken the next step, as did we."

"I am delighted," said Browning, "that the experience we have had in this country has indicated that women in the episcopal role can be a positive step for a church," and added that he offers his prayers and congratulations to Jamieson, the Diocese of Dunedin and the Province of New Zealand.

Jamieson was born in England and earned a Ph.D. degree at the University of Wellington and a B.D. degree at the University of Otago in New Zealand. She was ordained a priest in 1983, and was most recently vicar of Karori West and Makara. Her consecration is scheduled for the middle of this year.

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Capitalist honeymoon premature

by Paul Surlis and Patrick Joyce

The recent upheavals in China — and in a different fashion the openings toward greater democracy and market-oriented economies in the USSR and in much of Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe — are leading many observers to proclaim that socialism has failed and capitalism has succeeded. One of the most noteworthy expressions of this sentiment was formulated by Francis Fukuyama in a Washington-based quarterly, *The National Interest.*

Fukuyama's thesis is contained in his first paragraph: "Watching the flow of events over the past decade or so, it is hard to avoid the feeling that something fundamental has happened in world history. The past year has seen a flood of articles commemorating the end of the Cold War and the fact that 'peace' seems to be breaking out in many regions of the world. But what we may, in fact, be witnessing is not just the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the emergence of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government. Borrowing the vocabulary of Hegel and Marx, it may be the end of history."

Fukuyama is not just hailing the end of ideology but the "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism." Small wonder this thesis is being vigorously discussed in Washington, Ottawa, Paris, Rome and other world capitals.

This thesis should be contested and not be allowed to become dogma.

It is important to challenge the underlying assumptions that capitalism occupies the moral high ground and, with a little fine-tuning, can and should become the sole economic system of the future.

Any discussion of capitalism is bound to be misleading unless its constituent structural elements, and the logic by which these operate and the attitudes they foster, are kept in mind. The three principal constituents of the capitalist system are:

1. Market-oriented commodity production. Commodities are produced for sale, and always for profit. This means the intrinsic purpose is not the creation of goods to meet human needs. This meeting of human needs does happen, sometimes abundantly, but the primary motive is still production for profit that has to be ever-increasing.

Each time corporations close shop in the United States and transfer production overseas, they do so not to produce more or better quality goods, but to make greater profit. This is indisputable.

2. An indispensable prerequisite of capitalism is private ownership of the means of production. The reference here is not to one's home, garden, or other personal belongings, but to land, factories, rental property, coal, oil, gas, to economic and whatever other institutions are capable of yielding wealth.

Three principal consequences follow from this:

- Private persons have wrested from society the right to dictate how natural resources and raw materials should be used.
- Such a right means that other individuals are excluded from having a say in how means of production should be used. Therefore, the real producers, i.e. workers, do not own the means necessary to carry on production.

Those who own the means of production thereby secure power over virtually the entire production process, and with this comes preponderant social control. In recent years this social control has often been used to transfer jobs overseas and devastate whole communities. Thus, the capitalist class in effect denies economic democracy to the majority.

3. Capitalism, everywhere it developed, produced for the first time in history that large segment of people who are forced to sell their labor for a wage in order to obtain the necessities basic for survival.

This division of society into those who own the means of production and those who survive only by selling their labor for a wage is not a given, it is not God-ordained or part of the natural order of things. Historically, it was brought about by massive social upheavals like the dislocation of peasants in the enclosure movement in England — and the dispossessed were forced into factories and sweatshops to work and into hovels to live.

A similar process is taking place in many parts of the world today where land is cleared of farm families, beef and crops are produced for export and for profit and the dispossessed move into urban areas where they are underfed, underhoused, underemployed or employed at subhuman wages. To cite a recent example in the United States,

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600,000 farm families lost their means of livelihood in the past eight years and they, too, were forced into the cities to sell their labor for a wage in order to survive.

The three foregoing are prerequisites of the capitalist system and are as necessary to it as roundness is to the wheel. Added to these is an attitudinal or behavioral dimension that arises out of the three objective constituent factors.

4. Individual, acquisitive maximizing behavior on the part of most in the economic system, both owners and workers, arises from the very logic of capitalism. This point is often confused by those who speak of greed or immorality as if the behavior in question were *psychological* in origin and hence changeable with sufficient doses of willpower. On the contrary, the endless competition for more is a constraint arising out of the very essence of the capitalist system.

If Mother Teresa were the owner of means of production and her Missionaries of Charity the wage laborers, the logic of the system with its never-ending quest for the highest rate of profit would compel them to the same competition and class warfare we see going on now in the coal mines of West Virginia or at Eastern Airlines.

Sure, one may envisage an economic system based on truthfulness, compassion and general humanitarian motives, but whatever it would be, it would not be capitalism, whose very nature and unalterable law is the pursuit of ever-increasing profit. Once any business entity ceases this pursuit, competition, the dynamo of the system, will inexorably cause its elimination.

Therefore, moralizing about compassionate capitalists or moral characteristics or social conscience is beside the point. This sermonizing obfuscates or mystifies what should be clarified. Indeed, it falsifies the issues by holding out the hope that the system can operate justly because abuses are peripheral to it. Instead, what are moralistically seen as abuses are inherent in the very constituents of the system and express the logic of its functioning.

We mentioned truthfulness, for example. What we mean is not the elimination of the false frills advertisers indulge in, but something that goes to the very heart of the system's creation of false needs (wants) for whose satisfaction often wholly unnecessary products are manufactured to the exclusion of those items necessary to fulfill all people's basic survival needs.

An important aspect absent from recent euphoric discussions of capitalism is the price paid by those on whose backs capitalism succeeds.

The history of the invasion, colonialization, and plunder of Ireland, Latin America, India, Africa and Asia, a history that contains near-genocide, starvation, and despoliation is a constituent part of the success of capitalism in England and later in Europe.

The history of the slave trade, with its various economic contributions, is also intrinsic to the success of capitalism in England, in other European countries and in the southern United States. Three hundred years of slavery may have robbed Africa of more than 100 million people between the ages of 15 and 35, the very prime of their lives.

Nor can the post-slavery racism in many countries be divorced from economic considerations. Racism, including its ethnic variety, keeps workers divided, holds wages down, keeps unions weak and so enables economic exploitation of the least powerful workers to continue. Globally, the free or underpaid labor of women and often, children, in the domestic and public sphere is also a necessary condition of the so-called success of capitalism.

One might also mention neocolonialism and its national-security state apparatus. Since the 19th century, U.S. expansionist policies have led to repeated invasions of Latin American countries.

U.S.-supported and trained armies practice torture, disappearances and murder of people who are struggling for access to land, food, houses, jobs, education and health care. South Africans and Latin Americans are subject to the most brutal oppression so that cheap labor and cheap resources are available to keep an excessively high standard of living for many in the United States and other First World countries.

To those who still say "capitalism has succeeded," we say: Go tell it in Vietnam, with its millions of dead or injured and its environment poisoned in defense of capitalism. Tell it in El Salvador, where 70,000 people have been massacred largely by U.S.-supported death squads and soldiers in the past eight years alone.

Tell it in Guatemala, with its 60,000 inhabitants, most of them Indians, massacred and buried in obscurity (in our media as well) in the past decade. Tell it in Nicaragua, where 50,000 people have been slaughtered under U.S. auspices because meeting basic human needs is the social goal aimed at and not maximizing of profit for elites.

Tell half the children in the United States under age six who live in poverty, together with 30 million adults, the most destitute of whom are women. Tell the 3 million homeless, the 37 million who have no health insurance, the 20 million who are hungry for a few days each month. Tell them the system occupies the moral high ground and is the best (when purged of a few abuses), but don't be surprised if skeletons and mocking laughter disturb your dreams. TW

MOVING?

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Short Takes

Not like Civil Rights

Operation Rescue now compares its anti-choice activities to the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement. I find the comparison difficult to affirm. During the '60s, the Civil Rights Movement struggled for equal access to jobs, public facilities and schools. I remember witnessing a group of Black children, with their school books, walking behind police lines to enter integrated schools. The police were protecting these children from screaming "anti-rights" protestors blocking the entrance to schools. These white so-called "Christians" were degrading and demoralizing a race of people. These demonstrators were deliberately trying to deny constitutional rights to a specific group of people, in this case, Blacks. What Operation Rescue is attempting to do is also to demean and to degrade a specific group of people; in this case, women. This is where the only connection appears.

Let's put an end to the illegitimate associations with the Civil Rights Movement.

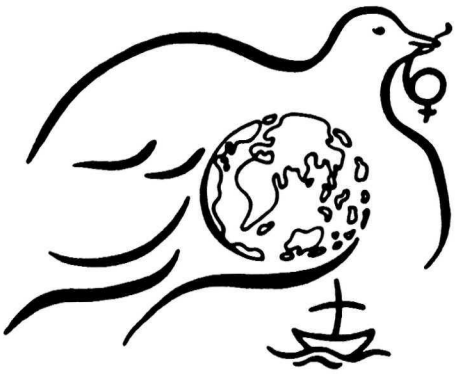
Mary Jane Patterson
Washington, D.C.

Prophetic limitations

We must learn to accept the church's prophetic role with its limitations. Prophets are called to speak to the faithful, and not to the world; prophecy presupposes a faithful, interested and involved audience. The need for speaking to other churches and other Christian people, as well as to our own institutions and constituency, is often overlooked, because it wouldn't be "charitable" to say what we really think, even if our message is based on what we believe is true. The truth, however, is often not charitable, and we need to remind ourselves and others of that.

There is a need for an ecumenicity of judgment on what we do as churches. The Scripture tells us that judgment begins with the household of God. What we perceive as truth, as wrong as it may be, does have some rights; justice has a major claim on us, as well as charity and peace. (That we think of the ideas of justice and peace as separable at all, tells us something that we need to hear.)

The Rev. Hugh Weaver
***JSAC Grapevine* 5/89**



Solidarity with women decade

Foremost on the agenda of the U.S. Committee involved with the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, meeting in Los Angeles recently, was to set up a process by which efforts could be measured at the end of the decade (1988-98). After two years of planning and organization, the World Council of Churches' U.S. Committee proposed examination of quantitative endeavors, such as increasing the number of women in church leadership positions now held by men, increasing of at least by one-third the number of women senior pastors in major posts. Also proposed was the implementation of an experiential educational process for men to overcome fear of the leadership of women and to share power on an equitable basis.

The committee also recommended the development of relationships with women in other countries, particularly across cultural and racial lines; global and local action plans which lead to self-development and justice, local interdenominational exchanges, representation of both men and women on all committees on issues currently called "women's issues," and a new paradigm for integrating work, family and life.

A national consultation for women in politics and church women was proposed, along with workshops on developing a spirituality that discloses a renewed understanding of sexuality, and a series of state, regional and national celebrations.

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U.S. Office, WCC

Quote of note

A line of scripture which does a lot for me comes from St. Paul, quoting the Psalms: "Be angry, but do not sin." Jesus was angry over 50% of the time, and it's very dangerous theology to try to improve on Jesus. The anger needs to be focused, but anger is what maintains your sanity. Anger keeps you from tolerating the intolerable.

The Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr.
***Pax Christi* Fall, 1989**

What is Episcopal Church image?

As part of a discussion on redefining the congregation at a Working Class Ministry Conference in Plainfield, Ind., the Rev. Robert Gallagher asked small groups to name Episcopalians in the news, people they wished were Episcopalians, and television characters known to be Episcopalians. After all the names were called out, Gallagher asked, "Where are the working class Episcopalians?" The group could not name any, leading Gallagher to suggest that the church has an image problem.

The church often needs to be defined as "what we are instead of what we used to be," he said. Gallagher, a member of a pastoral team in Trenton, N.J., used material developed by the Order of the Ascension and taught as part of the Parish Development Institute co-sponsored each summer by the order and General Theological Seminary, New York.

Episcopal News Service

Journalists lied to

The problem we journalists face is that we are constantly being lied to, and that we often fail to expose the lies. In my view there is no such thing as "journalistic ethics." There is only ethics. What counts, what justifies our trade, is the stuff they would pay us not to print. Untruths told often enough by the highest authorities become accepted facts, so that, for example, journalists use the phrase "humanitarian aid" without quotation marks to describe logistical support to lethal commandos.

John L. Hess, *Quill*
Quoted in *Churchman's Human Quest*

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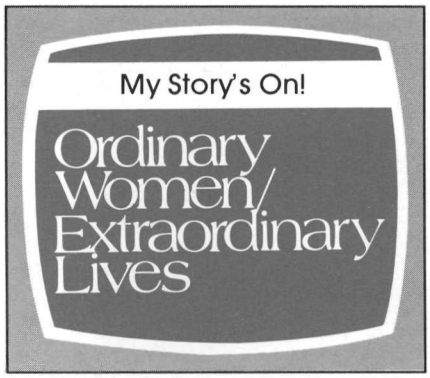

Edited by Paula Ross, Berkeley, Cal.

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THE WITNESS

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On freezing pre-embryos
• Charles Meyer

Seminaries and liberation
• Alison Cheek
• Carter Heyward

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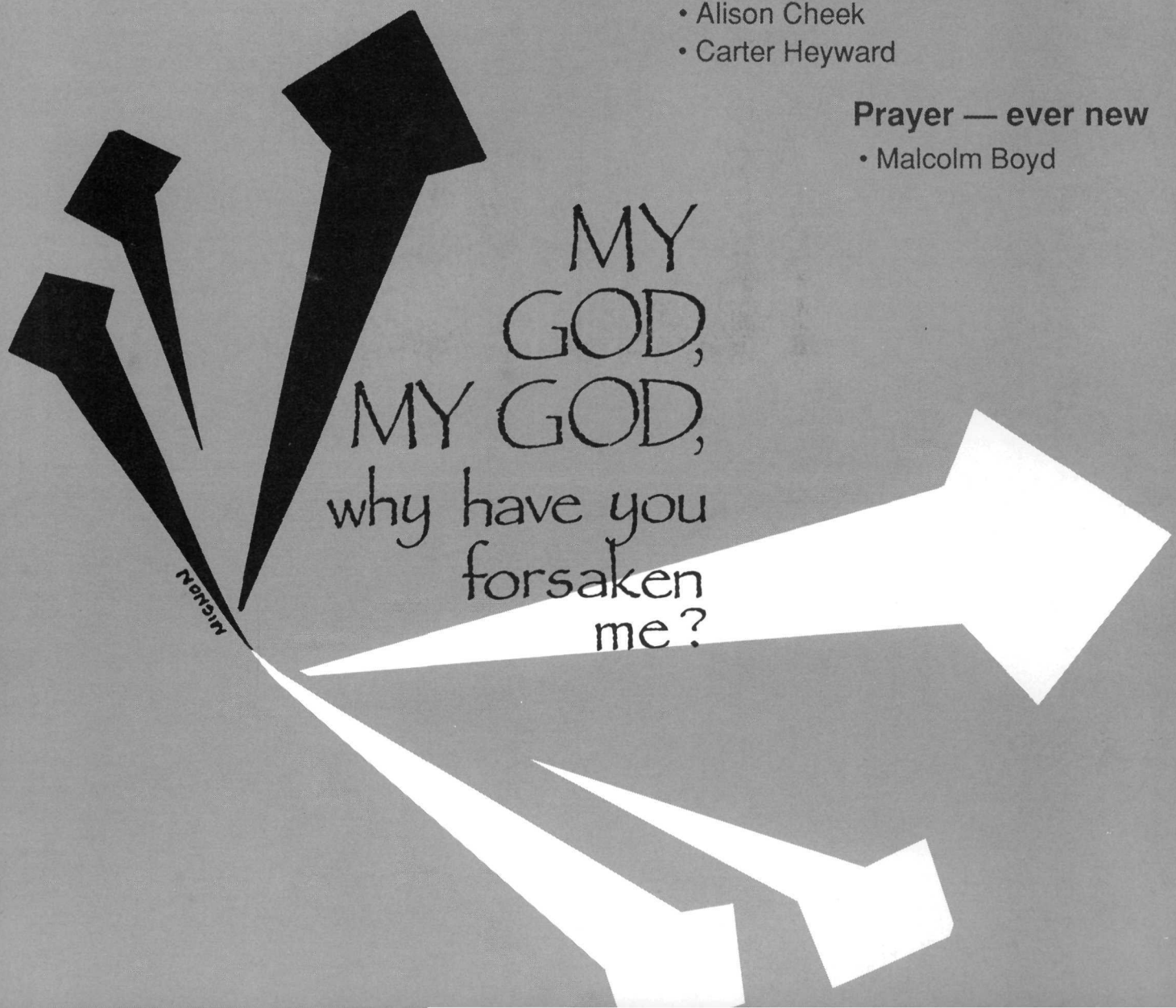
• Malcolm Boyd



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Letters

Middle class scapegoats

It is kind of John Snow to identify the cause of all our problems, the white, straight, money-oriented, college educated, affluent middle class (December WITNESS). He exhibits all the prejudice that he would deplore if directed at another group. We have to have our scapegoats, don't we?

I would remind John Snow the white middle class feels, bleeds, and has its tragedies due to AIDS, drugs, delinquencies, etc.

No wonder the church speaks to a smaller and smaller audience when spokespersons of the Gospel drive people to the margins because of who they are.

Abner K. Pratt II
Eastham, Mass.

Snow responds

I am sorry to see my article in THE WITNESS interpreted by Abner Pratt as an attack on the middle class. What I was attempting to say is that American culture as it affects everyone from the underclass to the very rich is based on Social Darwinist assumptions.

As a middle class person successfully on the way up believes he or she is a winner, so the underclass kid about to drop out of high school believes deeply that he or she is a loser. Both believe, or rather assume, that the survival of the fittest adequately describes the human enterprise. The middle class is not an evil conspiracy to dominate American society, it is captive to the same crazy idea that life is a struggle among individuals, the "war of all against all," where only the most fit must survive if there is to be human progress.

Not only is this kind of reductionist evolutionary socio-biology scientifically silly, it is in direct contradiction to the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. John Snow
Cambridge, Mass.

Read with eagerness

I am part of the Whitefish Peace Alliance and we send you our Peaceweaver newsletter, from which you quote on occasion in Short Takes, so I feel like sending you a personal note.

Many thanks for all you stand for. I would never have known about the Appalachian coal mine strike except for your coverage. You got to it early, and that has added help for me when I have seen it in other media contexts.

The two periodicals I always read with great eagerness are THE WITNESS and *Sojourners*. You represent a very important part of the Episcopal Church, and a voice that is sorely needed today.

The Rev. Richard A. Kirchoffer
Whitefish, Mont.

Read with reservations

I generally disagree with you 90% of the time, but you are always stimulating, and your December AIDS issue was really excellent.

The Rev. Robert M. Darrow
West Bend, Wisc.

Trident correction

I'm particularly pleased with the November issue commemorating the 50th birthday of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. I like all the articles, especially Nathaniel Pierce's piece and Mary Miller's history.

I would only make one small correction in Jim Lewis' interview which I also think came out well. It is understandable that he would quote me as saying that "just one Trident submarine has as much destructive power as 25 World War II submarines," because it's almost impossible to imagine the terrible extent of the destructive power of these weapons. Actually what I said is that just one Trident carries as much destructive force as 25 World War IIs!! (According to *Newsweek* magazine.) Or put another way, just one Trident is also equal to 1,200 Hiroshimas.

The Navy likes the Trident and the D-5 missiles they carry because they are accurate and fast — the missiles can travel 6,000 miles and come within 600 feet of their target. The Navy claims that the D-5 can destroy Soviet land-based missiles while they are still in their hardened siloes.

And aside from their awesome destructive capabilities is the fact that each Trident submarine fully equipped with its load of 24 D-5 missiles (each carrying up to 12 nuclear warheads) costs $1.3 billion. Just imagine how many affordable housing units could be built with that money, or community health centers, or how many urban schools upgraded. This is just a way of saying that what we need in this country is nothing less than a profound reordering and reshaping of our economic priorities.

Anne Rowthorn
Hartford, Conn.

Shares resistance story

Pat Washburn's "Inviting the IRS to dinner" in November prompts me to share a story of another EPF member's tax resistance. A dear friend of mine, long either a student or otherwise unemployed, is now entitled to a respectable taxable income. His solution was to live within that modest amount that can remain untaxed and donate the remainder to his parish for the express purpose of making it fully accessible to persons with disabilities. God only knows what good works will come from this method of tax resistance.

Jane Jackson
Oakland, Cal.

Issue gave hope

Having been "grounded" by a bad cold, I caught up on some of my reading, including the November WITNESS. I was so excited about some of the articles that I called numerous people to share with

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them my excitement.

The article about the death penalty really got to me. When Joseph Ingle mentioned about the throwaway diapers, "*stripped of his dignity . . .* " I wept.

I have been a member of EPF since about 1960, so I was much interested in the issue. I had also been a member of the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity (ESCRU) and always felt that the two groups should join, but ESCRU just died. Why can't we make connections?

THE WITNESS pulled me back into the Episcopalian fold. I was so discouraged that I had given up going to church. Of course, I knew that wasn't the answer but the November issue did me more good, gave me more hope, than any sermon could have given me.

Mary Austin
Newtown, Pa.

John Walker memories

I was deeply touched by the WITNESS article on Bishop John Walker, as it brought back many memories of that wonderful evening at St. Margaret's, so full of love and of the man who inspired them all.

Many people said after the service that they needed a personal way to say goodbye. The Cathedral service helped us lay our bishop to rest. But we needed something more intimate to express our love for our friend and pastor. For nearly three hours, story after story was told by young and old, rich and poor, friend and stranger. You did an excellent job in your article of sharing the flavor of that evening and of paying tribute to a great man. Thank you for all you give to us throughout the year.

The Rev. Dr. Vienna Cobb Anderson
Washington, D.C.

300 years late?

I am unable to set aside the remarks submitted in Glen Rice's Letter to the Editor, "300 years late" (December). Certainly his hostility toward the church is readily apparent, but I wonder if his hostility masks a deeper alienation, suffered by many gay and lesbian people who have left the church and, consequently, the faith which it represents. One can hardly blame Rice for his hostility. At the same time it seems ironic that while he would not allow the church to determine his right to his sexuality, he has seemingly allowed the church — by completely embracing his exile — to determine his spirituality, and the corresponding understanding of how God interacts with the world.

Gay men and lesbians have not been the only group to suffer at the hands of the church: Women, blacks, Jews, children, among many others, have equally experienced shame and rejection. Each have been forced to clarify God's continued faithfulness to their people regardless of the prevailing attitudes of the institution, a scandalous particularity especially to white, heterosexual men. Each have reclaimed their rich heritage, their rich traditions. Likewise, gay men and lesbians are beginning to reclaim their heritage, even if it is only to remember the countless brothers and sisters who were burned as "faggots" at the stake. And gay and lesbian Christians are giving witness to a God who seeks justice for those among God's people who have had no voice in their society, and too frequently in their own church.

Perhaps Rice may never return to the church. Nevertheless, God continues to remain faithful to him. Thankfully, your efforts and the work of others will be the voice crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight God's paths." (Pardon the pun.) You have brought a new vision, a new hope to those who have been kept in bondage or exile.

Paul Bendan
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Kudos from Peru

Loving greetings for the New Year, and many thanks for keeping THE WITNESS coming our way. The contents are always stimulating and we share the ideas with our Christian Feminist group, *Talitha Cumi.* It is good to feel connected in some way with all the efforts to humanize our planet.

So many momentous events going on in our world — does it mean there may be a breakthrough for transformation in the coming century?

Sister Rose Timothy
Sister Rose Dominic
Lima, Peru

Returns to Nicaragua

My husband and I have returned to Nicaragua to work for a few years, *si Dios quiere.* We're interim staff of the Quaker Center, then we'll work in the *campo,* I doing health education and Charles, carpentry. I recently saw the Rev. Miguel D'Escoto and remembered his fast for peace in 1983 when so many came to fast with him from all over the world, including THE WITNESS. What a special moment in history that was.

Poor Nicaragua is suffering terribly. There is hunger among adults as well as children. With rising costs, it is a daily struggle for the poor to survive. Since Congress voted funding for the opposition in the elections, the contras in the countryside have increased their killing, kidnaping, mining of roads, destroying cooperatives, robbing, even threatening those who will not promise to vote for the opposition UNO. The people are weary. However, belief in the fundamental goodness, rightness and ultimate victory of the revolution is strong. Christians speak of this time as being their "40 years in the desert" after their escape from slavery.

The Sandinistas are doing everything

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THE WITNESS

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THE WITNESS



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Editorial

Our demons, ourselves

Continual reports from Central America of cold-blooded murders, never-ending suffering of civilian populations, and, most recently the U.S. invasion of Panama present abundant, grotesque material for reflection as Lent begins.

One of the six Jesuits murdered in El Salvador often said, according to the *National Catholic Reporter,* that the United States was the most violent country in the world. George Bush seems determined to prove it with the 14th U.S. invasion of Panama — yet another example of "gunboat democracy."

A *New York Times* headline last October asked, "What Should Washington Do About Noriega?" The story, among other things, suggested the possibility of "an old fashioned military operation." But Robert A. Pastor, a former Carter Administration official, is quoted as reacting to this: "Removing Noriega by force is a ridiculous idea. If we failed, we'd be humilated; and if we succeeded, even our closest friends in Latin America would condemn us. We could be faced with a hostile new regime or find ourselves compelled to support a regime through military occupation."

Then came the Dec. 20 invasion of Panama.

Now reactions are setting in — witness Colombia's firm protest of the U.S. Navy in its waters for openers. But what about the lack of voices condemning the invasion of Panama coming from our own country? Our own Congress?

To their great credit, church leaders reacted with outrage. But they were fighting macho headlines such as "OURS", which took up half a tabloid page over Noriega's prison photograph. And church leaders who filed protests must have felt like voices crying in the wilderness, as public opinion proved supportive of the invasion. WITNESS readers who found the act unconscionable will be consoled by the following statements, gathered by the Episcopal News Service:

Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning: "I am profoundly saddened that the administration has found it necessary to intervene militarily and unilaterally once again in the affairs of a Western Hemisphere nation — even in the face of extreme provocation . . . I mourn the deaths both of the U.S. soldiers and of Panamanian citizens." He expressed concern whether "such a violent act will issue in a just solution."

James Hamilton, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, sent a letter to President Bush admonishing: "The rationale you have offered the nation for having ordered this invasion is insufficient, in our opinion . . . The NCC has long defended certain basic norms of international behavior. These include respect for the international rule of law; respect for treaties freely entered into; recourse to appropriate intergovernmental organizations for resolution of international disputes, and the unacceptability of unilateral acts of military force, whether covert or overt, against another party. The NCC has consistently challenged governments, including our own, when they have violated these fundamental principles."

The Rev. Thom White Wolf Fassett, general secretary of the United Methodist Church's Board of Church and Society: "U.S. intervention in Panama cannot be understood as a valid act of a civilized nation. Unilateral intervention, no matter its validity, can never be supported."

Episcopal Bishop James Ottley of Panama: "We regret that the changes so longed for by our people did not find a response in the negotiations which were carried out previously, and that they had to be accomplished through an armed intervention, which has left suffering and grief in the wake."

The Council of Latin American Churches called the invasion "a new terrorist action" and accused the U.S. government of being the "main obstacle for the establishment of peace" in the region.

"How long will the Christian churches in the United States continue to tolerate, and in some cases, even justify, these actions that not only violate the most basic human rights, but also the right that the weakest and smallest countries have to make their own decisions and to write their own history?" the statement asked.

All of which provide sober reflections for Lent, as we ponder that "some demons are cast out only by prayer and fasting" — and international opinion mounts that *we* are those demons.

7 of 8 churchworkers released

Seven of the eight Episcopal churchworkers who were jailed in El Salvador have been released. Still detained is Julio Castro Ramirez, agronomist for CREDHO, allegedly being held because his brother is a member of the FMLN. Church lawyers continue to work for his release.

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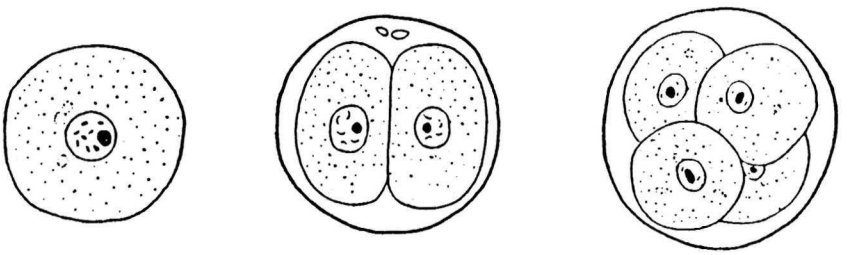
Cryo in the wilderness:

The ethics of embryo freezing

by Charles Meyer



Jokes abound about frozen embryos. The judge in the Tennessee divorce case reportedly awarded equal embryo custody to husband and wife: six months in his freezer and six months in hers. A new movie is said to be titled: "Honey, I Thawed The Kids!" Couples with embryos in storage call them "kid-cicles."

But behind the levity is a sense of uneasiness about the ethical implications of cryopreservation — the freezing of human embryos — for our society. This uneasiness is shared by couples requesting the procedure, practitioners performing it, and commentators observing it, and rightly so, for the balance of benefit to burden is as yet unclear. The scales are still teetering while the procedure is rapidly becoming standard medical practice in In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) programs around the world — yet another example of medical technology rapidly outpacing our systems of ethical decision-making.

Cryopreservation of embryos is not new. It has been successfully done with mammalian embryos since 1971. But it has only been since 1983 that the technology for cryopreservation has been applied successfully to human embryos as a possible adjunct for treatment of infertility in IVF programs. The first human birth from a frozen embryo occurred in 1985, and there are now nearly 100 children resulting from such embryos. There were nine U.S. IVF clinics using cryopreservation in 1985, 15 in 1986 and 39 in 1987. A 1989 study showed that 63% of (responding) clinics used the process and nearly 33% of the remaining programs were instituting it by 1990. With the current number of 2.4 million infertile U.S. couples on the increase due to postponement of pregnancy to later age, environmental factors and sexually transmitted diseases, the demand for the procedure in the current 169 U.S. IVF clinics will continue to grow.

The method of cryopreservation is technically simple. Following the usual regime of IVF treatment, immature eggs are surgically removed by laparoscopy under general anesthesia or, more currently, ultrasound-guided vaginal needle aspiration. These eggs are then mixed with the sperm and incubated until they reach the 4-to-8 cell stage. After further preparation, the embryos are pipetted into small glass ampoules (called "straws") which are heat-sealed and cooled to minus 30 degrees Centigrade

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before being transferred into liquid nitrogen. When the woman is ready to receive, embryos are thawed one to two days following ovulation and are inserted non-surgically (without anesthesia) into her uterus.

The ethical issues surrounding this process center around cryopreservation itself, the nature of the embryo, the options for disposition of excess embryos, informed consent, and the just distribution of healthcare resources.

Benefits and burdens

There are basically three benefits of freezing human embryos. First, the number of embryos kept available for transfer is increased. In many IVF programs all fresh embryos must be placed into the woman from whom the eggs came. Although a pregnancy is most likely to be produced with the placement of three to four embryos, if eight to ten eggs are fertilized and result in six to eight embryos, all must be transferred back, thus decreasing the likelihood of implantation. If a woman must repeat the IVF process several times, multiple embryos are lost with each attempt, whereas cryopreservation ultimately decreases the number of "wasted" embryos by slowly using one or two at a time. As a result, the process should increase the pregnancy rate for infertile couples by about 8%.

Second, the risk of multiple pregnancies — twins, triplets, or more — is decreased by transferring only a few embryos and freezing the rest for a future cycle. Multiple pregnancies often result in more complications of pregnancy, fewer live births, and smaller birthweight babies.

Third, and perhaps most important, cryopreservation obviates the need for the woman to go through the painful process of daily injections of hormones for ovarian stimulation, frequent blood tests, and surgery. Stored frozen embryos can be used for subsequent cycles at much less cost to the couple — both physically and financially. The charge for IVF procedures is between $7,000 and $10,000 per attempt. Repeat attempts with cryopreserved embryos average about $1,000 each.

Critics of the process complain that 50 to 60% of the frozen embryos do not survive thawing. Is this a sacrifice worth the potential benefit, if the chance for implantation and development to term of the frozen embryo is, even in the best programs, under 15%?

Although the risk of multiple pregnancies is reduced by cryopreservation, the risk of cryodamage and birth defects is unknown because there have not been enough live births to make such a determination. It is certain that some damage to the outer layer of cells occurs, but, as with cattle, the result of that cell loss may be minimal. At the four-to-eight cell stage, each individual cell can still develop into a complete and separate embryo. That the existence or extent of damage is as yet unknown is enough for some to suggest that the wholesale practice of such an experimental procedure should not be done so widely without strict research protocols.

"The items being frozen are variously called tissue, embryos, preembryos, concepti, zygotes, life, fetus, human life, conceptual products, blastocytes, or "the children." Each has its concomitant emotional, legal and theological overtones."

But the rapid demand for, and growth of, cryopreservation in IVF programs across the country seems to have made the practice appear to be standard medical procedure. In fact, the American Fertility Society (AFS), which in 1986 cautioned about the process, determined in June of 1988 that cryopreservation of pre-implantation embryos was "an established therapeutic procedure."

The benefits of convenience and minimization of the woman's physical discomfort have no counter-argument. But one must ask whether this manipulation of the reproductive process is worth its potential effect on the family structure and the morass of legal complications resulting from its use, especially regarding issues of ownership, property rights, liability, and inheritance.

Until now, for ease of discussion, the objects here have been referred to as "embryos." But there is considerable popular debate about the nature of the items being frozen. They are variously called tissue, embryos, preembryos, concepti, zygotes, life, fetus, human life, conceptual products, blastocytes, or — in the case of Circuit Judge W. Dale Young of Tennessee — "the children." Each has its concomitant emotional, legal and theological overtones.

The most accurate designation is "preembryo": a fertilized clump of four to eight cells which are as yet undifferentiated. Each one could potentially grow into a separate embryo; they could combine to form twins or triplets; or they could not develop at all and be expelled from the woman's body, as a large percentage are naturally each month. It is not until two weeks' development that the preembryo cells differentiate into germ layers and an embryo is formed that may or may not develop into a fetus. It is only at this post-two week embryo stage that placental cells form for the attachment and nourishing of the developing fetus.

As with other things, what it is called suggests what can be done with it; designation determines disposition. While many people want to submit, along with Judge Young and Pope John Paul II, that "life begins at conception," others believe that designation to be fallacious.

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Life does not *begin*; it *continues*. The preembryo did not spring forth *ex nihilo*. The sperm and egg that joined to form the preembryo were alive. What, in fact, is being questioned here is the relative value of life at its various stages.

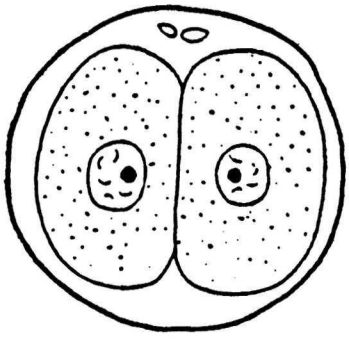
As a society, we value a full-term baby more than a 19-week fetus. In Texas (and some other states) a 20-week stillborn requires a death certificate, while a 19-week one does not. Further, we value a 19-week fetus more than an embryo, an embryo more than a preembryo, and a preembryo more than sperm and egg. Few would suggest, for instance, that the demise of an undifferentiated group of cells is equal to the death of a full-term baby. But it is reasonable that the loss of these cells, whether naturally dispelled from the woman's body or through thawing, has more meaning than the loss of sperm and egg tissue. For this reason, as the American Fertility Society suggests, preembryos should be treated with more respect than sperm and egg tissue, but with less than a further stage of development.

This reasoning is crucial to understanding the ethical acceptability of cryopreservation. It is precisely because of the preembryo's lesser existence, as compared to the embryo, that it may be frozen, even knowing that half of them will not survive thawing. It is not that the preembryo is insignificant and may be cavalierly dealt with, but that its significance and value are less that of an embryo, and the burden of its loss is less than the benefits accrued to the woman.

Disposition of preembryos

Probably the most vexing issue arising from cryopreservation is the disposition of excess, unused or unwanted preembryos. When a pregnancy and live birth has been achieved, when one of the couple dies or the two divorce, or when a change of mind occurs, excess cryopreserved preembryos are the result. It is estimated that there are currently over 30,000 frozen preembryos in storage around the world, The options for their disposition are: thaw to transfer into the woman from whom they came, storage, donation to another woman, couple, or program, and thaw to discard.

• **Thaw to transfer.** Especially in the case of a partner's death or a divorce, the remaining partner may wish to have the unused preembryos transferred back into herself — or the man's new partner, infertile or not. In instances of birth or disagreement between parties, the woman may wish to dispose of the excess preembryos by thawing and transferring them into her uterus, either with



no thought to the ovulatory cycle, or leaving their implantation to chance.

Questions arise regarding whether the couple or surviving spouse has the right to designate to whom the excess preembryos will be transferred. Could they be given to the deceased woman's sister, mother, or daughter? If disease or accident has rendered the woman whose preembryos are frozen incapable of bearing children, can she choose the recipient? If a woman divorces and determines she is lesbian, can she and/or her new female partner opt to receive the excess preembryos?

Most programs require that the participants sign a detailed informed consent before entering, designating their choices in these matters ahead of time. Courts will undoubtedly deal with the situations where people sign and then change their minds.

The American Fertility Society and nearly every other organization is against intergenerational transfer whereby a woman could give birth to a granddaughter, a niece/nephew, or even a sibling.

Screening of preembryos presents other ethical dilemmas. If a couple determine through genetic screening that their preembryo has cystic fibrosis or sickle cell disease or oncogenes ought they be able to discard on the basis of the possibility of unwanted future medical difficulties? On what other bases ought such discard be permitted? Sex? Eye color? Skin color? Furthermore, once the preembryo has been transferred into the uterus, implanted and become an embryo, can the couple request "embryo reduction" — the injection of a lethal substance by needle into unwanted implanted embryos — if twinning or tripling occurs?

• **Storage.** Although no one knows how long preembryos may be kept frozen, presumably they may be stored indefinitely. It is assumed that the longer the storage time the less likely the preembryo is to survive thawing or to implant upon transfer. Many programs set arbitrary limits on length of storage. A frequently used standard from the AFS is "for the reproductive life of the woman or until the original objective of storage has been achieved."

Of the over 30,000 preembryos stored worldwide, the United States has about as many as all other countries combined. It is certain that not all of these preembryos will be used by the couples from whom they came. One of the concerns arising from this massive number, all of which, presumably, will have a data sheet in their computer file, is the problem of preembryo banking. The United States already permits the sale of blood, semen and plasma (a practice forbidden by federal law on other continents such as Australia and Europe). It may eventu-

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ally be possible to go to a bank and choose the desired characteristics of a preembryo for transfer, regardless of one's sexual orientation, age, economic or marital status, or level of infertility. Many people argue that this is no different from current adoption practice, and would result in even closer emotional bonding since the woman would presumably carry the preembryo to term and actually give birth to the child. To avoid the banking dilemma, some programs set a two to five-year limit on storage once a birth has been achieved, in order to bring closure to the process.

Programs vary on how to charge for storage. Some charge a flat fee at the beginning, others a monthly or yearly fee. But what happens if the couple no longer wants the preembryos, or leaves the area without notice, or becomes unable to pay the storage charge? Should the preembryos then become the property of the program and be donated, used for research, or thawed to discard? Likewise, what is the liability in the event of a power failure, mishandling or other human error? Is the death of the preembryos due to these causes legally to be considered murder or negligent homicide? Though most states do not yet have case law on these issues, it seems clear that no prosecutions would result from power failures, but a program might find itself in difficulty if it took custody of the preembryos as a result of the couple's failure to pay or show interest or availability, unless a clear and complete informed consent document was clearly in evidence.

In any case, preembryo storage and banking will be fraught with difficulties until some clear consensus arises regarding the nature of the preembryo and the options for its disposition beyond the freezer.

• **Donation**. For some couples, donation of their excess, unwanted preembryos — termed "little orphan embryo" by some — is a way to preserve that couple's interest in giving their genetic legacies the best possibility of achieving birth, while at the same time fulfilling the wishes of another infertile couple. The issue this option raises is one of ownership. Whose property are they? Can a program require a couple to relinquish ownership of their preembryos ahead of time in an informed consent statement? What if circumstances, or feelings change?

Part of the problem lies in the differing ways of viewing the entire process. Physicians and clinics tend to view IVF in general and cryopreservation in particular entirely as a medical intervention for treatment of infertility, the goal of which is to produce a pregnancy and, hopefully, a live birth. Frozen preembryos are the means to that end. Couples, who are often desperate by now, tend to see the process as the final step in a long series of medical/personal failures which holds out the last hope that they will have their own genetic replicants: i.e. "children." Once the IVF process is accomplished and some preembryos are transferred and some frozen, there is often little delineation between the two sets of preembryos — all of which have now taken on the symbolic meaning of "the children," with concomitant emotional bonding. If the transfer fails and the preembryos do not implant in the uterus, or a pregnancy miscarries, the couple feels as though a significant death has occurred. Having other preembryos in the freezer may assuage some of those feelings, knowing that other attempts are possible, or may be the cause of further grieving when donated.

The parallel with mothers or parents who give up full-term babies for adoption is applicable here. While there is obviously a difference from the physician's perspective between an eight-celled preembryo and a newborn, there is often little difference for the parents of those preembryos, who may begin to see the frozen objects as their property.

In Great Britain, to enter an IVF program, a couple must have been in treatment for infertility for at least 12 months and receive psychological counseling regarding possible emotional ramifications of the process. No such guidelines exist in the United States. Because these emotional bonding issues have not been taken seriously by either clinicians or attorneys, no one has really studied the legal ramifications regarding the relinquishment of property rights before entering a program, designating a particular recipient (intergenerational, relative or otherwise) or the right to choose to discard thawed preembryos.

Current preembryo donation practices are unregulated. Consensus is unclear about what, if any, records — other than medical/genetic ones — should be kept regarding the donating couples' personal, professional and educational backgrounds, and if and how such data should be made available to adopting couples, or the children themselves. As with adoption, does the donating couple relinquish all rights forever to the knowledge of their genetic material's whereabouts? Is there a difference between giving up a full-term infant for adoption which the woman has carried in her womb and nurtured for nine months and donating eight-celled preembryos from a freezer to someone else?

Until consensus develops, it would probably be well to consider preembryo donation parallel to adoption, and call the process adoption rather than donation. Adoption emphasizes the action of the receiving woman or couple and focuses on the rights of the child, while donation emphasizes the action of the givers and seeks to defend their property/ownership rights. While the rights of all parties need protection, those of the potential child seem most vulnerable and worthy of primary focus.

• **Thaw to discard**. When the goal of

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Sallie Bingham:

Daughter of privilege scorns elitism

by Norris Merchant

"You can't get away from some of the amazing things the Gospels say. I always used to be astonished to hear this minister who seemed to be part of the white elite talking about 'suffer little children,' all the brotherhood scenes, and that rich man who could no more get into heaven than a camel could get through the eye of a needle. These were extraordinary things to be saying to a rich, prosperous, upper-class congregation. And nobody seemed to be taking them seriously."

This candid astonishment at striking contradictions helped direct Sallie Bingham, the daughter of a wealthy, liberal and devoutly Episcopalian publisher in Louisville, Ky., toward militant feminism and a more free-swinging and venturesome political stance than that of her family. In fact, her relations appear to have at least temporarily disowned her. One reason may be her frank discussions in her family memoir, *Passion and Prejudice*, of dark rumors surrounding the death of her step-grandmother, supposedly the richest woman in America, and her conjectures concerning her father's possible U.S. intelligence connections during his work as a Marshall Plan coordinator.

Though forgiveness or reconciliation may be alien to her family's present stance, a desire to retain the elegant, Elizabethan language of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer has proved more to their taste. Bingham's mother Mary has assiduously supported the traditionalist Prayer Book Society, with much the same nostalgia that Bingham's ancestors had for the doomed, antebellum South. A Confederate flag was prominently displayed among the memorabilia in her father's office.

Those rich Christians who would listen respectfully to Gospel passages that seemed to condemn them, said Bingham, would nevertheless engage in philanthropy that "basically furthers the cause of the status quo. It has nothing to do with change."

Like many offspring of the ultra-rich, Bingham found her closest childhood relationship with a beloved and loving nurse. Nonetheless, from the intensity of commitments she discusses with such deep feeling, one senses that however distant her parents were, their professed liberal values took root in her — even while her aging parents were becoming conservatized by unwelcome events in society and the church. The raucous youth rebellions of the 1960s were not to the taste of the elder Binghams, admirers of the sedately "aristocratic" liberalism of Adlai Stevenson. They tended to see the Episcopal Church's statements as becoming more embarrassingly "political" and the liturgical changes as demeaning. Of her mother's attitude toward Prayer Book reform and allied matters, Bingham said, "She's been a great force for conformity in the Episcopal Church. I've been sorry to see that because a lot of that has been directed against women in the clergy."

What Bingham valued from her upbringing in the church is "the philosophy, not the practices." She professed a deep gratitude for having been introduced to certain Christian values, even though she saw them blatantly violated in the suburban "mansion-church" attended by her family and other well-to-do white folk. "I did develop a great love of the ritual, and still love the symbols of the Christian church," she said.

But when she ventures to church these days, Bingham admitted, "the language is a problem for me. I'm very put off by having to constantly refer to 'God the Father' and so on."

Because of her determination to witness to feminist values she sees consistently threatened in a male-dominated world, Bingham finds unusual means of speaking out. At her father Barry's funeral last year, when noted politicians, the wealthy and the humble packed Louisville's Calvary Church to pay tribute to a man they highly regarded, she insisted on altering the masculine language used in the service.

"They were singing all those incredibly paternalistic hymns: 'Faith of My Fathers,' 'Rock of Ages,' and I kept changing the pronouns." She made her instant liturgical revisions with such confident loudness that she was overheard in the sanctuary, causing rector Benjamin Sanders to smile about it afterwards.

"I sang pretty forcefully," she explained. "It was not really done in a spirit of rebellion, it's just the only way I can sing those hymns any more."

There exists, said Bingham, a contradiction between the radical vision of the Gospels and the fact that "the church seems to attract the conformist members

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Norris Merchant is a free-lance writer based in Louisville, Ky.

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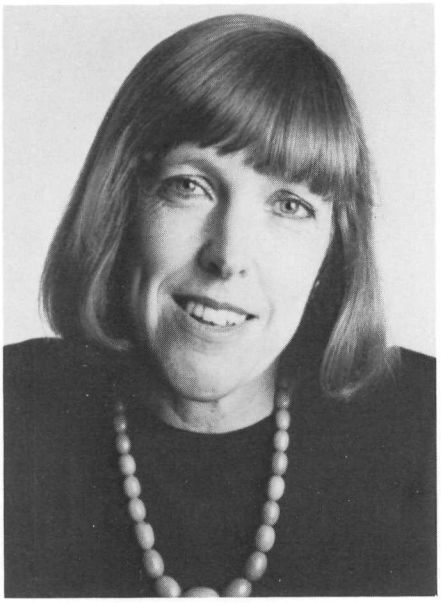

Sallie Bingham

of society. It's so rare to find a rebel or an outcast who's working from *within* the church."

When asked how she as feminist would evaluate the work of a woman like Mother Teresa, who is known to hold traditional attitudes, Bingham said, "I think that works on two levels. She is certainly relieving suffering, and I have the greatest admiration for her commitment. But in terms of being an example for other women, I don't think it's helpful because of this aura of *saintliness.* Most of us don't think we can be saints — it's a model that's never really worked too well for the vast majority of the population. We're well aware of our frailty, and our need to have life made a little easier. When we see someone like Mother Teresa, who appears to have no needs, it's rather alienating."

So far as the problem of ending poverty goes, Bingham commented, Mother Teresa "is not changing structure, or even criticizing structure, as far as I know."

Mother Teresa's stated opposition to all abortion or even birth control "just adds to the troops of the hopeless she's trying to minister to," said Bingham. Many women serving the male power structure of the church, she noted, embrace "the spirit of humility, which in effect means that you can never really criticize anything."

Bingham was not reluctant to discuss a sense of spiritual awareness she finds extremely meaningful and sustaining in her own life. "I have always felt a Higher Power. At this point in my life, at age 52, I feel this power most strongly in aspects of nature, and in young people, where I do think you see the spirit of God working."

That sense of something divine in certain vital manifestations of life transcends for her, at present, the value of the church as an institution. "I don't belong to a church at this time," she said, "and I don't attend regularly, because I find the service so alienating."

Louisville has become the scene of much feminist activity since Bingham centered the Kentucky Foundation for Women and her literary quarterly *The American Voice* there. The city's Christ Church Cathedral has also become the home of the Episcopal Church's first woman dean. "I've been going to the Cathedral now and then, where we have a wonderful woman, Dean Geralyn Wolf," she said, "But the service hasn't changed."

Anti-feminist activity also abounds in the city. Responding to the picketing by anti-choice groups at a Louisville public clinic, Bingham said it was "horrifying. They're led by some blind hatred and are really persecuting people already in distress. I just can't imagine people who call themselves Christians behaving that way."

Bingham confesses to being disturbed by the overwhelming patriarchal emphasis still found in Western religion. "From what little I know about what happened in the pre-Christian era, the Goddess religions all over the world were slowly but thoroughly exterminated. I think the anti-nature, anti-woman connection is very strong. It's something feminist environmentalists are beginning to talk about. There's something about 'nature' that the male power structure abhors."

There came a time when Bingham required vast inner strength to fight a power structure. In 1984 women family members were asked to resign from the board of her father's newspaper, the *Courier-Journal.* She refused and was then forced off. She eventually decided to sell her stock in the family empire, which later led to her father's surprise announcement that the entire family holdings would be sold. During that crisis, Bingham averred that one of her principal supports came from Al-Anon, a secular self-help group mainly intended for family members of persons with drinking problems. She found the frank, open, and non-judgmental exchange of confidences provided in Al-Anon meetings a source of strength.

The controversy attending the sale resulted in much blame being placed unfairly. Bingham was resented as the catalyst that brought about the fall of one of the great, liberal family-owned newspapers and the loss of many jobs. A caller on one interview program asked her, "How does it feel to be hated by 2,200 people?" For a while such issues deflected public attention from projects such as her new foundation which, using part of her proceeds from the sale, has already given well over a million dollars to support the work of women artists.

Controversies also tended to overshadow Bingham's previous work — two well-praised books of short stories, a novel, and eight plays, in addition to her remarkably venturesome stint at the *Courier-Journal* as book review editor, where she wrote a column championing regional and little-known literary publications and writers.

Characteristically, among the books

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Are You Running With Me, Jesus ?

At 25, book probes prayer anew

by Malcolm Boyd

Twenty-five years ago, *Are You Running With Me, Jesus*?, a book of 89 short prayers and meditations I wrote was published. Langston Hughes insisted on calling them, simply, poems. When the book deeply touched the lives of people and was critically acclaimed, it was the most unexpected event of my life up to that time.

The book emerged in silence, with virtually no reviews. Twelve months after publication, *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* was selling 5,000 copies a week. The title became familiar in the press, on TV and radio; its name began to appear on banners in peace demonstrations.

The spirit of the times had a lot to do with the book's growing reception. There was excitement and a positive thrust in religion that could not be separated from a comparable secular mood, with its Peace Corps imagery of hope, the civil rights struggle, a strong public consciousness of a potential to effect significant changes in society, and a near-universal yearning for peace.

I wrote most of the book during the summer and fall of 1964 in inner-city Detroit. The meditation that begins "Look up at that old window where the old guy is sitting," was based, for example, on a street scene just five blocks from my lodgings near Wayne State University, where I was a chaplain. "The old house is nearly all torn down, Jesus" was a view directly across the street. "The kids are smiling, Jesus, on the tenement stoop" — six blocks away. "In this ugly red building, old people are waiting for death" — three blocks away.

The impulse to write the book sprang from my increasing inability to pray. I had always assumed prayer was necessarily verbal. I forced myself to use the archaic language of liturgical prayer, battling my growing disillusionment and boredom. Wasn't God supposed to be *up there?* When this neat system collapsed for me, I virtually stopped praying, except for the Lord's Prayer.

In the spring of 1964 a group of Roman Catholic laity and clergy invited me to visit Israel and Rome. At one point we visited Cyprus where the men lived dormitory-style in a hostel. One afternoon everybody was taking a nap despite the sounds of distant gunfire being exchanged by Greek and Turkish Cypriots. I lay on my cot, trying to pray. Then I picked up a pen and notebook. "It's morning, Jesus," I wrote, "and here's that light and sound all over again."

I didn't know it at the time, but that was the basis of the first entry in *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* I was grappling with prayer and meditation in a new way. After the tour I again started writing my sacred thoughts.

I sent the resulting book to a friend. The publisher for whom he worked accepted it, and the original contract titled the book, *Prayers for a Post-Christian Era.* The editor explained we would have to move very carefully if we called it *Are You Running With Me, Jesus*? Finally that title won approval, but only because the publisher thought the book was doomed to peak at 4,000 sales. What difference could a title make?

The avalanche of letters from readers was the first indication something exciting was happening. Their communications filled pages and dealt with complex matters. One terse message remains my favorite: "My sister and I are too old to run with Jesus as we used to do," a woman wrote. "Now we're only able to walk with him. Jesus has taken us over some rough terrain but he stayed with us. Old and weary though we are, we can say there is no other way. His hand is large and secure, isn't it?"

I seldom used structured words in my own prayers or meditation anymore, except for those uttered in a conversation where God's presence, or need, was particularly strongly felt. Prayerful reflections used to stand as something separate from other parts of my life. But I came to learn that real prayer or meditation is not so much talking to God as just sharing God's presence, generally in the most ordinary of situations.

I also learned how to feel free to be completely myself with God. Now, in a given situation, knowing that God is with me — perhaps revealed in another person, or persons — I speak out of that deep trust and love which can spring only from a healthy, tried and authentic freedom. When my idea of prayer changed, I realized it would no longer be offered to God *up there,* but to God *here;* it was to be natural and real, not phony or contrived. It was not about other things — as a rationalized fantasy or escape — but these things, however unattractive, jarring or even socially out-

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The Rev. Malcolm Boyd is writer/priest-in-residence at St. Augustine by-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Santa Monica, Cal. This article is adapted with permission from the Introduction to the anniversary edition of *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?,* to be published in April. Copyright, Beacon Press 1990.

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cast they might sometimes appear to be.

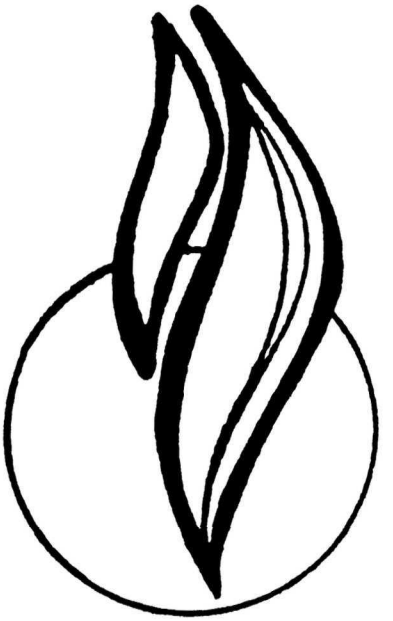
Prayer is so much more than most people give it credit for. It can be voting, making love, being angry, being quiet, marching in a peace demonstration, watering a garden, attending an office meeting, listening, lying on a sick bed, dancing, getting married, starting a new job. Prayer can be filled with color and fun, vitality and pain, hopelessness and starting over again.

An exciting aspect of prayer, for me, is that the old patriarchy is dead. God is not, I discovered, a hierarchical, autocratic, macho "Lord" of a clublike "holy of holies," nor is God an impersonal machine computing sins in a celestial corporate office above the clouds. It came to me that God is loving, even vulnerable, in a terribly unsentimental and profound way, demonstrating the depth, complexity and holy simplicity of an extraordinary relationship with people.

I came to realize many prayers and meditations are uttered or felt without prescribed forms of piety. If you listen, you can hear sacred thoughts and reflections in the novels, songs, plays and films of a wide range of contemporary artists. Authentic prayer bridges the heretical gulf between the sacred and secular, the holy and profane.

We also encounter anti-prayers when confronted by worshipers who deny in their actions outside a church building what they "pray" about inside. There is a hypocritical gulf between mouthing prayers about racial justice, and then resolutely manipulating a white power structure to keep non-whites in housing ghettos, unemployment, and interminable second- or third-class citizenship.

Prayer, I have learned, is more my response to God than a matter of my own initiative. I believe Jesus Christ prays *in* me as well as *for* me. But my response — like the Psalmists' — is sporadic, moody, now despairing, now joyful, corrupted by my self-interest and frequent desire to manipulate God's love. The



widespread, often hidden, community that is open to the Spirit of God — ranging from Christians to Buddhists, Jews to adherents of New Age consciousness — incarnates prayer in its essential life. My own prayer is part of this. But many times when I am caught up in egoism or self-pity, I forget.

I am as conscious of experiencing God everywhere in life as a medieval person residing in the shadow of Chartres Cathedral, or an ancient tribal person living close to nature might be. My sacred thoughts, prayers and meditations reflect this.

In 1965 *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* became a phenomenon as well as a book. As a result, it was necessary for me to confront and assimilate celebrity, and learn how to survive it. Now, nearly a quarter of a century has passed since the appearance of the book. I am also that much older, having celebrated last year not only my 66th birthday but also my 34th anniversary as an Episcopal priest. Doing so, I found myself looking back on the significant spiritual turning points of my life.

In 1968 I withdrew into a reflective, carefully structured life at Yale University's Calhoun College while I privately experienced a crisis of faith. A Humpty Dumpty part of me had fallen and broken into pieces. What did I actually believe? Could I rediscover it or find it anew? I sought peace, intellectual honesty, and spiritual renewal.

In 1970 I entered into an even deeper spiritual search. For the most part I cut myself off from people, stayed close to nature in the Michigan countryside, and was nurtured by the steady, slow turning of the seasons, with their witness to God's creation and stability. In 1976 I came out of one of my life's closets when I revealed that I am a gay man.

I experienced a rebirth that reverberated through my entire life with its sheer spiritual intensity. The reaffirmed love of God for me as a person created in God's image became overpowering. The love of Jesus Christ, who shared every aspect of human life in the Incarnation and is my Redeemer, set me afire with new hope and joy. The companionship of the Holy Spirit is, I found, nurturing, intimate, a limitless source of strength, and a guide to personal well-being and social responsibility.

Imagine my dismay, then, in confronting a Mt. Everest of turning points that apparently still lay ahead. Although loaded down with accoutrements of what the world chooses to call achievement, I had to face a crucial question: What is the purpose of the rest of my life? Despite everything I had to be grateful for, I was aware I had come perilously close to not growing anymore. I felt my life was becoming encased in cement. I had to get in touch anew with my conscience and intuition, feelings and senses. *The Book of Common Prayer* says quite eloquently, "Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal." The moment had come once again come for me to get deeply involved in the quest for Christ's

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strength and renewal.

I find to my delight that I am not alone on my spiritual journey. Companions are legion. It is different from the mood of 1965, and *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* There is now anxiety and hope about the emergence of a new century. An earlier innocence has been replaced by a hard awareness of realities — it is understood that youthful, fresh idealism is not enough. Yet old answers and familiar approaches do not suffice.

In our highly materialistic, consumer-oriented, success-motivated society, there is a spiritual wilderness. Conventional churchianity — too timid to address controversial social issues, publicly asexual, reciting traditional norms by rote and devoid of passionately committed spiritual leaders — is unable to meet the challenge. Growing numbers of people are asking how to gain the world without losing one's soul.

While Jesus is the same, our world is not. The deep changes are reflected in the pages of the new 25th anniversary edition of the book. For one thing, environmental issues have moved to the forefront of our consciousness and experience. Survival itself is at stake, along with our common health. Tragically, we have let racial justice lag below the level of minimal decency and the requirements of an honest conscience. Women's and gay/lesbian rights have taken immense strides, yet even though a war has been won, battles remain to be waged. And ever-new wars hang in the balance. Politics remains a dismaying paradox between the forces of public service and the most flagrant, abusive assertions of self-interest.

Therefore, new prayers in the 25th anniversary edition reflect my focus on these matters. Scattered intermittently through the book, they concern a wide range of subjects including AIDS, the planet Earth, gridlock traffic in the city, the human voyage into outer space, a ceremony of loving union, and Latino immigrants. There are a few new chapters: Meditations at a Zen Buddhist Retreat Center in the Country; Meditations at Home, at Work, on Identity, On Curious Occasions; Life and Death in a Retirement Home; Non-Verbal Prayers and Jesus Prayers.

Language has changed too; it is constantly in flux. Twenty-five years ago blacks were called Negroes by the media; gay men and lesbians were called homosexuals. But the most dramatic changes are found in the area of inclusive language. A quarter of a century ago, "he" was used to describe persons of both genders; God was referred to as "He" or "Him." Paternalism was firmly entrenched. The new edition represents a sincere belief in the significance of inclusive language and an honest effort to utilize it.

Prayer is many things: intimate and public, personal and social. It concerns one's own life and the life of the world. The book celebrates the loving life of God in the world.

In its pages are meditations and reflections, fragments of experience and memory that express a yearning for wholeness, and many different forms of what we call prayer. If you are willing to share the intimacy of a spiritual journey with me and let me be your guide in occasional labyrinths and over some hills, I offer you my hand.

***(Are You Running With Me, Jesus?: A Spiritual Companion for the 1990's** by Malcolm Boyd will appear soon in paperback at $8.95 from Beacon Press, Boston.)*

Barbara Harris: Bishop

Order a copy of the historic April issue of THE WITNESS commemorating the Feb. 11 consecration of the first woman bishop in the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion.

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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

possible to assure fair elections. The challenge to the rest of us is to do whatever we can to assure that the findings of the international observers, which indicate that the electoral process is proceeding fairly and freely and faces its greatest threat from contra activity, are circulated and accepted in the United States

Dorothy Granada
Managua, Nicaragua

(WITNESS Assistant Editor Susan Pierce went to Nicaragua as part of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship Witness for Peace delegation to monitor the election. Her analysis will appear in a future issue.)

Communists?

Can you send me a copy of a recent issue of THE WITNESS, please? I heard an Episcopal bishop in a radio interview explaining differences in the church. He said, "Some people say it (THE WITNESS) is communist." He was from Ft. Worth. I *longed* to read your ideas.

Virginia Killough
La Porte, Ind.

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The Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Manning Marable

Martin Luther King, Jr., has been dead for nearly a generation. The political environment which defined his activities — the oppressive conditions of legal segregation and political disenfranchisement — no longer exists. It is easy, therefore, for those who opposed King's democratic social vision while he was alive, such as President Bush, to now provide platitudes about racial equality and justice. Faced with the destruction of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the absence of enforcement for affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation, and the policy of ignoring the mounting tragedies of black unemployment, homelessness and growing poverty, most white American politicians hide behind the soothing image of King as an advocate of racial peace. They fear the disturbing implications of the economic and social demands for restructuring American society that King made in the final years of his life, and pretend that this radical phase of his career never existed.

Black politicians have a different responsibility to be truthful in African-American history. To be sure, King symbolized the struggle to desegregate the racist South and dismantle the structures of civil inequality. His famous "I Have a Dream" speech, given on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on a hot August afternoon in 1963, spoke for the democratic sacrifices and struggles of millions of African-Americans, from the abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth to the early civil rights crusaders like Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, A. Philip Randolph, and Ida B. Wells.



Black elected officials and all blacks who gained some degree of success in the cultural, social and political hierarchy of white America owe part of their accomplishments to King and thousands of other nameless freedom fighters who demanded a redefinition of democracy beyond the color line.

But civil rights was not the only issue to divide America in the 1960s. Under the Johnson administration, the United States had sent over half a million troops to southeast Asia. Black Americans represented one out of every seven soldiers in Vietnam. They suffered disproportionately high casualties because they were unfairly ordered into combat units. While the NAACP and the Urban League, fearing political retaliation, cautioned against the civil rights movement becoming involved in the Vietnam War debate, King made the decision to align his political beliefs with his ethical hatred of war. Against bitter attacks, King urged black Americans to reject American imperialism abroad, and the sterile logic of crusading anti-Communism. He inspired millions to oppose the U.S. war effort.

But King's political legacy transcended the issue of Vietnam. He began to recognize that the political program of integration was insufficient to achieve economic equality for people of color in the United States. He called for the nationalization of basic industries, in order to guarantee jobs for the inner cities. King favored a plan for a guaranteed income for all Americans, and expanded social programs. Massive reductions in the Pentagon budget would be required to finance this domestic reconstruction. American foreign policy abroad would have to pull back from its support for imperialism, economic exploitation and political domination.

King's political vision also makes sense for the 1990s. We must advocate certain socioeconomic prerequisites for full participation in a democracy, such as the right to a job, not to starve, and to have decent housing and free medical care. King would insist that the battle today against racism is being lost, and that all Americans lose when blacks' median incomes are barely 55% of whites'. Poverty is directly connected with urban crime. And the answer to urban chaos, King would tell us, is not more police and capital punishment. The termination of drugs, crime and social unrest will come about only with total reconstruction of the inner cities, which requires shifting millions of dollars from the military budget. The legacy of Martin Luther King demands a rededication to the struggle to create both political and economic democracy in America. TW

Dr. Manning Marable, Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado, is a member of THE WITNESS editorial board. His column, *Along the Color Line*, appears in 170 newspapers in the United States and abroad.

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About these reflections

Feminist theologians Alison Cheek and Carter Heyward chose the Feast of Sts. Martha and Mary — the date of their "irregular" ordinations in 1974 — to reflect on the relation of these two biblical women to their present lives in general and to the role of a seminary in modern times in particular.

Their meditations, delivered in back-to-back sermons at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass., offer conundrums that might well be pondered by all men and women.

Cheek points out the irony in the Lucan story of Martha and Mary, cited by many as a "woman's gospel" but regarded with suspicion by women today because of the way the story, told by a man, sets "activists" at odds with reflective or contemplative women.

Heyward examines the role of strong women in "wilderness" times, and urges seminaries not to succumb to "wilderness fatigue" as the path of least resistance today. — Ed.

Martha, Mary: Cautionary

In 1974 on the regular feast day of Martha and Mary, 11 women deacons were ordained to the priesthood in a service in Philadelphia that was later termed "irregular." It is true that the Episcopal Church was constipated in the matter of the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate, and since the women were ordained without the formal consent of their diocesan bishops, perhaps it is accurate enough to call it "irregular." But it is a piece of history worthy of *anamnesis*.

At that time the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) had already begun its search for an ordained woman to join its faculty. Increasing numbers of women were seeking admission to the school, many of whom were also seeking ordination. After the Philadelphia event this school made a very serious and deliberate decision that it would not eliminate from the search any of the women who were ordained in Philadelphia. It also decided that, were one of the women so ordained to be hired, she would function regularly and normally as a priest.

This decision involved making a prophetic witness. It meant taking a public stand that the opinion of this institution differed from that of the House of Bishops, which had passed a resolution saying that the Philadelphia ordinations were not valid. It was a prophetic decision. People put their status in the

The Rev. Alison Cheek, ordained as one of the "Philadelphia 11" in 1974, is Director of Feminist Liberation Theology Studies at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.

'Seminary-in-wilderness' new

The tradition of the real Martha and Mary — strong, active women whom the early church was trying to silence — was embodied in the 1974 Philadelphia ordinations when 11 "uppity" women were ordained priests.

The Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) has a tradition of outspoken women in an outspoken seminary. But there are questions about if and how, as a school, we intend to be faithful to this tradition, about where we stand.

I want to suggest that where we really are is in the wilderness. We are in a tradition not only of the real Mary and Martha, but also of the people of Israel, who once in bondage to false gods, found themselves wandering in the wilderness between captivity and liberation. Hear their lament: "Why were we brought up out of Egypt to die in this wilderness? We even hate the food." That's where we are in this school, in the wilderness — betwixt and between — and that's where we've been since at least 1975 and, in many ways, long before that. By the grace of God, and with a little help from God's friends, that's where we'll continue to journey on this side of God's realm where justice will roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. What is this wilderness all about?

First, it's not as easy or as comfortable as it was in Egypt. It was easier when there was no question that good Episcopalians used the *Book of Common Prayer* for daily and weekly worship. It was more comfortable when there was no question that spiritual and ecclesiastical authority was passed down by God through *His* church in the persons of bishops and priests to lay people. It was easier when there was no question that an Episcopal seminary ought to be first and foremost a training school for professional parish priests. It was more comfortable when we wanted to be a school that the church loved; a school that most bishops would welcome their folks attending; a school widely re-

***The Rev. Carter Heyward**, ordained as one of the "Philadelphia 11" in 1974, is Professor of Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. A contributing editor to THE WITNESS, she has published numerous books and articles on feminist theology.*

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tale held suspect by women by Alison Cheek

church, and maybe their jobs, on the line, and it is something that we should honor and be proud of today.

The women concerned did not lose the initiative even in the process of hiring, since the three persons who were "short-listed" for that job — Suzanne Hiatt, Carter Heyward and I — by mutual agreement decided that one should withdraw, and the others suggest to the school that they be hired to share the position. Now, in the ceremonial life of the hiring of faculty, this isn't terribly conventional behavior. Nevertheless, it was not far from those communities in the early church which made decisions because "it felt good to the Holy Spirit and to us." And it felt good to the Holy Spirit in the sisterhood and to us to make this suggestion, which was accepted favorably by EDS.

On the day of the ordinations in Philadelphia it seemed to us very propitious that the feast day of Martha and Mary fell in the calendar at that time. It seemed good that we could be ordained on a day that is one of the few honoring women, and where the Gospel is a woman's story.

Actually, the Lucan account of Mary and Martha is *not* a woman's story. I'll guarantee it wasn't lifted out of the secret journal of either Mary or Martha. It is a *man's* story about Jesus and two women. And by and large, women have always been leery of it, hating the playing off of two women, one against the other. Most women strongly identify with either one character or the other. Yet they resent the put-down of Martha. After all, she seemed to be doing all the work. And they are apt to be co-opted by the commendation of Mary. I have found that even in the most conservative of women's groups there is nothing like this story to raise a hermeneutic of suspicion.

Some feminist interpreters have tried to save the story by saying Jesus is rescuing women from the stereotyped role of housewife and liberating them within the church, giving them a new role. But there are difficulties with this line of interpretation, because if we adopt it, we are bringing Christian women from their marginal position and raising them up at the historical expense of their Jewish sisters. We are presupposing that Jewish women had no chance to study the Torah, and that Christian women have been

concept for '90s by Carter Heyward

garded as one of the finest, if not *the* finest, seminary in the church.

It was easier in Egypt; it always is. The people of Israel knew this, which was why they lamented, complained, got tired of wandering, got fed up with Moses *and* the food, got restless and yearned to turn back from time to time. Similarly, do we now hear rumblings of this desire to turn back, to get into a place where we can be sure of who we are and where we're going? That's what I believe I'm hearing, for example, in the plea that we remain primarily "Episcopal" in our ambiance, allegiance, and numbers. Do those who are urging us to be more "Episcopal" mean for us to enthusiastically embrace the real justice-seeking elements of the Anglican heritage, and nurture the seeds of liberation planted by Episcopalians who have struggled at the margins of the church and society? Or are we being asked to shape up and conform in more conventional, less controversial, ways to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church?

As the liberation tradition in Judaism teaches us, wandering in the wilderness is the way to learn that God is not located in a fixed place, an established temple, a church, or a single tradition. God is in the journey. God is in the movement. Our "spiritual consciousness" as a school has not been well-tuned to this realization, I think. Not because it's our fault as a seminary, but because the mainline Christian church — including, of course, the Anglican tradition and the Episcopal church — has not embraced the commitment to liberation which is essential to being a faithful wilderness people. Thus we find ourselves unprepared for wilderness journeying, disappointed to be the seminary so many bishops love to hate, unhappy not to be better understood as faithful people.

On the one hand, we genuinely want justice for women, people of color, lesbians and gay men, poor and outcast people. On the other hand, we want to be well-liked, accepted by those who don't necessarily want those things. On the one hand, we want feminist women and feminist men to come, enjoy themselves here, and help make this a fine school —

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Cheek . . .

raised out of all this, whereas scholarship shows that women did study the Torah, and inscriptions have brought to light the fact that women were sometimes rulers of synagogues. Another difficulty with this line of interpretation is that it treats the story almost as biographical data, and we know that the Gospels are not intended to be biographies.

Once we see when this story was written, and look at the words used, it is obvious that it comes out of a later date than the days of the historical Jesus. Jesus is called "the Lord," suggesting that an appeal is being made here to the word of the risen Lord rather than the historical Jesus. We know there was a problem about women's leadership in the early church. The author of *1 Timothy* simply makes a flat and straightforward prescription that women are to remain silent in the churches: "I do not permit a woman to have authority over a man."

Luke is a little more subtle. He tells a story where the risen Lord reproves the woman who is active and takes initiatives, and commends the woman who is passive and silent. We also know that the word used to describe Martha as being encumbered with much serving is indeed a word that was used to mean table service. By this time in the church it was also commonly used as a technical word describing church leadership. And we note that, in an era of house churches, it is in Martha's house that this all takes place.

If this story is intended to silence women, why is that necessary? What is going on here? I think the real Martha and Mary provide a "dangerous memory." They were powerful women leaders — if they had not been, it is not very likely we would know their names. Their names are among the few women's names that have come down to us out of a period of androcentric historical consciousness. Women's leadership was causing a threat to patriarchal social structures, and therefore problems for the church communities. And what better weapon with which to tackle the problem in the church than the word of the Lord? It is a very effective weapon to this day. Little did Luke know how effective it would be. And 20th century women, although critical of the story, are ecclesiastically socialized not to question what is presented as the words of Jesus. Perhaps we get more of a glimpse of the historical Martha and Mary in John's account of them, where we are given a few more details. But we know from history that they must have been powerful, committed women in the early church. I am glad to have been ordained on the feast day of the *real* Mary and Martha. I am glad to be in the lineage of women who were active, committed, faithful and powerful enough to have become a problem for later generations.

I regard this Gospel as a cautionary

Heyward . . .

but not too many, please. On the one hand, we want to live true to our commitments, we honestly do; but, on the other, we want to make sure the church understands us. We want to move, but not too fast. We want to grow, but not become too feminist. We want women, but not too many, and certainly not more lesbians. We want men, the straighter the better. We want black people, but make sure they're Anglican. We want to do what's right but, please understand, we need money.

Our confusion is, I believe, a sign of "wilderness fatigue." It says to me that we are a weary people. Whether we have been at EDS for many decades, came in 1975, or have just arrived, we have learned the lament: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?" "Wilderness fatigue" is contagious. It is rooted in collective faithlessness — that is, in the failure to accept, with radical seriousness, the presence and power of God in our corporate journeying and life together, and let it comfort, inspire and delight us.

In leaving Egypt and venturing forth out of bondage; in hiring "irregular" women priests; in becoming an "irregular" seminary, we embodied a vision of faith rooted in the tradition of Jonathan Daniels, our student murdered in 1965 in Mississippi as he worked for civil rights.

By hiring the most formidable organizer among women priests, the one we've long called "bishop to the women," this seminary embodied a vision of a prophetic God. This school, in tenuring an "out" lesbian professor, embodied a vision of a sacred Spirit who will touch, comfort and surprise us. EDS embodied great faith when it hired a black woman ethicist to help redefine the very terms on which moral decisions are made.

And this school, by hiring a feminist Anglican liberation historian as well as two feminist liberation biblical scholars, was trying to help us sharpen our biblical and historical vision of what it means to involve ourselves with those who have given their time, energies, scholarship, talent and sometimes, like Jonathan Daniels, their lives on behalf of marginalized and oppressed peoples throughout the world.

I have a few questions: Do we want women priests on the EDS faculty and women students to settle in and become female patriarchs? Do we want our male faculty and students to be untouched radically by the presence of strong, outspoken women? What sorts of alums did we and do we want to produce here?

Do we really want EDS to be a school in which we do business as usual? Or do we want to journey in the wilderness,

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text. If this is the Gospel of Christ, how are we to proclaim it? Can we proclaim it? Is it good news for women? I think not, if we take it at face value. I think it is a cautionary tale.

Are we again in the same place in this school as when Luke's Gospel was written? Our public relations, the application of funds, policies of prudence in church politics — are we using these things to silence women or to mute women's contributions? Are we toning down a dangerous memory of this school's prophetic history in the Episcopal Church?

I would call upon this school to reaffirm its commitment to the liberation of women and all oppressed peoples, structurally, prophetically, in radical trust in the Spirit of God, remembering the past, steadfastly setting our face toward Jerusalem, in the sure and certain knowledge in the power of the resurrection. TW

(I am indebted to theologian Elisabeth Schuessler-Fiorenza for insights into the interpretation of Luke 10:38-42 — A. C.)

confident that our vision of a realm of a just and compassionate God will bring us home? Do we really want to figure out how to be a decent and orderly seminary of the Episcopal Church, or do we intend to be a wilderness school? Will this be a seminary-in-exile, a place where God will always be known, loved, and celebrated in the margins, in the struggle for a just and compassionate church and world?

If we truly were to embrace as our vocation being a seminary-in-exile and make this journey our home, our problems with money and public relations would fall quickly into perspective. We might find ourselves poorer in some ways, but would find ourselves journeying with a startling sense of confidence, clarity, joy and energy — a people on fire with a passion for justice. And I believe we would be at last a people at home, at peace with ourselves. TW

Bishops' report lacks depth

by John M. Gessell

The Board of Directors of the Cumberland Center last fall released its critique of the Urban Bishops' Coalition report, "Economic Justice and the Christian Conscience," suggesting that its analysis does not probe deeply enough and does not speak to the structural causes of economic justice.

The Cumberland Center for Justice and Peace, Sewanee, Tenn., has over 60 members and is dedicated to promoting efforts, programs and activities to bring about a measure of peace with justice in its own region as well as in the nation and the world.

The Cumberland Center's response emphasizes that economic well-being for some has been gained at the expense of misery and poverty for many. The Center suggests that the bishops' call for a change in values is too timid, and what is required are changes in the economic and political structures of free societies if this paradox-is to be addressed.

The Center's board issued the response because, while they hoped that the Urban Bishops' report would start a widespread debate within the church on the causes and consequences of economic injustice in America, this had not yet happened.

To stimulate discussion, the Center has issued 350 copies through sales (at $3.75 each) and other distribution, and is planning a second printing. The board received some thoughtful letters but debate and discussion in the church is minimal so far as we can tell. Perhaps there is no mechanism within the church to foster such a dialogue.

The Center's response begins by calling attention to the *kairos* of opportunity provided by the present danger of widespread impoverishment occasioned by cruel politics and structural injustices. It notes further that the Urban Bishops' report is helpful as a guide to conscience, but that its premise lacks sufficient credibility to move us further to action. Some reasons are alleged to show why this is probably true:

1. The report does not go far enough in criticizing the relation of current economic structures to the systemic causes of poverty in America, for if the problems which it only hints at lie within the capitalist system itself these are not addressed.

2. It is not sufficiently rigorous in its theological analysis, for even people of goodwill cannot change the paradox of poverty in the midst of wealth merely by a shift in values.

3. The report does not appear to be well-informed on the developments of theological and social ethics in the past generations relating to economic justice.

4. It does not give sufficient attention to the problems of pervasive racism and militarism in our society.

5. The fundamental issue of transforming a war-based economy in the United States to an economy that will better meet the demands of justice is not well addressed.

6. The report understates the scope of the necessary individual and societal changes required to bring about a greater

The Rev. John M. Gessell is Excutive Director of the Cumberland Center for Peace and Justice and Emertius Professor of Christian Ethics at University of the South's School of Theology, Sewanee, Tenn.

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measure of economic justice whereby equitable sharing of material well-being with those who are impoverished will be required by those who are more fortunate.

One might speculate on the failure of the Urban Bishops' Coalition or the Cumberland Center to provoke widespread discussion of economic injustice in America. Is it because the current events in Eastern Europe demonstrate the coming triumph of capitalism and the ultimate defeat of socialism? Such self-congratulation and self-glorification is a vulgar denial of reality. Poverty in America grows with each succeeding year. And 1988 was a record-breaking year for the rich. The gap between rich and poor Americans has now reached its widest point since 1946. Last year the poorest one-fifth of U.S. citizens received 4.6% of the total national family income. At the same time the richest one-fifth received 44% of total national family income. The number of officially poor Americans was 31.9 million, 13.1% of the total population. Given this data, Eastern Europeans groping for new political and economic solutions should be forewarned about the consequences of opting for American-style capitalism.

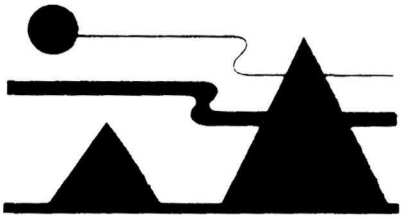
No one in Eastern Europe is rushing to embrace American "free-market" economics — which has become a euphemism for multi-national monopolistic protection of deregulated greed. The call everywhere is for democratic socialism.

One bishop's reaction to the Cumberland Center's response may come closer to the truth. He noted his agreement with its final paragraph: "Thus the report of the Urban Bishops' Coalition is to be commended for addressing critical issues of justice and conscience related to the functioning of the U.S. economy. It nevertheless accepts, and is perhaps captive of, the dominant values of our culture — political, economic, and religious — as these are construed in the late 20th century. The board members of the Cumberland Center believe the report should adopt a more radical stance from within, questioning those very assumptions, rather than simply hoping for their reform." And he goes on to say, "We are captive in many ways that we need to look at, i.e., we are still captives of the `Prince/Bishop' thing — we need to restructure the way in which the episcopate functions."

It may well be that the Episcopal leadership of the church is to a large extent captivated by its medieval theology of *episcopé* which includes the relatively uncritical alliance with the political and economic principalities. There are those who are critical and can distinguish the dominant secular values which engulf us, but the general ethos tends to be acceptance without critical judgment — as if the Episcopal Church were an *established* church with duties to legitimize the culture.

In October 1981 the House of Bishops issued an astonishingly perceptive pastoral letter from its meeting in San Diego. Titled "Apocalypse and Hope," the letter charts the dismal and self-destructive spiral of violence throughout human history. "With violence so deeply rooted in human behavior it becomes an agony of growth to shift to another means of security. It remains easier to rely on instruments of mutually-assured destruction than to negotiate in patient non-violence for the means of mutually assured survival. We are therefore prompted as religious leaders to impose upon ourselves the obligation for making this moral shift. We pray to the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, moving us from violence to non-violence."

This was a landmark pastoral calling for a shift from the tradition of moral theology on the uses of violence that had been regnant in the church for over 1500 years. But this commendable access of acumen and imagination has not been followed up. Little indication has appeared that the church's leadership is moving from its uncritical option for the rich to a preferential option for the poor, or that it is willing to call into question the church's complicity with the warfare state, or to work against the death penalty, or to end the continuing oppression of women and homosexual persons. The "radical shift" of the pastoral letter is not merely a personal preference, it is a social contract. Radical shift from violence to non-violence in the terms of moral theology is a shift from a concern for the rich to the poor. For it is the poor who pay the unbearable price of the violence that is an integral part of injustice.



Pro-choice issue available

■ **Procreative freedom — the June 1989 issue of THE WITNESS gives a comprehensive theological and social analysis of reproductive freedom. Features penetrating interviews with Faye Wattleton, president of Planned Parenthood, and Beverly Wildung Harrison, feminist theologian. Also, an African-American male viewpoint by Faith Evans, past president of Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, and articles addressing pastoral and legislative implications.**

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Short Takes

Pre-embryo phase not pregnancy

I would suggest that a woman is not pregnant until the pre-embryo implants in the uterus, at about two weeks. The IUD in some fashion disrupts the early process so that implantation doesn't take place. The assumption is that, unable to find a place in the inner lining of the uterus, the pre-embryo fragments and dies. This also applies to RU 486, the new pill developed in France. Like the IUD, RU 486's effect is contragestive. It is not against the ovum itself. It interferes with the interaction between the uterus and the pre-embryo.

Embyrologist Clifford Grobstein
in *Psychology Today* 11/89

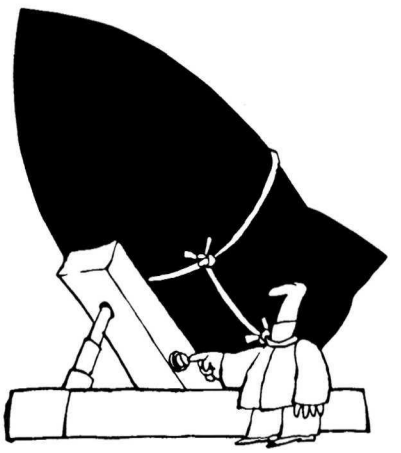
(Grobstein serves on the ethics committees of both the American Fertility Society and the Catholic Health Association.)

How 'bout dem CEOs?

A recent survey of pay for the chief executives of 354 major companies found that in 1988 they earned 93 times the income of a typical factory worker, 72 times more than a schoolteacher, and 44 times more than an engineer. In 1960, when American business called the shots for the whole world, executives took home a mere 41 times more than factory workers, 38 times more than schoolteachers and 18 times more than engineers.

What we are going through is part of a worldwide radical shift in the division of labor. It is carried out by irresponsible corporations at the expense of workers in both the First and Third Worlds. We have to have an alternative to this reality of a global economy in furious, and often socially destructive, transition. We need democratic and social intervention into the investment process itself. It is the corporations, not Mexican, Taiwanese, or South Korean workers who are the enemy. That's why international labor solidarity is so important.

The late Michael Harrington
***Solidarity* 7-8/89**



Swiss Army challenged

The Swiss people voted in November on the abolishment of their army, and 35% voted to get rid of the army by the year 2000. The referendum was initiated by a group called, "Switzerland Without an Army," which had gathered 100,000 signatures to force a vote.

Two years ago, organizers of the referendum were publicly ridiculed by government and media. One year ago, high ranking military officers said that if the referendum were to reach 20% of the votes, there would be a serious crisis. With a voter turnout of 69%, highest since 1971, 35% of those voting want the army gone.

Until recent history the Swiss army has been the number one patriotic insitution. It has been labeled the most modern and effective army in Europe. Heightened public discussion around questions of war, peace and nonviolence has provided the grounding for wide reassessment of the need for an army.

***Synapses* news release**
12/18/89

Quote of note

George Bush was born on third base and thinks he hit a triple.

Jim Hightower
Texas Agricultural Commissioner

Youths bend ethics rules

According to a recent survey of 795 business persons and 1,093 high school seniors by the Pinnacle Group, students were much more inclined than business people to be more inclined to do something illegal to make money:

— Asked if they would be willing to face six months probation on an illegal deal in which they made $10 million, 59% of the students said "definitely yes" or "maybe;" and 24% of the business persons responded similarly.

— 36% of the students, contrasted to 14% of business persons would copy to pass a certification test.

— Half of the students said they would exaggerate on an insurance damage report, versus one of four business people.

— Two-thirds of the students said they would consider lying to achieve a business objective, while 29% of the business persons claimed they would do so.

Gregory Pierce
***The New World* 8/25/89**

No ethics, no dilemma

As part of an effort to weed out people only interested in parlaying a Harvard business degree into a high-paying job, the admission process has been changing. It now includes 13 questions and nine essays and takes hours to complete. To make the cut, students must answer a few questions about ethics.

In the application, they are asked to explain how they managed an ethical dilemma they experienced. But according to Laura Gordon Fisher, the school's admission director, many students say they never have encountered an ethical dilemma. "Some applicants want to know if they can fabricate one," she said.

Reminds me of the old question, if a dog could talk, what would it say? If these kids could make up an ethical dilemma, what do you suppose it would be?

Molly Ivins
Houston Post

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Embryos . . . *continued from page 9*

the process — live birth — has been reached, or when there is a dispute between parties, a death, or a change of mind due to physical, emotional or financial circumstances, couples may choose to have their unused preembryos removed from the freezer, thawed and discarded. At least one program removes the preembryos and keeps them in an incubator as they are slowly warmed and disintegrate, in a manner which parallels withdrawal of interventions in intensive care nurseries. Other programs view the four-to-eight-celled objects primarily as human tissue and, while treated with respect, they are nonetheless thawed and discarded as any other human tissue from the lab.

The euphemisms used by IVF to avoid the reality of the preembryo's death indicate their uncertainty with the process. Australian programs originally said preembryos were "removed from storage." Recent U.S. terminology has centered around "thawing without transferring," "thawing to discard," or simply "thawing." None of the designations acknowledge that this choice intentionally allows the preembryos to die.

While many would contend that this option is active euthanasia or, more vehemently, abortion, it seems clear that removal of preembryos from the device which maintains them in a sort of suspended animation has a closer parallel to the removal of life-support systems from hospitalized patients. But even this comparison assumes too much in equating eight-celled embryos with persons. The fact also is that these undifferentiated eight-celled embryos die when thawed.

The interesting dilemma is that preembryos are seen by these same clinicians to be of lesser significance than an embryo and therefore ethically able to be frozen and thawed with a 50% sacrifice rate. But on the other hand, they are of such significance that terminology becomes euphemistic or evasive when the matter of choosing to thaw to discard arises. Some programs will not even offer that option and require that excess preembryos be stored indefinitely or transferred for donation to an infertile woman. Louisiana is the only state where this is currently law.

Preembryo symbol of life

The issue here is the preembryo as a symbol of life and medical practitioners' refusal to accept not only the end of that life, but also the logical consequences of their technological interventions. Preembryos do symbolize human life. Human life ends in death, regardless of the kind and amount of medical treatment applied to prolong the process. If practitioners want to devise procedures to create and preserve potential lives, then they must be willing to accept the responsibility for withdrawing those procedures, and allowing, at the discretion of the parents, those preembryos to die. Not to do so denies the wholeness of life which includes death, and devalues the preembryo, making it a mere means to an end, and another commodity in an already overly commercial society. Thawing to discard, then, is an appropriate option for any program offering IVF and cryopreservation.

In order ethically to practice cryopreservation, there must be a well-written informed consent document. In addition to costs, issues raised in the form should include conditions of transfer, storage, donation, and thawing to discard. Disposition in case of death, divorce or disagreement must also be decided and agreed to prior to cryopreservation in order to avoid the kind of legal problem that developed in Tennessee, where no informed consent form was offered.

But can a couple be informed enough about the psychological, emotional and symbolic attachments they will experience to decide to abrogate any future rights for knowledge of or contact with their preembryos? Or is this consent parallel to one signed by a mother relinquishing her rights regarding a full-term baby? Will they be prepared for the criticism that they have "aborted" by allowing the excess preembryos to be thawed to discard? And what will happen if the mother dies and the bereaved father wishes to have the preembryos transferred into a sister-in-law, or mother, or new significant other to preserve the genetic legacy of his former spouse?

Even the best informed consent document will not totally protect all the parties from litigation, especially in this country. Legal issues not addressed in most documents involve inheritance and property rights. If both parents die, do the preembryos stand to inherit the estate if transferred to another woman, and what is her involvement in their inheritance?

Informed consent is, however, the key to the ethical structuring of any cryopreservation program. Couples or singles must explicitly know ahead of time the limits of the technology, the situations that may arise, and the best and worst-case scenarios this technology may produce.

Ethical objections

Some people believe with the poet Homer that "The human race should rightly be confined/Within the bounds which Nature hath defined." They object to cryopreservation for the same reason they object to the use of any artificially assisted reproduction techniques, on the grounds that it is artificial and unnatural. But much of medical practice is "artificial" in terms of the physical or mechanical interventions used. Modern medical technology, from lasers to magnetic resonance images, has expanded what were previously thought to be nature's "bounds."

In fact, biotechnology may eventually obviate the need for cryopreservation altogether, once an effective way is devised to freeze ova. Because ova are made up of only one cell, they are much

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more fragile and difficult to freeze and thaw without total loss. But once the method is perfected, frozen sperm and eggs may be thawed and mixed together when the woman is ready to receive them, thereby circumventing the entire issue of preembryo creation, storage and disposition. Already there have been at least five human births from the use of frozen ova.

Other ethical problems with cryopreservation stem from its association with IVF. As with IVF, many ask whether, in a country with 37 million people without healthcare insurance, it is a just allocation of scarce resources to spend money on a technology that benefits a relatively miniscule number, with an alarmingly small success rate? As the United States faces future rationing of healthcare resources, will such novel and expensive procedures be a priority in a nation with a higher infant mortality rate than Spain and Costa Rica? In a world teeming with babies in need of food and nurture, should we produce more infants when we have not met our moral obligation to care for those already born?

In addition to the ethical issues raised earlier which are peculiar to cryopreservation, even aside from IVF, will we allow only "perfect" babies to be chosen? What political, social, physical or economic criteria will we use to define "perfect?"

Finally, where is the church in all of these issues? There is a desperate need for open discussion at the parish and community level about the ethics of sexuality, procreation, abortion, termination of life-sustaining treatment, and the socially just allocation of healthcare resources. The fact that there are no "right" answers, official church answers, Christian answers, or Biblical referents to cryopreservation deters many churches from entering into such controversial dialogues. But this fact points up the need for discussion from the Christian perspective to provide the insight and guidance from which will evolve many possible courses of ethical action.

Current common belief is that we live in a "post-Christian age." If we do not take seriously our obligation to address these ethical issues, then the competing cultural theologies of science, law, political and economic advantage and social convenience will become the dominant forces in directing our common life together.

If we, as Christians, are to have any cultural viability and social influence in the future and if we are to assist our people in the understanding of our particular tradition of belief, then the church must begin to examine the untangling of that web, strand by sticky ethical strand. TW

Daughter . . . *Continued from page 11*

Bingham chiefly turned to for support during the family crisis were Anne Braden's *The Wall Between* and Lillian Smith's *Killers of the Dream.* Both books were written by Southern women activists whose militant championship of minority causes met with a dismaying lack of support on the part of Southern "moderates."

In 1947 Braden and her husband Carl had roused the wrath of Louisville racists by selling a home in a white neighborhood to a black couple. When the house was firebombed, the Bradens were blamed. Tried before a biased court using the testimony of paid informers, Carl was imprisoned under a state anti-sedition law later overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. He was a proofreader at the *Courier-Journal* and at the onset of the controversy, he was suspended by Barry Bingham. The paper showed little support throughout the struggle.

Impressed by Anne Braden's courage, Bingham sought to probe this admirable activist's life by writing a play, also called *The Wall Between.* And recently, Bingham said, "the Foundation gave a grant to a woman who's writing a biography of Anne Braden, and I'm very pleased with that."

She also has strong empathy with Lillian Smith, derived from the fact that she and Smith grew up in a closed environment, stifled by patriarchal domination and racial prejudice, which had to be fought to win self-determination. She, like Smith, remembers an encompassing ambience of "sin," a deeply-implanted guilt requiring a high moral responsibility that was contradicted by the rampant racism and injustice she saw around her.

During her girlhood "we lived in a rigidly segregated society," Bingham said. "All the white people were living off the labor of their black servants, and yet black people weren't considered, so far as I could see, to have souls. There would never have been a thought of a black person in the churches. Even before the mansion-church was built, when we used to congregate in a little black church in Harrod's Creek, there was still no notion that the two congregations had anything in common."

Noting that the phrase "brotherhood of man" was frequently invoked in church, Bingham asked, "Where were women in that brotherhood, a brotherhood that wasn't even working for men?"

"Under that benevolence, the kindness of the patriarchy," Bingham said, "there was really murderous intent. How could all these people be treated as human beings with souls when they were being exploited?"

It is this whole question of exploitation and exclusion which troubles Bingham the most, and has led her to actions which have resulted in alienation from her family. TW

*(**Passion and Prejudice** is published by Knopf. Hardback, $22.95.)*

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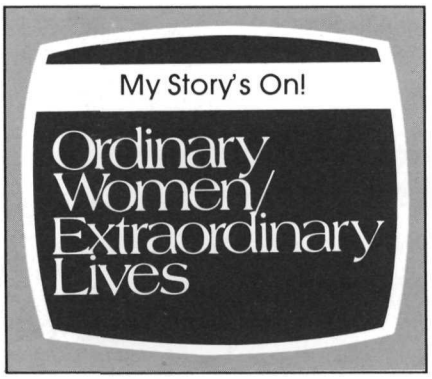

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THE WITNESS



CUBA

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Letters

U.S. policy co-alcoholic

Thanks to THE WITNESS for its incisive reporting on U.S. aggression in Central America. The United States has a co-alcoholic foreign policy. A co-alcoholic helps his relative or friend, the alcoholic, in such a way that the sickness worsens. The "co" gives money, food and support to the alcoholic. The sick person gets sicker.

Our U.S. "co" policy in Central and South America purports to help the people of those regions. Take Panama. We want to help the people throw off a dictator, establish a better economy and stop the drug traffic. To help our sick neighbor, we invade the country, kill thousands of people, and perpetuate widespread looting. We establish a government that suits us. We lend them money and supplies which they can't pay back. The sickness will worsen.

What assists an alcoholic is taking responsibility for one's self. What will help Central and South America is self-determination. The leadership and people of those countries can handle their own problems if we co-alcoholics will get out of the way.

I must be missing something in all this Panama stuff. If we were unhappy with Maggie Thatcher, could we go in and kidnap her and bring her to the United States for trial? Isn't there something in international law that suggests this to be a no-no?

The Rev. Robert Warren Cromey
San Francisco, Cal.

For legalizing drugs

As former rector of Christ Church by the Sea, Colon, it is with considerable satisfaction that I endorse the article by the present rector, Edward O. Waldron, entitled "Drugs: Legalize the supply?" in the January WITNESS. I do not know the present situation in Panama, and I assume his article was written before the fall of Noriega, but I have long held that our national policy on drugs to date is unrealistic and ignores the lessons of our history, notably from 1918 to 1935.

I also know well that the entire history of West Indians and others who were imported to work, literally from birth to death, on the Panama Railroad, the French Canal and the American Canal under the brutal gold and silver system, which represented total discrimination — at least until 1948 and probably longer. A change did take place, during my years as rector of Christ Church, when the silver workers organized and for the first time received recognition of mainland labor. Even though the initial effort ran into difficulties under the United Public Workers, expelled from the CIO on grounds of communist leanings, the succeeding union was, I believe, effective in eliminating the gold and silver standard and accomplishing some much needed parity in salaries for non-U.S. citizens.

Nevertheless, at best the native workers as a whole have continued to suffer economic hardship, aggravated by governmental graft during the last 30 years, and if, as it appears, drug use spread widely through the populace, many of the causes do not lie far beneath the surface. I would like to read a more detailed appraisal by Waldron in support of his painful long-term solution, i.e., broad, national repentance. Certainly the United States has never measured up to its responsibilities and opportunities, and Panama, on the other hand, has been too prone to rely on Canal income instead of developing her own national resources, generally neglected over the years.

The Rev. John Chisholm
Huntingdon Valley, Pa.

White House 'on hold'

After reading your January editorial, I called my representative and senator to ask that military aid to El Salvador be cut off and to protest the arrest of church workers there. Then I called the Embassy of El Salvador, which was curt, rude, and difficult to understand.

When I dialed the White House, I was told that political commentary had to be directed to another number. I called there and was put on hold. After a long wait, I hung up because I couldn't afford the mounting cost. Maybe that's the ploy. If the White House is counting, it certainly cuts down protest calls from those like myself on limited budgets. Shouldn't the White House have a 1-800 number to receive political comments from the people?

Would you please send me another copy of the January issue? I sent mine to Barbara Bush, along with materials on El Salvador which a Catholic nun had given me. I asked the nun if she knew about THE WITNESS and she said yes, she thought it was terrific and a number of her friends subscribe. I just wanted you to know you had readers in the Roman Catholic community here.

Louise D. Smith
Holt, Mich.

Militarism rekindled

Your editorials are always right on and pertinent to current social problems. Racism is still with us, and militarism has been rekindled with the bloody and "successful" invasion of Panama. Washington keeps sending financial and military support to the butchers in El Salvador.

People everywhere in the country sympathize for the murdered Jesuits and associates down there. Protests ended in arrests for trespassing on federal property here and elsewhere. Over 20 of our people were arrested here in New Orleans, including visiting professor, Dan Berrigan.

I wish you grace and blessings.

The Rev. Joseph H. Fichter, S.J.
New Orleans, La.

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Likes keeping up to date

I was pleased to read Anita Cornwell's profile of Angela Davis in the January WITNESS, because I had not seen anything written about her for a long time. It was interesting to find out what Davis is doing now, and her vision for the future. She has always been one of the most consistently hard-working, aware and intelligent activists who came out of the 1960s.

As a Quaker with a longtime commitment to social action, I like reading THE WITNESS and being updated about the people who have provided leadership and inspiration in the movement for social change. It's important to keep up with them.

Cathryn Coate
Philadelphia, Pa.

Letter gives pause

It seems to me that there are a few alarming points sounded by the pro-choice letter of Jeanne Bland et al in the January WITNESS. Their characterization of the anti-abortion perspective seems ordinary and misleading.

Offering myself and knowing others, secular and religious, I must insist that anti-abortion protestors need not be Roman Catholic or Protestant fundamentalist, and that their aim is not necessarily to proscribe contraception and sex education. Some advocate these things.

The authors of the letter unacceptably suggest that the actions of anti-abortion protestors are appropriate only to a scene from a Fellini movie. Indeed, Christianity stands to suffer greatly if, within anyone's community, even Christians genuinely ridicule or impugn the display of crucifixes, priests, kneeling and praying.

According to Bland et al, some anti-abortion people support capital punishment and our country's lethal aid to El Salvador (even though some anti-abortion protesters also execrate capital punishment and our country's lethal aid to El Salvador). The pro-choice claim here is that it is contradictory to be against abortion and for capital punishment or lethal foreign aid. This claim, however, is a serious complication not for the anti-abortion advocate but for the pro-choice one. The complication is this: There is a contradiction only if abortion and capital punishment, or lethal foreign aid, each involves the loss of human life. The pro-choice criticism here entails that abortion involves the loss of human life.

According to Bland et al, it is most important to uphold the separation of church and state. If this recommendation is right, then Christians must be politically still and silent. And stillness and silence are deadly.

John D. Munday
Rockledge, Pa.

Not mainstream enough

I do not wish to renew THE WITNESS for the coming year, either my own subscription or my gift subscriptions. I feel the magazine does not represent the mainstream of Episcopalian thought. The articles are too one-sided with basically the same opinions in all of the issues. I do not feel that I would be a good steward of the monies entrusted to me if I continued.

Mrs. Geri Stirling, Director
Church Peridical Club
Diocese of Arizona

Picks up tab

Last spring you wrote and offered me a year's subscription when I'd finished my degree, as you do for seminarians. Well, I'm happy to say I received the MFA in creative writing recently for a collection of 38 poems, plus those term papers of course. But I'd like to kick in one year's worth because surely your generosity will find good use for the revenue. I enjoy THE WITNESS each month.

I joined the Anglican Church in 1974 in Montreal and will always be grateful. I learned that the church is not an option or a denomination, but a nation transcending political boundaries, within which each citizen possesses integrity and has the right not to be ignored, or worse, crushed. Like Our Lord, people who try to put such a belief into practice are unpopular.

Vivian Lewin
Gainesville, Fla.

Getting on with it

In view of the message of the whole article ("AIDS and the survival of the fittest" by John Snow, December) it's probably "picky" to note Carnegie's name on page 8 leading the Vanderbilts and Rockefellers as laissez faire capitalists. In one respect he differed. As I remember from reading Annie Dillard, Carnegie did as he had planned and distributed his wealth at his death (all those Carnegie Libraries) leaving only a million or so for his family — not enough to be a self-perpetuating "empire."

I like the idea that it's "the fear" of death that makes us give in (and give up). But some things seem to be falling in place — a possible program for training and retooling for a peace time economy, Tom Wicker correcting our view of nuclear waste (it cannot be "solved" and done with; it's with us for thousands of years). Might as well get on with it.

Eleanor Miles
Madison, Wisc.

Missing the mag

Please send me THE WITNESS as soon as possible. I've had nothing to read since I stopped subscribing. What is happening in South and Central America? In Africa? What about health care, the ageing, the homeless, etc.?

Janet Dickerson
DesPeres, Mo.

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THE WITNESS

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THE WITNESS



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Editorial

Welcome home, Nelson Mandela

I am the first accused. At the outset, I want to say that the suggestion made by the state in its opening that the struggle in South Africa is under the influence of foreigners or Communists is wholly incorrect. I had done whatever I did both as an individual and as a leader of my people, because of my experience in South Africa and my own proudly felt African background, and not because of what any outsider might have said . . .

I have been influenced by Marxist thought, but this is also true of many of the leaders of the new independent states. Such widely different persons as Gandhi, Nehru, Nkrumah, and Nasser all acknowledged this fact. We all accept the need for some form of socialism to enable our people to catch up with the advanced countries of this world to overcome their legacy of extreme poverty . . .

During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to the struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

— Nelson Mandela in his 1964 defense speech, reprinted in THE WITNESS, 2/87

After 27 and 1/2 years — almost a generation in time — Nelson Mandela is free. We prayerfully rejoice, along with his wife, Winnie, and the rest of the world united around the struggle against apartheid in South Africa — at the same time suppressing outrage that this African National Congress leader had to spend some 10,000 days of his life behind bars.

Mandela's first speech after his release reflected that he still affirms violence as a defensive, last resort to achieve liberation. In that respect, it is fitting that the release of Mandela coincided with this issue of THE WITNESS about Cuba, a country which has fought at great cost against racism and colonialism in southern Africa. Cuba recently buried more than 2,200 men and women who had died in military and civilian service in Africa, in a campaign which allowed Angola and Namibia to successfully defend themselves against South Africa in their struggles for sovereignty. It was the defeat of the invading South African forces in Cuito Cuanavale, Tchipa and Calueque, which forced South African authorities to sit at the table with Angola in negotiations mediated by the United States. Another consequence of Cuban military presence was the creation of conditions for Namibian independence.

Interestingly, Cuba has named as head of its Anti-Apartheid Committee the Rev. Adolfo Ham, a Presbyterian pastor. This is the first time in recent history that a church person has been asked to lead a government effort there.

But in these months of explosive social change, even in South Africa, we seek in vain for *perestroika* in the United States. As peace activist Dan Berrigan put it, "governments vanish like Punch and Judy puppets, and prisoners become heads of state" abroad, but "we Americans are stuck. This country is like a mortuary convention led by the stalking dead. Except these convening corpses are potent indeed; they mock the living, lie and smile and kill by proxy . . . We see horrific images of the dead of Romania, nothing of the dead of Panama. Evidently to paraphrase Orwell, some corpses are more equal than others."

Therefore, this Lent we rejoice for Nelson Mandela and the hope his release offers for ANC efforts to create a new South Africa. Toward that end, we will intensify our support to maintain economic sanctions. But equally, we will continue to work and pray for change and justice in our own hemisphere. TW

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Cuba studies role in an

December 7th. That date has special meaning not only in the United States but also in Cuba, where it marks the day one of its noted revolutionaries, Antonio Maceo, was killed in the struggle for Cuban independence in 1896. Because of its significance, Cubans chose Dec. 7th last year to lay to rest the remains of their men and women who died in furtherance of other independence struggles — mainly in Africa, the land of Maceo's ancestors. The special memorial ceremony took place at El Cacahual mausoleum, near Havana, where Maceo's remains are interred.

More than 2,000 Cuban "internationalist fighters" have died protecting the regime that emerged 15 years ago from Portuguese colonial rule in Angola. On a per capita basis, that's higher than the U.S. death toll in Vietnam.

Now, with Angolan independence apparently made secure by negotiated withdrawal of South African forces, Cuban soldiers were returning home as heroes — and President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos of Angola had come to help Fidel Castro honor the dead.

The rumble of slow-moving artillery caissons bearing flag-draped coffins underlined the solemnity of this farewell salute. The words and tone of the Cuban leader imparted an additional note of somberness.

On this December 7th Cuba said goodbye not just to its sons and daughters who died in the cause of international socialism on distant shores. It also bade a public farewell to old friends from across the waters who had helped protect socialism at home.

His beard turning grey but his voice still strong and defiant, Fidel Castro, now 63, told the hushed crowd that Cuba will go it alone if necessary rather than follow the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in dismantling communism.

He stressed that socialism cannot be saved by resorting to the tools of capitalism; and the cause of socialism cannot be advanced by joining capitalism in plundering the Third World.

Castro said, "We have never aspired to having custody of the banners and principles which the revolutionary movement has defended throughout its heroic and inspiring history. However, if fate were to decree that, one day, we would be among the last defenders of socialism in a world in which U.S. imperialism had realized Hitler's dream of world domination, we would defend this bulwark to the last drop of our blood."

Cuba welcomes the Cold War thaw, with its prospect for nuclear disarmament, Castro said, but it sees the growing U.S.-Soviet political accord as potentially dangerous to the Third World.

"They speak of peace," he said, "but what kind of peace? Of peace between the major powers, while imperialism reserves the right to intervene in and attack the Third World countries."

He cited several examples of growing U.S. intervention in the affairs of underdeveloped nations, unaware that within two weeks the invasion of Panama would provide him with another.

"The imperialist government of the United States demands that no one help the Salvadoran revolutionaries and tries to blackmail the USSR into ending its economic and military assistance to Nicaragua and Cuba because we express solidarity with the Salvadoran revolutionaries, even though we abide strictly

Samuel H. Day, Jr. is co-director of Nukewatch in Madison, Wisc. and a member of THE WITNESS Editorial Board. He recently spent six months in jail for non-violent civil disobedience at a missile silo site. While in jail, he edited a book entitled *Prisoners on Purpose*.



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abandoned Third World

by Sam Day

by our commitments concerning the weapons supplied by the USSR . . . Meanwhile, that same imperialist government which is demanding an end to solidarity with Salvadoran revolutionaries is helping the genocidal Salvadoran government and sending special combat units to El Salvador; supporting the counterrevolution in Nicaragua; organizing coups d'état and the assassinations of leaders in Panama; sending military aid to UNITA in Angola — in spite of the successful peace agreements in southwestern Africa — and continuing to supply the rebel forces in Afghanistan with large amounts of weapons, ignoring the Geneva Accords and the fact that Soviet troops have withdrawn," said Castro.

For a WITNESS writers' group touring Cuba in early December, the defiance of Castro — who led Cuba out of the U.S. political and economic orbit in 1959 — dispelled any questions of whether Cuba will trim its sails to meet the new winds blowing from the Communist world.

The answer, reiterated in interviews with lesser government and party officials, is an emphatic "No." Unlike their allies in the Soviet bloc, the people who have ruled Cuba for 31 years have no intention of relinquishing one-party control, ordering Western-style political elections, cutting back their system of centralized social planning, or returning to a market economy.

They freely acknowledged that there is popular discontent in this island nation of 10 million, particularly among young people. But Cuba is in no danger of going the way of Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia or Romania, they assured us, because socialism has deeper roots here. The revolution was achieved by the Cubans themselves (rather than being imported by the Red Army) and it continues to enjoy a far greater degree of popular participation.

"Popular participation is the key to our revolution," we were told by Fernando Garcia-Bielsa, a Communist Party Central Committee official whose job is to help keep the party leadership abreast of hemispheric developments.

"Here we made our own revolution. But it wasn't just an historical happening 30 years ago. It has been happening every year," said Garcia-Bielsa.

He and others acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining enthusiasm for the revolution in the face of continuing scarcity and rising expectations — particularly among young people, who don't remember the old days.

Though a poor nation not overly-endowed with natural resources, Cuba has made giant social strides since 1959 — bringing health care, education and housing within reach of all, eliminating great disparities between rich and poor. But these achievements have come at the cost of market place austerities.

No Cuban goes to bed hungry or homeless, we were told, but the food is plain and the apartments are apt to be cramped with relatives and in-laws waiting for a home of their own. Such consumer shortages, partly the result of policies that deliberately favor underlying social programs, are compounded by bureaucratic inefficiencies — freely admitted by the government — and U.S. economic strategies designed to deny the Castro government badly-needed hard currencies.

At the heart of the U.S. economic offensive is a trade embargo which, by sealing off the nearby U.S. market, has stunted and distorted the Cuban economy, making it heavily dependent on the socialist trading bloc half a world away. In addition, U.S. policy has aimed, often successfully, at denying Cuba access to



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other trading partners and international lending sources.

The United States makes no bones about the purpose of its economic and ideological warfare against socialist Cuba. The purpose is to isolate that country economically and politically, to hamstring its development, and thereby to deter others in Latin America and the Caribbean from following the Cuban example.

Can Cuba survive the continuing U.S. "cold war" in the face of changing circumstances in the Eastern bloc which could terminate the ideologically-based grants and trade subsidies that Cuba has enjoyed since the revolution?

That question was put to Ramon Sanchez-Parodi, Cuba's Deputy Foreign Minister for American affairs. He said yes.

"The embargo has been going on for 30 years. We're almost used to it." He said what concerned him more was the adverse impact on Third World nations from current changes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. He said he already saw signs of international capital abandoning Third World projects in order to pursue new investment opportunities in Eastern Europe.

As for its dealing with the United States, Cuba would like to normalize relations, Sanchez-Parodi said, but not on the basis of the past, when the United States treated the island like an economic colony. From Cuba's standpoint there are no serious issues between the two governments, and it would welcome cooperation in such common problems as combatting the illegal drug trade.

Periodic peace feelers from Havana or Washington always have foundered on the rock of U.S. ideological hostility, Sanchez-Parodi said. From time to time over the years U.S. domestic opinion has exerted a restraining influence on U.S. policy toward such places as Vietnam, southern Africa and Central America, Sanchez-Parodi observed. But Cuba has



Ramon Sanchez-Parodi

remained the victim of bipartisan U.S. foreign policy consensus which seems to regard the Cuban revolution as a threat.

What the Deputy Foreign Minister said was doubly true. The U.S. government has succeeded in isolating Cuba not just from much of the world economy but from the U.S. peace and justice movement as well.

Why do American political activists, properly sensitized to their government's interference in Nicaragua and El Salvador, evince little awareness or concern about bludgeoning of Cuba? Several explanations come to mind:

1. The embargo has worked all too well. It has curtailed U.S. travel in Cuba, restricted cultural contacts between the two countries, and cut off the information we need in order to make a fair judgment of the Cuban revolution.

2. The information vacuum has been filled by a government disinformation program aimed at falsely portraying Cuba as a threat to vital U.S. interests and other nations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

3. A large and influential Cuban exile community in the United States has aided and abetted our government's campaign of lies and distortions about the Cuban revolution.

4. Except for the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961, the U.S. campaign against Cuba has been a bloodless one. Unlike the wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador, there have been no atrocities to grab headlines and stimulate public protest.

5. Churches do not provide the same link. Much of the U.S. domestic support for revolutionary movements in Central America comes from the identification of religious people with that struggle. In the revolution, which preceded the advent of liberation theology, the Cuban churches identified with the forces of reaction.

6. Communist Cuba, like any government under virtual siege by a powerful nearby foe, has repressive features such as occasional summary trials and executions, political prisoners, sanctions regarding religion, a controlled press, and an excessively regimented economy. This has understandably alienated many Americans, including some on the left.

Despite the difficulties standing in the way of a fully-informed public opinion, U.S. policy toward Cuba ought not to remain unchallenged. At stake is the simple question of justice for a neighboring country that has done us no harm. But the issue goes deeper than that.

The effort to isolate and cripple the independent government of Cuba is part of a larger policy of projecting American power and influence elsewhere in the world to the detriment of other countries and also to Americans, who ultimately wind up bearing the burdens of empire. We can best challenge that policy by examining all its parts. The U.S. war on Cuba is a significant part of that policy.

Now that the tensions and the hysteria of the East-West cold war are subsiding at long last, it would be a shameful irony if those forces were rechanneled into a North-South war against bogus enemies in the Third World.

For many years the cold warriors in our midst have been preparing for that eventuality through the villainization of poor Third World countries that dared to deviate from our control. Cuba is the place where that process began. It's a good place to bring it to a halt. TW

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Doing theology in a Marxist ambience

by Alice L. Hageman

As rapid changes come to Eastern European countries, churches have been working within socialist frameworks to help reshape the emerging political and social order. Although socialist countries are usually stereotyped as totally anti-religion, Christian-Marxist dialogue has been going on quietly in these countries for many years. But this dialogue has also shaped a new theology in the churches of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Last winter, for example, a group of 100 academics, activists, and clergy gathered at a Cuban seminary in Matanzas for the Third International *Encuentro* (Encounter) of Theology, sponsored by the Latin American and Caribbean region of the Christian Peace Conference. Most participants came from outside Cuba, although Cubans constituted the largest single delegation, including several participant observers from the Department of Religious Studies of the Cuban Academy of Sciences. There were also six European and six U.S. participants.

The Christian Peace Conference originated in the Eastern Europe of the late 1950s, under the tutelage of noted Czech theologian Josef Hromadka. Since its inception CPC's international headquarters has been located in Prague. Its first assembly took place in 1961, when both Chinese and Russian delegates were prominent; by 1964, the Chinese were no longer attending. For many years the CPC served as the Eastern European quasi-counterpart to the World Council of Churches. The Russian Orthodox Church provided primary CPC financial support, as the churches in the United States and Western Europe did for the WCC. In those days theological discourse in the CPC, as in the WCC, was shaped chiefly by "east-west" rather than "north-south" issues.

Early CPC deliberations were dominated by "the German question," and although persons from the Southern Hemisphere were present from the beginning at CPC assemblies, Third World issues were secondary to the conversations between Christians east and west. Of particular interest in early CPC gatherings were the contrasting assessments of Marxism made by those whose daily lives were shaped by institutions modeled after the thoughts of Marx and Lenin, versus those who had difficulty imagining any option other than exile open to a Christian living in a Marxist society. Since the early 1960s, participants in CPC gatherings were no strangers to Christian-Marxist dialogue.

It was not until the 1970s that CPC regional groups began to develop in the Southern Hemisphere. It is appropriate that all three of the theological *encuentros* sponsored by the Latin American-Caribbean group have taken place in Matanzas, since Cuba is the first country in the Western Hemisphere where Christian-Marxist encounters have taken place on an informal and daily basis, and where Christians and Marxists alike have tried to sort out some of the tensions between traditional and contemporary understandings on the part of both church and government.

The first of these international meetings of theologians took place in 1979, on the theme, "Evangelization and Politics." The second meeting, or *encuentro*, was held in November 1983, with participants gathering at the same time that the bodies of Cuban construction workers and others killed in the U.S. invasion of Grenada were being returned home. Just as the second gathering took place under the cloud of Grenada, so also was this third *encuentro* dominated by political events — this time in El Salvador and in anticipation of U.S. action in Panama. And the Eastern Europeans present — a Czech and an East German — were overtaken by events occurring in their homelands in the brief time they had been traveling, as news came daily of far-reaching and seemingly irreversible changes. November 1989, like November 1983, was an historic moment to be present at such a gathering.

The theme was "Evangelization and Colonization: Past, Present and Future of Latin America and the Caribbean." The keynote biblical text was taken from *Micah 5:2a*, "Yaweh will abandon them only until such time as that which is to be born will be born." (Latin American version.) This *encuentro* was also notable as one of the first gatherings in which a Christian organization evaluated the heritage of 1492, when Christopher Columbus arrived in the Western Hemisphere, in anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the event in 1992.

Luis Rivera Pagan, a professor at the

Alice L. Hageman, a Presbyterian minister and attorney, has been inquiring into religion in Cuba since 1969. Co-author of *Religion in Cuba Today*, she recently made her 11th trip to the island. She currently investigates allegations of lawyer misconduct for the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers.

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University of Puerto Rico, gave the keynote speech, a systematic evaluation of European presence in the Southern portion of the Western Hemisphere over the past 500 years. Exploring potential postures towards 1992 — celebration, commemoration, or acknowledgement of conquest — he identified the impact of the Columbus voyages as conquest, resulting in ethnic genocide of native peoples.

Rivera especially emphasized the negative impact of the conquest on indigenous women. Describing the near-ideal (and possibly idealized) role of women in pre-Columbian culture, he asserted that the encounter of the two worlds meant that woman went from a situation in which she was a natural partner with man in a setting where both had a relationship with nature, to one in a patriarchal, nature-denying society where she was required to submit to man and was confined to a private world in which her identity and value was derived solely through her body.

Once raped, she was marked by the aggressor; whether mistress, concubine or wife, she was placed at the disposal of the erotic needs of the *conquistadores*, producing the children who assured the continuity of society. Women, argued Rivera, were the true representatives of cultural resistance — they sought ways to preserve their own society while learning the culture of the new society.

Hector Diaz Palanco, from the Dominican Republic, further explored the theme of ethnic genocide resulting from the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. Diaz asserted that the anti-ethnic bias of Christianity as the "one true faith" played a significant role in eradicating the historic roots of various ethnic groups.

Jorge Pixley, a North American who has lived most of his life in Latin America and currently teaches at a Baptist seminary in Nicaragua, provoked the most lively discussion during the *encuentro*. During a Bible study on the Gospel of Luke, Pixley asserted that Luke *lied*, describing in his Gospel a false, temple-based view of the early church. Luke's perspective, according to Pixley, represented an effort to legitimize Peter's role and the importance of the apostles' stay in Jerusalem, while de-emphasizing the popular church and the importance of radical anti-ecclesiastical actions such as the cleansing of the Temple. Pixley posited that those who stayed tranquilly rooted in the Temple in Jerusalem were accomplices in the persecution of early Christians. The discussion, though spirited, was geared especially to those well-versed in contemporary New Testament studies.

Maria Vasconcelos Rezende, a Brazilian, was the only woman to make a major presentation. She was the third speaker on the second morning's program. The two men who preceded her took more than their allotted time. She did not protest, but rather told them to take all the time they wanted; instead of 30 to 40 minutes, she was left with less than 15. In her brief remarks she emphasized that, as Rivera had pointed out, 1992 is an opportunity to celebrate the role of women in *resistance*. However, she pointed out that this is also a time to recognize that *persistence* in women's domestic work had made daily life tolerable, not only in the kitchen and home, but also in contributing to the domestic and nurturing aspect of various workplaces.

Vasconcelos later explained that her refusal to protest the diminution of her allotted time had been a form of protest against the patriarchal organization of the *encuentro*. Most of the time was spent in plenary session as speakers (most of whom were male) made formal presentations. The lunch break was only an hour long. There was little opportunity for informal interchange or gatherings in which the spirit might blow loose among this unique gathering. Lodging logistics further contributed to a lack of cohesion and the difficulty of informal interchange. Cuban delegates were housed at the seminary, while other participants were bused back and forth from a hotel 45 minutes away in the beach resort of Varadero, thus segregating *encuentro* participants from 6 p.m. until 9 a.m. each day.

To some extent Vasconcelos' observation about the organization of this event

Pope invited to Cuba

Pope John Paul II may go to Cuba next year. Jose Felipe Carneado, head of the Office of Religious Affairs of the Communist Party of Cuba, visited the Vatican in May and delivered a message from Fidel Castro, encouraging the Pope to accept an invitation extended by Cuba's Roman Catholic Bishops.

Commenting on his meeting with the Pope, Dr. Carneado said, "This visit, for which the Cuban government feels conditions exist . . . will reaffirm the new relationship, and that differences which existed in the past have been overcome. It will be an extraordinary contribution for both the Catholic Church and the Cuban people, as well as for our government, which is interested in unity between believers and nonbelievers," he added.

Several Latin Americans present at the Christian Peace Conference questioned Cubans in informal conversation about why Fidel Castro had invited the Pope. The critics said they thought John Paul II was very conservative in his positions; in light of his activities during his visit to Nicaragua, they warned that he was a potentially damaging guest to receive. The Cubans pointed out, however, that the invitation had come from the Cuban bishops, not from Castro, and although a calculated risk they felt Cuba had more to gain than lose in the visit.

The Pope's visit is tentatively scheduled for 1991; the exact date depends on his travel schedule.

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reflected a tension inherent in the *encuentro*. Many participants were academics and church administrators who, although acquainted with grass-roots activities and fluent in the "option-for-the-poor" language of liberation theology, nevertheless are accustomed to formal presentations and structured deliberations in conference settings. Those participants who were more activist than academic, although no strangers to disciplined reflection, find more informal settings and less structured schedules more conducive to productive interchange.

For example, a young priest from Brazil displayed photos of his friends and colleagues who had been murdered recently, and in a persistent and quiet way sought opportunities to share his story informally with others. He told of the courageous few who are taking on big landowners and their hired vigilantes to assert the claims of the landless to the land they work and occupy. The specifics of his story made the theory and rhetoric of the conference come alive, and his photos gave human faces to those who are all too often forfeiting their lives in the many struggles throughout Latin America for land, bread, and dignity.

In addition to consideration of issues related to 1992, there were three other recurring themes. One was the impact of the external debt, a continuing preoccupation throughout Latin America. Perhaps less widely known, and one more of the connections made in this setting, is that several countries in Eastern Europe, including Rumania, Poland, and Hungary, are also struggling with a major debt burden. Lubomir Mirejowski, General Secretary of the CPC International, pointed out that the temptation to seek loans from foreign banks to finance everything from major development projects to consumer goods is one of the greatest threats to Eastern European countries in the coming years.

A second, and more hopeful, theme was an emphasis on and affirmation of our interconnectedness and our vision of being one people facing common threats and sharing common dreams. Many speakers were optimistic that, despite the decline of emphasis on collaborative work since the '60s, and the dominance of individualism in the '80s, new winds might be stirring in the '90s. This *encuentro* gave a taste of the rich fare resulting when persons met one another and shared their preoccupations in such a global perspective.

The issue of collaboration between Christians and Marxists was the third theme. Although Fernando Martinez, of the Cuban Communist Party's Center for the Study of the Americas, presented a political analysis of contemporary Latin America, Christian-Marxist collaboration was addressed more implicitly than explicitly. That may be symbolic of where the issue now finds itself, as the attendant anxiety of previous decades has subsided, and relations have progressed to the point where both collaboration *and* distinctiveness are assumed. As Sergio Mendez Arceo, former Roman Catholic bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico, pointed out in his closing remarks, although there are no contradictions between Christianity and Marxism, neither is there an identity. Yet, he concluded, there *is* mutual understanding — and that does represent an explosive possibility. TW



Facts about Cuba

Cuba is the largest island in the West Indies and lies on the northern boundary of the Caribbean Sea, about 90 miles south of Key West, Fla. Measuring approximately 745 miles from west to east, its width ranges from 22 miles to 125 miles. In land area, Cuba is about the size of Pennsylvania. Its harbors — Havana, Santiago, Guantanamo, Bahia Honda, etc. are among the best in the world.

Population: Approximately 10.4 million. Some 73% live in urban areas, 27% in rural areas. Ethnic breakdown is 66% Caucasian, 12% Black, 22% "Mixed."

Workforce: About 62% male and 39% female. Unemployment rate is 3.4%. Average monthly salary is 190 to 210 pesos (1 peso = US$1.25). Rent, by law, is no more than 10% of a worker's income. Health care and education are free. A liter of rationed milk costs .25 pesos. A kilo (2.2 lbs.) of rationed chicken costs 1.54 pesos.

Literacy: 98%; enrollment among primary school-age children is 100%.

Life expectancy: 74 years, men; 76 years, women. Infant morality rate 11 per 1000.

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Cuba's love affair with children

by Margaret E. Ferry

The American citizen lucky enough to meet the strict U.S. government guidelines for a legal visit to Cuba receives a little red brochure at the Miami airport. It does nothing to relieve any twinges of anxiety the traveler may have regarding this country Americans know so little about, and around which the U.S. government has erected an invisible wall.

The little red pamphlet explicates the regulations issued under the Trading with the Enemy Act as they apply to Cuba. As these regulations do not apply to either of the well-known communist countries, the Soviet Union and China, the American traveler cannot help wondering how evil Cuba may be. The pamphlet does not explain. It simply states that the United States issued these regulations in 1963 "in response to certain hostile acts (unspecified) by the Cuban government" and that "the basic goal of the sanctions against Cuba is to isolate Cuba economically and deprive it of U.S. dollars." Violations of the regulations can be punished by prison terms of up to 12 years and fines for individuals as high as $250,000.

One explanation for Cuba's status as enemy may be found in the 1961 disaster known as the Bay of Pigs. That was when the U.S. government, presumably on behalf of some of its 180 million citizens, was unsuccessful in invading Cuba, a country of less than 9 million at that time.

So what did I go to see in Cuba on my first trip in 1986? My professional interests were in the fields of health and education, and I had heard and read stories of great Cuban successes in these two areas. I wanted to see for myself. I came home depressed and shamed by the contrast in priorities set by my country and a poor little nation 90 miles from Florida. In both health care and education Cuba demonstrated its concern for children in proactive programs for prevention and early intervention. Planning emphasized an inclusive attitude for the common good. The United States, however, has been more reactive. Prevention has had less emphasis than has crisis intervention and rehabilitation. Individual rights and privileges seem more important than the common good.

I decided I wanted to go back to Cuba to be sure my observations were valid, and that what I had seen was not a fluke of time, places, or personalities. And I wanted to see more of the churches in a country where the government seemed to act in accordance with what we consider "Christian values" but restricted church activities. I was fortunate enough to become a member of THE WITNESS news-gathering group.

Again I was charmed by the warm and friendly Cubans and their handsome children, and impressed by how a poor country took care of its children, the least powerful of any group in society. A visitor might assume that *Matthew 25* had been their inspiration. Pre-revolution children in the countryside could look forward to a short life of poverty, hunger, disease, and illiteracy. An early priority of Fidel Castro was the provision of potable water throughout the island. This public health measure meant an immediate improvement in the health of the children as waterborne diseases were practically eliminated.

Food, to be sure, is rationed, but each person is guaranteed a monthly basic diet which meets or exceeds the nutritional and caloric guidelines of the United Nations. Additional and different foodstuffs are available for those families who can afford higher prices. There is little beef but ample quantities of beans, rice, fruits, and vegetables. Well-balanced meals are provided for children in schools or day care centers, and no deduction is made from the basic ration for meals or snacks. No one goes hungry; there is no need for soup kitchens or food pantries. There are no Third World swollen bellies or emaciated babies.

Like food, clothing is rationed; everyone receives two sets at a price the lowest salary can afford. Again, families with more than the basic income can purchase additional clothes at a higher price. School children wear simple but attractive uniforms — skirts and blouses for the girls and shirts and trousers for the boys. Impeccably clean and neat children come romping out of the poorest of housing. Day care center tots change into play clothes which are kept at the center and laundered there. They are dressed in a rainbow of colors and, like their clothes, these youngsters are

Margaret E. Ferry, Ed. D., has served in the field of health and education for 34 years and has studied health care systems in the USSR, China, Europe, Japan, and Australia, as well as Cuba. A long-time activist around social justice issues in the Episcopal Church, she has been a member of St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., for the past 18 years.

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bright and attractive.

With basic needs for food, water, and clothing adequately fulfilled, medical care for children is in a position to devote attention to health as well as to sickness. From the moment of conception until death, health care is available, accessible, and free of charge for all Cubans; and it is of high quality. Cuban children now experience the lowest infant mortality rate in any nation in Central or South America, and can also look forward to the longest lifespan. Cuba's infant mortality rate and longevity statistics approach those of the United States.

The success of the health care system may be attributed to multiple interdependent causes. The need for shelter has been attacked through vigorous, massive construction and rehabilitation programs. More housing is still needed, and building continues, but new construction and extended-family hospitality together ensure that no one will be homeless in Cuba.

In addition to having the physical needs of children attended to by other systems, the ratio of physicians to patients is about 1:400. The health care system has an adequate number of physicians and has the authority to determine their distribution by speciality and by geographic location according to perceived need.

Family physicians live in the same neighborhood as their patients, provide health education, family planning, preventive medicine, primary care, and care for the chronic illnesses of the elderly. The assumption has been that physicians who live among their patients will know them better, be more accessible, and better understand those problems, environmental or personal, which may affect the health of both children and adults.

For conditions which demand more specialized pediatric care, the family physician makes referrals to the neighborhood clinic, or the most appropriate hospital in the area. Highly specialized, tertiary care is provided in regional hospitals. A new children's hospital was opened during my last visit.

The number, specialities, and placement of physicians have encouraged the development of systems integration between health, housing, education, and production. Physicians can be found in day care centers, schools, universities, housing developments, communities, nursing homes, senior centers, and factories. This strategic placement supports the Cuban belief that the health of the nation, particularly the health of the children, is essential for the future of the country.

In addition to the hungry, thirsty, naked and sick, *Matthew 25* also expressed concern for the prisoner and the stranger. Neither of the trips provided first-hand experience with the prison system, but I did learn that children are not included in the adult system. If a youngster is not doing well in school, is having behavioral problems, or is suspected of petty thievery, he or she becomes a concern of the local Committee for the Defense of the Revolution, the CDR. This is an organized neighborhood group which deals with local problems and nominates representatives to the municipal CDR. In the case of potential delinquents, the CDR meets with the parents to support them in working out a solution to the problem.

Articles 29 and 30 of the Cuban *Code on Children and Youth* reads:

> The state pays special attention to the development of specialized schools for children with physical or mental handicaps or with behavioral problems, in order to permit them, to the degree possible and according to individual aptitudes, to take care of themselves and become a part of society.
>
> Through the local bodies of the People's Power, the state pays particular attention to minors between the ages of 13 and 17 who are behind in school or have dropped out of the national education system, providing special schools where their scholarship level can be raised and where they can be given job training.

We did not see any of these schools. We did, however, visit a model day care center for hearing-impaired children between 18 months and 6 years old. If spe-

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School students in Havana.

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'A revolution within the Revolution':

Thirty-one years is but the blink of an eye in world history. But in Cuba, 30 years has seen the reordering of society from top to bottom. Since the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the country has worked to leave behind its colonial past and to shape its own future.

As part of that process, Fidel Castro called the women's movement "a revolution within the revolution," and Cuban women are still defining their role in a society that is yet defining itself. In this sense, the revolution is "an unfinished product," in Castro's words.

Women have gained considerable power in Cuban society, and have been freed of many problems their sisters have in other developing countries because of the government's commitment to health care, nutrition and housing. However, life is still austere — the basics are available, but it means standing in long lines, dealing with ration books and having to buy whatever is for sale that day instead of one's first choice. These hardships, combined with the lingering influence of traditional male attitudes that scorn helping with housework, have made women impatient for speedier reforms.

That women have such high expectations is due in great part to the work of the *Federación de Mujeres Cubanas* (Federation of Cuban Women), the national organization for promoting women's rights. It was founded on Aug. 23, 1960, a year after the revolution. At its national headquarters in Havana, Catherine Rivas, FMC's energetic Secretary of Foreign Relations, talked about the ever-evolving role of Cuban women.

Rivas, who speaks fluent English with a trace of a New York accent, was born in the South Bronx and lived there until she was a teenager. Her parents had fled the political repression in pre-revolution Cuba. Much more attention has been paid in the United States, she noted, to those who fled than to those who returned.

"Many Cubans repatriated after the Revolution. For example, I went to a school in Havana for repatriates' children in 1961 — there were 700 kids in my school alone," she said.

FMC headquarters is located on a tree-lined street in a building typical of many government agencies — the former home of an upper-class family. Floors are marble and high-ceilinged rooms are paneled in mahogany.

Rivas said that FMC's membership numbers 3,400,000 women — 80% of the female population over 15 years old.

Women have borne much of the brunt of the enormous changes Cuba has gone through. Before the revolution, women were mostly confined to the home and childrearing. Wealthy women had servants, but poor women often had to take care of their families and work outside the home.

Cuba at that time also had an enormously profitable sex trade (much as do the Philippines and Thailand today) run by the U.S. crime syndicate and corrupt Cuban officials. According to one account, there were special Friday night Miami-Havana flights for businessmen where a woman was available for each passenger.

The massive exploitation of women by the pre-revolution sex industry is a painful memory for Cubans. "Thousands of women were prostitutes," said Rivas. "Less than 12% of the labor force was women, and those working were mostly maids." Women also worked in the tobacco fields, a job inherited from slaves.

And women of color suffered double oppression. Despite Cuba's strong African heritage, "black women were not allowed to work in stores or banks," Rivas noted.

In 1959, Rivas said, "Infant mortality was over 60 per 1,000 live births in the city — the number in the countryside was not even known. Educational standards for women were very low — 70% had less than a third or fourth-grade education, 25% were illiterate. Less than 1% attended university.

"Infant mortality is now about 11 per 1,000 in Cuba. There are many more women university students. In 1987-88, there were 30,000 graduates, 16,600 of whom were women. Half the high school population is women. In adult education, out of 54,000 students, 26,000 were women," she said.

There is a history of a strong feminist movement in pre-revolution Cuba, though it was mostly confined to middle and upper-class women. In 1939, the third Feminist Congress helped push benefits for women.

"In 1940," said Rivas, "a Constitution was passed, and was one of the most advanced in the world in terms of women's rights, but nobody paid attention to it." She added that provisions for women were so good in the 1940 Constitution that when the revolutionary government took power, it simply implemented those provisions until new legislation was passed in 1975.

"The FMC brought together the pre- and post-revolution women's groups. Women were claiming their place in the development of a new society, which couldn't be built with only 50% of the population participating," said Rivas.

It was a huge undertaking to dismantle the colonial structures and redefine women's place in society, Rivas explained. "The first task was the elimination of prostitution. The workers taught them to read and write, got them medi-

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Women's rights in Cuba

by Susan Pierce



Catherine Rivas

cal care, found them jobs, got the pimps jailed. Those who didn't want to change emigrated to Miami.

"The second task was to convince women to join the labor force; this had to be discussed with women and their families. It was a door-to-door job."

Despite the intensive campaign by government workers, women were often unable to deal with the double demands placed on them. "They would work for a week or two and then quit because of responsibilities at home," she said.

In order to facilitate women's entrance into the work force, the government launched a massive day care program, building hundreds of centers, but "it's still not enough. We have a great need for day care," Rivas said.

One problem with social change in developing countries is that it often takes place in urban centers, at the expense of the rural population. Rural culture is usually more traditional and resistant to change. Rivas said that was true in the early days of the FMC's organizing efforts: "At the time of the revolution, there weren't facilities in the countryside for political education, and there were a lot of counter-revolutionary influences. The FMC created the first school for peasant girls. They were taught how to sew, had classes in political education, hygiene and nutrition. When they came to the city, it was their first sight of running water and electricity. Fidel gave each graduate a sewing machine.

"This was in the first decade of the revolution, a time of enormous goals and efforts. In the literacy campaign, 55% of the teachers and 59% of the students were women," said Rivas.

After the ground-breaking advances of the 1960s, said Rivas, "the '70s were the decade of institutionalization." She explained that during that time the *Poder Popular* (Popular Power) — a body of locally-elected officials who oversee daily affairs in the municipalities — was created, a new constitution was written and the first Party Congress took place.

As Cuba was building its legislative infrastructure, women's rights were an important component, she said. And since the center of Cuban life is the family and the revolutionary government's aim has been to effect change starting with the family as the basic unit of society, these rights became part of what was called the Family Code. "All issues dealing with women were taken from the civil code and studied by jurists and the FMC. In 1974, the Family Code was drawn up. On March 8, 1975 — Women's Day in the U.N. International Year of Women — the Family Code was passed." However, Rivas explained, a new code is presently being formulated and a draft will be issued for public discussion because "there are things in the old Family Code that are still discriminatory to women."

"For example," she said, "in the old code, a couple could marry when the man was 16 years old and the woman was only 14 — or even 12 if she was pregnant. This discriminates against the girl, who has to drop out of school and has a frustrated life."

Cuba has the same problems with sexually-transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy as does the United States and other countries. Rivas said the government constantly promotes sex education through the media because "we have to educate adults so they can educate their children," she said. "Sex educators are giving attention to teachers and doctors. But it's still not enough — there's a lot of resistance."

The resistance comes from ingrained cultural habits, held in particular by older people. "Sex education has always been taboo in Latin families," she said and smiled ruefully as she told how she gave a book on sex education to her two nephews, and "their grandmother took the book and hid it."

Attempts to combat biases against homosexuality has run into even greater resistance, said Rivas. "It is a very touchy problem in Cuba and in all Latin societies — there is an aversion to gays. No Cuban law condemns them or limits their rights. It's a social aversion. Sex education tries to explain that being gay is like being left-handed."

But again women suffer from a double standard, as lesbianism is more harshly condemned. Rivas admitted, "People can accept gay men more readily than lesbians. Some fathers say they would rather have their daughter be a prostitute than be gay. We have to be patient, it takes time to change attitudes."

Birth control is an important issue in a developing country and the Cuban government promotes smaller families.

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Abortions are not encouraged, but are permitted. Another difficult pre-revolution memory is that abortion was illegal, but wealthy women could get them. Batista, the dictator overthrown by the revolution, allegedly built a hospital to service rich U.S. women who wanted abortions. Poor women were left to back-street butchers and many died.

To prevent more needless deaths, said Rivas, "the revolutionary government made it illegal to have abortions done at home, or not by a doctor, or with inadequate equipment. Abortions are free, and a high number are performed." She noted also that "IUDs are free and birth control pills are available at a low price, as are diaphragms and condoms."

When asked about adoption as an alternative, Rivas said, "Adoptions are rare in Cuba. If an unwed mother carries the baby to term, someone in her family will help take care of it."

The country had to deal with the subject of adoption during the social upheaval caused by the 1980 Mariel boatlift, where over 100,000 were permitted to leave Cuba by sea.

"A lot of children were abandoned by *Marielitos*. Some were adopted but most were taken care of by family and friends," said Rivas.

As Cuban society rapidly changes, so does the foundation of society, the Cuban family. Large families with the mother at home or working nearby were the rule in the past but now "there are approximately 1.6 children per family," said Rivas. "As women get more involved in society and the work force, they have less time for bearing children. Now 39% of the total labor force are women — 54% of working women are technicians."

But since vestiges of traditional Latin macho culture still strongly influence Cuban life, women rarely attain positions of power. "Why aren't there more women in leadership posts in the party, the state and the mass organizations?" asked Castro at the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions. Rivas agreed women have come a long way, but there was plenty of room for improvement.

"The transformation of society has to start from its fundamental unit, the family. Both men and women have to share responsibility. Women sometimes voluntarily limit themselves by taking all the responsibility for the child care and the housework. And emphasizing double standards in education creates new male chauvinists. If we want a new family, we have to educate the kids," she said.

José-Louis Dominguez, a tour guide and translator with Havanatour, a government tourist agency, told us about the difficulty of being a liberated male in Cuba. He and his wife live with his parents — a common occurrence in a country where housing is in short supply — and he said when he helped his wife with housework or the care of their son, his father would walk by and say disapprovingly, "Are you a man or a baby, to do women's work?"

Later, during dinner, when challenged to prove if he *really* knew how to change a diaper, Dominguez picked up a napkin and proceeded to demonstrate by skillfully diapering an imaginary baby.

According to Rivas, the government tries rigorously to root out sexism wherever it can. "Inspectors check day care centers to make sure play isn't gender-divided — that both boys and girls play equally with trucks and dolls — but it has to be done at home, too," she said.

As women attain more equality, they become dissatisfied with traditional attitudes and in this once-strongly Roman Catholic country there is no longer such a strict bias against divorce. "Everyone has to read the Family Code before they get married," said Rivas. Still, much to the government's distress, four out of every 10 marriages end in divorce.

Though domestic abuse is an endemic problem in the United States and in Central and South America, Rivas said it was not an issue in Cuba. "A battered wife has never been acceptable in Cuban society, even before the revolution," she said. "If a man hits a woman, he's considered less of a man." And child abuse is so repugnant to Cubans that it is extremely rare.

Cubans not only respect women and adore and cherish children, but also the elderly, said Ribas. "The FMC gives an 'Outstanding Grandparent' award. It's the support the grandmothers give at home that has allowed Cuba to advance."

And the country is increasingly faced with an aging population. "The average lifespan has increased dramatically," said Ribas. "It was 54 years in 1959; it's 74 now. We have to build more homes for the elderly. There are even day care centers for them now. It's a new problem in Cuba."

Rivas has been to the United States numerous times to attend meetings and give talks at universities. She said she was impressed with the U.S. women's movement, but was negatively impressed by a sight now commonplace in most U.S. cities — the homeless.

"It had great impact on me," she said. "You would never find a homeless person in Cuba. We have the extended family here, there is always someone to take them in. Before the revolution, there were beggars, many homeless. The people who came in from the countryside looking for work ended up in the streets."

The Cuban government's emphasis on social services, bolstered by the memory of widespread poverty and suffering in the old Cuba, has created a generation that has never gone homeless, hungry or without medical care. Rivas said, "My niece recently went with her swim team to Colombia; all she could talk about when she got back was the beggars. She couldn't conceive of children without food, clothing or a home." TW

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Short Takes

Whatever happened to clout?

What has happened to the clout of U.S. Protestant mainstream churches? A recent 24-page report, entitled *Progressions,* released by Lilly Endowment, Inc. includes these major findings:

- Baby boomers have dropped out of the churches in droves.
- With church operations increasing in complexity, pastors have become more managers than spiritual guides. As governance has become more participatory, many pastors have lost their sense of authority and influence.
- From the mid-'70s to the mid-'80s the number of ordained women in the United States doubled. But the women's movement has brought new understanding to the meaning of ministry and has prompted some church women to question the institution of ordination itself.
- Differences between denominations are fading. The crucial identity issues tend to focus on conservative/liberal elements within, rather than between, denominations.

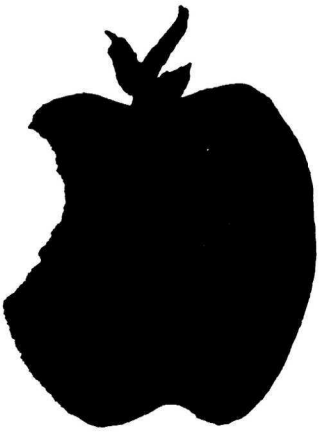
For further information: Lilly Endowment, P.O. Box 88068, Indianapolis, IN 46208, (317) 924-5471.

Champion of L.A.'s homeless

The Rev. Alice Callaghan, founder of the storefront family center *Las Familias del Pueblo,* was awarded the Los Angeles County Bar Association's 1989 Distinguished Citizen Award for her achievement in relocating some 1,500 homeless people to better surroundings. She is the driving force behind a project to clean up Los Angeles' Skid Row hotels, giving a shelter option to many singles, handicapped and elderly people. The first hotel was dedicated last May, with 10 more in the works.

Journal of Women's Ministries
Winter 1989

(Alice Callaghan also sits on the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publisher of THE WITNESS. — Ed.)



All about Eve?

A Tanzanian participant (in the Maryknoll Summer School of Theology) told me how the story of Adam and Eve struck him as a young boy. For him Eve was not a weak creature, a fallen woman, a seductress. He spoke of his secret envy of Eve. The fruit Eve was eating was called an apple in his Bible stories for children. But he had no idea what an apple was; he only knew that they were very expensive in Tanzania.

He imagined an apple would grow like other fruit, high up on a palm tree. It represented an enormous challenge and adventure for a young boy to climb up a palm tree and collect the fruit. Girls would never climb the trees, but instead, pick up the fruit from the ground after they were dropped by the boys.

For him, Eve was an adventuress, a model, to shin up a high palm tree and return with the fruit. What a tough, adventurous woman Eve must have been to do all that! And what a friend to have — because parents always forbade the boys to climb trees! He asked his mother to buy him an apple for his next birthday and found it very appetizing. He wondered how people reading the Bible in his country liked the other, the "agreed" interpretation of this text.

Dorothea McEwan in *Chrysalis*
November '89

New social model

I am glad to be associated with the men and women who are changing our society. My hope is that Hungary can become a model for other Eastern Bloc countries by combining a free-market economy with socialist goals.

Bishop Karoly Toth, member
Hungarian Parliament
Quoted in *Sequoia* 1/90

Black Union troops no exception

The movie "Glory" gives the false sense that black troops were an exception to the rule in Civil War combat. Actually, a total of 180,000 blacks had fought in the Union Army by the end of the war.

More than 38,000 died, a 40% higher casualty rate than for white northern troops. Blacks fought in over 250 separate engagements, beginning as early as the fall of 1862. There were also scores of black officers, including abolitionists Major Martin R. Delany and Captain P.B.S. Pinchback.

Ex-slaves, both women and men, worked as spies behind Confederate lines. African-Americans, civilians and soldiers alike, were not passive witnesses in the struggle for freedom. Despite these weaknesses, "Glory" makes a substantial contribution to our awareness of the role of African-Americans in the conflict to abolish human bondage.

Manning Marable
Along the Color Line

Central America protest

An interfaith march for an end to the war in Central America is set for March 24 in Washington, D.C., marking the 10th anniversary of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero's assassination. There will be a 9 a.m. prayer service at St. Aloysius Church, followed by a march to the White House, via the Capitol. Civil disobedience is planned. Simultaneous marches will take place in cities across the country. Contact the Archbishop Romero Coalition at (202) 483-3911.

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Children . . . *continued from page 13*

cialized schools for behavior problems or drop-outs resemble this day care center in expertise and commitment, they should experience considerable success.

As far as the Cubans' treatment of strangers was concerned, we had first-hand experience. Despite our affiliation with "the enemy," we were welcomed and made to feel at home wherever we went. And children were particularly welcome. The 8-year-old American on my first trip became the pal of the maintenance man and the pet of the rest of the staff at the guest house of the Ministry of Education. At the farewell dinner they presented "Ches" with a baseball mitt, on the fingers of which were their autographs in memory of his delight at being taken to a Cuban baseball game. The tears and hugs that followed all around were unforgettable.

Because the U.S. government isolates Cuba, I assumed that everyone else did. I was astonished to discover that Cuba welcomed travelers from all over the world. A ride in the hotel elevator sounded like an international group meeting, and a day at the beach could become a competition in people-watching. There seems to be no end to the Cubans' tolerance for all species of the human race, no matter the color or language.

In its spirit of hospitality to children, Cuba offers a safe haven for children from war-torn or disadvantaged countries. They are housed and educated on the Isle of Youth. Counselors come with the children from their particular cultures to ensure preservation of these cultures. Children also are taught in their native language because it will be their task to return to their native lands in order to share their education with the children of their homelands. Young Pioneers from all over the world also convene periodically on the beautiful beaches of Varadero to share in activities with the Cuban Pioneers.

There is a striking difference between Cuban and U.S. priorities when it comes to children. *Children in Need*, a report of the U.S. Research and Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development stated in its report on the U.S. educational system and disadvantaged children that:

> (The schools) must also reach beyond the traditional boundaries of schooling to improve the environment of the child. An early and sustained intervention in the lives of disadvantaged children, both in school and out, is our only hope for breaking the cycle of disaffection and despair.

The report then goes on to list cost-effective programs for which sufficient U.S. government funding has not been made available: 1) Supplemental Food for Woman and Children (WIC); 2) prenatal care; 3) Medicaid; 4) childhood immunization; 5) preschool education; 6) compensatory education; 7) education for all handicapped children; 8) youth employment and training.

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the Cuban health care system for mothers and children funds services covered under items 2, 3, and 4 above. Food rationing takes into account the nutritional needs of the entire population, and day care centers and schools supplement this. Preschool education, item 5, was carried out in 1988 in 1,021 day care centers which served 142,073 children and 131,815 mothers. In 1990 the Federation of Cuban Women expects that 1,283 centers will serve 212,000 children. Education for the handicapped, item 7, begins in day care centers; mainstreaming takes place in first grade if appropriate, or the child continues in special classes. Item 6, compensatory education, is discussed extensively in the *Code on Children and Youth*, but is best summed up in its Article 43:

> According to the Constitution, work is a right, a duty and a point of honor for each citizen. Thus, every young person is obliged to use his creative ability, aptitudes and knowledge to help build the new society.

Our government's protracted attempts to strangle the economy of Cuba by big-bully tactics of isolation are more subtle than the support of the Contras, but potentially as lethal. Trade agreements which force other countries to forgo commerce with Cuba as a precondition to trade with the United States can be devastating. Are we trying to coerce Cuba's economy into collapse to prove we are bigger and better, no matter what human suffering may be caused? Or can't we tolerate a little communist country that is kinder and gentler to its children?

And why should our tax money support Miami's Radio Martí — named almost blasphemously after José Martí, Cuba's "George Washington" — and the development of TV Martí, both intended to beam American propaganda to Cuba?

The Cuban attitude which regards children's development as the most important priority is sadly lacking in the United States, where children are indeed among the least of our brethren. Cuba also sends its teachers and doctors to developing countries to educate and to heal the children, and train teachers and doctors.

Our "Christian" country has not been providing compassion for millions of its children. As we who presume to be called Christians sit in our straight-backed pews, let us beware lest the "Kingdom of God be taken away from (us) and given to a nation producing the fruits of it." We should be aware of what our government is doing — or not doing — for and to children not only in our own country but also the world over. Have we already forgotten Khadafi's daughter, killed by U.S. bombers? Let us expose the absurdities of the little red brochure which tells me that my Cuban friends — either Christian, communist, or both — are my enemies. TW

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U.S. troubador 'objective but not impartial'

Lois Kroehler went to Cuba more than 40 years ago straight out of college, intending to learn Spanish in preparation for work in Costa Rica. She never left Cuba, and today is the only "mainstream" U.S. Protestant church worker to have remained there since pre-revolution days.

Initially an administrative secretary, then English teacher at the Presbyterian secondary school *La Progresiva* in Cardenas, Kroehler's life took a dramatic turn in 1961, when the U.S. broke relations with Cuba. She did not get to visit her family for nine years, waiting until she had assurance from both sides that she would be able to return to Cuba. In '69, '74, and '76 she had to get her passport stamped, "Good for one round-trip to Cuba," to assure she could continue her work, because U.S. passports then read, "Not valid for Cuba, North Viet Nam and North Korea."

After the revolution, more than half the Presbyterians fled from the island. Those who remained did much soul searching to determine why they were looked upon with distrust and suspicion by the government. "We analyzed our actions to see if we as the church, we as Christians, were not responsible for the atheism of many who said they did not believe. Perhaps our lives had presented a God who should have been denied," Kroehler said.

She cited an example from Cuba's early history which illustrated commonly-held attitudes toward the church following the revolution: "Institutionalized religion was introduced to Cuba by the Spanish *conquistadores* They killed most of the indigenous natives and finally captured the last rebel chief, Hatuey. When he was about to be burned at the stake, a priest held out a cross and asked if he would not like to become a Christian and go to heaven. Hatuey looked at the solders' swords which had slain his people and asked, 'Are Christian soldiers going to heaven? If so, I do not want to go there.'"



Lois Kroehler

Although not especially political when she first went to Cuba, her capacity for political analysis was stretched by her daily experiences with the revolution.

Kroehler was fond of making biblical comparisons for what was happening in Cuba in the early days of the revolution for visitors from the States. For example:

"To produce the shocking effect that Jesus intended in his time, he might use the word *Communist*, rather than Samaritan in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The 'good Communist' makes many Christians uncomfortable, no?"

In the early '60s, Kroehler joined a team overseeing Christian education in the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba. She also assisted in Presbyterian parishes in Cardenas, and taught at the Protestant seminary in Matanzas. Since 1980 she has served a small parish in the rural town of Coliseo as lay pastor. Initally a missionary, after the revolution she became a lay worker employed directly by the Presbyterian-Reformed Church of Cuba. As one expression of her solidarity with the situation of Cubans suffering the effects of the U.S. embargo, she did not accept a car until 1985, even though many Cuban pastors had use of a car much earlier. She often had to leave her home at 5:30 a.m. in order to arrive at a given destination by erratic Cuban bus.

Kroehler became a pioneer in composing new songs for the church. During her 40 years in Cuba she has helped put together approximately 25 songbooks, including at least two major hynmnals. As Director of the Department of Music for the Cuban Ecumenical Council, she encouraged Protestants to lessen their reliance on translations of European and North American hymns. Kroehler stimulated use of music drawing on rhythm and instruments and expressions more familiar to Cuban society. She organized conferences in 1975 and in 1982 which brought together composers and singers to share their creativity and celebrate the growth of the New Song movement within Cuban churches.

In her musical compositions, Kroehler tried to show the similarities that exist in the efforts of Christians and Marxists working together to build a new society. For instance, she set to music the words of Jorge Ricardo Masetti, an Argentine journalist who fought with Fidel in the Sierra Maestra mountains, to illustrate the biblical theme of "weep with those who weep, rejoice with those who rejoice":

We want to know who suffers in order to alleviate their suffering

And who laughs so we can rejoice with them in their joy

Who is subjugated, so we can help them to liberate themselves

And who subjugates in order to combat them with all our might

We are objective, but not impartial.

Most recently she helped edit a new hymnal published in 1989 under the auspices of the Cuban Ecumenical Council, *Toda la Iglesia Canta* (The Whole

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Church Sings).

Kroehler comes from a family with a strong ecclesiastical heritage. Her father is a retired UCC minister. Two brothers, Armin and Bill, are UCC missionaries in Japan. While on leave to visit them in 1974, she had a "small world" experience. "Would you believe I was taken to a Cuban restaurant in Tokyo by one of my former students who works in the Cuban embassy there?" This past summer the Kroehlers had a reunion in Bremerton, Wash. on the 67th wedding anniversary of their parents.

Her relatives and friends in the States are always surprised that she wants to go back to Cuba after such visits. But Kroehler has strong feelings about her vocation.

"I was shocked, saddened, unbelieving when I saw a TV commercial showing a choice of eight different kinds of meat combinations for dogs, when two out of every three persons in this world go to bed hungry at night. We have rationing in Cuba, to assure an equitable distribution of foodstuffs across the countryside. We are a developing society, and of course, the U.S. embargo has taken its toll. The Cuban churches, both Catholic and Protestant, have taken strong stands condemning the U.S. embargo as causing needless suffering for the people," she said.

In an unpretentious way, for more than 40 years, Lois Kroehler has been living out the concept of "Christian presence." She became an astute observer of developments within Cuba, an articulate advocate for the vitality inherent in the life of post-1959 Cuban churches. She has shared her perceptions through letters, occasional visits to the United States, and extended conversations with many visitors to Cuba from various Christian communities. The quintessential modern "missionary" in the best sense of that word, she went — and remained — where she was needed. — **Alice Hageman and Mary Lou Suhor.** TW

Churches crucial in

A young woman comes and stands before the congregation to sing a Christmas carol.

I am seated in the Ebenezer Baptist Church. In the adjacent parish hall is a picture of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and a copy of the proclamation of a King holiday signed by Mayor Andrew Young of Atlanta.

The young woman's voice is fresh and clear. The tune is *Greensleeves*, with familiar words: "This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the son of Mary."

It feels like home. But I am not home in Raleigh or even in Atlanta at Dr. King's Ebenezer Baptist Church. I am in Havana, Cuba.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus made a landing in Cuba. Greeted by brown-skinned Taino, Siboney and Guanajatabey natives, he thought he was in India. He was confused.

Landing in Havana almost 500 years later, given my own misconceptions, I could just have easily have been confused. After all, isn't Cuba an atheistic state? Haven't all Christians long since departed for Miami following the revolution in 1959?

Raul Gomez Treto, a Cuban Roman Catholic layman, said in his book, *The Church and Socialism in Cuba*, that the pre-1959 Cuban church was a weak church. It was poorly attended. Of the 72.5% of the population claiming to be Catholic, 75% of them were non-practicing. It was a church controlled by those with money and power, and administered mostly by Spanish priests and religious.

Raul Suarez, the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church and President of the Cuban Ecumenical Council, confirmed Treto's account in a meeting where he explained some of the history of the Protestant church in Cuba.

Suarez remembered the pre-revolution Protestant churches: "The message was simple. Don't drink, smoke, curse or dance. To tell Cubans they'll go to hell if they dance is very surely to put them there. A Cuban who isn't allowed to dance is already in hell."

But the post-revolution churches became more inclusive. Suarez celebrates the changing of the words in a hymn: "Before the revolution we sang, 'Apart from the world, I live my faith. I leave the world and follow Jesus.' Now the words go, 'I go to the world because it is the object of God's love.'"

After the revolution, Suarez said, 90% of Methodist and 70% of Baptist and Presbyterian clergy followed the money and deposed power structure to the United States. By 1970, half the Episcopalian congregations had left. What this did, in essence, to the Christian church remaining in Cuba was to force it to understand its history and mission in light of the social and economic realities of the revolution.

Since the revolution, Christians in Cuba have continued to theologize and redefine the church in the context of Vatican II in the early '60s, the development of liberation theology, and the pronouncements of Latin American Roman Catholic bishops in Medellin in 1968 and Puebla in 1979.

The rise of base communities in Central and South America, relying heavily on lay ministry, and the liberating mes-

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breaking barriers

by Jim Lewis

sage that God calls the church to "a preferential option for the poor," closely paralleled the changes and growth the Cuban church has experienced since 1959.

Reminders of Cuba's colonial past are never far away. From Matanzas, a port city east of Havana, runs the "Hershey train." Built and owned by the huge U.S. candy manufacturer, it linked the company's sugarcane plantations and Havana.

Up on a hill, the Evangelical Theological Seminary overlooks Matanzas harbor. The seminary's dean, Oden Marichal, an Episcopalian, has invited Presbyterian theologian, Sergio Arce Martinez, who teaches at the seminary, to have a conversation with us. Joining the group is an Episcopal priest who pastors a local congregation and a Canadian woman studying at the seminary. The discussion goes on as a blinding rainstorm pounds against the building.

Arce talks about the significance of liberation theology in Cuba but is quick to point out that Cuba's revolution happened prior to the publication of Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez's monumental work, *Theology of Liberation*.

"Our revolution has already taken place. Our major concern isn't for *liberation*, but for *creation*. As helpful as the Exodus events are, our major focal point is Genesis. Creating a new society is what we are about," said Arce.

That task has been anything but easy, particularly given the fact of the U.S. embargo against Cuba, which has forced it to rely heavily on trade with the USSR and Eastern European nations.

We discuss the recent events in Eastern Europe and how they will affect Cuba, a question that emerges in practically every conversation. Cubans are concerned about their future because Cuba could find itself more and more isolated as the communist bloc nations of Eastern Europe come unglued. Cubans fear the possibility of economic cutbacks by Eastern European trading partners as those nations become more solicitous of and dependent on U.S. capital and government aid.

Valuable subsidized sugar markets in the USSR, along with vital trade links involving oil, food, and machinery could dry up as the cold war thaws and political vultures in the United States declare moral and economic victory over communism.

That kind of shallow analysis, combined with changing military strategies in the United States, could spell trouble. Les Aspin, Democratic representative from Wisconsin, recently commented on the military implications of the cold war thaw, east and west. He said, "The military is going through a real soul-searching. They are looking for a mission."

That mission, given the fact of the invasion of Panama, could well trigger new covert, and even overt, military operations against Cuba and deeper involvement in Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.

Cuba was repeatedly invaded and colonized by European and U.S. forces over a 500-year period. Now, once again, Cuba finds itself forced to respond to the great giants of the north, the United States and the USSR.

The fall of the Berlin Wall is being felt on this island, which is just 90 miles



Padre Miguel Tamayo, dean of the Episcopal Cathedral in Havana, baptizes Enrique, son of Enrique Olivera Ojedo and Angela Ojedo Falcon, during Sunday services.

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south of Florida. That 90-mile stretch is its own kind of wall — a wall of water that must be parted for the good of both Cuba and the United States.

Padre Miguel Tamayo splashes water on a child being baptized on Sunday morning at the Episcopal cathedral in Havana. There are about 50 people present. Among them is an older woman who has recovered from having both knees operated on and can say nothing bad about the health care in Cuba. However, she is unhappy about the fact that chicken and meat are in short supply at local state markets.

She expresses the same hope that people at the seminary shared with us. Cuba, they all say, needs personal as well as economic contact with the United States. They see the church as the vehicle for breaking through the wall between the two countries. Exchanges of people are vital in order for Cuba to lose its demonic image in the eyes of the United States, so that diplomatic and economic relations can be re-established.

Cubans are conscious of the role the churches can play in defusing potential conflict between peoples or nations. They hope that can happen with Cuba and the United States. They remember Jesse Jackson's 1984 visit to Cuba. Jackson and Fidel Castro attended a United Methodist church service in Havana where Castro was touched by Jackson's sermon. Hope runs high that Pope John Paul II will pay a visit to Cuba in the near future.

The new church in Cuba, built since the revolution, has made a profound discovery. There is widespread recognition that atheism has been an unexpected gift of God. That admission on the part of many Cuban Christians has profound implications in the building of a new society.

The pre-revolutionary church, out of touch with the poor and representing only the interests of the rich, was compelled by the nature of the Gospel and the reality of the revolution to confront its own elitist mission and misguided evangelical piety.

In a conversation with Fernando Bielsa-Garcia, a Communist Party official, he confessed that he had belonged to the Catholic Youth Program when he was younger. However, when forced to choose between a reactionary church serving the rich and a political party working for revolutionary change for the poor, he abandoned the church.

Before the revolution, many Cubans became disillusioned as they watched their church side with colonial domination.

Fidel Castro was raised by a Catholic mother in Oriente Province, an area owned by U.S. fruit companies. Even though he was influenced profoundly by Bible stories learned under Jesuit tutelage, particularly the Moses stories, the church offered him no model for change.

Since then, Castro has grown in his appreciation of the church as a revolutionary force. In the book *Fidel and Religion*, Frei Betto, a Brazilian Dominican priest, interviews Castro, who reveals a changed attitude towards religion. The book should become compulsory reading for North Americans concerned about the presence of a new theology and church in Cuba. Thirty years has made a difference, given the changes in the church.

In Jean Stubb's book, *Cuba: The Test of Time*, Angel Ortiz, a black minister from Matanzas, gives personal testimony to the centrality of atheism to his new understanding of evangelistic faith:

> "The revolution has motivated my faith on more than one occasion. In my personal life, I have lived crises of faith, crises that have stemmed from incomprehension of the church and its incomprehension of the struggles of society. I am by no means enamored of pain, but the revolutionary process has stimulated me, as it has stimulated other young Christians to play a conscious part in it. This implies strengthening one's Christian identity in a society that calls itself Marxist, socialist, atheist . . . Daily practice in Cuban society has inspired me to understand that theoretical atheism is not as important as practical atheism, and that at times religious people can be atheist . . .We preach what we don't practice."

Ortiz goes on to say, "We need to evangelize from a different perspective, from that of helping to build the new society. The best values of human beings, men and women alike, must be reaffirmed."

Cuba has come through a period of history, immediately following the revolution, when Christians weren't welcomed into the structures for creating the new society. The memories were too fresh of a church co-opted by the rich, and Christians were therefore denied government and occupational positions.

But the situation is different now. The Cuban church, with a revised and renewed sense of evangelism, one compatible with the goals of the revolution, could well offer important gifts needed if the goals of the revolution are to be fully realized. The church is now qualified, because of its commitment to the revolution, to offer a constructively critical voice on behalf of a more open news media and social, political and cultural dissent.

All of that may well depend on how successful the church can be both in Cuba and the United States in reducing Cuba's isolation through the exchange of Christians willing to work at changing U.S. policy. Heightening the already existing tensions between the two countries through a continued policy of economic and social isolation will not contribute to peace.

A simple slogan might read: "No to embargos — Yes to exchanges."

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Havana is not East Berlin

by J. Antonio Ramos

Cuba today is the focus of much attention, curiosity and speculation because of the dramatic changes taking place in Eastern Europe and the unexpected turn of events in the Soviet Union. So much hype is being given by the Western powers and its media to these events, that in-depth coverage of other historic changes taking place in South Africa and its neighboring countries of Angola and Namibia is being overlooked in the furor.

It seems that in the Western world view, especially that of the United States and Great Britain, the evil of racism and the scourge of apartheid are lesser sins than those of ideology. If one compares the attitudes toward the dramatic changes in Europe versus the ones in Africa, it is obvious that the former have the blessing, encouragement, and support of the West, while the collapse of the immoral scourge of apartheid in South Africa is taking place in spite of, and quite often against, the wishes of much of the Western world.

It is no wonder that while Sakharov and Walesa were immortalized, Mandela was left to rot in prison for 27 years. And Archbishop Tutu and other religious leaders of South Africa are often ridiculed and considered by some to be dangerous "subversives."

As we look at Cuba historically and even today, the issues of ideology and racism cannot be separated. That connection was quite clear to me in my recent trip there with THE WITNESS. I will try to provide some insights as to how these two historic movements — which are shaping a new world order in Europe and Africa — particularly relate to Cuba.

Since 1981, when I was on the staff of the National Council of Churches' Latin American and Caribbean office, I have had the opportunity to travel to Cuba on various occasions, mostly at the invitation of its Ecumenical Council. Contrary to what the majority of people in the United States may think, both the Roman Catholic Church and the various Protestant so-called historical churches, as well as the Pentecostals, have continued to operate and expand their work and ministry in Cuba.

Two summers ago, at the invitation of the Ecumenical Council, I spent six weeks in Cuba on sabbatical, at which time I was able to preach in various congregations, travel on my own to different parts of the country, spend time in private homes, and have conversations with diverse sectors of the population.

Earlier, in the summer of 1984, just after the conclusion of the U.S. Presidential primaries, I had the privilege of accompanying the Rev. Jesse Jackson in his peace trip to Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Cuba, which turned out to be a momentous occasion for their religious communities — especially in Cuba, where Fidel Castro attended the ecumenical service where Jesse preached.

It is out of such experiences that I share these reflections, as we look to the future in this rapidly transforming world, also taking into account the recent invasion of Panama by U.S. troops. For while there is progress in disarmament and demilitarization in the North among the superpowers, there is regression in the South, especially in our hemisphere. Civil war, human rights violations, poverty, injustice and death are still rampant, and a growing tension exists between the United States and Cuba.

A new heaven can be constructed to the North, while the South remains in the shadows of hell and death. Increasingly now, because of the North's attention to itself, the South will be the Lazarus of the parable, recipient of the "crumbs that fall from the table" of the rich man.

What about Cuba? The visit by THE WITNESS group was indeed a timely one. We were there in the midst of two significant events: the International Latin-American Film Festival which brought thousands of people from different parts of the world; and, more significant for our visit, the observance of the Day of Mourning (similar to Memorial Day) for those Cuban military and civilian personnel who had died in international service, especially in Angola.

At the memorial service, Castro gave a foreboding speech, exalting Cuba's contributions to the liberation of Angola from South African imperialism and the ushering in of independence in Namibia. It was also a serious analysis of events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and their possible repercussions on Cuba. He referred to "the current crisis in the socialist camp, from which we can only expect negative economic consequences for our country."

Undoubtedly, because of its trade relations with Eastern Europe and the USSR, there will be additional hardships for Cuba over and above the conditions of

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scarcity created by the 30-year U.S. embargo. This will place further demands for austerity measures, and will add frustration to efforts underway to make the economy more self-reliant.

In a recent speech in Miami, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, predicted that *perestroika* would soon reach Cuba and Central America. Only history will tell. Yet my question remains: Is *perestroika* exportable to a hemisphere where the fundamental issues are those of life and death, not of individual freedoms? Conditions have worsened, especially in Central America over the last 10 years, in spite of the electoral democratization which has taken place.

And how do conditions in Cuba today differ from those in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union?

The struggle in Cuba in the late 1950s, as has been the case of Nicaragua more recently, or in the Philippines, was against oligarchical power structures benefiting an elite minority. The regimes of Batista, Somoza, and Duvalier exemplified dictatorial, oligarchical, oppressive systems, often allied with military powers. Cuba's struggle turned into a nationalist and anti-imperialist movement because of the historic pattern of U.S. behavior in the hemisphere. It started with the economic and military occupation of Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1898 and, since then, of Nicaragua, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Panama, etc. Because of that, the U.S. embargo against Cuba did not create humilation and submission. Instead, Cubans had a greater sense of national pride, internal strength, and discipline in the face of hardship and austerity.

As a Puerto Rican, whose country's history has been closely tied to Cuba in our struggles for independence from Spain and later from the United States, I have always appreciated Cuba's continued solidarity with Puerto Rico.

In general, electoral democratization in Latin America has not led to economic democratization; rather, social and economic situations have worsened. The fundamental concern in Latin America has been not only to struggle against oligarchical power, but also how to bridge the economic and social gaps under the prevailing conditions of poverty and corruption.

Cuba chose a socialist model, which in spite of its flaws is quite different, qualitatively and quantitatively, from that of Eastern European countries. That this model has proven effective is evident when one compares the quality of life in Cuba with the rest of Latin America in terms of health, nutrition, education, participation in mass organizations and so on.

The situation in Cuba is also quite different religiously and ethnically speaking. There is not a monolithic church, or a popular religious body in confrontation with the political power, or a church that has a hold on the population. Ethnically, Cuba does not face the multi-cultural problems of Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union. There is strong Cuban identity and it is a culture proud of its Afro-Latin heritage. This was evident in the Cubans' warm response to Jesse Jackson's visit in his role as a religious leader, a black person, and a champion of the causes of the poor, the minorities, and the Third World. To understand Cuba's role in Southern Africa one needs to look at the historical connection with its African roots and the participation of blacks in Cuba's own independence and revolutionary struggles.

My own view is that in contrast to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, there is a wide base of popular participation and support for the Communist Party. The continued rejuvenation of the party and government apparatus, and the process referred to as "rectification," has intensified. Events in the socialist world will push the process even further.

I believe that ultimately in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and Cuba, as well as in the rest of the world, the fundamental question for the future is whether there will be a true democratization of *all* sectors of society — and a democratization process that considers economic and social equality to be a primary goal. TW



Raul Suarez, left, head of Cuba's Ecumenical Council, with the author at the CEC office on the grounds of the Episcopal Cathedral, Havana.

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How not to evangelize

by Mary Lou Suhor

Cuban history provides some clues, in this "Decade of Evangelism" proclaimed by the Episcopal Church, of how *not* to evangelize. One of the first Episcopal worship services held in Havana was presided over by Bishop Benjamin Whipple in 1871 aboard a U.S. gunboat anchored in Havana harbor. According to Cuban theologian Adolfo Ham, "This act was to become typical of the direct relation of U.S. political and economic interests in Cuba to the development of Cuban Protestantism."

On the Roman Catholic side, most are familiar with the entry of Catholicism with Columbus and the subsequent pairing of "cross and sword" as the *conquistadores* proved invincible against the indigenous tribes who suffered genocide at their hands. Christians aware of this history are already alerting their denominations to the injustice and insensitivity of "celebrating" the 500th anniversary of the "discovery of America" — seen by Latin American and Caribbean nations as the beginning of a long history of oppressive Spanish colonialism.

But the story of early Protestantism after the so-called Spanish-American war also produced its share of cultural imperialism as missionaries "targeted" Cuba for evangelism. One could almost picture Protestant Mission Board members rubbing their hands in glee, given some of the public statements of this period. Perhaps one of the best examples of this was Methodist Bishop Warren Candler, who in late 1898 returned from Cuba proclaiming it "our ripest, nearest, neediest mission field."

Bishop Candler's phrasing was classic: "The churchmen of our land should be prepared to invade Cuba as soon as the army and navy open the way, to invade Cuba in a friendly, loving Christian spirit, with bread in one hand and the Bible in the other."

Candler's hand might have held bread, but it also grasped a bottle of Coke. He persuaded his older brother, Coca-Cola exec Asa Candler, to enter Cuba as a new market, and they both set about to capture the island for Methodism and Coca-Cola. Bishop Candler raised over $100,000, mostly for church property, and by 1915 his mission led all other Protestants in Cuba, both in membership and number of U.S. missionaries. Asa opened the first Coca-Cola bottling plant in 1906 in Havana, the second in Santiago in 1913, to take advantage of sales at the U.S. Naval Station at Guantanamo. Grateful for skyrocketing profits, Asa in turn helped Warren, who also owned stock in the company, to finance several major religious enterprises for Methodism.

Other Protestant ministers running schools, clinics and dispensaries in rural areas were similarly led to accept financial assistance from Hershey and United Fruit Company, putting them in compromising positions during labor strikes and worker disputes. All of these factors led Protestantism to become committed to homeland mission boards, U.S. businessmen, and U.S. foreign policy.

The tone for U.S. occupation was set by General Leonard Wood. In 1900 he wrote to President McKinley from his position as head of the American military government in Cuba: "The people here, Mr. President, know that they are not ready for self-government, and those who are honest make no attempt to disguise the fact. We are going ahead as fast as we can but we are dealing with a race that has been steadily going downhill for 100 years and into which we must infuse new life, new principles, new methods."

In marked contrast to Wood's words, "downhill for the last 100 years," Cubans characterize that same period as *cien años de lucha* — 100 years of struggle. They were well on the way to winning their War for Independence against Spain before the United States intervened and began to rewrite Cuban history. The United States changed the name of the conflict to the Spanish-American War, and after victory, forced the Platt Amendment upon the island, calling for the leasing of naval stations on Cuban soil and the right of the United States to intervene militarily, if necessary, in Cuban affairs. This set Cuba back into colonial status with a new master.

The U.S. model of economic penetration skewed the Cuban economy. By 1933, with the United States investing profitably in Cuban industry, some 60% of the native population lived outside the money economy. One historian calls this period "*Plattismo sin la Emienda Platt.*" "Intervention without the Platt Amend-

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ment" presumed complicity of Cuba's domestic oligarchy to assure an administration capable of conducting itself in accord with the interests of Wall Street and the State Department.

When the Cuban Revolution intervened to change that situation, Fidel Castro adopted a socialist model of development. Some of the resulting accomplishments of the revolution in the areas of health, women's rights, and education which have propelled Cuba to leadership among the Third World and Non-Aligned Nations, are discussed in other articles in this issue.

Those who disagreed with Cuba's nationalization of schools and industries fled the country. This included more than half the Protestant missionaries, dependent on their U.S. boards for pensions and operating budgets, and dependent, too, on "the American way of life."

Surely here was a strange twist, Raul Gomez-Treto, a noted Havana Catholic layman, marveled. Christians, who considered themselves "spiritual," left in multitudes because of material changes in their lives, and communists, whom Christians called "materialists," stayed to try to build a new society with better distribution of goods, he said.

In a similar vein, Sergio Arce, professor of theology at the Protestant seminary at Matanzas, once told a visiting U.S. pastor that he is frequently asked in Western countries, "How is it possible to be a Christian in a communist country?" to which he responds, "How is it possible to be a Christian in a capitalist country?"

Arce's response has deep theological implications for the future of the missionary enterprise, and for evangelization.

The Cuban churches, which before the revolution ran schools, hospitals, and clinics, began to critically analyze their failures and to reflect upon their new role in society, but by and large they were ill-equipped, theologically and economically, to deal with how to serve God in a Marxist land.

Commenting on how mission churches were dependent on their sending bodies, J. Merle Davis, author of "The Cuban Church in a Sugar Economy," concluded, "We have here reached the crux of the economic problem of the missionary church — not only in Cuba but in many other lands. How can a relatively expensive institution, a product of an alien, high-grade economy and living standards, be indigenized and financed in countries of lower economic standards where the bulk of the church members are drawn from the classes of the lower economic levels?"

By August of 1960, all U.S. firms had been nationalized, and by October, most Cuban firms. The United States declared an embargo on all U.S. exports to Cuba in 1960, and in 1961 broke diplomatic relations with the island.

By 1961, thousands of Cuban exiles had emigrated to the United States. In April of that year, many of them took part in the U.S.-backed mercenary invasion of the Bay of Pigs, with several priests and one Methodist minister among them. Three priests, all Spanish nationals who had served in Cuba and accompanied the troops as chaplains, were captured. Cubans turned the invaders back in 72 hours, and Castro read, in his victory speech, the following proclamation, prepared by the mercenaries' head priest-chaplain, intended to be broadcast after the mercenaries won:

> The liberating forces have landed on the beaches of Cuba. We come in the name of God, justice and democracy to restore the rights that have been abridged, the freedom that has been trampled upon and the religion that has been subjugated and slandered. We do not come because of hatred, but because of love; we come to bring peace even if to earn it we must wage war.
>
> The Assault Brigade is constituted by thousands of Cubans who in their totality are Christian and Catholic. Our struggle is that of those who believe in God against the atheists, the struggle of spiritual values against materialism, the struggle of democracy against communism. Ideologies can be vanquished only by superior ideology, and the only ideology that can vanquish the Communist ideology is the Christian ideology. That is why we have come and that is why we fight.
>
> Catholics of Cuba: our military might is crushing and invincible, and even greater is our moral strength and our faith in God and in His protection and in His help. Cuban Catholics: I embrace you on behalf of the soldiers of the liberating army . . .

In historic context, then, government hostility toward the churches can be understood, if not condoned. The missionary effort, with notable exceptions of course, proved inglorious.

On an ecumenical trip to Cuba in 1975, I heard a visiting church official congratulating a Cuban administrator on what he had seen. Impressed by advances in medicine, education, housing, the visitor said he thought that the Cubans had developed a truly Christian society by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, providing shelter for the homeless. The Cuban corrected, "I know you mean that as a compliment, but you are mistaken. These advances have been accomplished by a Marxist-Leninist methodology. When Christians had our country, they raped it."

But what about the future for the churches in Cuba? Early resentment toward the churches by the Communist Party has somewhat dissipated. Even Castro has said that "nobody wants to hear again that for centuries, the church didn't deal with those problems," and it is time to move on, he indicated. Today progressive Christians in the churches perceive an openness on the part of the

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government for rapprochement.

When our WITNESS editorial group visited Havana's Catholic Cathedral in December we saw a sign in the vestibule saying "The Pope is coming." And Fidel Castro in his conversations with Frei Betto, published as the book, *Fidel and Religion,* discusses the phases he has gone through in dealing with the churches after the revolution, even indicating an openness now to Christians joining the Communist Party. Fidel is quoted in the book as saying to a group of Chilean Christians for Socialism that believers can take a revolutionary stand, and "Christians and Marxists can join in a strategic alliance to carry out social change." Later, to Jamaicans, he said, "It isn't enough just to respect each other; we must cooperate with each other."

And in a 1980 speech, Castro said, "I don't know what the imperialists think about this (Christian-Marxist alliance). But I'm absolutely convinced the formula is highly explosive." He totally supports the church's option for the poor, which he sees as a real advance, both theologically and politically. *Fidel and Religion* has been published in 22 languages, and 2 million copies have been sold in 29 countries.

Cuba's official publication, *Granma,* now regularly carries articles reporting on religion. Last summer it ran a full-page interview with Msgr. Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, director of the Cuban Catholic Bishops' Secretariat, on the proposed visit of the Pope. In its weekly review (after THE WITNESS trip), it carried not only an account of the burial of Cuba's Angolan war dead, but on page four, a three column story entitled "Cuban Episcopal Church Has Three Deaconesses," featuring an interview with the Rev. Marta Lopez, who heads two Havana province churches. It quotes Bishop Emilio Hernandez of Cuba, "Just as women in Cuba are leaders in the country's political and economic life they are taking major roles in religious affairs." The article cites that Marta Lopez, in addition to her church duties, has also been active as a member of the Federation of Cuban Women, a union, and the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution. Cuba's other deaconesses are Griselda Delgado, in Santiago and Nerva Cott, in Matanzas province.

Cuban-born Bishop Hernandez was out of the country during our visit, at a meeting exploring the possibilities of a new autonomous Caribbean church province comprised of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Cuba. An interview with Bishop Hernandez by the Rev. Cora Cheney Partridge appeared in THE WITNESS in January 1986.

In sum, Cubans who have traveled recently in the United States are shocked by the human callousness and indifference which tolerates homelessness and drug dealing that they see on U.S. streets. To be sure, Cubans are economically strapped by a battered economy and foreign debt, as are the rest of the Latin nations, plus a 30-year-old blockade imposed by the United States. But they feel that given their history of underdevelopment, their revolution has proceeded apace, and if anything, it is the American Revolution that is in trouble.

Resources

Fidel and Religion, Fidel Castro's conversations with Frei Betto, Touchstone (Simon and Schuster) New York.

Religion in Cuba Today, Alice Hageman and Phil Wheaton, Association Press, New York.

Cuba: People Questions, Friendship Press, New York, especially "Religion: Cuba," by Margaret E. Crahan; Introduction, Mary Lou Suhor.

"Contextualizing the Faith; Protestant Churches in Cuba," by Paul Deats and Alice Hageman in *One Faith, Many Cultures,* Orbis 1988.

"Georgia Methodism and Coca-Cola," Institute for Southern Studies pamphlet, Atlanta, Ga. TW

Back Issues Available:

• **Our church has AIDS:** Features a theological reflection: "AIDS and the survival of the fittest" by the Rev. John Snow; welcomes Bishop Barbara C. Harris back into THE WITNESS pages with her article on "The politics of AIDS"; includes touching vignettes of people with AIDS by a nurse who tends them; critiques by blacks and Hispanics of racist approaches to dealing with "the viral holocaust." December 1989.

• **Justice and Peace:** A special WITNESS devoted to issues addressed by peace activists. Joseph B. Ingle's penetrating article, "Death row must go," describes his experiences with prisoners facing the electric chair; Jim Lewis addresses how the U.S. Army is recruiting youth for war in high schools and even at Boy Scout Jamborees; Pat Washburn describes her dark night as a tax resister, and Anne Rowthorn her struggle against Trident missiles in her neighborhood; Stan Rich deals with nukes and *metanoia* in South Carolina. Produced in conjunction with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship on its 50th anniversary. November 1989.

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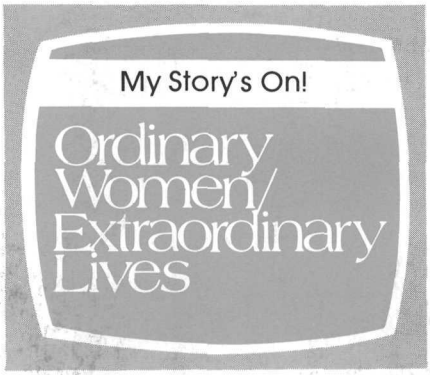

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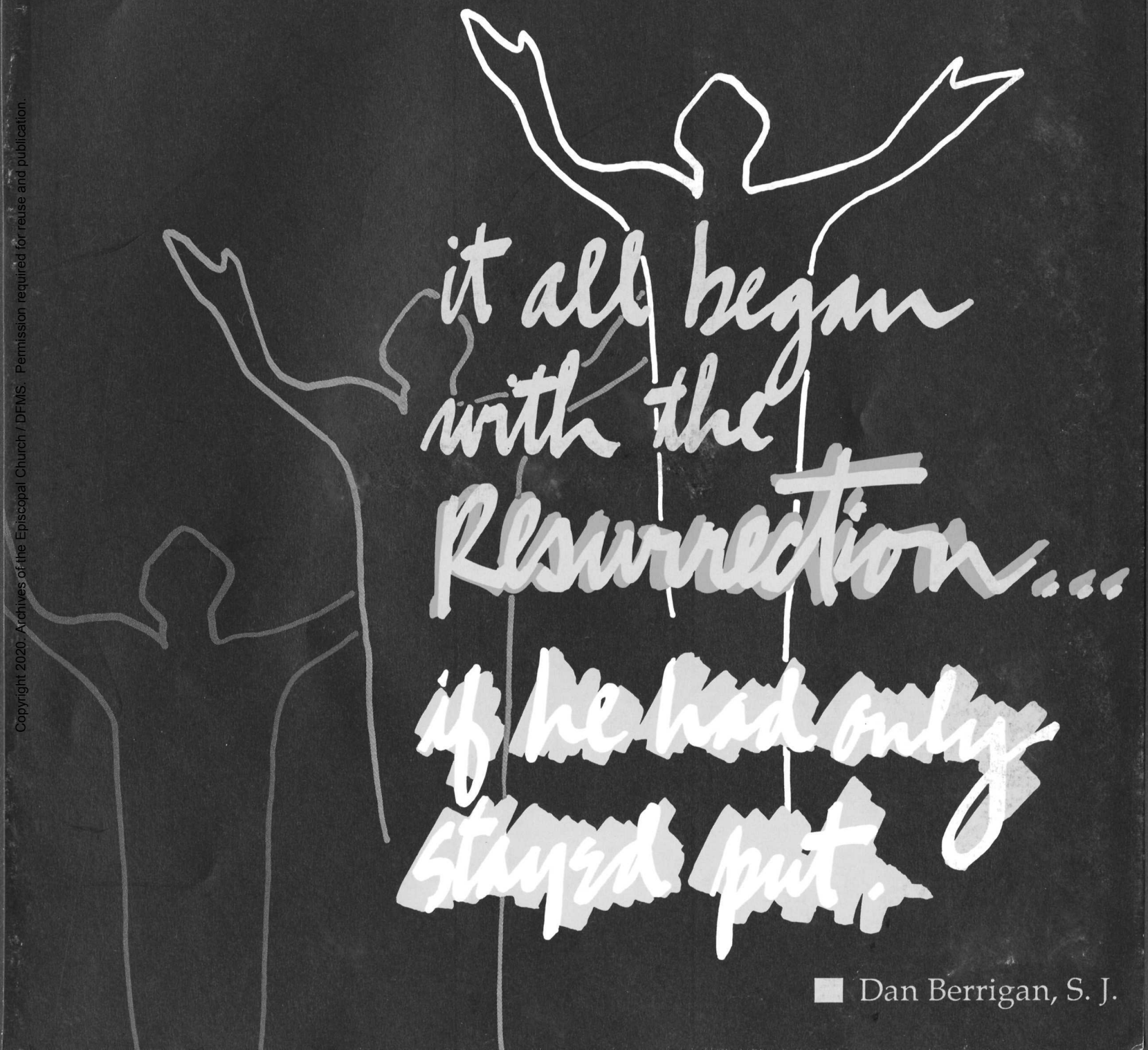
THE WITNESS



Dan Berrigan, S. J.

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Letters

Saw hope in Haiti

I too have been to Haiti (like Joan Chittister — January WITNESS). I too have walked along the shadowed streets of peeling, pastel Port-au-Prince. I too have stepped in silent horror through Cité Soleil. I was first there beneath the softest salmon twilight heavens, and I wept to see how God's creatures on earth are forced to live in such pain. It was still called Cité Simone, then, after the president's wife. She was the one who installed refrigerated rooms for her furs, while mothers on nearby streets cradled dying babies, praying for medicine and mercy.

And I too have taken the very bumpy ride out of Port-au-Prince, up the big mountain to Hinche. Hinche is the reason that I first travelled to Haiti during the summer of 1985. An Episcopal church and school in my home diocese of El Camino Real had established a link project with an Episcopal school just outside of Hinche. I was sent to see what needed to be done. Hinche is also the reason that I was compelled to return to Haiti the following summer. By then, president-for-life Jean Claude Duvalier had fled, leaving behind him a nation mourning what had been and celebrating what might be.

In her article, "The anguish of Haiti," Chittister wrote powerfully of the suffering of Haiti and its people. I share her outrage that this situation exists, and that great efforts are not being made, by all of us, to end this oppression. But, I experience something else in Haiti, something I did not find in Chittister's article. It was hope. It saddens me if the lasting image of Haiti is one of despair. Perhaps the hope in Haiti is not something readily witnessed in a matter of days. But it is there.

It is there in Pere Durecin and St. Andre's School. Pere Durecin, the Episcopal priest in Hinche, is headmaster of St. Andre's Primary School. This school did not exist when I first visited Haiti. Pere Durecin spoke with passion and humility that a school was needed to strengthen the Episcopal Church and its community in Hinche. Money was soon raised at St. Dunstan's Church, Carmel Valley, Cal. and sent to Hinche. Work on the school began. When I returned to Haiti the following summer, I was greeted with songs of welcome by students in bright green uniforms.

It is there in Sister Leslie Anne and Holy Trinity Episcopal School, just blocks from the National Palace in Port-au-Prince. There is a summer music camp at this school. The children of Cité Soleil learn to play violins and trumpets and flutes, and music comes forth with an eloquence which would move a maestro.

It is there in the Sisters of Charity and Mother Teresa's Orphanage, also in Port-au-Prince. Children are brought to the orphanage each day. They are met with soft touches and gentle voices. The children are nurtured with love and laughter until they are able to return to their families, or are adopted, or die.

There is much in Haiti that is tragic. What I saw amid this pain, however, was a people of unshakable grace and dignity and faith. The lesson the Haitians taught me — and teach all of us — is that it is not anguish which is the starting ground, but hope.

Christina S. Griffith
Cambridge, Mass.

No more rich havens

In the two years I have been reading THE WITNESS, I found the January issue to be the most informative. The article on Haiti's "La Tortue: Haven for the super-rich?" points out what is and always will be the difference between the rich and the lower and middle classes. The very rich will always be the very rich. The lower and middle classes will always walk in their shadow. We must be on guard to prevent more of these "havens."

Margaret Carlson
Roxborough, Pa.

Strikes balance

Your article about Sallie Bingham (February WITNESS) was probably written prior to Sallie's quite regular attendance at our 9:15 a.m. Eucharist at Christ Church Cathedral which uses the supplemental texts. For several years this liturgy has afforded a contemporary balance to our more traditional Rite II service at 11:15.

The Very Rev. Geralyn Wolf
Louisville, Ky.

Boyd saved day

I am an Anglican feminist and long-time WITNESS subscriber who can find almost nothing redeemable in the traditional roles for women in the church. Nevertheless, privileged Sallie Bingham's censure of Mother Teresa's "saintliness" was depressing to read. In the same issue, however, Malcolm Boyd's beautiful, truly realized words on life as prayer redeemed me. Certainly Mother Teresa's saintliness is a mere outcropping of a life lived as prayer.

Leonora Holder
Long Beach, Cal.

Despairs over 'Rescue'

I am writing this letter two days after having taken part in a pro-choice counter effort aimed at stopping an "Operation Rescue" at a women's health clinic. As an evangelical Christian, I am feeling totally disgusted and spiritually grieved that most of the anti-choicers label themselves as "Christians."

I have seen professed believers in Je-

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sus bang on the car windows of women patients, screaming at them, calling them "sluts" for wanting abortions. I heard one professed Christian holler out to a woman leaving the clinic, "Is your baby dead yet?" causing her to burst into tears. I am in total shock and filled with despair.

I have finally come to know how the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. must have felt when he realized that the Bible he found love, mercy, compassion and justice in was the same Bible being used by segregationists and the KKK to justify racial hatred and bigotry. My heart feels as his must have felt.

I am so glad I discovered the Christian feminist movement and the liberal wing of evangelical Christianity. If I hadn't, I think I would have given up all hope by now. And I want to thank your magazine for being there, too. A friend gave me a copy of your June pro-choice issue and it has been providing much inspiration and hope for me. I take great comfort in your magazine, but especially in *John 16:33*. Thank you for caring!

Annette L. Ravinsky
Philadelphia, Pa.

Offended subscriber

Please cancel my subscription. From the advertisement I did not realize that your magazine had religious/church overtones. I find this offensive.

Suzanne Arnopolin
Ypsilanti, Mich.

About enclaves?

I was genuinely impressed with Carter Heyward's "Seminary-in-wilderness" article in February. Ultimately, however, it was self-centered and self-serving. Perhaps it will turn into a book. One of the chapters I would label "Metaphors abounding, reality wanting." You see, Ms. Heyward, we are all pilgrims, even those of us who shovel money from Egypt into the traveling potsherds. Enclaves are enclaves, wherever they take root.

The Rev. Thomas L. Culbertson
Baltimore, Md.

Need people of vision

I admire Carter Heyward for the courageous way she applies the Gospel to seminary life. I can readily believe, however, that her opinions will be minority ones since too many folks are only interested in what they can get out of the seminary rather than the intrinsic value of it. A person with great vision of the possibilities was George Peck, president of Andover Newton Theological School, who recently died. Our seminaries need more people like Carter and George.

Dorothy A. McMillan
Geneseo, N.Y.

Instrument of Satan?

I believe you are a very rotten magazine, malicious, misoriented, demonic and an instrument of Satan. No, I do not need your magazine.

The Rev. William Muniz-Rocha
El Paso, Texas

Dying to read it

Please rush a copy of your publication. It has been suggested as one of the more liberal Episcopal publications. Thus, we are dying to read it.

Hans von Siegel
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Editorial pablum

Your February editorial suggests that WITNESS readers who found George Bush's invasion of Panama to be unconscionable would be consoled by the statements of the church leaders whom you quoted.

Consoled! Rather, readers should be outraged by the moral flabbiness of the statements. As one example, I suggest below an edited version of Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning's statement so that it might be termed an appropriate reaction:

> I am outraged that George Bush has decided to invade Panama to gain in presidential popularity polls by ordering U.S. killing forces, without any true provocation, to intentionally slaughter civilians, women, men, children and infants with bombs, flame and gunships in order to assassinate one person, Noriega.
>
> His real motive: to enhance his *macho* image and minimize his *wimp* image, with no national interest, to quote essayist Lewis Lapham, "other than Mr. Bush's vanity and spite." I mourn the deaths of both U.S. soldiers and Panamanian citizens, and equally I mourn the slow death of the Constitutional restraints protecting the free people of the United States from the oppression of a democratically elected U.S. dictator president.

For Browning to describe the killing fields of Panama, carefully choreographed by Bush, as "intervention" is to call the dropping of A-bombs at Truman's order a surgical strike because only one was dropped on each city. Soon our delicate leaders will refer to rape as "a sexual impropriety."

The reason for the inability of Browning to exprss genuine outrage against this democratically elected, Episcopalian assassination chief might be found in the article by Jack Gessell in the same issue:

> It may well be that the Episcopal leadership of the church is to a large extent captivated by its medieval theology of the *episcope* which includes the relatively uncritical alliance with the political and economic principalities. There are those who are critical and who can distinguish the dominant secular values which engulf us, but the general ethos tends to be acceptance without critical

Continued on page 25

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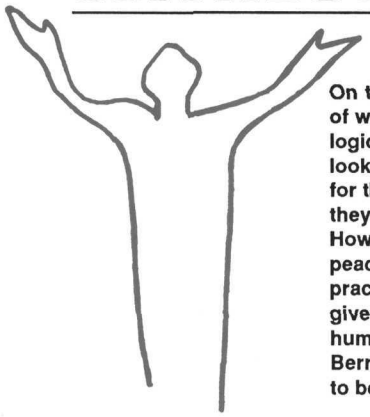

About our Easter cover

On this month's cover, Sister Helen David sketched her concept of words spoken by Jesuit peace activist Dan Berrigan at a theological seminar at Maryknoll, N.Y. Berrigan said that Jesus was looked upon as a rebel in his day and it would have been easier for the Pharisees and Sadducees "if he had only stayed put" after they crucified him. The Resurrection was, to them, an illegal act. How dare Jesus rise from the dead? Analogously, justice and peace activists like Berrigan who challenge the ruling powers by practicing non-violent civil disobedience will continue to be given jail sentences to make them "stay put." But the house of humanity is burning and we have to break down doors to save it, Berrigan said. May all WITNESS readers be granted the courage to be Easter people in a Good Friday world.

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Editorial

U.S. needs program to end war addiction

The U.S. government has a terrible addiction — the need to control the destinies of Central American and Caribbean countries. Like most addictions, it is extremely costly and destructive, both to the addict and those affected by the addict's abusive behavior.

For many years, the U.S. State Department, military and the CIA have been hooked on a particular method of control — low-intensity warfare. Basically it consists of wearing down a population through a combination of guerilla warfare, economic and social sabotage, and propaganda — or, in the case of Panama, outright invasion — until the people are whipped and more willing to follow orders.

Nicaraguans recently demonstrated how effective low-intensity warfare can be. A population that danced in the streets last July celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Sandinista revolution, voted it into history on Feb. 25. People voted with their empty bellies and aching hearts — 10 years of U.S.-sponsored war and crushing economic deprivation had worn away their enthusiasm for the self-determination championed by the Sandinistas. Like many abuse victims, they desperately sought to win the approval of the abuser and hopefully end their pain. In fact, many Nicaraguans said openly that they would welcome a U.S. invasion.

And the violence the United States exports and encourages is an outgrowth of the chaotic brutality of its homelife. Homelessness, drug abuse, hunger, lack of health care, decent education and employment have been brushed off by the Bush Administration, which prefers to blame the victims of its injustice and neglect for their own problems. Not permitting its own poor a chance at self-determination, the U.S. government, like most bullies, fears any movement in this hemisphere that empowers those at the bottom. Witness the 30-year economic sanctions, Bay of Pigs invasion, and vicious propaganda attacks on Cuba.

The U.S. government clearly needs to participate in the 12-step program — pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous and used by most self-help groups — to overcome its addiction.

The United States first must admit it is powerless over its addiction — that its life has become unmanageable, with an out-of-control military budget causing a monstrous federal deficit and a rapidly deteriorating quality of life.

The next few steps require that architects of U.S. policy believe that God or a Power greater than themselves can restore them to sanity. They must let go of the need to oppress and start supporting self-determination.

And all the doublespeak must end. State Department spokespersons will have to stop calling invasions "interventions." The military will have to refrain from calling its deadly missiles "peacekeepers."

The United States will have to make "a searching and fearless moral inventory"— as Step Four says — and confess to God, itself, and the people of Central America and the Caribbean, the exact nature of its wrongs, and own up to its support of contras in Nicaragua and death squads in El Salvador and Guatemala, and tell the truth about its complicity in the death, wounding and homelessness suffered by thousands of Panamanians.

But in order for its rehabilitation to be successful, the U.S. government must humbly ask God's help to remove its defects, make a list of the people both at home and abroad that its policies have harmed, and be willing to make just retribution, including forgiveness of international debts.

The United States needs to take personal inventory and admit promptly that Bush's so-called "victories for democracy" in Central America and the Caribbean have been victories for a capitalist economy more interested in exploiting the poor than improving their lives.

To complete the last two steps of the program, the U.S. government has to spend time "in prayer and meditation" to understand the will of God or a Higher Power. Once the U.S. government has had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, it must carry the message to others addicted to violence, and practice the principles of peace, justice and redemption in its dealings with other countries.

And as U.S. citizens, we must solemnly determine not to be co-dependents in encouraging our government's rapacious habit. TW

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In search of the labor movement

by Kim Fellner

"What do you do?" the businessman sitting next to me on the plane invariably asks.

"I'm a union organizer," I reply. On good days, I gleefully anticipate his surprised response; on bad days, I brace myself for the latest malediction against unions; on terrible days, I say I'm executive director of a writers' organization, so I can spend the rest of the flight in peace.

At 41, I'm one of labor's "new leftovers," one of the generation of activists who, after participating in the civil rights or anti-war movements, migrated into union work. Most of us didn't know each other in the beginning. Yet we came with a shared need to somehow hang on to the passions, however inchoate, that the '60s had kindled — for social change, for racial and gender equality, for the lifestyle and camaraderie of activism itself. We were the first substantial influx of college-educated young people to enter the labor movement since the 1930s.

What we found, and how we have fared over the past 20 years says much about the current status and potential fate of American labor.

I've been a union staffer now for 15 years, first at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), then at the Screen Actors Guild, and for the last four years, at the National Writers Union. My vocation has, in fact, always been troublesome, not so much because of corporate management, which I always expected to be recalcitrant, if not downright immoral, but because of union management, which often seems determined to grind its organizers and activists into conformity and complacency.

Which means I've been in trouble from the start. Much worse, I have persisted not only in having opinions, but also in voicing them — from questioning election procedures at the Labor Press Association in my earliest days, to joining my ex-boss Edward Asner in challenging AFL-CIO policies toward Latin America. And those are less forgivable sins.

Along with its near-fanatic anti-communism, the AFL-CIO has embraced a classical, pre-glasnost Soviet approach to loyalty. "I'm willing to talk with you, but don't use my name," close friends tell me when I ask about their lives in labor. "It's like China," an AFL-CIO insider half laughs, rolling her eyes.

I learned early that working in unions requires a high tolerance for contradiction on many fronts. Among my disorderly files is an article I wrote more than a decade ago in praise of union work. "However," I cautioned, "it is work for believers who can survive in organizations that often mimic in style, and occasionally in substance, the corporate and management structures they were created to oppose. Those same organizations that preach dignity for workers often exploit their own. They preach equality and discriminate against women; they advocate progress and desperately fear change." All still true.

Twice a year, I vow to open a cafe devoted to Viennese pastry and string quartets. But so far I haven't, because I'm in love. Not with unions as they are, but with the labor movement as it still occasionally blooms: a dynamic community of organizers and working activists who, through collective action, struggle to achieve a redistribution of power and wealth; dignity for workers as a class and as individuals; and an enrichment and celebration of the human spirit.

And sometimes it happens — in the crusade of the United Farm Workers, in decent locals throughout the labor landscape, in an organizing campaign where all the components miraculously come together.

The knowledge that it's still possible keeps us going, but the realities of working in unions are a powerful challenge to that faith.

The contradictions between labor's principles and practices are seldom so apparent as at the ceremonial gatherings of the labor establishment, like at the biennial AFL-CIO convention. "Just thinking about it makes my heart sink," says one union staffer. "All those white males over 50. And we could fund an organizing campaign on the money it takes to host just one of those receptions."

The conventions, and the meetings of the AFL-CIO Executive Council in Florida, are frequently the butt of mean-spirited, sarcastic commentary by the media. But sometimes it's hard to blame them.

"Two young showgirls, appropriately

"The labor movement is like the lover you cannot leave, the parent to whom you cannot be reconciled. Part prayer, part promise. A vision in the synapses of bureaucratic days. And those of us who hold it cannot sleep."

Kim Fellner is executive director of the National Writers' Union based in New York, and a longtime organizer. This article was made possible through a Samuel Gompers Leadership Award from the City University of New York.

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nicknamed 'Postage Stamp Girls' by some, have provoked a fierce debate among convention-goers," the *New York Times* reported from the Council meeting in Bal Harbour. The article went on:

> *At issue is whether young women in skimpy black bikinis with sequins are beneficial to labor's drive to improve its relations with women, who account for an increasingly large chunk of the workforce.*
>
> *The National Letter Carriers hired them to pass out small gift bags at its lavish cocktail party the other night. Men lined up to pose for photos with the women . . . "I think it enhanced the image of labor," said Vincent R. Sombrotto, president of the union.*

The article noted that AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, "who recently started an advertising campaign to bring more women and minorities into the federation, brushed off the criticism, saying 'Don't you take some things too seriously?'"

Then there's Labor Day. In New York City last year, 40,000 unionists marched in the Labor Day Parade — including contingents from four major strikes. Machinists, pilots and flight attendants from Eastern Airlines. United Mine Workers from the Pittston coal fields. Local telephone and hospital workers.

But the streets were nearly devoid of spectators, the marchers impelled by duty more than pride.

As one organizer put it, "Here we are again, marching down the streets of New York with no one watching. Why not march on some of the big financial institutions behind Eastern Airlines or the Pittston Coal Company? Why not go to the airport, or to the Virginia coal fields where these numbers would make a difference?"

If labor's commitment to solidarity is more often pro forma than proactive, the same thing can be said for organizing.



Union organizers with Ralph Fasinella, left, noted labor painter, during Pittston strike

No one, either in the AFL-CIO or in the national Bureau of Labor Statistics, seems to know how many labor organizers there are in the country today, although "not enough" is a common response, attested by the drop in union membership from a post-war high of 35% to a current low of less than 17% of America's workforce.

A study by two California organizers, Marshall Ganz and Scott Washburn, revealed that in 1985, out of 7,000 full-time union staff people in the state, there were just 182 organizers — less than 3% of the total.

The definition of organizing is almost as elusive as the practice.

"The clearest definition of organizing I have been able to develop is that it is about identifying and developing leadership, building a community around that leadership, and building power out of that community so it can meet its own interest," suggests Marshall Ganz. The son of a rabbi, he came out of the civil rights movement, served as organizing director for the United Farm Workers for more than 10 years, and now heads the independent Organizing Institute in northern California.

"It also requires a credible strategy and financial independence. Reduced to its most basic elements there would be just two: people and power."

That definition owes much to the work of master organizer Saul Alinsky, a friend and biographer of John L. Lewis.

Alinsky first achieved recognition for his feisty community organizing in the Back of the Yards neighborhood of Chicago. He based his approach on the belief that organizing should not "do for" people but, rather, enable a group of people to "do for themselves." From the late 1930s until his death in 1972, Alinsky practiced and preached the gospel of building "people's organizations." Many of the community and labor organizers of my generation were trained at his Industrial Areas Foundation, or were mentored (occasionally hectored) by those who were. His book, "Reveille for Radicals," inspired us to regard organizing as an heroic vocation to which we should aspire.

To Alinsky, every good radical was an organizer, every good organizer a radical. The organizing rubric went beyond the conventional understanding of union campaigns to win more members (or po-

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litical campaigns to win more voters), to defining an approach toward shaking up the status quo. It distinguished the educators, editors, negotiators, even the occasional attorney, who were activists and empowerers from those who were functionaries and bureaucrats.

Alinsky's systemic approach gained emotional resonance when cross-fertilized and combined with the more intuitive, but powerful, movement-building culture of the civil rights movement. Organizers a shade older than I often cite SNCC — the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee — as their first romance with organizing. However, while the Southern tradition and style differed from Alinsky's, the underlying goal of empowerment was the same.

"This is our real job," Alinsky asserted, "the breaking down of the feeling on the part of our people that they are social automatons with no stake in the future, rather than human beings in possession of all the responsibility, strength, and human dignity which constitute the heritage of free citizens of a democracy. This can be done only through the democratic organization of our people . . . It is the job of building People's Organizations."

If the concept of democratic empowerment that brought us to the labor movement was inspired by the civil rights movement and grounded in the work of Saul Alinsky, it also had roots in the labor legacy of Eugene Debs.

Ask 1960s activists whom they aspire to emulate, and it's never Samuel Gompers, cigar maker, organizer turned bureaucrat, who became the first president of the American Federation of Labor. Rather, you'll hear the names of the renegades: Mother Jones, who was still organizing in the coal fields and steel towns when she was 80; the Wobblies, who fought for "One Big Union" in the first two decades of the century; and especially Debs, leader of the Pullman Strike of 1894, pioneer of industrial unionism, socialist candidate for president of the United States. In his heyday, the press carried columns of his aphorisms and thousands flocked to hear him speak.

Samuel Gompers told us to ask for "more." Eugene Debs told us "while there is a lower class, I am in it, while there is a criminal element, I am of it, while there is a soul in prison, I am not free."

It is that overarching vision, passionate and generous, that seems to have disappeared from the AFL-CIO philosophy. "Initially there were two separate streams to the labor movement," says Gus Tyler, 78, education director emeritus of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. "On the one hand were the pure and simple trade unionists who did not believe labor had any kind of ultimate goal and were opposed to political action, even to social legislation at the federal level. Their ideologue was Samuel Gompers.

"Then you had the radicals, deeply influenced by selfless thinking, and they were perhaps a third of the trade union movement. During the 1940s, in the Roosevelt era, there was a confluence. The pure and simple trade unionists became more moderate. They no longer said, 'socialism today,' but 'socialism somewhere in the back of our minds as an ultimate goal.'"

That socialist legacy was eviscerated even further in the 1950s, when most AFL-CIO unions purged left-wing activists and intellectuals during the McCarthy era. Eleven unions representing almost 1 million members were expelled from the CIO on charges of communist domination. That weeding out process cost the labor establishment many of its most eloquent and effective proselytizers. Those who remained were often less progressive, or more circumspect, in their views.

By the time I started working for a Pennsylvania social workers local of the SEIU in 1974, most AFL-CIO unions had been closed communities for more than 15 years. I knew no one active in the labor movement and few who thought well of it. The support of George Meany and the AFL-CIO for the Vietnam War, combined with labor's very white, male, public face, had not endeared it to civil rights and anti-war activists. Or the other way around. After all, "hippies vs. hard-hats" had been one of the media images of the decade.

"No unions were hiring in the '60s when they were strongest," says Marshall Ganz. "I first heard about unions at the Highlander Center in 1965 at a session organized by SNCC and SDS. The Meatcutters and the United Electrical Workers (UE) were the only unions who came, and they were leftist, outside the mainstream. While the Peace Corps and the poverty programs were recruiting us, the unions were too afraid of communists to talk to us. The unions were scared of young people, and an organization fearful of the young is a dying organization."

Not surprisingly then, the first real opening for '60s activists came, not from the labor establishment, but from the fringes.

It took Cesar Chavez, in search of a large cadre of organizers to build the United Farm Workers of America, to open up the labor movement to a new generation of idealists.

Among the ranks of ex-civil rights and peace movement activists he found people, including Ganz, with the fervor to work 100 hours a week for $5 plus communal room and board. Between 1965 and 1980, mentored by one of Alinsky's co-organizers, the Farm Workers trained several thousand activists, using as many as 500 organizers on any one campaign.

Other '60s activists began to work at other labor causes at the peripheries of the labor establishment: in the J.P. Ste-

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Short Takes

How to save $100 billion

We cannot base our military strategy and force structure for the 1990s only on conditions which prevailed in the past. Hitler is dead, the Cold War is over, the Warsaw Pact and NATO will soon be irrelevant. We can pretend to ignore the changes which are occurring at the risk of becoming irrelevant ourselves.

After World War II we promptly reduced our forces from 12 million to 1.5 million. After Vietnam we cut our forces from 3 milion to 2 million and there is every reason now to move toward a force of about 1.2 million total active persons (from 2.1 million), which could be operated for $100 billion less per year than the current $300 billion military budget.

Admiral Gene R. LaRocque

How do I work? I grope.
— Albert Einstein

Poverty exciting, says millionaire

To me, one of the most exciting things in the world is being poor. You see these people in line in supermarkets with all these food stamps. You'll find potato chips, frozen foods, ice cream and all that stuff — give me a break — that's poverty?

A family of four today could have an adequate, balanced diet on an annual food budget of $150-$300. First thing, go to the Farm Bureau and buy a 100-pound bag of powdered milk, like they feed calves. Buy yourself a bushel of wheat, a bushel of oats, a bushel of corn and mash that stuff up. Grow some vegetables to supplement your diet. I think that's exciting.

Thomas Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza, quoted in *National Catholic Reporter* 3/2/90

Plus for forgetfulness

Do you know what is nice about aging and getting forgetful?

You can hide your own Easter eggs!

Network News, 2/90
Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging



Do not believe in miracles. Rely on them. *Anon.*

Holocaust Memorials scheduled

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council will lead the nation in remembrance of victims of the Holocaust in two important ways, the first to take place this month. April 22 through April 29 have been scheduled as Days of Remembrance, during which persons are asked to draw from the Holocaust critical human lessons: to respect and protect the rights of each individual, to strengthen our commitment to human moral and philosophical values, and to deepen our appreciation and tolerance of ethnic and religious diversity.

The second memorial, a permanent, national Holocaust Museum, is now under construction in Washington, D.C. It will tell the complex story not only of six million Jews murdered by the Nazis, but also the often little known story of the Gypsies, Poles, Soviet POWs, homosexuals, handicapped and other individuals persecuted and killed by the Nazis and their collaborators.

Ministers hang in there

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle,* a U.S. Labor Department study found that people stay in the ministry longer than most other careers. The study found that most ministers have been in their jobs for 15.8 years. Only barbers, who stay in their careers an average of 24.8 years, farmers and railroad conductors stay longer. The normal career tenure is 6.6 years.

NCC's *Ecu+link*, 1/90

Women take on bishops

The Sisters of Loretto recently released an open letter to the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States, calling their teaching against the use of condoms "outrageous" and "irresponsible."

"We are not thinking here of homosexual relationships or extra-marital intercourse," but "that increasing number of women who, attempting to be faithful to the teaching of their bishops, have marital sexual relationships without the protection of a condom with husbands who carry a sexually transmitted disease, whether it be syphilis or gonorrhea or AIDS.

"You must know that the fastest-growing poulation infected with AIDS is Hispanic women, traditionally women of Catholic background, who contract the disease from their drug-using husbands and pass that disease on to their infant children. We find it outrageous that this irresponsible teaching of the bishops is proving fatal to women and children," they said.

Mistaken identity

The ancient mountaineer found a mirror, an object new to him. Looking into it, he said, "By cracky, it's a picture of my old pappy," and put it under the bed for safekeeping. His wife saw him, thought he was hiding something, and fished it out. "So that's the old hag he's been chasing," she said.

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And the truth shall set you free:

The rise and fall of Robert Williams

by Kim Byham

"What we're doing here today will make our Anglican Communion more honest."

I heard the Rt. Rev. John S. Spong, Bishop of Newark, say those words on Dec. 16, 1989 at All Saints Parish in Hoboken. The occasion was the ordination to the priesthood of an openly gay, non-celibate man, Robert Williams. What Bishop Spong meant was that the church in general and our part of it in particular had long been dishonest. We have ordained gays and, more recently lesbians, but asked them either to lie about their orientation during the interview process or to keep very quiet about it, and to remain silent about it after they had been ordained.

But was the Episcopal Church really being honest that day? I had serious doubts. There were only about 175 people in the congregation. There were perhaps 50 people from the news media, including camera crews for several television stations. I had never been to an ordination which had so small a congregation, and many there didn't even know Williams. The woman sitting next to me, for example, had come in from the suburbs because she had read about the ordination in the press and wanted to be present at "an historic event."

Why did the media descend en-masse on Hoboken that afternoon? My theory is that the media pounced on the ordination because the preceding Sunday, Dec. 10, ACT UP, the AIDS activist group, had staged a demonstration both outside and inside St. Patrick's Cathedral. It was a slow news day and the coincidence of this colorful and controversial demonstration and an article in the New Jersey section of *The New York Times* containing an interview with Robert Williams resulted in his upcoming ordination becoming national network news that evening. While neither *The New York Times* nor the networks claimed the ordination was unique, the level of coverage led others in the press to assume there would be something monumental happening the next Saturday.

Edgar K. Byham, an attorney, is National President of Integrity and lives with his life partner, Scott Helsel, in Guttenberg, N.J.

Press release issued

The following day, the Diocese of Newark issued a press release. The release described the ordination as "unusual and probably unique," and it made reference to the ordination of Ellen Barrett, an openly lesbian priest, in January 1977. The communique stopped short of stating that Robert Williams was the first openly gay male ever or the first openly gay person to be ordained since 1977, but that was implied. More explicitly, in comments to at least two news services, United Press International and Reuters, the press spokesperson for the Diocese of Newark, the Ven. Leslie Smith, stated that, indeed, "Robert Williams will be the second openly homosexual person to be ordained in the Episcopal Church."

During that week I became aware that the news media was beginning to tout this unusual idea. An Integrity member called to say, "How can this be? We all know that lots of openly gay non-celibate males have been ordained since 1977." I knew that, too; I'd been to several such ordinations myself. At least two had been reported in nationwide gay newspapers: The Rev. Blair Hatt, who was ordained in the Diocese of New York in 1982 and the Rev. Rodney Reinhart, who was ordained in the Diocese of Michigan in 1985. Neither of them, however, claimed to be the "first" openly gay male ordinand.

On Friday I made a list of persons I knew who had been open about their sexuality during the ordination process, which caused me to prepare a press release which was distributed to the media at the ordination the following day. The Integrity release stated that there had been approximately 60 such ordinations prior to Robert's and that while he was the first openly gay man to be ordained in the Diocese of Newark, his ordination was far from "unique" for the Episcopal Church as a whole.

The news media, many of whom had no doubt gone to considerable trouble to get to Hoboken that day, were not interested in hearing that the story they were covering was less significant than they had imagined. Indeed, one of the television reporters to whom I handed the press release and whom I saw reading it, reported on the news that evening that this was the first such ordination in the Episcopal Church. Two months later, Phil Donahue began his interview with Williams with the same misinformation.

This was not the first time I had questioned Robert's and the diocese's honesty with the press. In June 1989, at Robert's initiative, the Diocese of Newark had created The Oasis, a ministry with the lesbian and gay community, at All Saints in Hoboken. Robert told *The Adovcate*, the national lesbian/gay newsmagazine, that it was the "country's second Episcopal gay outreach program but is the first that had an official sanction when it opened." The other program is The Parsonage in San Francisco, which Williams said, began unofficially but is now recognized by its diocese.

Two programs ignored

I'm not sure that's an accurate description of the status of San Francisco's Parsonage, but it completely ignored two other official outreach programs initiated by the Episcopal Church years before: The Parsonage in Los Angeles, and P&ALS (Proud & Affirmative Lives) in Erie, Pa. The latter, a project of the Diocese of Northwest Pennsylvania, was a Jubilee Ministry. These projects are listed in the *Integrity Directory*, which is sent annually to all members. I wrote to *The Advocate* about the error, but the letter was ignored; the press doesn't like to admit when it gets snookered.

By a day or two after the ordination, the news of Robert's priesthood had reached around the world and it seemed as though he had begun to believe the press stories that, indeed, he was the first openly gay man to be ordained an Anglican priest. Integrity re-issued its press release. During interviews with the gay press, Williams pressed his claim that his was the "second openly gay ordination, regardless of gender (sic), since 1977" and was quite angry about claims that it was not. He told reporters that I was expressing some kind of personal animus toward him. That struck me as odd; wouldn't the president of Integrity welcome such an ordination if it were truly unique?

The event was unique, but not for reasons noted by the press. The intensity of the media presence was the most notable aspect of the event. There were only three protestors outside but five camera crews were filming them. I did not see one openly gay male priest at the ordination, although even Williams acknowledges that there are some in the Diocese of Newark and many more in nearby New York. Only two openly lesbian priests were present. There were no members of the board of Integrity/New York, the 300-member chapter which Williams had recently joined.

Integrity was represented by Louie Crew, our founder, who carried the national banner in the procession. However, no other lesbian/gay groups were represented. Where were the "radical, out-of-the-closet, self-affirming lesbians and gay men" that Williams was later to claim rallied to his defense, the people he described as his "community of accountability"?

Most of the people present appeared to be parishioners of All Saints. As I looked over the small congregation, it occurred to me that had this actually been the first ordination of an openly gay male, or the first of any gay or lesbian person since 1977, a church the size of New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine would scarcely have held the crowd.

The lesbian/gay media, to its credit, largely took the position that Robert's ordination was misrepresented by the straight media. The general media frenzy, however, in reporting the event and reactions to it continued unabated.

The theme of Robert's ordination was "Things which were cast down are being raised up" and Robert clearly saw himself as the one being raised up. He began to style himself as the leading prophet of the lesbian/gay movement in the Episcopal Church.

As a result of his notoriety, invitations began to pour in. Integrity chapters played a considerable role in embellishing his instant celebrity. The Dallas chapter planned a special service with Robert preaching at a non-Episcopal church. The Richmond chapter, a joint chapter with Dignity, invited Williams to speak at its annual dinner — the largest event in the lesbian/gay community in Richmond. And, in celebration of the Feast of St. Aelred, Integrity's patron saint, Integrity/Detroit, the Task Force



The Rev. J. Robert Williams on his ordination day Dec. 16 in Newark, being applauded by the Rt. Rev. John Spong.

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on Gay and Lesbian Concerns of the Diocese of Michigan, and the Church of St. Matthew and St. Joseph, invited Williams to speak at a symposium on the church blessing lesbian and gay relationships.

Began plunge from forum

That forum, on Jan. 13, was the platform from which Robert Williams began his plunge. He was aware that the press was present. Asked about celibacy, he said that he could not say anything good about it and that he believed "sex is inherently good for all people." When questioned further about whether that could possibly include Mother Teresa, Robert replied, "If she got laid? Yes. I believe the quality of anyone's life is significantly enhanced by sex." He also stated that "Monogamy is as unnatural as celibacy. If people want to try, OK. But the fact is, people are not monogamous. It is crazy to hold this ideal and pretend it's what we're doing and we're not."

The symposium itself — on a controversial subject and with the newly-installed Bishop of Michigan, R. Stewart Wood, in attendance — would have attracted widespread attention completely apart from Robert's remarks. Indeed, while *Detroit News* religion writer Kate DeSmet wrote a lengthy piece on the forum the next day, she did not even mention Robert's name. It wasn't until the following Saturday that she revealed all in an article which began, "Sometimes the gift of celebrity should be packaged with operating instructions."

The article was picked up by the wire services but the initial coverage was limited to the Midwest. A few days later, when Bishop Spong was called for comment, things really started happening. The press had made Robert Williams; the press was now determined to destroy him.

Williams' comments about Mother Teresa really were nothing new. While in seminary he had said much the same thing about St. Julian of Norwich. That comment caused considerable controversy even at the Episcopal Divinity School and was certainly known by "the dean and the faculty of the seminary that recommended him . . . with enthusiasm."

Williams had been making statements of this sort for many years; indeed outrageous comments were his stock in trade. He often used them to get people's attention when giving a presentation.

It would be virtually impossible for anyone to have a sustained conversation with Williams without hearing comments of the general nature he uttered in Detroit. Williams says he doesn't recall ever being asked by anyone on the Commission on Ministry or the Standing Committee for his views on celibacy or monogamy.

Asked to apologize

After learning of Williams' comments, Bishop Spong asked him to retract them and apologize. When Williams refused, the bishop conveyed his concern to The Oasis board. The board scheduled a meeting as soon as it could — Jan. 26, the first day of Newark's diocesan convention. Sometime during the day-long meeting of the board, Williams allegedly put in a long-distance telephone call to a priest who advised him not to give in to Bishop Spong, and to maintain his position above all else.

When Williams retold this conversation to Louie Crew, who is also a member of The Oasis board, Crew said to him: "What this priest has done is to catapult you into the ranks of the non-stipendiary clergy. While I greatly value the gifts that the non-stipendiary clergy have made to our church, that isn't what I thought you saw yourself called to in founding a pastoral ministry like Oasis."

Further, some in the diocese felt that Williams simply was not fulfilling his pastoral ministry at Oasis and was failing to respond to parishes that were calling upon him to present information about the lesbian/gay community. Instead, he spent his time being a media prophet. When the board of The Oasis held its emergency, agonizing 14-hour meeting, all who were present agreed to ask for Robert's resignation. His initial reaction reportedly, was, "I will not resign — I want to hurt Jack Spong the way he's hurting me." However, after a lengthy conversation that night with the Rev. Carter Heyward, an EDS professor, Williams relented and on Saturday morning submitted his resignation to The Oasis board. It was hoped that this would essentially end the media furor.

More verbal tirades

That was not to be. When the next reporter called him he said, "Now that I'm resigning I'm telling them to go to hell," Since that time there has been a veritable tirade of comments from him about Bishop Spong. Williams' basic argument is that he was attacked by Spong because the bishop was trying to take pressure off himself in potential action being brought against him by fellow members of the House of Bishops. Williams has used other endearing phrases, such as "the Diocese of Newark functions as a large, dysfunctional family. Everybody knows daddy's crazy and flies into occasional rages." "Jack Spong . . . wants to be Paul Moore when he grows up. The tragedy for the Episcopal Church is that Paul Moore [has] retired and Jack Spong never has grown up." And he called Bishop Spong a "racist, sexist, homophobe" on national television.

Williams said in one of numerous letters he has widely distributed since Jan. 27: "Those of you who know me well know nothing angers me more than the suggestion I lied. The reason all this happened is simply because I *don't* lie."

Williams has threatened to leave the Episcopal Church, saying, "Before I got ordained, I was thinking of starting my own church, and that may be something I'll have to do after all, in order to tell the truth." It may be Robert Williams' perception of the truth that will set him free from the Episcopal Church. TW

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The forgotten side of evangelism

by Barbara G. Schmitz

Many of us have had the experience of going to a hospital, nursing home, or someone's house for a pastoral visit. Perhaps a death has just occurred, or bad news has been received, or we go simply to visit one who is lonely, to pray, to comfort, to give of ourselves, to bring Christ. But how many times have you heard one who has gone to minister to others say, "I went to them, but it was they who ministered to me."

Like pastoral ministry, evangelism, which starts out as "my going out to convert and evangelize the world" ends up with my coming home and admitting, "I went to evangelize, but it was they who evangelized me." I go out with all good intentions, to "do something" along with the poor; to work in a soup kitchen, or help rehabilitate a house, but I find myself coming back having been converted and called to repentance. In hearing the stories of the poor and being with them, I am challenged by and converted to the Gospel call to justice and peace. Much more than my needing to evangelize do I need to be evangelized.

To think that it is I who need to go out, that it is I who have the truth which others need, borders on arrogance and idolatry. I do not need to tell my story as much as I need to hear their stories.

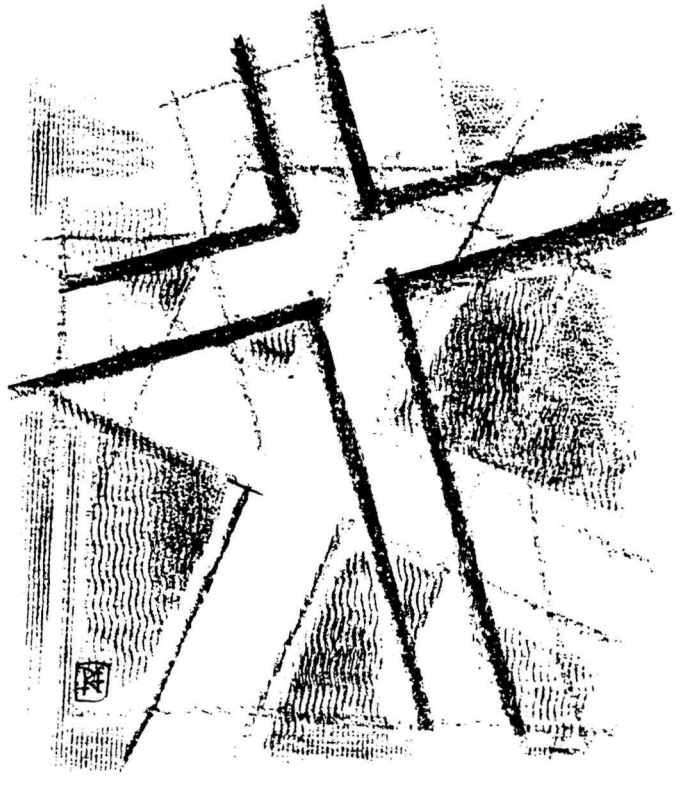
I need to hear the stories of people in Central America, people in poverty, people like Desmond Tutu and Nelson and Winnie Mandela who suffer under apartheid in South Africa. I need to hear the stories of people who are persecuted in countries like China and El Salvador. I need to hear the stories of gay men and lesbians, of Third World factory workers, of coal miners in Virginia, of women who are physically and emotionally abused. I need to hear the stories of drug addicts, of the homeless, of the dying and those who grieve. I need to hear all these stories of Christ present in today's world.

Jesus came to preach good news to the poor and to proclaim release, recovery, and liberty for the captives, the blind, and the oppressed. He told stories and evangelized those around him. But Jesus was also evangelized by the outcasts, the marginal people in society. The woman who washed his feet evangelized Jesus. The woman at the well evangelized Jesus. The blind Bartimaeus evangelized Jesus. The lepers evangelized Jesus. They all told Jesus their stories of what it was like to be outcasts, less than whole — marginal people. They converted him. They touched him. They evangelized Jesus.

Oscar Romero was evangelized by the poor in El Salvador. Initially sent to maintain the status quo, Romero heard the stories and he was converted.

There are two sides to evangelism. One is telling our story and the Gospel story, the good news, to those who need and want to hear it. But there is another, often neglected side. We need to hear the stories of others. We need to be evangelized by the poor, homeless, hungry, hurting. We need to be converted to peace, and proclaim economic justice. We need to be ministered to and evangelized precisely by the people we think need to be evangelized by us.

We need to hear the stories of marginal and outcast people if we together are to have any hope of finding the salvation we are too eager to preach to them. The Episcopal Church has declared the '90s to be the Decade of Evangelism. May we prepare for it by being willing to be evangelized ourselves. TW



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An observer's view of the Nicaraguan elections:

War-weary people give up the vote

by Susan Pierce

From Feb. 15 to March 1, a 16-member Episcopal delegation, brought together by Mary Miller of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, traveled to Nicaragua as official observers of the Feb. 25 elections. The group was one of seven denominational delegations, totaling 123 people, coordinated by Witness for Peace, which has been working to change U.S. policy in Central America since 1983. The following is what I saw and heard as a WITNESS editor and a member of the delegation in this suffering country for which we as U.S. citizens bear so much responsibility.

The streets of the provincial capital of Matagalpa were nearly empty, and eerily quiet. It was Feb. 26, the day after the Nicaraguan elections, and despite the stunning defeat of the ruling Sandinista party, members of the opposition UNO coalition were not celebrating their landslide victory. In fact, the people seemed to be collectively holding their breath in disbelief, frozen in the numbness resulting from 10 agonizing years of civil war and economic disaster. The only signs of life were groups of defiant Sandinista supporters headed towards a rally in one of the town's plazas.

Sandinista banners bearing the campaign slogan "*Todo será mejor*" (Everything will be better) hung over shuttered shops and restaurants. At a *hospedaje* (inn) in the center of town, foreigners and Nicaraguans clustered around a TV to watch President Daniel Ortega's concession speech. Many wept silently as Ortega, appearing tired and fighting tears himself, accepted the results while vowing to hold the new government to the advances made by the Sandinista revolution. He said, "This Feb. 25, we Sandinistas have demonstrated our commitment to keep our word . . . In this unjust world, divided between the powerful and the powerless, we are proud to have contributed a little dignity, democracy, and social justice."

Some pro-Sandinista international residents appeared more visibly upset about the defeat than their Nicaraguan counterparts. Stoically dry-eyed, one Nicaraguan explained, "We have suffered so much, we have no tears left."

The 1990 Nicaraguan elections were the most thoroughly observed in the world — more than 2,000 people had come from all over at the invitation of the Nicaraguan government to act as observers. Ninety percent of the registered voters had gone to the polls — many for the first time in their lives — to select a president, vice-president, members of the National Assembly and the Municipal Councils.

Witness for Peace, a faith-based group that has been non-violently opposing U.S. policy in Nicaragua since 1983, had organized seven delegations of different faiths, one of which was an Episcopal delegation.

Leader of the Episcopal delegation was Gail Phares, a Roman Catholic and former Maryknoll sister who was one of the founders of Witness for Peace. During an orientation session in Miami, Phares explained why she and others felt called to witness in Nicaragua. As a young woman teaching in Guatemala in the early 1960s, she said, "I saw what happens when a revolution is destroyed." She also taught in Nicaragua for three years, along with Maura Clarke, the Maryknoll sister murdered with three other women in El Salvador 10 years ago.

Phares and others opposed to U.S. intervention traveled to Jalapa in northern Nicaragua in 1983 and tried to "literally form a human chain" to stop the contras coming in from Honduras. Since its inception, Witness for Peace has brought over 4,000 people to Nicaragua in short-term delegations to see the effects of the U.S.-backed contra war.

The onslaught of observers and 2,300 journalists was intended to be "a pacific invasion, rather than the more nasty kind," according to Roman Catholic delegation member Arthur Schmidt, a Latin American Studies professor at Temple University. Especially in the wake of the U.S. invasion of Panama, the Nicaraguan government wanted to safeguard against the United States using charges of election fraud as a pretext for military action.

Dr. Alan Neely of Princeton Theological Seminary, a member of the Interfaith delegation, noted after the elections that the Nicaraguan experience had much to

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teach the United States. "If the presence of international observers can result in the defeat of an incumbent administration, let us work to have them in the United States," he said.

What was at stake in the elections became very clear in the Nicaraguan countryside. If one spent time in Managua and the larger towns, it was easy to think that the Sandinistas would be victorious, or at least there would be some fair representation of the 10 parties on the ballot. However, in the war zones of rural Nicaragua, there were only two sides — the FSLN and the UNO. And in the tense atmosphere of a country at war, voting seemed less a political exercise than a matter of life and death. The opponents waged serious graffiti battles. A common anti-UNO slogan was GN=1, implying a vote for the UNO was a vote for the *Guardia Nacional*, the National Guard of the former dictator Somoza, many of whom became contras. UNO supporters countered by transforming the FSLN slogan from *todo será mejor* to *todo será peor* (things will be worse).

There was no conversation with a Nicaraguan that did not eventually come around to the war. Over 30,000 people out of a population of 3,754,000 have died in the decade-long contra war, proportionally far more than the number of U.S. soldiers killed in Vietnam. Twenty-eight thousand people have been wounded; 10,450 kidnapped or captured by the contras; 16,500 children have been left orphans.

And it has not been the kind of war that swells national pride, that bands a people together against an outside aggressor. Instead, it has been a vicious U.S.-funded war of terror and intimidation, a cancer eating at the heart of the country, an eroding of the bedrock of Nicaraguan society by creating bitter divisions in families, villages, and, ultimately, the entire nation.

The ideological battle in the countryside is waged at the expense of the *campesinos*, struggling to make a living from their isolated small farms in the mountains and valleys. "The mountains are so beautiful," an observer said to a *campesino*. The *campesino* answered somberly, "These mountains will not be beautiful until the war is over."

The provinces of Matagalpa and Zelaya, where the Episcopal delegation spread out to various polling places, are in a "contra corridor," one of the routes by which the contras travel to and from their bases in Honduras. The *comarcas*, or townships, where most *campesinos* live, are considered to be contra controlled. Many young *campesinos* are kidnapped by the contras or lured into their ranks by promises of new U.S.-made uniforms and boots — things most of them would never have otherwise.

In Rio Blanco, a frontier town of 9,000, a Roman Catholic priest explained that the contras encouraged many *campesinos* to support the UNO, and that the *campesinos* often cooperated with the contra "not because they support their struggle, but simply because they want to stay alive and work their land."

Also mentioned continually as a major source of discontent was the government's compulsory draft, necessitated by the war, which deprived many households of all their male wage earners. It was one of the primary reasons that the townspeople of Rio Blanco supported the UNO over the FSLN. Don Julian Zeladón and his wife Maria Jesús, who own a shop and have a farm outside of town were in favor of an UNO victory because of the state of the economy and in the interest of their three sons. He said, "One of our sons lives in Guatemala now to avoid the draft. He doesn't want to go into the mountains and end up killing someone he knows."

In Wilicón, a tiny *asentamiento* — government resettlement village — in the mountainous eastern part of Matagalpa, the war is a constant companion. All the inhabitants have been forced out of their homes in the mountains by contra attacks. Wilicón itself has been attacked several times. Now there is an army outpost on a nearby hill. The villagers farm cooperatively, and a few



Nicaraguans waiting to cast their ballots at the polling place in Wilicón.

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armed residents make up a small militia to protect the fields and livestock.

Life there consists mainly of unrelenting hard work. The houses are small, generally made of wood and thatch, with dirt floors. Cooking is done over open wood fires, and village women make the five or six-mile walk to cut wood twice a day. To fetch water, which must be done three or four times a day, requires a 15-minute walk to reach a treacherously slick red clay path down into a gully. There spring water is scooped from two small holes in the ground.

Though the residents were polite, dignified and generous with what little they had, a sense of desolation permeated the village. People rarely raised their voices, and there was little laughter. When not working, people often sat and stared blankly into space. "They've been so brutalized by the war that they're like the living dead," said Witness for Peace long-term volunteer Marie Clark. Long-termers generally serve stints of six months documenting contra attacks, leading delegations, and sharing the hardships of the Nicaraguan people.

Clark has been in Nicaragua for a year and a half and lives in Rio Blanco with another long-termer, Patricia Westwater. They said that the number of contra attacks in the region had risen sharply in the six months before the elections in an apparent effort to disrupt the process. Most of the dead and wounded were FSLN activists and election officials. Clark, Westwater and Leone Bicchieri, who is based in the town of Waslala, guided the Episcopal delegation through the countryside.

Clark and the others understood the emotional emptiness of Wilicón. Because Clark has had to learn to suppress her feelings to do her job, "I see dead bodies now and I feel nothing," she said. "But it's the only way to survive and do my work."

Doña Carmelita de Lopez, who provided hospitality to election observers in Wilicón, told her story on the evening before election day. By the flickering light of a tiny oil lamp, her face shadowed in darkness, she related a tale of such devastation and loss that it stood out even among the endless litany of tragedies one hears in Nicaragua. She said, "I'm 75 years old. I can't read or write. I can't remember a time when I didn't work. I suffered under Somoza and I am suffering now from the *Guardia*. The *Frente* (Sandinista party) has saved my life, has given me a place to live and protection. Before, we always had to go from place to place, moving because of threats. Every time we got a little bit ahead, everything was taken away.

"I have lost 18 members of my family



to the war," she said, putting her head in her hands. "I have lost sisters, daughters, sons, cousins. They killed my first son by surrounding his house in the mountains and setting it on fire. My last son, who was in the army, was killed at Christmas time by men trying to rob him — they rode by on horses and dropped a grenade in his backpack."

She paused, rocking back and forth as tears ran down her face. "Sometimes," she whispered, "I don't know if I want to go on living anymore."

People in Wilicón feared an UNO victory. Many said they saw no difference between the UNO and "the *Guardia*," and saw a return to "the time of Somoza," where the poor would lose the land given to them by the Sandinistas.

On election day, officials started setting up in the little schoolhouse in Wilicón at 6 a.m. Each party was permitted by law to have representatives present. Voting actually started two hours late because neither side trusted the other. The FSLN and UNO *fiscales* (officials) wrangled endlessly over procedure. Voting dragged on into the evening — well past the 6 p.m. deadline — because the UNO *fiscales* insisted on checking every name against their list as well as the official registration list.

Nicaraguans stood patiently all day in the hot sun, men in one line, women in another. Many had been waiting to vote since the night before, having come from the mountains on foot or on horseback. Some had traveled for a day or more. Most were wearing their best clothes, carefully protected from dust or mud. Shyly, respectfully, the *campesinos* presented their voter registration cards and received their ballots and voting instructions. Both voters and officials treated the whole process with immense seriousness. Linda Burton of the United Methodist delegation, who was an observer in the southeastern Chontales region, commented later that "people approached voting like it was a sacrament." Many were voting for the first time in their lives, and were so nervous that their hands shook as they placed their ballots in the ballot box.

As evening fell, the voting in Wilicón took on a dreamlike quality. Rain began to fall in torrents on the still-patient voters. The registration table was bathed in light from a lantern hanging overhead. Voters fumbled with flashlights in the voting booths. When darkness set in, the guards at the doors of the schoolhouse became more vigilant, their AK47s ready in their hands, uneasy at any unfamiliar noise or movement. For a long time, the men's line never seemed to grow shorter. Those who had waited until nightfall to vote drifted into the line unseen. "There are those from the mountains who don't want to be noticed," said

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a pollwatcher enigmatically.

Finally, around midnight, the count began, and with it the first inkling of the stunning upset. As the pile of UNO ballots rose higher and higher, the faces of UNO *fiscales*, which had been rigid with the aggressive fear of the underdog, became wreathed in smiles. The FSLN *fiscal* slumped motionless in his chair, a look of utter defeat in his eyes.

Back in Managua, speculation began over why the FSLN lost by a 15% margin. One of the major reasons was the disastrous state of the economy. According to Hemisphere Initiatives, a Boston-based fact-finding group, inflation in 1988 topped 30,000%, and was still 1,700% in 1989. Urban real wages in Nicaragua have fallen 90% since 1980. Last year, 50% of the national budget went to the war. From 1982-84, the height of the conflict, it was estimated that as much as 75-80% of the budget went to defense. In November 1989, the cordoba was devalued from 25,000 to the dollar to 42,000, making the legal minimum wage of 500,000 cordobas a month lose half its value.

Many felt it was clearly a victory for the U.S. doctrine of low-intensity warfare — 10 years of war and economic blockade had pushed people to blame the Sandinistas and vote them out of office. Donna Kilich, an editor at *Envio*, a Managua-based journal, felt the Sandinista government had done much for the Nicaraguan people despite formidable U.S. interference, and was shocked at the election upset. But, she said, "The Nicaraguans are taking the long-term view. It's going to be easier physically, but harder politically."

The Rev. Dalton Downs, an Episcopal priest from Washington, D.C., is a cousin of Sturdie Downs, the Bishop of Nicaragua, and, like him, was born and raised on the country's Atlantic Coast. As a native Nicaraguan, he was acutely sensitive to the fears and the hopes that have surrounded the elections. After visiting with his brother and several nieces and nephews in Managua two days after the elections, his face reflected the prevailing mood of anxiety. "Everyone is very worried," he said. "No one knows what will happen now."

Uncertainty is the legacy of the UNO victory. Dr. Henry Wells of the Episcopal delegation, an expert in Latin American elections, said, "I don't know how such a fragile coalition as the UNO can possibly govern with any effectiveness," noting that it is a coalition of parties ranging from right-wing conservative to far-left communist, unified only by their dislike of the Sandinistas.

The Episcopal observers at Nicaraguan elections

The Rev. Peter Casparian, Lexington, Ky.
The Rev. Dalton Downs, College Park, Md.
Joe Louis, Highland Park, N.J.
The Rev. Brian Grieves, New York, N.Y.
Dr. Richard Groepper, Atlanta, Ga.
The Rev. Carter Heyward, Cambridge, Mass.
Ann McElroy, Cupertino, Calif.
The Rev. Roberto Morales, Bronx, N.Y. and Puerto Rico
Gail Phares, Raleigh, N.C.
Susan Pierce, Philadelphia, Pa.
Dr. Robert Proffitt, Maryville, Tenn.
The Rev. Thomas Trimmer, Alma, Mich.
Ann Vest, Norfolk, Va.
Dr. Henry Wells, Philadelphia, Pa.

Despite their loss, the Sandinistas made it clear that they still held a majority of the seats in the National Assembly and remained a force to be reckoned with in the country's political life. At a post-election reception for the observers in Managua, Daniel Ortega declared, "Shall we say that the FSLN getting only 40% of the vote is a defeat of the revolution? Not at all. It will be a test of the free, democratic nature of the Nicaraguan revolution. We are now going to govern from below, in a constructive way."

Serious questions remained about the future of the international community in Nicaragua. UNO president-elect Violeta Chamorro, who will take over April 25, has declared that many of the foreigners, because of their support for the FSLN, would no longer be welcome. Guatemalan, Salvadoran and Panamanian exiles were facing the loss of their only refuge in Central America. The day after the election, doctors and others from Cuba who had been doing development work were reportedly being recalled by Havana.

The Ben Linder Council, a North American residents' group named after the young U.S. engineer killed by the contras, issued a paper with suggestions for actions now that many of the group's goals, such as working to end the embargo, would no longer exist. "We all need to renew our commitment to solidarity with the poor and their organizations . . . continue our close relations with grassroots organizations." The group pointed out the necessity of continuing financial and material aid because, in spite of announced large U.S. aid packages, "From experience, we know that very little bilateral aid ever reaches the poor."

And the paper concluded by noting that the lessons of the Sandinista revolution should not be lost: "We need to reflect on what we have learned from the Nicaraguans and adapt it to work in our own society . . . Nicaragua continues to be 'the threat of a good example.' Our challenge is not just to change U.S. foreign policy but to change the United States."

The message that many Nicaraguans expressed was summed up by a milita man in Wilicón, who stood and talked with great dignity, wearing threadbare fatigues and worn boots caked with mud. The afternoon sun glinted off the barrel of his battered AK47 as he said, "Please tell the people in the United States that the Nicaraguan people have suffered for too long. All we want is enough food to eat and peace." TW

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The myth of equality

by Manning Marable

A myth is haunting black America — the illusion that equality between the races has been achieved, and that the activism characteristic of the previous generation's freedom struggles is no longer relevant to contemporary realities.

In collective chorus, the media, the leadership of both political parties, the corporate establishment, conservative social critics and public policy experts, and even marginal elements of the black middle class, tell the majority of African-Americans that the factors which generated the social protest for equality in the 1950s and 1960s no longer exist. The role of race has supposedly "declined in significance" within the economic and political order. As we survey the current social climate, this argument seems to gain a degree of credibility.

The number of black elected officials exceeds 6,600; many black entrepreneurs have achieved substantial gains within the economic system in the late 1980s; thousands of black managers and administrators appear to be moving forward within the hierarchies of the private and public sector. And the crowning "accomplishment," the November 1989 election of Douglas Wilder as Virginia's first black governor, has been promoted across the nation as the beginning of the transcendence of "racial politics."

The strategy of Jesse Jackson in both 1984 and 1988, which challenged the Democratic Party by mobilizing people of color and many whites around an advanced, progressive agenda for social justice, is dismissed as anachronistic and even "reverse racism." As in the Wilder model, racial advancement is projected as obtainable only if the Negro learns a new political and cultural style of the white mainstream. Protest is therefore passe.

It is never an easy matter to combat a myth. There have been sufficient gains for African-Americans, particularly with the electoral system and for sectors of the black middle class in the 1980s, that elements of the myth seem true. But from the vantage point of the inner cities and homeless shelters, from the unemployment lines and closed factories, a different reality behind the specter emerges. We find that racism has not declined in significance, if racism is defined correctly as the systemic exploitation of blacks' labor power and the domination and subordination of our cultural, political, educational and social rights as human beings. Racial inequality continues despite the false rhetoric of equality. Those who benefit from institutional racism now use the term "racist" to denounce black critics who call for the enforcement of affirmative action and equal opportunity legislation.

Behind the myth of equality exists two crises, which will present fundamental challenges to African-Americans in the decade of the 1990s. There is an "internal crisis" — that is, a crisis within the African-American family, neighborhood, community, cultural and social institutions, and within interpersonal relations, especially between black males. Part of this crisis was generated, ironically, by what I term the "paradox of desegregation." With the end of Jim Crow segregation, the black middle class was able to escape the confines of the ghetto. Black attorneys who previously had only black clients could now move into more lucrative white law firms. Black educators and administrators were hired at predominantly white colleges; black physicians were hired at white hospitals.

As the black middle class increasingly retreated to the suburbs, they often withdrew their skills, financial resources and professional contacts from the bulk of the African-American community. There were, of course, many exceptions, black women and men who understood the cultural obligations they owed to their community. But as a rule, by the late 1980s, such examples became more infrequent, especially among younger blacks who had no personal memories of experiences in the freedom struggles of two decades past.

The internal crisis is directly related to the external, institutional crisis, a one-sided, race/class warfare which is being waged against the African-American community. The external crisis is represented by the conjuncture of a variety of factors, including: the deterioration of skilled and higher paying jobs within the ghetto and the decline in the economic infrastructure; the decline in the public sector's support for public housing, health care, education and related social services for low-to-moderate income people; and the demise of the enforcement of affirmative action, equal opportunity laws and civil rights legislation.

The myth of equality is required in order to convince African-Americans that the external crisis doesn't really exist, and that racism is dead. That's why it is more important than ever for the black

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movement to be reborn, using the strategies of demonstrations, community mobilizing and resistance to the "new" racism. Institutional racism may be more sophisticated, using the language of equality, but the necessity for struggle still exists.

The American economic and political system promises equality, but has never delivered for the African-American. In fact, the system uses the rhetoric of equality to hide the process of oppression. Both through legal and illegal means, blacks are being destroyed.

Illegal drugs destroy thousands of African-Americans in many direct and indirect ways. We witness the daily, destructive impact with the proliferation of gangs and fratricidal criminality. But there are other indirect effects as well. In January 1990, a comprehensive study released by the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, which reviewed traffic fatalities between 1984 through 1987, observed that nearly one in four drivers age 16 to 45 killed in New York City tested positive for cocaine in autopsies. Researchers suggested that individuals addicted to cocaine experience spatial perception and other physical dysfunctions. How many thousands of African-Americans are crippled and killed in accidents caused by those whose abilities are impaired by crack or other drugs? How many homes are destroyed, and dreams shattered? How many daughters and sons are lost forever from their families and friends?

The cancer of crack creates many more living victims than those who are killed by the drug. Crack is part of the new urban slavery, a method of disrupting lives and "regulating" the masses of our young people who otherwise would be demanding jobs, adequate health care, better schools and control of their own communities. It is hardly accidental that this insidious cancer has been unleashed within the very poorest urban neighborhoods, and that the police concentrate on petty street dealers rather than those who actually control and profit from the drug traffic. It is impossible to believe that thousands and thousands of pounds of illegal drugs can be transported throughout the country, in airplanes, trucks and automobiles, to hundreds of central distribution centers with thousands of employees and under the so-called surveillance of thousands of law enforcement officers, unless crack represented at a systemic level a form of "social control."

Most African-Americans do not realize that the most destructive drug problem within our community is tobacco addiction. The tobacco industry makes it highest profits from African-Americans. For two decades, tobacco companies have followed a strategy of "special marketing," targeting younger, poorly educated African-Americans as potential consumers. In late December 1989, for example, the R. J. Reynolds Company announced the development of "Uptown" menthol cigarettes, a product specifically designed to "appeal most strongly to blacks." One NAACP leader has called the strategy "unethical," and the American Cancer Society declared that the "campaign exploits blacks, especially the ghetto poor." Under fire, R. J. Reynolds was forced to cancel the scheme for higher profits.

The "Uptown" controversy highlights the fact that African-Americans suffer higher death rates for virtually all types of cancer, especially cancer of the lungs, prostate, esophagus and cervix, than white Americans. The statistical life expectancy for blacks actually *declined* in the late 1980s, due in part to extremely high mortality rates from cancer.



However, the major means for the social control of the African-American remains the criminal justice system. As of June 1989, the U.S. prison population reached 673,000, of which blacks comprise 46%. Prisons have become the method for keeping hundreds of thousands of potentially rebellious, dissatisfied and alienated black youth off the streets. There is a direct correlation between the absence of job training programs and social programs designed to elevate blacks' incomes, and the increased utilization of the criminal justice system to regulate unemployed and unemployable blacks. Keep in mind that between 1973 and 1986, the average real earnings for young African-American males under 25 years fell by 50%. In the same years, the percentage of black males aged 18 to 29 in the labor force who were able to secure full-time, yearround employment, fell from only 44% to a meager 35%.

Is it accidental that these young black men, who are crassly denied meaningful employment opportunities, are also pushed into the prison system, and subsequently into permanent positions of economic marginality and social irrelevancy? Within America's economic system, a job has never been defined as a human right; but for millions of young, poor black men and women, they appear to have a "right" to a prison cell or place at the front of the unemployment line.

The struggle against the myth of equality requires a break from the tactics and ideas of the desegregation period of the 1960s. Our challenge is not to become part of the system, but to transform it, not only for ourselves, but for everyone. We must struggle to make economic and racial equality for all. TW

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On the night she was betrayed . . .

by Jan Nunley

October 23, 1989

Carol DiMaiti Stuart, a 30-year-old lawyer, seven months pregnant with her first child, was returning with her husband Charles to their home in Reading, Mass., a suburb north of Boston. They'd been at Brigham and Women's Hospital for Lamaze classes. The hospital is located in the Mission Hill neighborhood of Boston, a close-knit, racially diverse area tucked between Roxbury and the Fenway.

Shots were fired.

And when the telephone rang at State Police headquarters, the voice was Charles Stuart's, calling from his cellular car phone, begging for help; he and his pregnant wife had been shot, he said, by a man who jumped into the back seat and robbed them. He didn't know just where he was. Desperate dispatchers kept him talking for 13 minutes, trying to gauge his location from the sound of the approaching police sirens. A camera crew from the TV show *Rescue 911* raced along with police to the location.

Mortally wounded, Carol Stuart was delivered of a son, Christopher, and died in the emergency room in the early morning hours of Oct. 24th. (The baby died 17 days later.) Charles Stuart, shot in the abdomen, was in critical condition. Police told reporters he had described the gunman: a black man with a raspy voice, wearing a black sweatsuit.

Boston Mayor Ray Flynn called a press conference that night, promising to deploy "every available detective" to find the Stuarts' assailant. Republican Party Chairman Ray Shamie urged restoration of the death penalty. Suffolk County District Attorney Newman Flanagan jumped on the law-and-order bandwagon. Flynn, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis and Roman Catholic Cardinal Bernard Law attended Carol Stuart's funeral. A farewell letter, written by Charles Stuart to his wife from his hospital bed, was read at the service. "In our souls," the letter said, "we must forgive this sinner, because He would too."

The story made the *CBS Evening News*. The next day the tabloid *Boston Herald* printed a full front-page picture of the wounded Stuart couple, calling the crime an example of "the gratuitous violence that we too often accept as part of urban life." The normally staid *Boston Globe* called the couple's relationship "a shining life," and descriptions of the two as a "Camelot couple" surfaced on radio and television.

On the night Mission Hill was betrayed . . .

In Mission Hill and Roxbury, Mayor Flynn's promise was delivered. African-American men were immediately suspect — professionals, students, workers, unemployed — all were ordered spread-eagled against cars and walls, made to drop their trousers in public places to be frisked for weapons and drugs. Community leaders who protested that it was "open season" on their people were accused of "overreacting." Within six days, police had detained an unemployed African-American man after finding a black sweatsuit in his apartment. (He was released after 23 days in custody.) Within a month, Charles Stuart had identified another African-American, William Bennett, as a suspect.

Bennett was no angel. His criminal record showed some 38 arraignments and 60 arrests. He'd bragged, so witnesses said, about the Stuart shooting. When Charles Stuart picked Bennett out of a lineup in late December, Boston police, the District Attorney's office, and the media seemed to have their man. Case, very nearly, closed.

On the night Boston was betrayed . . .

The city awoke Jan. 4 to the most shocking news it had heard since the Stuart shooting. The body of Charles Stuart had just been fished out of Boston Harbor, an apparent suicide, hours after Stuart's youngest brother implicated him in his wife's murder.

Within days, the possible scenarios had multiplied. Charles Stuart was involved with another woman, a co-worker. Charles Stuart had been treated for cocaine addiction while recovering from his gunshot wound. Charles Stuart had a number of high-ticket insurance policies on his wife. The most plausible story was at once pathetic and chilling: Charles Stuart wanted to kill his wife and unborn son so that nothing would stand in the way of his dream — opening a top-notch restaurant in Boston.

The anger multiplied, too. And the blame. Mayor Flynn had overreacted to the shooting. So had the police. And the DA's office. The media hadn't done its job. African-Americans had been scapegoated. So had Mission Hill.

But who killed Carol Stuart?

After Charles Stuart's suicide, the stories began to emerge from friends. Carol had known about her husband's ambition to be a restauranteur. Wondered, to friends, about the huge insurance poli-

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cies he'd taken out on her. Complained when he insisted on nights out with "the boys" while she was home alone, carrying his baby. She loved him, and he appeared, in public, to love her. But his brother said Charles had once spoken of hiring a hit man to kill his wife; he hadn't taken the conversation seriously.

It was the ultimate wife-beating, the last word in domestic violence, but few were willing to see it that way. State Representative Byron Rushing (D-Boston), who is sponsoring legislation to create a commission to probe the Stuart case, says part of its charge will be to unmask the sexism that led investigators to ignore the possibility that Stuart killed his own wife. Rushing says that denial extended to the media. He cites a television interview with domestic violence counselors in which "one of the women suggested that from what she knew, just reading the papers, she would guess that Carol Stuart had been abused before, that this was not the first violence that she experienced at the hand of her husband." The male interviewer looked astonished, says Rushing, and expressed disbelief that Stuart had abused his wife.

In Massachusetts a woman dies at the hands of a husband or boyfriend every 22 days. Yet the investigators in the case failed to do the one thing that is standard operating procedure in the death of a married woman — check out the husband. Stuart's near-fatal wound may have thrown them off the track, as did the pathos of the story. It certainly had a chilling effect on the media. According to Tony Brooks of public radio station WBUR-FM, "The level of grief in the city was such that if someone had begun questioning the DiMaitis about Charles and Carol Stuart's marriage, they would have been crucified for insensitivity."

Carol Stuart also died of racism. Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts Barbara Harris observes, "Historically, the white community has always felt that black men did this kind of thing to white women. It's why so many blacks were lynched, because of imagined or perceived threats to white women . . . It has to do with the notion that white women are vulnerable in the presence of black males." Charles Stuart's hoax played on those centuries-old fears.

Carol Stuart died, too, of her husband's ambition, the classism that surrounded them both. His life was checkered with contradictions: the Brown University education he claimed but didn't have, the working-class childhood he repudiated for the "good life" as a successful salesman at one of Boston's tonier Newbury Street fur salons. Carol Stuart, pregnant and alive, was a liability, a hindrance to Chuck Stuart's yuppie aspirations to be a successful entrepreneur. Carol Stuart, dead, was a liquidated asset, a source of thousands of dollars in insurance money to make his dreams a reality. She was expendable.

And who wounded Mission Hill?

Charles Stuart had to play out his plan in a place where the story would be believed, says the Rev. Canon Ed Rodman, canon missioner to the Diocese of Massachusetts. Mission Hill was just such a place — "the ultimate contradiction," says Rodman, with institutions like Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Mission Hill Housing Project side-by-side. "The thing that's been missed in all of this is that Mission Hill is one of the city's most integrated areas." The Rev. Floyd Naters-Gamarra, vicar of St. Stephen's in the South End, near the Mission Hill area, says the Stuart shooting casts another shadow on the neighborhood, a shadow of "violence, hostility and degradation." Mission Hill suffered economically as well as psychologically, says Naters-Gamarra, "People avoid coming here now." A plan to move the headquarters of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to a location just blocks from Bringham and Women's was axed following the shooting, costing the area a potential $200 million dollars in development and 900 high-tech jobs.

The controversy over police stop-and-search procedures has stayed at a high pitch. At the time of the shooting, Boston was having a deadly autumn — from Labor Day to late October, the time of the Stuart shooting, more than 100 people had been wounded and five killed by gunfire. Most of the assailants and victims were African-Americans, including one who died the same night as Carol Stuart. But it took an assault on a "perfect" white suburban heterosexual couple to galvanize city government into an attack on urban violence — an attack that targeted its most common victims as much as its perpetrators.

It's not clear, says Byron Rushing, what the response would have been if the Stuarts had been an African-American couple assailed by a white gunman. But certainly "the police would not have gone into Brookline (a predominantly wealthy, white section) and started grabbing every white man they could find and slamming them up against buildings and telling them to spread their legs and search them. That's the difference." Canon Rodman agrees. "Since white people have never been subjected to a stop-and-search policy, they don't understand why black people are upset."

But the idea that race and class motivated the police response is highly unpopular. Eileen McNamara of the *Boston Globe* wrote a column after the shooting, asking why some peoples' lives are seemingly more valuable than others, based on their race and class. The next day angry readers kept McNamara's phone ringing, in one case calling her a "nigger-lover" for comparing the Stuart murder with that of an African-American man killed the same night.

Boston police have also come under scrutiny for their treatment of witnesses who implicated William Bennett in the

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How TV sold the Panama invasion

by Mark Cook and Jeff Cohen



Two weeks after the Panama invasion, CBS News sponsored a public opinion poll in Panama that found the residents in rapture over what had happened. Even 80% of those whose homes had been blown up or their relatives killed by U.S. forces said it was worth it. Their enthusiasm did not stop with the ousting of Gen. Manuel Noriega, however. A less heavily advertised result of the poll was that 82% of the sampled Panamanian patriots did not want Panamanian control of the Canal, preferring either partial or exclusive control by the United States ("Panamanians Strongly Back U.S. Move," *New York Times*, 1/6/90).

A "public opinion poll" in a country under martial law, conducted by an agency obviously sanctioned by the invading forces, can be expected to come up with such results. Most reporters, traveling as they did with the U.S. military, found little to contradict this picture. Less than 40 hours after the invasion, Sam Donaldson and Judd Rose transported us to Panama via ABC's Prime Time Live. "There were people who applauded us as we went by in a military convoy," said Rose. "The military have been very good to us [in escorting reporters beyond the Canal Zone]," added Donaldson.

While this kind of "Canal Zone journalism" dominated television, a few independent reporters struck out on their own. Peter Eisner of *Newsday's* Latin American Bureau, for example, reported that Panamanians were cursing U.S. soldiers under their breath as troops searched the home of a neighbor — a civilian — for weapons. One Panamanian pointed out a man speaking to U.S. soldiers as a *sapo*, a toad, slang for "dirty informer," and suggested that denouncing people to the U.S. forces was a way of settling old scores. A doctor living on the street said that "liberals will be laying low for a while, and they're probably justified" because of what would happen to those who speak out. All of Eisner's sources feared having their names printed.

Obviously there was a mix of opinion inside Panama, but it was virtually unreported on television, the dominant medium shaping U.S. attitudes about the invasion.

Few TV reporters seemed to notice that the jubilant Panamanians parading before their cameras day after day to endorse the invasion spoke near perfect English and were overwhelmingly light

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Jeff Cohen, Executive Director of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting), a national media watch group, co-authored this article with **Mark Cook**. It appeared in the Jan./Feb. 1990 Issue of *Extra!*, a bi-monthly publication of FAIR, 130 W. 25th Street, New York NY 10001. Subscriptions are $30 a year for individuals, $50 for institutions.

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skinned and well dressed. This in a Spanish speaking country with a largely mestizo and black population where poverty is widespread. ABC's Beth Nissen was one of the few TV reporters to take a close look at the civilian deaths caused by U.S. bombs that pulverized El Chorillo, the poor neighborhood which ambulance drivers now call "Little Hiroshima." The people of El Chorillo don't speak perfect English, and they were less than jubilant about the invasion.

In the first days of the invasion, TV journalists had one overriding obsession: How many U.S. soldiers have died? The question, repeated with drumbeat regularity, tended to drown out the other issues: Panamanian casualties, international law, foreign reaction. On the morning of the invasion, CBS anchor Kathleen Sullivan's voice cracked with emotion for the U.S. soldiers: "Nine killed, more than 50 wounded. How long can this fighting go on?" Unknown and unknowable to CBS viewers, hundreds of Panamanians had already been killed by then, many buried in their homes.

Judging from the calls and requests that poured into the FAIR office, European and Latin American journalists based in the United States were stunned by the implied racism and national chauvinism in the media display. The *Toronto Globe and Mail* of Canada ran a front page article critiquing the United States and its media for "the peculiar jingoism of U.S. society so evident to foreigners but almost invisible for most Americans."

TV's continuous focus on the well-being of the invaders meant that the screen was dominated by red, white and blue draped coffins and ceremonies, honor rolls of the U.S. dead, drum rolls, remarks by Dan Rather about "our fallen heroes" . . . but no Panamanian funerals. This despite the fact that the invasion claimed perhaps 50 Panamanian lives for every U.S. citizen killed.

On Day One, when Pentagon pool correspondent Fred Francis was asked on ABC's Nightline about the civilian casualties, he said he did not know, because he and other journalists were traveling around with the U.S. Army. Curiosity didn't increase in ensuing days. FAIR called the TV networks daily to demand they address the issue of civilian deaths, but journalists said they had no way of verifying the numbers.

No such qualms existed with regard to Rumania, where over the Christmas weekend, CNN and other U.S. outlets were freely dishing out fantastic reports of 80,000 people killed in days of violence, a figure greater than the immediate Hiroshima death toll — which any editor should have dismissed out of hand. Tom Brokaw's selective interest in civilians was evident when he devoted the first half of NBC Nightly News to Panama (12/20/89) without mentioning non-combatant casualties, then turned to Rumania and immediately referred to reports of thousands of civilian deaths.

Not until the sixth day of the Panama invasion did the U.S. Army augment its estimated dead (23 American troops, 297 alleged enemy soldiers) to include a figure for civilians: 254. The number was challenged as representing only a fraction of the true death toll by the few reporters who sought out independent sources — Panamanian human rights monitors, hospital workers, ambulance drivers, funeral home directors. These sources spoke of thousands of civilian injuries and 10,000 left homeless.

TV correspondents, so uncurious about civilian casualties, could not be expected to go beyond U.S. military assurances about who was being arrested and why. As the *Boston Globe* noted, U.S. forces were arresting anyone on a blacklist compiled by the newly installed government. Peter Eisner reported, "Hundreds of intellectuals, university students, teachers and professional people say they have been harassed and detained by US. forces in the guise of searching for hidden weapons."

Ted Koppel and other TV journalists had a field day mocking the Orwellian-titled "Dignity Battalions," but none were heard ridiculing the invasion's code name, "Operation Just Cause." The day after the invasion, NBC Nightly News offered its own case study in Orwellian Newspeak: While one corre-







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spondent referred to the U.S. military occupiers as engaging in "peacekeeping chores," another on the same show referred to Latin American diplomats at the OAS condemning the United States as a "lynch mob." After the USSR criticized the invasion as "gunboat diplomacy" (as had many other countries), Dan Rather dismissed it as "old-line, hard-line talk from Moscow."

Journalism gave way to state propaganda when a CNN correspondent dutifully reported on the day of the invasion, "U.S. troops have taken detainees but we are not calling them prisoners of war because the United States has not declared war." That kind of obedient reporter probably still refers to the Vietnam "conflict." Similarly, on Day One, many network correspondents couldn't bring themselves to call the invasion an invasion until they got the green light from Washington; instead, it was referred to variously as a military action, intervention, operation, expedition, affair, insertion.

Many reporters uncritically promoted White House explanations for its breakup with Noriega. Clifford Kraus reported in the *New York Times* that Noriega "began as a CIA asset but fell afoul of Washington over his involvement in drug and arms trafficking." ABC's Peter Jennings told viewers on the day of the invasion, "Let's remember that the United States was very close to Mr. Noriega before the whole question of drugs came up." Actually, Noriega's drug links were asserted by U.S. intelligence as early as 1972. In 1976, after U.S. espionage officials proposed that Noriega be dumped because of drugs and double-dealing, then-CIA director George Bush made sure the relationship continued. U.S. intelligence overlooked the drug issue year after year as long as Noriega was an eager ally in U.S. espionage and covert operations, especially those targeted against Nicaragua.

Peter Jennings' claim that the U.S. broke with Noriega after the "question of drugs came up" turns reality upside down. Noriega's involvement in drug trafficking was purportedly heaviest in the early 1980s when his relationship with the United States was especially close. By 1986, when the Noriega/U.S. relationship began to fray, experts agree that Noriega had already drastically curtailed his drug links. The two drug-related indictments against Noriega in Florida cover activities from 1981 through March 1986.

When as vice president, Bush met with Noriega in Panama in December 1983, besides discussing Nicaragua, Bush allegedly raised questions about drug-money laundering. According to author Kevin Buckley, Noriega told top aide Jose Blandon that he'd picked up the following message from the Bush meeting, "The United States wanted help for the contras so badly that if he even promised it, the U.S. government would turn a blind eye to money laundering and setbacks to democracy in Panama." In 1985 and '86, Noriega met several times with Oliver North to discuss the assistance Noriega was providing to the contras, such as training contras at Panamanian Defense Force bases. Noriega didn't fall from grace until he stopped being a "team player" in the U.S. war against Nicaragua.

The U.S. media showed little curiosity about the Dec. 16 confrontation that led to the death of a U.S. Marine officer and the injury of another when they tried to run a roadblock in front of PDF headquarters.

The Panamanian version of the event was that the U.S. soldiers, upon being discovered, opened fire — injuring three civilians, including a child — and then tried to run the roadblock. This version was largely ignored by U.S. journalists even after the shooting two days later of a Panamanian corporal who "signaled a U.S. serviceman to stop," according to the administration. "The U.S. serviceman felt threatened," the administration claimed, after admitting that its earlier story that the Panamanian had pulled his gun was false.

For months, U.S. forces had been trying to provoke confrontations as a pretext for an attack. In response to an Aug. 11 incident, Panamanian Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter asked that a UN peacekeeping force be dispatched to Panama to prevent such encounters. The U.S. press largely ignored his call.

"When during the past few days Noriega declared war on the United States and some of his followers then killed a U.S. Marine, roughed up another American serviceman, also threatening that man's wife, strong public support for a reprisal was all but guaranteed," Ted Koppel said on Nightline Dec. 20.

Noriega never "declared war on the United States." The original Reuters dispatches, published on the inside pages of the *New York Times,* buried the supposed "declaration" in articles dealing with other matters. In the Dec. 17 article headlined, "Opposition Leader in Panama Rejects a Peace Offer from Noriega," Reuters quoted the general as saying that he would judiciously use new powers granted him by the Panamanian parliament and that "the North American scheme, through constant psychological and military harassment, has created a state of war in Panama." This statement of fact aroused little excitement at the White House, which called the parliament's move, "a hollow step."

The Bush team set out to control television and front page news in the first days knowing that exposés of official deception (such as Noriega's 110 pounds of "cocaine" that turned out to be tamales) would not appear until weeks later buried on inside pages of newspapers. Rulers do not require the total suppression of news.

As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "It's sufficient to delay the news until it no longer matters." TW

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Betrayed . . . *Continued from page 21*

shooting. Three teenagers say they were forced to make false statements; another says he was threatened with a beating and 20 years in prison if he didn't go along with a statement about Bennett's alleged confession to the crime. A woman who saw Bennett the night of the shooting says police offered to release her son from juvenile custody if she cooperated — and to detain her daughter if she didn't. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has announced its intention to investigate those allegations.

Rep. Rushing isn't sure he believes Charles Stuart was the source of the story that the "gunman" was black. "One of the things we have to do [with this commission] is to really start from the moment Charles Stuart called the State Police dispatcher, and reconstruct what happened and when people knew certain things. We have no public information yet that tells us when Charles Stuart said that the perpetrator was black."

Tony Brooks says the media bear some responsibility for "dropping the ball" in the Stuart investigation. "News coverage isn't set up to include minority communities," says Brooks. "The *Boston Globe* doesn't have a Roxbury bureau. We know those areas only as havens for violence and poverty. So it was easy, when Charles Stuart set up this hoax, to believe and imagine that such a crime belonged in Mission Hill. Had the city's reporters done a better job at covering minorities, things might have been different." Brooks talked to police-beat reporters at both newspapers about their relationship with the "cop shop." "Their sources are police officials, and that's dangerous, because the police have a vested interest: their job is to get someone arrested for the crime. In Willie Bennett, they thought they had their man. Reporters told me their sources inside the investigation were leaking information to build their case." As for suspicions about Stuart: "Everybody had heard the rumors, but there was nothing to back them up, and it was hard to buck the momentum of sticking with the cliches of 'the perfect couple.'

"As a white journalist," Brooks says, "I would like to figure out ways to be involved in all of the city."

It was Carol Stuart's family who provided a healing touch in late January, when they announced they were setting up a scholarship fund for Mission Hill residents in her name. The fund has grown rapidly since its inception, and it's been hailed as the most caring and sensible gesture to come out of the tragedy.

Canon Rodman thinks the Episcopal Church has a role to play in the aftermath of the Stuart case — working to abolish the death penalty. Rodman says the initial "rush to judgment" in which politicians were calling for its reinstatement was immediately reversed after Stuart's suicide. "What we're trying to do in the church community in particular is to try to focus on that aspect of this issue, until such time as the rest of the facts come out," says Rodman.

There's a feeling that what Boston is dealing with now may be the "bottoming-out" phase of an addiction to racism, sexism and classism. Whether or not the city can admit it has a problem remains to be seen. "It is extremely difficult," says Bishop Harris, "for white people to admit that they are racist, or to admit their complicity in a racist system. They don't really have to do anything to perpetuate it. If they just keep putting one foot in front of the other, enjoying their privileged status, the beat goes on." TW



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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

judgment — as if the Episcopal Church were an *established* church with duties to legitimize the culture.

In its editorial, THE WITNESS bewails, "But what about the lack of voices condeming the invasion of Panama coming from our own country? Our own Congress?" As to Episcopalians, why ask? In deed, as well as word, the teaching of this sect of ours supports jingoism. It's leaders have always waited until society has made it fashionable to even speak about, let alone condemn or fight against, oppression.

Condemn? To what? Not to hell, as the recent message of the Roman Catholic Bishop Austin Vaughn to Cuomo.

Impeachment? Yes. It is not as efficient as the Rumanian system of condemning the killer of their dreams. But it is the agreed method to condemn the killers of the Constitutional Democracy dream.

If THE WITNESS wishes to console its readers by printing the words of existing others, let it eschew the pablum and cheap grace suggestions of those wearers of fine ecclesiastical silks, dwellers in kingly homes. Offer writers like Lapham and John B. Oakes: "The president's rationale for this long planned, clumsily executed and cynically named Operation Just Cause was hypocritical and false. Not one of his reasons for pressing the Panama button stands up under scrutiny. Mr. Bush showed his contempt for truth, contempt for domestic and international law, contempt for the norms of diplomatic decency."

McRae Werth
Blue Hill, Maine

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Labor . . . *Continued from page 8*
vens campaign mounted by the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union against the notoriously anti-union Southern textile producer; in the efforts of renegade Mine Workers and Teamsters to reclaim and democratize their unions; and in public employee unions winning the legal right to union representation for the first time.

In these out-of-the-mainstream organizing efforts, the new generation of activists felt at home. The work was defined as part of the crusade for a more equitable society, and utilized many of the same techniques and community/church coalitions that had characterized the movements of the 1960s. In addition, they fostered an organizer-centered culture, a community united in struggle, sacrifice and solidarity.

And they were successful. Combining brilliant organizing in the California fields with a national boycott, the Farmworkers won a contract with Gallo wines. A former VISTA volunteer, Ray Rogers, developed a corporate campaign strategy which, by applying pressure to corporate boards and financial interlocks, helped ACTWU win a contract with J.P. Stevens. The Miners for Democracy deposed the corrupt UMW president Tony Boyle. And public employee unions became (and remain) the fastest-growing unions in the country.

These successes could not go unnoticed by other unions or the AFL-CIO. In addition, the influx of the new activists coincided with an intensified attack against unions by the New Right and a proliferation of sophisticated union-busting firms retained by companies to fight union representation. A new economic order was beginning to take form, marked by increased corporate conglomeratization and the shift from an industrial, more frequently unionized base to a mostly ununionized, often female or minority, service workers economy.

As labor confronted these new, perplexing problems, a few of the more traditional unions grudgingly opened their doors to some of the labor newcomers.

However, the integration of '60s activists into the labor establishment has frequently been an uneasy and disheartening process. While organizing and the people who do it may be crucial to the survival of the labor movement, union organizers generally suffer the double whammy of long hours and strenous demands, coupled with low pay and a lack of institutional recognition. Furthermore, unions have often embraced a restrictive managment style that makes it hard for good organizers to survive.

Pittston strike settled

Some 1,500 United Mine Workers from Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky were back on the job at the end of February after voting to accept a new contract from the Pittston Coal Group, ending an almost 11-month-long strike. Though 500 miners were laid off, they were hoping to be reinstated by the end of April. The union is still negotiating to have Judge Donald McGlothin of Russell County Circuit Court drop $64 million in fines he levied against the union for illegal strike activities.

The contract permits Pittston to schedule shifts 24 hours a day, including Sundays, and to suspend 13 strikers who are faced with felony charges for strike activities. But the company is required under the contract to pay 100% of workers' health care costs and resume payments into an industry pension fund, a victory for the miners since this is the issue which prompted the strike. Retirees also got their benefits, a hotly contested issue with the company in the strike. Union officials expressed gratitude to religious leaders and congregations throughout the country who supported the strike, many of whom participated in non-violent civil disobedience with the miners.

For Episcopalians supporting coal miners and their families, their involvement has been a true biblical experience including a lonely crucifixion and now a resurrection, according to Mary Lee Simpson of Roanoke, editor of the *Southwestern Episcopalian.*

As Si Kahn, an independent southern organizer who has worked with many unions, notes, "Great organizers are gut non-conformists. They're artistic and creative and fundamentally anti-management. Also headstrong, quirky, and profound outsiders. They don't fit well with suits and ties."

Unquestionably, the organizational structures that inhibit innovation, the lack of institutional support or recognition for organizing, the bias for conformity and the sheer arduousness of the lifestyle, all take their toll on activists employed by unions. But what seems to finally grind down, and eventually defeat, union organizers and activists are the contradictions. Between espoused democracy and internal repression; between espoused equality and institutional racism and sexism; between a commitment to solidarity and organizing in theory, and an internal culture that vitates against them in practice.

For those who can limit their vision to the small daily tasks, survival in the labor movement is possible, even rewarding: You can manage to do good organizing, if you don't concern yourself with issues of foreign policy; you can rise in the union hierachy, if you don't defend your clerical staff; you can edit the union newspaper, if you don't encourage debate. Some make the compromise.

For others the cost is too high. When the divide between the principles and the practice becomes too wide, people, both inside and outside the institution, lose faith.

Those of us who struggle to keep faith look for ways to make the culture of organizing live in the movement and in ourselves.

"When I started," Industrial Unions Department organizer Joseph Uehlein relates, "my boss said, 'I understand you're a singer of labor songs; that's not why you're on our payroll.'

"People saw music as ornamental, not political. But I tell them music reflects

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politics. Culture is what people do together to make them a group, and it is inseparable from political activism. Look at our efforts to inform people in organizing drives. Those conversions that are solely intellectual are always vulnerable. We need to win people over in their hearts, with the righteousness of what this movement is about."

Good organizers, Si Kahn maintains, "have rage at the core, rage at injustice, but at the same time, are guided by great feelings of love. I think organizers can survive living in motels, the hours, the demands, so long as they have a chance to feel they are changing history. They cannot survive when they feel they no longer make a difference, when they are no longer redressing injustice.

"We need to make sure they're doing that, and then let them know they are heirs of a proud tradition. People who struggle for justice are the prophets of our time. It's that kind of call."

The office next to mine at District 65, UAW, belongs to Julie Kushner, Vice President for the Clerical and Professional Division, my friend and fellow survivor.

Julie hardly has an evening to herself. Ever. The divorced mother of two young children, whose crayoned masterworks adorn her office walls, her life is a constant juggling of out-of-town travel, evening meetings and childcare. I've seen her negotiate all night long and come in the next morning, exhausted but still fighting.

I love Julie because she is still passionate about the labor movement, although that's sometimes a political liability within the organization, as though strong feelings were somehow inappropriate. I've never seen Julie as discouraged by management, as she is by the under-appreciation and non-support occasionally displayed by fellow union officers. More and more often, she wonders whether she has the stamina to ward off emotional fatigue.

A few weeks after Labor Day, Julie helped coordinate a caravan of 40 New York union staffers on a solidarity visit to the striking Pittston miners in Russell County, Virginia. The visit, which started out as a plan to participate in civil disobedience, was transformed when 100 United Mine Workers strikers seized one of the Pittston processing plants, the first plant take-over in the United States in 50 years.

"The plant had already been taken over when I arrived on Monday," Julie told me. "It was night, eerie and foggy. But there were 200 supporters at the plant, and the atmosphere was charged. That plant's a huge, grey, enormous concrete structure, maybe six stories high, with chutes coming out the sides. The guys who had occupied the plant were on a balcony about four stories up. When I was allowed inside, there was water dripping and coal dust everywhere, but it was so important to let them know how much we appreciated their courage, to make that contact.

"On Tuesday, the UMWA was ordered into court, and the judge ruled that unless they were out of the plant by Wednesday at 3 p.m., they would attach the union's strike fund and arrest everyone.

"They were planning to send in the National Guard. By then, the crowd of supporters had swelled, contingents of miners arriving from Indiana, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana. It was so exciting. And by Wednesday we were all ready to take them on, anxious to defend the workers in the plant, even against the National Guard. There were close to 4,000 of us by then, so many of us we had no fear. It seemed so natural to be there. Here was a union saying 'no' to the laws which have found all sorts of ways to restrict us.

"The union didn't leave the plant in the afternoon. It planned a rally at the plant instead. It was already getting dark when the music started. Joyful. A celebration of our power, like a victory. And then the strikers inside the plant came out on the balcony in formation, carrying an American flag. And chants rang back and forth between them and us. 'We are. Union.' 'Solidarity. Forever.' And they somehow managed to spell the letters UMWA against the wall of the plant with their flashlights, and the chants kept on, deep voices, real loud, echoing. And then the men came out of the plant and evaporated into the crowd.

"Nothing like this had ever happened to me in 12 years in the labor movement," Julie relates.

"This was not a picket, but a real challenge to authority. It was like history repeated, at the same time as we were making it. We so rarely have the opportunity. And even though our contingent was only a small group, they showed us such warmth, welcomed us into the struggle, not just their struggle, but ours.

"When I came back to New York on Friday, I had to go to an arbitration, and I thought, how mundane. But if you think deeply about the experience we had, it spurs you to think more creatively. You internalize it and take it with you to the next struggle. And the alliances you build are deep, people are aware, and it will not be forgotten."

"Deep in the cradle of organized labor," Saul Alinsky wrote, "America's radicals restlessly toss in their sleep — but they sleep. There they continue to dream of labor and the world of the future.

"But in spite of the parallel course of organized business and organized labor, the fault with the American radical is not that he chose to make his bed in the labor movement but that he fell asleep in it."

To me and my fellow '60s refugees, the labor movement is like the lover you can neither marry nor leave, the parent to whom you cannot be reconciled. Part prayer, part promise. A vision in the synapses of bureaucratic days. And those of us who hold it cannot sleep. LW

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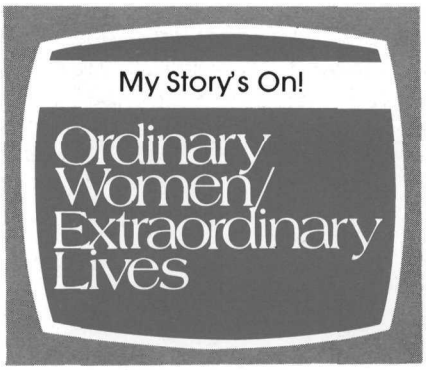

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THE WITNESS

Liberation Philosophy for Retirement • Parker Rossman

Saying 'Yes' in a 'No' world • Verna J. Dozier

An interview with Maggie Kuhn • Anita Cornwell

Carter Heyward on Nicaragua
Paul Washington on Israel



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Letters

Unprecedented effort

The decision to devote virtually the entire March issue of THE WITNESS to Cuba, and the sending of a team of writers to obtain a firsthand picture of the situation there is, to my knowledge, unprecedented in contemporary journalism. As each day brings new evidence that the Bush administration is beginning to mount a massive campaign of disinformation regarding Cuba, comparable to that carried out by the "Office of Public Diplomacy" during the Reagan administration against Nicaragua, the need for such in-depth, honest and detailed reporting becomes more obvious, and those who decided to produce this issue deserve great credit.

I find it difficult to single out any one article, for the rich variety of perspectives provide us with a multi-dimensional picture documenting the results of the Cuban revolution in areas of life seldom discussed even in other sympathetic publications.

For example, as someone deeply involved in issues of sexism, homophobia, and reproductive rights in this country, I found Susan Pierce's article an excellent antidote to some of the false reports circulating here about what was happening in these areas, and Margaret Ferry's reporting of the amazing achievements in education and health care reminded me of similar programs I had observed in Nicaragua, many of which had received help from Cuban doctors and teachers.

Perhaps the most difficult thing to understand after reading the articles by Tony Ramos, Mary Lou Suhor, Jim Lewis and Alice Hageman is why, despite the long history of close collaboration between the churches and the forces of imperialism and repression, Castro is willing to trust and work with these institutions. If the Cuban churches were able to be "born again" to rediscover the Gospel message of God's concern for justice, perhaps there is even hope for the Protestant Episcopal Church, U.S.A.

In the past, the churches have reacted, albeit usually feebly, after our tax dollars have been used to invade Latin American or Caribbean countries or to subsidize terrorist groups such as the contras. But widespread distribution of the March WITNESS *now*, before the planned invasion begins, could stimulate the organization and growth of a grassroots movement to prevent such an action. I hope that many of your readers who wish to continue to be kept up to date on this situation and be part of such a movement will contact the Hands Off Cuba Coalition, 104 W. 14th St., New York NY 10011, (212) 246-3811, ext. 890.

The Rev. F. Sanford Cutler
New York, N.Y.

Rumania dept paid?

From everything I have ever read, Rumania was the only Eastern European country that had paid up its debt, due to the terrible austerity program of the late Ceausescu.

Alice Hageman's article on Cuba, "Doing theology in a Marxist ambience," lumps Rumania in with Poland and Hungary. Please check this out.

Rose Touralchuk
Buffalo, N.Y.

Hageman responds

According to figures from the World Bank's *World Development Report, 1989*, reader Touralchuk is correct in that Rumania was recognized in the international community as a "responsible debtor" for staying current with its loan payments. Among countries cited, Romania's debt was 12 to 15% of its Gross National Product, while Poland's debt was 55.7% and Hungary's, 63.5% of their GNP in 1987. The social cost of this to Rumania is implicit in Ms. Touralchuk's letter — political repression and enormous restrictions on consumer spending and internal investment. Meanwhile, Poland and Hungary have joined Mexico and Brazil as major debtor nations. Eastern European nations now face the challenge, in economic restructuring, of how to maintain health, education and employment standards while at the same time trying to pay off their debts and incorporate a free market economy.

Alice Hageman
Jamaica Plains, Mass.

No positives about Cuba

With regard to your Cuba issue: Without going into details, it surprises me that there are still individuals or institutions in the United States that find any positive things about Cuba.

In 1989, according to the *Washington Post*, over 370 Cubans were picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard trying to leave Cuba. Why are these people leaving? Why are Cubans willing to die to leave Cuba?

One of the articles in this issue said that Cuba was not East Berlin. Time will prove you wrong. You will soon see the smiles on the faces of young Cubans (as you did in East Berlin) when the corrupt and repressive Castro government is toppled.

Silvio Canto, Jr.
Dallas, Tex.

Hit a bullseye

What a bullseye, that issue on Cuba. Cuba needs support now more than ever. Our media is impossible; even letters to the editor are hostile.

We wish we were younger, more effective. But we go on. Bless you and your great work.

Rita and Dick Post
Newtown, Pa.

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Lists three resources

Congratulations on the WITNESS issue on Cuba. Cuba is not the most popular issue these days, so here's a long distance toast to your courage to inform your readership.

Perhaps we were negligent in sharing with you some of our more recent efforts at The Circus, an ecumenical center for social justice and international awareness. We have opened a small publishing company, and have three books on Cuba among our titles. We would like to call them to the attention of your readers: *The Church and Socialism: Reflections from a Cuban Context*, by Sergio Arce; *Evangelization and Politics*, edited by Oden Marichal and Arce; and *Christian-Marxist Unity*, by Raimundo Garcia Franco. All are readily available in paperback from The Circus, P.O. Box 681 Audubon Station, New York NY 10032.

The Rev. David Kalke
New York, N.Y.

Pack of lies

As a postscript to your visit to Cuba issue of THE WITNESS, in November of 1987, I attended *el Synod de Iglesia Episcopal de Cuba* as part of the Diocese of Florida's companion relationship. During the convention, I carried with me and was reading Frei Betto's book, *Fidel and Religion*. While some of the clergy were excited about the volume, I must report that many laypersons approached me quietly and said, "It is a pack of lies."

The Rev. Robert M.G. Libby,
Publisher, The DIOCESAN
Jacksonville, Fla.

Evangelize with care

The March WITNESS on Cuba is a superb issue — as always — especially the article "How not to evangelize." Except at home, we should not spread the word "to those who have not heard" as long as American Christians act as if they never heard it yet themselves!

I love the quote from Daniel Berrigan in the editorial. I've been reading *Hammer of Justice: Molly Rush and the Plowshares Eight*, as a discipline to get me in shape for the Plowshares Eight resentencing on Passover. I am hoping for a sentence of "time served" for all of them. Oh Lord, let it be that!

Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska

(As THE WITNESS went to press, the Plowshares Eight — eight religious activists arrested 10 years ago for damaging two nuclear warheads with hammers and pouring blood on documents at the General Electric Aerospace plant in King of Prussia, Pa. — were sentenced to the time they had already spent in jail while awaiting trial in 1980 and during the decade-long appeal process, and put on 23 months' probation. — Ed.)

4 decades of madness

I have absolutely *no* interest in your publication whatsoever. If memory serves me correctly, THE WITNESS has stood for, and backed everything that has diminished the Episcopal Church over the past four decades. In fact, statistically speaking, the Episcopal Church is one of the fastest dying churches on the U.S. scene, thanks to the sort of madness which the magazine espouses.

Were I to seek the truth, the last place I could find it is in the pages of THE WITNESS. While Ms. Barbara Harris is no longer your executive, I sincerely doubt that your direction has changed appreciably. Now that Marxism is rapidly going out of vogue in Europe, I would be curious to learn what naive idealism you will look to next.

The Rev. Theron R. Hughes
Quincy, Ill.

In tune with Gospel

As a line from Robert DeWitt's quote in your last Advent letter seems to suggest, your greatest service is your writers' ability to articulate theologically and/or politically "uncomfortable" positions. Your critical responses to many of the day's problematic issues, while being assailed from many quarters — religious and secular alike — as too intolerable, implausible or even too nonconformist or idealistic, do indeed strike a resonant chord with me and other like-minded Christian friends (Episcopalian and otherwise) who find your arguments more in tune with the Gospel than most of what the "status quo" have to offer.

Like the U.S. government, the church (again, Anglican and otherwise) has its own share of "bad records." We can never undo forever the centuries of oppression and injustice committed in the name of Christ. But maybe by shining God's light constantly on the evils being perpetrated today — and often blithely accepted or ignored — there may still be hope for overcoming and even eradicating them.

Keep up the wonderful work and God bless you throughout the year.

Thomas C. Lissey
Brookline, Mass.



To potential WITNESS authors

THE WITNESS will now accept manuscripts on computer disks, either 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" floppies. The word processing program must be MS/DOS compatible. **Do not send original disks.** We cannot be responsible for damage in transit. Send a copy and a hard copy print-out.

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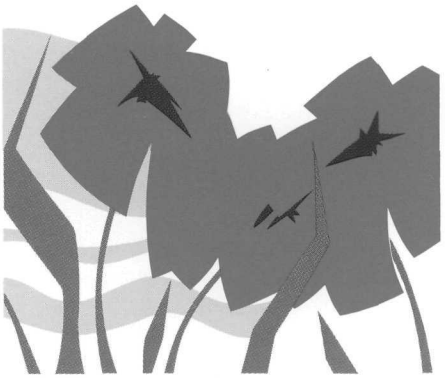
THE WITNESS



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Editorial

Preparing for a *real* ratings war

The winding down of the Cold War has its good points and its bad points. It's a good deal in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, because the United States need no longer spend so much money on defense and it opens a whole new market for fast food franchises. The bad part is that many covert action devotees have been cast into the peace wilderness and are looking for new battlefields. Unfortunately, the cold warriors have turned their attention to the Third World. The Bush administration, buoyed by its recent "successes" in Panama and Nicaragua, is now aiming to give Cuba the traditional pummeling to prepare it for a "democratic transition," rather like a piece of meat is beaten with a mallet to make it tender for the grill.

Bored with firing on Cuban trawlers which persist in carrying mundane things like fish or magnesium instead of weapons, frustrated that a decades-long economic embargo has hampered but not destroyed the Cuban economy, the U.S. government has turned up the volume on the propaganda front. The new weapon is TV Martí, the technological descendent of Radio Martí, which has been beamed at Cuba since the mid-1980s.

TV Martí is named after Cuba's national hero, Jose Martí, a 19th century poet and revolutionary — a further insult to Cubans. TV Martí began transmitting recently from an Air Force blimp tethered 14,000 feet above Key West, Fla. It cost $7 million dollars to develop this system which will broadcast, according to a report in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, "news, game shows and replays of such U.S. entertainment programs such as *Kate & Allie* and *ALF*, translated into Spanish."

In most developing countries, a TV blitz would be a waste of time, because only a fraction of the population has TV sets. However, the Cuban government made a push early on to provide as many households as possible with televisions and refrigerators. Havana and the countryside bristle with TV antennas. Quite a contrast to such places as South Africa, which until recently severely restricted access to TV sets and limited broadcasts for fear racially-mixed programs would be shown.

But this technological openness makes Cuba a good target for a U.S. communications invasion. What is puzzling is that Cuba already imports and shows a good deal of U.S. television, and is negotiating with CNN's Ted Turner for more. However, despite the absurd spectacle of millions of dollars being spent so Cubans can watch sitcoms, TV Martí is an illegal intrusion on the sovereignty of Cuba's airwaves and breaks three international conventions. The Cubans immediately jammed the attempt electronically, and have the means to retaliate with powerful transmitters that could disrupt AM radio broadcasts as far west as Utah and as far north as Canada.

The United States, miffed with Cuba's refusal to be invaded ever since the Bay of Pigs, reportedly has plans for a military strike if Cuba responds to the communications invasion. The April 2 issue of *The Nation* reports that Cubans have detected new U.S. military exercises in which fighter aircraft fly across the Straits of Florida and peel off just before reaching Cuban airspace. The flight paths are headed toward the transmitters. And in 1983, *The New York Times* reported that "surgical removal" of the offending Cuban transmitters was among the active options being considered by the Reagan administration.

Cubans are aware of the shortcomings of their country and know they face an uncertain future. But they also have the right to decide their own fate, without a propaganda barrage backed by the ugly threat of military muscle. The United States has no cause to be pouring millions of dollars into this pointless venture when it has neglected its commitment to those in need at home. And its present policy has the potential of jeopardizing U.S. and Cuban lives as a possible climax to this continuing TV saga. TW

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Liberation philosophy for retirement

by Parker Rossman

My wife and I were surprised a couple of years ago by an unexpected visit from friends in Sweden who were on their "50-year sabbatical." Margareta and Lars Inglestam explained that it is becoming a custom in Sweden to take 12 months off from work during one's 50th birthday year to re-examine one's life and work, to decide how one should live during the later part of one's life.

By age 50, Margareta explained, most people's children are educated and grown, and careers have matured to success. So there is no reason why many cannot turn to new avenues of service, perhaps to work at dreams they had when young and had to shelve as too idealistic at the time. Margareta has had a broadcasting career in Sweden; and her husband, Lars, is a university mathematician who has also served Swedish society as a futurist, heavily involved in government and private agency planning to assess what a quality life in Sweden ought to be, and how it might be achieved.

A sabbitical of this sort is particularly easy for Swedes, because most of them, like the Inglestams, live very frugally and all their medical expenses are taken care of by an extensive national health care system, which Swedes fund with a high percentage of their tax dollars.

I first met Margareta and Lars — who has also served as moderator of his congregation and denomination — when they were selected in the early 1960s to represent the Free Church of Sweden at a World Council of Churches conference in Germany on the "Life and Mission of the Church." Two thousand young people from all over the world came for training to be future ecumenical leaders. It would be interesting to follow up on the other 1,998 of them to see what roles they have played in the church and to learn if Lars and Margareta are typical. Their lives and careers have shown the worth of that training program, which was itself a dream of World Council of Churches leaders.

Later during a year of study in the United States at Yale University, Margareta and Lars joined a local house church. That experience led her to purchase a big house upon returning to Sweden, where in addition to her career, she could provide a housing ministry to those who were homeless or disabled.

She also wrote an outstanding 1977 book, *Whither Video*, about the impact of American films and TV programs on Swedish culture. She was concerned that only about one percent of music on sale in her country was Swedish; and only ten percent of films, records, tapes and so forth. She worried about homogenization, passivity and dehumanization, and even that the Swedish language might disappear. On the positive side she was a pioneer in predicting that videotape recorders could give power to individuals which might end "passive television" and its domination by foreign entertainment companies. She anticipated what has since become a popular alternative to TV, checking out videotapes from a library, and she proposed a plan for funding educational videotapes.

So in the 1980s, after this sort of career and the making of many documentaries, Margareta and her husband set out on a world journey, a sabbatical in which they would distance themselves from their own community, their jobs, their country. Thus they could reflect on what they had accomplished and make new plans for the latter years of their lives.

Any of us who consider doing the same thing ourselves would, I think, wonder where we should go and what we should do during such a future-planning sabbatical.

Margareta wanted first-hand experience in places of special need in the world. As Christians, she and her husband wanted to look at communities that were engaged in dealing with crucial human problems, such as world peace and feeding the hungry. So where did they go? To Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, as well as to the Sojourners community in inner-city Washington D.C., the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, and the Kirkridge Center in Pennsylvania.

They did not discover some exciting new career, as some people do on their 50 year sabbaticals. Instead, they went home after their journey of exploration with greatly enriched new perspectives on the jobs they had held for many years.

In Guatemala they sought out the Peace Brigades' international office to interview some of the staff for Margareta's radio program. The Peace Brigade volunteers from Europe, Canada and the United States organize personal escorts and nonviolent defense of people who are known to be in danger of arbitrary arrest or "disappearance." These volunteers play an important role in assisting

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Parker Rossman, a free-lance religious journalist from Niantic, Conn., is co-author with Gaylord Noyce of *Helping People Care on the Job* (Judson Press).

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the wives and mothers of people who have disappeared, and in helping defend their right to protest and petition the government without reprisals.

When she found that the Peace Brigades were also at work in Nicaragua, Margareta became interested in possibly making a film about their efforts to protect villagers from attack. She was moved by the commitment of those involved in the *iglesia popular*, and their efforts to organize water and agricultural projects to help ordinary people improve their lives; and in the work of Swedish government and church projects supporting human rights in Nicaragua. One of their Swedish hosts, Bengt Kjeller, who helped them see how U.S.-backed contras were hindering development, was later selected in Sweden as the "foreign aid worker of the year." The Inglestams were also pleased to find Swedes involved in helping bring books into Nicaragua to create more adequate libraries because such resources were meagre.

During a trip to El Salvador, Margareta was especially moved by her visit to the women's prison in San Salvador where she found 41 children under seven years of age living there with their mothers.

A lawyer took Margareta to visit one young woman, a political prisoner, whose two-year-old son Malcolm, born in prison, was eager for a chance to look through the gates at the world outside. He was mentally retarded, probably because his mother had been beaten by soldiers when she was pregnant. "I lived in a hacienda where they fed bowls of meat and milk to the dogs, and my children, who had only a few scraps to eat, died for lack of medical care. You will never understand violence," she told Margareta, "until you watch your children slowly dying from hunger."

After she had been home for a few months, remembering such people as little Malcolm, she and Lars resolved that in the future their concerns for peace and justice had to be kept close together. True security, they decided, can come only through disarmament. Coming from a small country like Sweden led them to have a special concern for the integrity and self-determination of other small countries. When they visited Nicaraguan refugees in Costa Rica, Margareta noted there, as she had in her own country the dominance of American television.

What could she do? At one time, Margareta wrote, "Sweden nurtured the brutal Vikings who waged some of the most terrible wars in Europe," priding itself on its great warriors. Sweden was arrogant and expansionist. Now, she wrote, "Sweden is a rather peaceful and even peace-loving country, trying to solve both national and international conflicts by mediation and conciliation, without violence."

Without responsibilities to employers and children, for example, senior citizens should be able to act on major social issues — such as disarmament — with greater boldness. With the right preparation, freedom from work should come as a kind of authentic liberation.

How did this transformation happen? As a result of her "sabbatical journey," she helped start a study group to seek answers to that question and to explore the idea of establishing an Institute for Reconciliation and Mediation. It was seen to be a timely idea as the Swedish government was considering for the first time the establishment of a non-military style of defense.

As people get older and more of them undertake such sabbatical journeys to make new plans for their later years, many Christians will find a certain freedom. Once on pension the prospect of losing one's job as a result of an unpopular action is no longer a worry. Without responsibilities to employers and children, for example, senior citizens should be able to act on major social issues — such as disarmament — with greater boldness. With the right preparation and attitude, freedom from work should come as a kind of authentic liberation.

Perhaps Christians need a new "retirement philosophy," with churches offering to commission people who wish a new kind of service career in the early years of retirement. Even suggesting the idea could cause many people to consider doing things that otherwise might never have occurred to them. But if such a plan is considered at age 50, rather than 65, many could make far more significant plans for using the strength and resources they have in retirement. If challenged, would more people give a retirement year to an adventure like the Peace Corps, as President Carter's mother Lillian did in India?

Such a retirement philosophy would point out that there can be a Christian calling or vocation in retirement as well as in youth. For example, one couple moved into an intentional community for the mentally retarded when they retired, offering their services gratis to that village. Many retired persons plan overseas travel, and some of them now do so to learn about major social problems, so they can come home to work more effectively in solving them.

Others, as Margareta Inglestam proposed, have helped develop exciting new projects like an electronic creativity workshop based in a kind of play to show people how to develop their creativity and new alternatives to commercial TV and films. Senior citizens today tend to have more strength, more education and ideas, and more possibilities to do interesting things than ever before. TW

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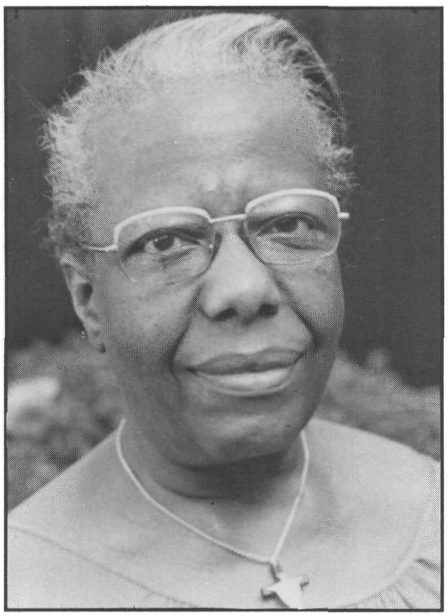

Verna J. Dozier

Saying 'Yes' in a 'No' world

by Verna J. Dozier

I'm me
I'm good
'Cuz God made me
And God don't make junk.

I see that motto every day of my life. It hangs in my bedroom beside a small chest of drawers. It is spelled in different colored letters on burlap.

I grew up black in a world in which white was right. I am female in a world in which male is the currency of power. I am old in a culture that idolizes youth.

I'm me
I'm good
'Cuz God made me
And God don't make junk.

This is a faith statement.

For all who believe it, it is the Judeo-Christian declaration of independence from every tyranny of the demeaning estimates of the world.

But it is a faith statement. Faith is something I live by. It is a decision to risk that this is the way God meant the world to be.

In a world that exalts whiteness, maleness, youth, I live by the faith that whiteness, maleness, youth is not the best part of reality — nor the worst either — but only part of reality and indeed, without blackness, femaleness, age, a very incomplete part.

In strange ways that only the faithful know — and I cannot articulate — faith is not only the decision to risk; it is also the power to make that decision.

It is the courage to be, to affirm yourself in the face of all that denies you.

To be able to say YES to yourself when all the environment is shouting NO, but to be able to listen to that NO and hear what message it is sending from which you can profit — in my experience, that is certainly beyond the possibility of fragile human beings. That takes a leap of faith. That takes a religious dimension.

I was taken on a tour of Ethiopian museums a few years ago by a bitter, hostile youth. He said to me as he proudly showed off the figures of Ethiopian kings in all their splendid regalia, "I do not see why they always picture us as naked savages. We have always worn clothes." I wondered why wearing clothes was to him such a sign of worth. In the Genesis story nakedness was a sign of innocence. Human beings only felt the need for clothing when they felt the need to hide. But obviously my young dude was taking his signals from another drummer, and not necessarily the drummer of his fathers.

Verna J. Dozier, noted educator and author of numerous books and articles on the importance of lay ministry, is on the board of the Alban Institute in Washington, D.C. and adjunct professor at Virginia Theological Seminary. This article is adapted from a talk given at the Women's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast in Orlando, Fla.

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With sublime arrogance, Sir Kenneth Clark writes a book about a small part of the world and calls it *Civilization*, and even proud blacks who would protest it most fall unwitting prey to the stance.

Out of scores of definitions for "black" in the Oxford English Dictionary, only a few are not pejorative. Black hearse, black days, black moods. Black is bad. White is good. Howard Thurman noted that *Moby Dick* is the only instance in American literature where white is a sign of evil.

So blacks follow that example. If blacks have been condemned by whites, blacks will condemn whites. You hate me, I will hate you more.

The response was inevitable, since we all, I believe, participate in fallenness, but there is no redemption in the response. If I have to say a death-dealing NO to you in order to say YES to myself, you still have power over me. I am still bound by the model you set. There is no freedom for me in that. I cannot point the way to a new reign of God that way.

Living by the death of the other, however, not only characterizes the relationships between the races; it characterizes the relationships between the sexes.

Women the world over are struggling to find a new definition of themselves, and their big handicap in the struggle, as I see it, is we have no model but the male one. Kill or be killed, win or lose, YES to me, NO to you.

Western civilization said NO to the black. East and West said NO to women. But the United States has written its own unique chapter in human history in its disparagement of the aging.

Dourness about growing old is not, of course, unique in America. Ecclesiastes warns, "Remember now thy creator in the days of youth, while the evil days come not nor the years draw nigh when thou shall say, I have no pleasure in them." Then the old preacher goes on to paint as grim and realistic a picture of aging as you will find anywhere:

> *. . . and the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened . . . And also they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way . . .*

In our country the picture is grim. This is a young country, and we have always worshipped at the shrine of youth. Old and ugly companion each other in our thoughts like apple pie and cheese.

"What's new?" is the classic American greeting, and growing old is a fate worse than death. Our folk heroes are those who lived hard and fast and died young. The specter of turning 40 traumatizes the nation. Mid-life is a crisis. Robert Butler aptly titles his book about growing old in America, *Why Survive?* And the question is not lightly asked. Our culture writes the aging off. We can look forward to victimization by young hoodlums in the decaying neighborhoods to which our lowered earning power condemns us, and victimization by our government because we are increasingly powerless and dependent.

Our wrinkled skin and slowed movements are too-vivid reminders to the young of the fate that awaits us all, and they would just as soon forget it.

The good news for me in growing old is that the old have the possibility of breaking that vicious human history of living by the death of the other. Older people have an invaluable gift to bring to the world — the gift of reconciliation. I have always been responsive to the Native American saying about not passing judgement on another human being until you have walked a mile in his/her moccasins. It occurs to me that therein lies the possibility for a holy gift the old can offer our increasingly polarized society. Blacks have never been white — a white reporter tried to be black once, but the catch was that he could never really understand what it was like to be black with no escape hatch. Women have never been men. Men have never been women.

Older people can model a kingdom-of-God way for the opposing camps in our society. We have known what it is to be young and angry. In our time we have raged against the tyranny of *our* elders. We have walked that mile in another's moccasins. We have another life to remember. We have another word to say.

How often the NO is said to those who look different. You can't be the same as I. You look so different. From there it is a short step to, "You can't be as good as I. You are inferior."

In the face of that NO, I, for my soul's sake must do two things. I must first affirm myself, affirm the very realities the other denies.

Yes, I am black and blackness is good.

Yes, I am a woman, and womanhood is good.

Yes, I am old, and age is good.

Ultimately, I can only do that by the power of a Creator who is for me. "If God be for us," says St. Paul, "who can be against us?"

And that trust brings me to the second thing I affirm in the face of the NO against me.

You are white or brown or copper, and any color is good.

You are male, and maleness is good.

You are young, and youth is good.

The Creator is for all creation. "And God saw everything that God had made, and behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

That is my faith. And that, to me, is the new possibility for a new humanity, every man, woman and child saying YES to themselves and YES to every other human being.

We're us
We're good
'Cuz God made us
And God don't make junk! TW

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Make a better world for young and old,

When Maggie Kuhn organized the Gray Panthers in 1970 to combat stereotypes about the elderly and to advocate for their rights, she did so out of sheer frustration after having been forced to retire at age 65 from a job with the United Presbyterian Church that she enjoyed. Today, the Gray Panthers not only embrace the old and young, but reach out to the poor, to minorities, and to those languishing behind prison bars.

Born in Buffalo in 1905, Maggie Kuhn came to Philadelphia in 1930 when she transferred from the YWCA in Cleveland. A great believer in the grass-roots approach for effective social change, she has said that most people do not seem to realize the power they posses when they organize. Also, she told one interviewer, "I'd love to see . . . cadres of think tanks of radical, older people who could delve into public policy."

Undoubtedly, her great sense of humor has also helped in her unceasing efforts to bring about change for the better for all those in need.

She would like her epitaph to read: "Here lies Maggie, under the only stone she ever left unturned."

Free-lance writer Anita Cornwell recently interviewed the 84-year-old Maggie at her home in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, where she lives with several housemates and two very inquisitive cats. Kuhn gave the impression of a woman filled with caring and friendliness, as well as a powerful impatience with injustice.



Maggie Kuhn

Do you still believe the best strategy for obtaining the Gray Panther goal of national health insurance is to pursue it on a state-by-state basis?
No, not anymore. We think the time is at hand to move on a national level. We still have well over 30 million people who cannot afford health insurance, and the big corporations are cutting back on insurance for their workers. I think it is going to come. The American Nurses Association and the Medical Students' Association are in favor of it. And last year the New England Journal of Medicine reported that 150 physicians have gone on record as supporting a national health insurance service.

This is a big priority with us. We are going to take our petitions to the House of Representatives this spring. We plan to make a house call on the House.

What are some of the alternative health care methods available to the elderly that are being overlooked by the medical and health care industry and the government?
One of the things I have been helped with is physical therapy. The problem is there are not enough therapists, and you have to be assigned to one by a physician. It is just another way in which the doctors maintain control. But in some states you do have direct access. You can call a physical therapist without a doctor's order.

Is it somewhat like the doctors trying to get rid of mid-wives?
Exactly!

Are the minority elderly worse off in terms of health care?
The minority elderly are really much more endangered. So many public hospitals and emergency rooms are closing, there is no place for poor people to go. One of the things we need is to have consumers on some of the boards that provide health care.

Many of the things that were available once upon a time disappeared under Ronald Reagan. Also, we need more home health care workers so we won't be so dependent on hospitals.

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says Gray Panther leader

by Anita Cornwell

How can older people organize effectively to lobby for changes in the health care system?
As I've said, grass-roots organizing is absolutely essential. We are going to petition the system and challenge its budget priorities.

A big question is, how will we pay for a national health care plan? I feel very strongly that we do not need to spend all those billions for defense. Look at "Star Wars." It's nothing but a boondoggle — a mess! There is an interesting boycott underway that began a few years ago. A Japanese physicist at City College of New York began this boycott, and several thousand scientists have joined in saying *no* to Star Wars' research money. They say it is never going to work anyway. The Pentagon is very shook up about this.

In one interview, you said the three major problems with our health care system are that it is too costly, it is inaccessible, and there is too much emphasis on technology. Do you believe the situation has improved any since that time?
No, I don't, because the hospitals are buying into the system. And although there are more women in medical schools today, they are programmed to act like men. As I mentioned to that interviewer, "To get along in a man's world, a woman has to dress like a lady, look like a schoolgirl, think like a man, and work like a horse."

What do you think of the right-do-die movement?
I have supported it, and I have spoken in favor of it. We have worked for establishment of the Living Will, which I have signed. How it works is that it is signed by you, your physician, your spiritual advisor, and your lawyer. You agree that you, the patient, do not want any extraordinary means to prolong your life, that when your time comes, you want to die with dignity. I hope that when my time comes there will be friends and care-givers with me who will understand and respect my wishes.

What role can the churches play in working with the elderly and advocating for them?
I think the churches should be in touch with the elderly in their areas. Of course, many elderly people for various reasons do not attend church anymore. And ministers and priests often do not visit people. The church is one of the main institutions that could fill this role of looking in on the elderly at home.

A young friend lived with me the entire time she attended Princeton University Seminary. One of her projects was a study of the course offerings and catalogues of 125 seminaries. Ten percent of them did not have any courses on the elderly. Many of the ministers said, "If we just have a lot of old people, we have a dying church." I believe we need both, the young and the elderly. But the fact is, many of the ministers are uncomfortable with old people.

I believe the churches and the seminaries should make it a practice to visit retirement communities and make a point of getting old and young people together. I think the religious community has a tremendous opportunity in bringing these groups together. The church has a great challenge facing it today in relation to the very young and the very old.

How is your work with prisoners at the State Correctional Institute in Gratersford, Pa., coming along?
Very well. That is a big story. Gratersford Prison is so crowded today. It has more than 5,000 prisoners, including a large population of very old prisoners. Many of them are lifers. We organized a Gray Panthers chapter there.

Some of those lifers have been in prison for over 40 years. Many of them don't want to come out even if they could because they have no place to go. They would not know how to live in the outside world and that world has no place for them.

Many prisons seem more geared to punishment than to rehabilitation. And there seems to be a great deal of antagonism between the younger prisoners and the older ones. We are trying to bring the two groups together so they can help each other.

Another thing we would like to see them do is set up a gardening system. The Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia is very much interested in helping establish such a program at Gratersford. We have lots of work to do. We also want to go to the state women's prison in Munsey, and start doing work there.

What do you think about the government using the Social Security surplus to pay off the federal deficit?
I think it's awful — totally wrong! It's a violation of the basic agreement the government made with working people. Fifty percent of every tax dollar goes to the Pentagon. If they would cut down on that bloated defense budget, they would not have to tamper with Social Security funds.

How do you feel about the way the government and people in general

Continued on page 22

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The forgotten people of El Toro

by Carter Heyward

Although the outcome of the Nicaraguan elections has long been known, with Violeta Chamorro toppling Sandinista favorite Daniel Ortega, THE WITNESS thought that this dramatic account by contributing editor Carter Heyward, an election observer, needed exposure. Heyward tells how she and Brian Grieves of the Episcopal Church Center were caught up in an unexpected and frightening turn of events at a rural polling place in contra territory. Names in this account have been changed, at the discretion of the author.

El Toro (the bull) is not on any map of Nicaragua I have seen. It's a spot in the Atlantic Territory, a scattering of dirt-floor houses, a road and several paths winding over a mountain and through a tropical forest. El Toro is an hour and a half drive southeast from Rio Blanco, which is three hours southeast of Matagalpa, the largest city nearby. One can travel to El Toro from Rio Blanco on an army truck converted to public transportation or by milk truck, jeep, or horse, though hundreds of Nicaraguans walked a couple of days to El Toro for the Feb. 25 elections. The entrance to El Toro is marked by a wood and palm arch over the dirt road.

When we mentioned we had been assigned by Witness for Peace to El Toro to observe the elections, a shopkeeper in Matagalpa shook his head and remarked, "Why would anyone go to El Toro?" Later the same day, a worker at Sandinista headquarters rolled her eyes and crossed herself when Brian Grieves, peace and justice officer at the Episcopal Church Center, and I noted that we'd be in El Toro. "It's not a place I would spend the night," she said.

Witness for Peace long-term volunteer Patricia Westwater, Brian, and I spent the day and night before the elections in El Toro. We had learned during our briefings in Managua that El Toro was contra country and, for that reason, a spot occupied by the Nicaraguan army. There had been some mention in the Witness for Peace correspondence that we might be going into dangerous territories, which, in my head, had translated into places where the contra might be. From my sabbatical residence in Deer Isle, Maine, this possibility had struck me as interesting. On the back of the public transport, bumping along the narrow dirt road to El Toro, it hit me in the stomach: I felt expectant, and scared.

We arrived at about 11 a.m. on Feb. 24, a hot day. Juanita, a woman we had met in Rio Blanco, and her small daughter were with us. Brian and I had stayed with Juanita's sister Maria and her family in Rio Blanco. Maria was a big Sandinista supporter, and we had some spirited conversations about the elections, Daniel Ortega, Violeta Chamorro, and what seemed to us all to be at stake. Juanita had been present for these conversations, though she had said little. When we got to El Toro, she invited us to come spend the afternoon in her home.

For the next hour, Brian, Trish and I followed Juanita and the child up a path, across a field, through a forest, over a mountain, down a meadow, until we came to her house, which sat in an orchard of bananas, mangoes, and cacao. Juanita introduced us to her husband Carlos and their other children, including a draft-age son. She then disappeared into the house as Carlos showed the orchard, offering us fruit and telling us how much this land meant to him. Then he escorted us back to the house which he himself had built.

As Juanita brought us food — soup, chicken, rice, beans — Carlos regaled us passionately about Nicaragua, the Sandinistas, the army and the elections. The Sandinistas had brought the country to ruin, he said. Never had he and the others been so poor. It was hard to keep going. The army was omnipresent, menacing, harassing, accusing him and his neighbors of being contras, stealing their chickens, threatening to draft his son.

"Had the revolution done anything good for him and his family?" we asked. "No, the Sandinistas do not care about us. We are a forgotten people," he responded. "Maybe in the city, there has been some improvement, but not here."

What did he think would happen in the elections? Who did he think would win? "There will be fraud. If not, the UNO coalition would win 80% of the vote. That is why it is important that you are here," he told us, "because maybe there will be less fraud. It is good for us that people like you have come to help try to make this election fair."

The Rev. Carter Heyward, Professor of Feminist Liberation Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School, has made several trips to Nicaragua.

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Later in the afternoon, Carlos helped us back down the mountain, holding our arms so we would not slip in the mud, and wielding a machete in case we ran into snakes. I wondered if, possibly, this hospitable, caring man was a contra? Along the way, we stopped at each house we passed. At one, we were given a live chicken for our supper; at another, grapefruit off a tree. In each case, we were given things by people who clearly were suffering extreme poverty and who, like Carlos, were lively in their condemnation of the Sandinistas and in their praise of the UNO.

When finally we reached the road that was the heart of El Toro, we said goodbye to Carlos, Juanita and their children and headed for the one-room schoolhouse which was to be the election polling place the next day. We were looking for the official appointed by the Supreme Electoral Council to oversee the polling. We found him outside the building, talking with some other men.

Since neither Brian nor I had much Spanish, we were largely dependent on Trish to provide our ears, voice and, at times, our interpretive judgments. Without Trish, Brian and I knew that we would be adrift in a sea of confusion. Trish talked for a few minutes with the election official, and then informed us that there was a problem: The election materials — ballots and voting booths — had not arrived and the last transport of the day had come and gone. We were stunned. Had someone, somewhere, forgotten the people of El Toro?

We walked through a crowd of about 100 voters who had already arrived and headed toward the place we were to spend the night. It was a small house by the road, the first of several located by the arched entryway into El Toro. This house, it seemed, was the only one in town occupied by a publicly pro-Sandinista family. Sandinista campaign materials were posted outside the house, making it clear that the inhabitants, and perhaps their visitors, were friendly to the ruling party.

Brian and I sat over our supper in the dark, crowded space and spoke quietly of how we understood what was happening. We felt confused, worried and, if the truth were known, a little apprehensive about sleeping in this house filled with occupants and visitors we had not met. All conversations around us in the two adjacent rooms were in whispers and, of course, in Spanish. Otherwise, there was just the clucking of chickens, whimpering of dogs, and grunting of pigs, which from time to time would brush against us as they passed through the room.

We slept in hammocks we had brought with us, which we hung from the rafters. Very early in the morning, well before six when the polls theoretically were to open, Brian and I woke up, got dressed, and headed to the schoolhouse to begin our election-watch duties.

My Spanish was barely adequate for the situation. No, we were told by the election official, election materials still were not there. His face sad and uncertain, he wondered if maybe the materials would arrive with the milk truck at 7 a.m. So we waited. But what arrived instead was a note from the president of the regional UNO coalition, which the official read to the several hundred people waiting to vote. Trish, who had joined us, translated the note. It said that the Electoral Council in Rio Blanco had decided for security reasons not to open the polling station at El Toro. The UNO coalition was trying to get the decision reversed, and people should wait until 10 a.m. for further word from the UNO about what to do. The tension in the crowd began to simmer. Some faces reflected bewilderment; others, anger. Many looked blank, as if this were just another day in El Toro, another non-event.

As it happened, two other election observers, Bob and Judy from the World Council of Churches, had come in a jeep to El Toro the night before. When we all realized on Sunday morning that there was a serious problem, Bob and Judy decided to drive into Rio Blanco to find out what they could and, we



Frustrated voters in El Toro, waiting to hear if the polls will open, hold up their voter registration cards.

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hoped, bring election materials back to El Toro. Taking four men with them to help push the jeep if it got stuck in one of the streams it had to cross, Bob and Judy left for Rio Blanco at about 9 a.m.

Trish, Brian and I milled, together and separately, among the gathering crowd, listening even when we did not understand, speaking even when we were not understood, trying to convey our concern and our hope that the polling place would yet be opened.

Until that moment, it had not occurred to me that something very big, something very bad, might have happened. I thought: What if there is no election happening anywhere? It had never dawned on me that the Sandinista government might cancel the elections. I *knew* this could not be. But were we in imminent danger? If so, from what or whom? Was this moment a small, searing flash in the gut of what it is like to be a forgotten people? Were Brian, Trish, and I, together with close to 1,000 Nicaraguans gathering to vote, being sucked into the belly of a beast bred and fed by the CIA?

Brian and I had not a clue as to what might happen next, but we sensed it would not be good. All we could do was wait, showing the Nicaraguans, as well as we could, that we cared.

After a while, we returned to the house where we were staying and sat together for about a half an hour, sharing suspicions and fears and then suddenly launching into a conversation about the Episcopal Church! This came to an abrupt halt when we heard the jeep approaching. We hurried to meet it. Brian went around to the driver's side. Bob spoke quietly to him, then drove away toward the schoolhouse. Brian told me that Bob had instructed us to pack our things immediately and be prepared to leave at once. When Brian had asked why, Bob responded that he couldn't tell us at this point, but that the situation was grave.

We went into the house and packed. I headed out the door for the woods to answer Mother Nature's call. Then Brian looked up from his packing as three soldiers suddenly appeared in the doorway. He said immediately, "*Con permiso*" (excuse me), and walked past them to join me. We took off for the schoolhouse. As we approached, we saw it was surrounded by a large and growing throng of voters. They cleared a path for us instantly and directed us toward the door. Once inside, we found Trish engaged intensely in conversation with the election officer. Bob and Judy were with her.

"What's going on?" I asked Judy.

"We can't tell you, but we are in an enormously dangerous situation. Your friends want you back very badly. Trish is trying to tell the man we can do more good for El Toro in Rio Blanco than we can out here. Just pray, Carter." Then she began with the words, "Come, Holy Spirit . . . "

"She's here," I responded quickly, assuring myself as well as Judy, who smiled and nodded.

A moment later, Trish finished speaking and the man seemed to agree with whatever she had said. She then turned to us and spoke emphatically: "Go immediately to the house, get your stuff and get in the jeep. Do not stop. Do not speak to anyone. Just go. Now."

And we did. We walked rapidly, without looking up, right through the crowd, who cleared a path for us. We went into the house, picked up our bags, said good-bye to the soldiers who were sitting there and the woman whose home it was, walked out the door, down the path, climbed into the jeep and sped away, leaving behind the forgotten people of El Toro, including those who hosted us, fed us, and gave us gifts. No thank you's. No good lucks. No farewells. Nothing. The rage and sorrow of the people rose behind us, barely audible, as the election official began his grim announcement that there would definitely be no voting in El Toro.

Several minutes down the road, our jeep was stopped by a band of men on horseback who asked where we were going. It was not clear whether they were armed. Several were looming over the car. It was obvious that they were drunk and, it seemed to us, belligerent. We told them we were election observers headed from El Toro to Rio Blanco. With some apparent reluctance, they let us pass. We suspected that they were contra headed to El Toro to vote.

And what grave danger had we been in? I pressed Judy and Bob for an answer. They said that the election officials in Rio Blanco simply had been adamant that as election observers our lives were in great danger in El Toro and they had been instructed to get us out of there and tell us nothing about why. That was all we were able to learn.

In El Toro, we met the evil of the Reagan-Bush doctrine of low-intensity conflict. We encountered the terror and the chaos generated by this conflict. In El Toro, we met the danger, we met the enemy, and it was us. It was our own nation's fear and confusion unleashed among the Nicaraguan peasants, a fear and confusion a few of us shared with them one day in February. But we could flee the violence of the evil we have wrought. And they cannot. TW

CORRECTION

The article on the Nicaraguan elections in the April WITNESS listed Episcopal election observers and several names were omitted: Jeffrey Penn, New York, N.Y., was a member of the Witness for Peace Episcopal delegation. Patti Browning, New York, N.Y. and the Rt. Rev. Frank Griswold, Chicago, Ill., were members of the Witness for Peace Opinion Leaders delegation.

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Short Takes

45% of workforce female

Most women in the United States today work because they have to, and young women now expect to work outside the home most of their lives. Forty-five percent of the workforce is now female, and 7 out of 10 women in the 25 to 54 age group are now in the labor force. By the year 2000, only 15% of new entrants into the labor force will be white native-born American males.

Encouragement by the arbiters of social acceptability for a woman to work for money outside the home did not include provisions for the care of her children, and this remains a particularly urgent problem. The answer cannot be found and should not be sought in the return to the isolation of the kitchen and dependence on some man's handout. There are other answers beyond token childcare programs that the political establishment is making noises about. They can only be found, however, if human welfare is seen to supercede the profit motive.

Ruth Berman
***Monthly Review* 11/89**

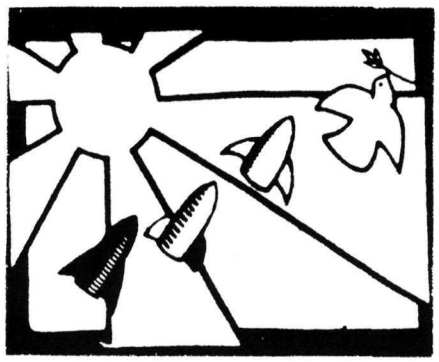
Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.

Mohandas Gandhi

Christians almost 1/3 of world

With more than 1.7 billion believers, Christians make up almost one-third (33.1%) of the world's population, according to figures released in the latest Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission. Christians are the largest religious group in the world. Muslims come next, totaling 17.5%, while non-religious people comprise 16.4%. And although neither Hindus (13.3%) nor Buddhists (6.1%) engage in evangelism, both groups attract a substantial following.

NCC's *Ecu+link* 1/90



Taxing thoughts

In January 1990, President Bush proposed a federal budget of $1.23 trillion for FY '91 . . . about $5,000 in taxes for every woman, man and child in the United States [if] each of us paid an equal share of the budget.

Most Americans would gladly pay 1.3 cents per dollar, or $65 per $5,000 as the federal share of education and employment programs. Many would be willing to pay three cents per dollar, $145 per $5,000, for housing. To put things in proportion, it might help to realize that the average American spent $45.63 at McDonalds in 1988 ($11.4 billion total), $84 on toiletries ($20 billion in 1984) and, if over 18, drank 32.8 gallons of beer.

Few Americans would volunteer to spend 52 cents per dollar — $2,600 per $5,000, for present and past military expenses; or a quarter of their taxes for interest on the national debt — a figure likely to continue rising.

Dick Hoehn
***Blueprint for Social Justice* 4/90**

Same middle name

Amy Jobes, a student at the School of Theology of the University of the South wrote a poem called "John the Baptist and Winnie the Pooh Have the Same Middle Name" in the recent St. Luke's *Journal of Theology.*

The price of oppression

Dr. Yehuda Hiss, the director of the Israeli government's autopsy institute in Tel Aviv, warned recently that the *intifada* has had a damaging emotional effect on soldiers who serve in the West Bank and Gaza. "A person who lives in an atmosphere of such violence several months a year changes his behavior and acts in a way in which he previously would not have dreamed of acting," Hiss told the Israeli press. He said that he could trace the escalation of violent behavior by Israeli security forces from the condition of the Palestinian corpses on which he performed autopsies.

Al Miskin
***Middle East Report* 3-4/90**

How do you see things?

The world is seen differently by the colonized than by the colonizers, by minorities than by majorities, by people of color than by whites, by Eastern peoples than by Western peoples, by the South than by the North.

Theologian Larry Rasmussen
***Christianity & Crisis* flyer**

The art of living

The trick of being alive is to be able to do two things at the same time. One is to honestly see that everything we are and everything we do, everything we believe is ultimately hopeless meaningless. We are all going to die, and the earth on which we live will burn out and fall into the sun . . . On the other hand, today I am free to make my life and the world in which I live as meaningful as I wish, as I am capable . . .

I tend to live my life on that, 'in the meanwhile' . . . And what gives my life movement, what gets me up and going and not stuck there — is laughter.

Robert Fulghum
***Gray Panther Network* 3/90**

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Not yet a time for peace in Israel

by Paul Washington

We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.
Martin Luther King, Jr.

We live in a global village. No one of us is an island unto himself or herself. I am involved in humanity — when the bell tolls, it tolls for me. That is why this past winter I spent two weeks in Israel and Palestine as part of the Palestine Aid Societies' delegation to participate in "1990: Time For Peace." We joined 1,200 Europeans and hundreds of other Americans for three days of meetings, cultural events and political demonstrations organized by European non-governmental groups as a way of showing support for the Palestinian uprising, or *intifada*.

During a Christmas visit to Jerusalem, South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu pointed out strong parallels between the repression of Palestinians under Israeli occupation and black South Africans under apartheid. I remember during civil rights days in the United States — the "Black Uprising" — there were millions, including untold numbers of Jews, who suffered with us blacks. I felt that if I did not go to Israel and identify with another oppressed people, I would be like the drowning man who, having been rescued by an outstretched hand, will not reach out to save another from drowning.

Our 16-member delegation was inter-everything; inter-ethnic, interfaith, intergenerational and interdenominational. The capacity of each person in this group to understand, respect and accept the others was the incarnation of peace and harmony in diversity.

Soon after we arrived in Israel, we walked alongside 6,000 women from the United States, Canada and Europe, who joined their Israeli and Palestinian sisters in a Dec. 29 march in Jerusalem. It was sponsored by "Women in Black," a group founded in 1987 by Israeli — Jews and non-Jews — and Palestinian women to protest the occupation. The women wear black in mourning of Palestinian deaths and the disruption of Palestinian lives and hold weekly Friday vigils in Israeli cities. I was close by when a Palestinian woman marcher unfurled a Palestinian flag. Immediately Israeli soldiers advanced into the crowd of marchers, breaking us up, and the march ended in violence.

On Dec. 30, I was a link in a human chain of 25,000 to 30,000 Palestinians, Israelis and foreigners which completely encircled the walls of old Jerusalem. We stood hand-in-hand saying, "It is time for peace." But we got another message from the Israeli security forces: With Palestinians, there will be no peace. The army and police attacked, using rubber and plastic bullets, tear gas, water cannons and clubs. There were 78 arrests and over 60 were seriously injured, including an Italian woman who lost an eye. The chain was torn asunder, but not before we had stood at the religious center of the world calling for peace.

Our delegation visited many cities in the West Bank and Gaza, areas heavily occupied by Israeli soldiers. We saw Israeli settlements being built where Palestinian homes had been demolished. We visited Palestinian hospitals and care-



The Rev. Paul Washington, left, joins human chain encircling the walls of old Jerusalem.

The Rev. Paul Washington, rector emertius of the Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia, Pa., is chaplain of the Advocate Community Development Corporation.

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fully-hidden factories where Palestinians are illegally making their own products so they can boycott Israeli goods.

We were on a street in Nablus when a boy picked up a stone and threw it in the direction of some soldiers. We pushed and struggled to get out of the way as the soldiers pursued him with guns drawn, ready to shoot.

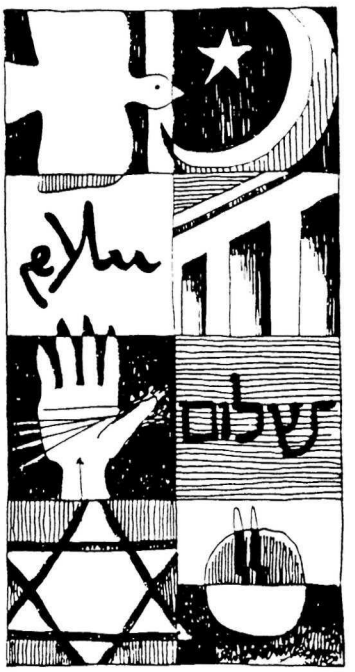
We visited Palestinian refugee camps and the homes of families who had lost members because they had either been killed for suspected subversive activities or deported. We helped a Palestinian farmer plant olive trees on his land, because the Israelis take any land that is not in use. I hope that the trees we planted will keep his land from being confiscated, but I have heard that many times such trees are simply bulldozed to make room for Israeli settlements.

The delegation had many meetings with leaders of the *intifada*. These were people from all walks of life — professionals, public servants, laborers and committed community people. They made it clear that the *intifada* is not about stone-throwing, but is instead about organizing "non-cooperation with the oppressor," and planning and preparing for the day when there will be a Palestinian state.

At present Israel spends $200 million a year trying to put down the uprising. My feeling is that, contrary to the rhetoric of their leaders, the Israelis will soon get tired and the fighting will be over, because the oppressed never tire of struggling to rise. Events in South Africa, Eastern Europe, Ireland, Central America and even the United States have made this clear.

When Senator Bob Dole proposed a 5% cut in the $3 billion in U.S. aid to Israel, Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir cautioned the United States that it needs Israel, because the Soviets are still pouring aid into Libya and Syria. But Shamir does not seem to be reading the signs of the times. Reagan's "Evil Empire" seems to be piling up olive branches rather than ICBMs. How much longer will the American people feel that we must have a strong military ally in the Middle East at the cost of $3 billion a year?

The State Department said U.S. money should not be used to build Jewish settlements on the West Bank and Gaza. Shamir responded that Israel will hold on to the occupied territories because they are needed to build settlements for the influx of Soviet Jews. For him it is unthinkable to even entertain the thought of a Palestinian state. Does he mean that the Jews, once homeless, will now make 2 million Palestinians homeless? Where will those people go? Would Shamir build the ghetto which will one day rise up and explode? It was a Jew who said a couple of thousand years ago, "He who seeks to save his life shall lose it."



Israel has three prominent allies — the United States, Britain and South Africa — but perhaps it should go back to Isaiah, who warned, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help and stay on horses and trust in chariots because they are many, and trust in horsemen because they are strong, but do not seek the Lord."

Egyptians are human and not God, and their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helps shall fall and they that are helped also shall fall. They shall both fall together.

Amos Oz, Israel's best-known poet and novelist, writes, "What worries and preoccupies me is the increased polarization within Israel, a decline of mutual trust and confidence, a growth of intolerance and arrogance." Not unlike America during the Vietnam era.

A very good Jewish woman friend and I had a reunion in Jerusalem during the "Time For Peace" witness. One afternoon she said to me, "Paul, twice in my life I have feared for the life of my people. The first time was when Hitler was trying to destroy us. The second time is now — we are destroying ourselves."

I think hers are prophetic words, eternal words — as you do unto others so shall it also be done unto you. The young men and women of Israel conscripted to suppress the Palestinians' struggle for self-determination today will be Israel's "Vietnam veterans" of tomorrow.

I wholeheartedly agree with Archbishop Tutu's statement that there must be a Jewish as well as a Palestinian state, and that Jews and Palestinians must forgive each other. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth means only that one day they will both be blind and toothless. Israel ought to stop and think for a moment. It is biting with borrowed teeth, $3 billion dentures granted by the United States. As for the Palestinians, they have no teeth. They can only persevere in their suffering, but it may be a suffering that will redeem them as God has so often redeemed the children of Israel. IW

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The COCU Consensus

A single seamless garment

by John H. Burt

Does belief in the Christian God automatically make a difference in how Christians treat their neighbors? Does faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour necessarily affect the way a person witnesses to social justice?

Theoretically, yes. But in the long history of Christian theology, the answer is not very reassuring. Great belief does not necessarily translate into a compassionate lifestyle — either by Christians or their churches. It is Christianity's greatest embarrassment.

Happily, today a new dimension is being added to the way historic biblical theology is crafted. Although known all too little by people in the pew, it is nonetheless an emerging reality. It is also a cause for rejoicing by any who feel that religion should constantly be relevant to the great human issues in every generation.

This new dimension is being stimulated largely by today's ecumenical movement with its insistence that the drafting of theological definitions can no longer be confined to the halls of academia, or to the insights of a single Christian communion. To be authentic, theology must not only draw on biblical roots and the historic catholic/reformed heritage, but must emerge ecumenically from the encounter of a variety of Christian traditions. And it must reflect ethical perceptions and social justice insights born from people's experience of struggling in the marketplace.

The Rt. Rev. John H. Burt, retired Bishop of Ohio, is a Board member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

Moreover, these insights must be woven into the fabric of the texts of the new theological statements themselves and not be pinned on at the end as an appendix to or as consequence of biblical doctrine.

The most notable example of this new development is the experience of the U.S. churches which are the current partners in the Consultation on Church Union. Their document, *The COCU Consensus*, is being offered to us as an official theological foundation on which to establish a fresh way into Christian reunion through a style they call "covenanting." The eminent scholars who drafted *Consensus* had to learn the hard way the necessity for re-casting its theological conclusions.

The struggle began in 1962, after a sermon preached in Grace Cathedral, San Francisco two years earlier by Eugene Carson Blake, the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church. In that sermon Blake challenged the churches of America to make a new attempt at healing their divisions. With the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church taking the lead, 10 major communions eventually set about designing a way to merge. The negotiators found few obstacles in establishing common agreement on major theological doctrines. But the operational styles and special traditions of the participating communions resisted homogenization. In the end, none of the candidate churches found the 1970 proposed "Plan of Union" attractive enough. Eventually, it was scrapped.

During a lapse of several years, it began to dawn on ecumenical enthusiasts that the life-styles of the partner churches and their differing experience of God's world had been treated too cavalierly. Too little attention had been given to what were called "non-theological factors" that were, in reality, church-dividing issues with profound theological significance. This led the partners in COCU, now nine in number, to seek a different style of union — one that called for *communio in sacris* (unity in sacred things) but that respected and even rejoiced in the riches of the different traditions. Unity was to be found in a covenanting relationship that would not obliterate any of those traditions, styles of life, methods of church government or liturgical expressions which presently characterize the life of the various partners. There could be unity in baptism, theological affirmation, church recognition, sharing of the Eucharist, ordination and common mission witness without institutional merger. But such unity could certainly not be achieved at the cost of neglecting the sociological and institutional sins that characterize much of our church division.

As a refocused COCU began its work, agreement was quickly reached on the commonality of "one baptism." At a 1974 plenary session, delegates proposed to the member churches a "Mutual Recognition of Members in One Baptism." This action subsequently was ratified by the highest decision-making bodies of each partner church. There was no real theological or inter-church dispute with respect to Christian initiation.

When the drafting of a new statement of common theological agreement began, however, the way ahead was not so easy. Initially, the COCU Committee on

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Theology focused on the historic differences between the churches as they sought common understanding — the classic disputes in relation to scripture and tradition, the faith, sacraments, and ministry, especially as these revolve around the difference between Catholic and Protestant emphases. Episcopalians were pleased that the four affirmations of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral were, in effect if not by title, accepted as a pattern for the overall design. But the theologians soon encountered sharp challenge from those who came to the negotiating table from the three black communions — the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. The black members insisted that any statements about the meaning of God, the personhood of Christ, the role of the Holy Spirit and the nature of the church which avoided racism as a major church-dividing issue would not garner the support of their communions. This prompted similar challenges from others who saw deep theological implications in the church's historic denigration of women, its insensitivity to those with physical handicaps, and in the way institutionalism, classism and congregational exclusivism have torn the church asunder down through the centuries.

When the theology committee made its report to the XIV COCU Plenary in January 1980, it sought to be sensitive to challenges by appending to its document "An Emerging Theological Consensus" four separate "alerts" on racism, sexism, institutionalism and congregational exclusivism. Though welcomed by the delegates, as appendices they were not sufficient. A motion subsequently passed by the delegates said, in effect: The substance of these alerts must be rewoven into the very fabric of the basic theological document. Appendices or afterthoughts, they warned, can easily be lost or forgotten — or seen as of minor importance. They insisted these alerts be truly theological in that they deal with sins that distort God's plan "to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head" (*Ephesians 1:10*). The absence of these four sociological issues in COCU's basic theological document would bring into question more urgently than ever whether the Church of Jesus Christ can indeed be the sign and the sacrament of the future unity of humankind.

Many who were present at that COCU plenary wondered whether the redrafting assignment given to the theology committee could really be done. In the history of theology, this conjoining of Christian doctrine and ethics into a single seamless garment had seldom been tried before. The historic creeds do not do it. Not even the celebrated "Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry" (B.E.M.) document of the World Council of Churches attempted it. But by 1984, the seemingly impossible had been done. The COCU Consensus, which implemented the Plenary XIV directive to merge the alerts into the doctrinal commentary, was adopted unanimously by the XVI COCU Plenary and has now been ratified by all nine of the COCU partner churches (though the Episcopal Church at its 1988 General Convention did so conditionally pending some clarifications which seem likely to satisfy).

The implications of the Consensus as amended have, in turn, now been woven into COCU's implementing plan for reunion, the *Churches in Covenant Communion: The Church of Christ Uniting* document which was adopted unanimously by the December 1988 plenary. Thus, the consultation has now spelled out how the nine COCU communions, plus others that may wish to join, can begin theologically, sacramentally and ecclesiastically to live as one — sensitive to the social as well as the doctrinal sins that have so long divided Christians. When this covenanting document is finally ratified by the partner churches at their national assemblies over the next few years, our generation in America will have given the world one more exciting sign that Christians in our day can be obedient to God's call that God's church, ethnically sensitive and committed to justice, once more can reflect the unity for which Christ prayed. TW

Church-dividing issues

Unity today is a task that requires resolution not only of old but also of new divisions . . . there is need for a reconciliation of long-standing estrangements in the church . . . between sexes, and among races, cultures, classes, political opinions, and visions of the meaning of justice.

Where racism is concerned . . . why ought we expect to be brothers and sisters of equal status in the Church of Christ Uniting when members of the majority refuse to live next door as neighbors? How can we have brotherhood and sisterhood without "neighborhood"?

COCU's task in relation to sexism is urgent because . . . growing numbers of men and women who are committed to liberating styles of human partnerships are becoming unable to participate in the life of the churches as they now exist. The Consultation may live its way toward union only to discover in five or ten years that many of its members have been so alienated that "unity" has become a gentleman's agreement within the dominant group, rather than an agreement of partners who have struggled together toward true mutuality in every expression of their personal and institutional lives.

— from *The COCU Consensus: In Quest of a Church of Christ Uniting.* Available for $1.25 plus postage from Consultation on Church Union, Research Park, 151 Wall St., Princeton, NJ 08540-1514.

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Evangelism in the '90s

What 'Good News' is good?

by Robert Beasley

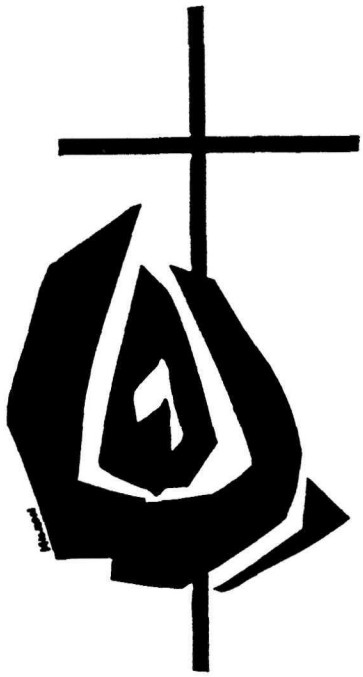
The 1990s Decade of Evangelism for the Episcopal Church responds to an urgent need. So many people in so many places want to hear good news from God and the Episcopal Church. However, all that Christians have shared under the banner of good news is not necessarily so. As each of us individually and our congregations corporately prepare to share the good news, it would help our efforts to remember the ethical dimensions of deciding what is good news and to whom such news is good.

Important questions confront our evangelism efforts: What are the results supposed to be? When we have shared the good news, what is the congregation supposed to look like? Toward what vision of our community do we strive?

In terms of ethical decision making, let's challenge ourselves with four questions about evangelism efforts.

• First, will our evangelism overcome or foster racism?

In the South where I live, our congregations are black, or they are white. Very few are both black and white. Defensively, we may say people choose to worship and praise with their own, that there are different cultural expressions,



but this separation began because of racism, not by choice. Does our evangelism overcome this racism or does it consciously or subconsciously choose not to invite certain people into a community of the good news?

Congregations develop ways of screening out people who do not fit the group. Does our congregation, our evangelism, screen out those whose skin color is different because it is too controversial to share the good news with them?

If coming together at the Lord's table in all the beautiful colors God has given us is what the kingdom of God is supposed to be, will our evangelism result in that kind of community or will we still see people broken and separated by the color of their skin?

• Secondly, will our evangelism overcome or foster sexism?

Some evangelism openly espouses the domination of men over women. Other evangelism is more subtle. It's language is usually about men. The leaders are men. Even the good news is couched in exclusive male-God imagery. Therefore, this evangelism fosters oppression of women by failing to embrace their liberation. In a never-ending cycle it attracts those women and men who want to continue a dominant-male, subjected-female church. They attract others . . . who attract others. Those who want a liberated church do not hear good news.

Will our evangelism foster the good news of the equality of women or will it present a picture of subordination for women? When the vestry has listened to us sharing the good news, will they be as likely to call a rector who is female as well as one who is male?

• Thirdly, will our evangelism overcome or foster imperialism?

The church has served the interests of the conquerors of this world. We have

The Rev. Robert L. Beasley is associate rector of Christ Episcopal Church, New Bern, N.C. and chair of the Department of Christian Social Ministries of the Diocese of East Carolina.

helped subjugate indigenous peoples for exploitation by white Europeans and Americans. We have heralded land-stealing as divine destiny and we have built beautiful churches from the gifts of conquerors. If we scratched deep enough, we would find the blood of slaves and native Americans transubstantiated into profits and donated in the bricks of our beautiful church buildings. We have also assumed that other cultures had no right to their religious expressions and their beliefs and practices had no value or truth. Thus we have fostered the idea of one nation over another and we have engaged in religious imperialism. We label people real Christians, nominal Christians, and ungodly heathens.

Will our evangelism foster the domination of American values and views? Will our evangelism assume that we have most of the right answers? Will our evangelism generate tolerance and respect of different expressions of the religious life?

• Finally, will our evangelism overcome or foster classism?

Someone once said, "When Methodists change denominations, they attend the Presbyterian Church. When Presbyterians change denominations, they attend the Episcopal Church. When Episcopalians change denominations, they attend the country club." We reek of caste and class. Does our evangelism intend to cross those lines? Will it help our church overcome class separation and domination or will it foster the coming together of the "right kind" of people? Will we consider many deserving of our charity but not of passing the peace?

Study of the Bible, our beliefs, and our history are alive today among Christians who see life with God from the underside, who do not have white American or European views. They tell us that we see the world from a position of wealth and power, and the good news we share is often better news for us than them, because it justifies our continuing domination. Remaining on the bottom is not such good news for the oppressed and poor.

Jesus preached good news to the poor. His good news was not, "Enjoy being poor." Instead, he spoke of justice and liberation. When the poor heard this, they rejoiced. When the rulers and the rich heard this, they shuddered and killed him.

If evangelism efforts produce a bigger group of upper-income, white, powerful, dominant males, it will certainly be a good party with ample food and beverage. All those who make the grade will rejoice at this good news. However, many will have heard bad news. The vast majority of human beings will continue to toil outside the walls of this country club, praying for the Messiah to liberate them with the good news for all people.

The good news must be more than Jesus saved us from our sins so we don't have to feel guilty about allowing or causing hungry, oppressed, and poor people to live as they do. The good news many await is that God has changed us into people who no longer wish to oppress and exploit but intend to liberate and respect; a miraculous conversion has produced a radical change in our lifestyles.

As the decade gives rise to evangelism efforts, please consider the ethical dimensions, so that we share good news that liberates and does not dominate — the kind our Lord shared with us. TW

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Leader . . . *Continued from page11*

have responded to the problem of the homeless?

There has been a lot of compassion, but they are going about it the wrong way. We need a new federal conclave. Once upon a time, we put a lot of money into public housing. Some of it was good, and some of it was terrible.

We have a lot of temporary shelters now that are not helping anybody. Many of them are perceived as being dangerous. In North Philadelphia we have hundreds of boarded-up old houses that could be turned over to the homeless. I guess it is too sensible for them to go that route.

One remarkable woman, Rachel Bagby, and her husband have rehabbed 50 houses here in Philadelphia. Also, I would like to think that we could have cooperative houses.

The Gray Panther office moved recently, didn't it?

Yes, it moved to Washington, D.C., and I was very sad when they closed up in Philadelphia. But this is where I still do my work, with the help of my assistant, Marilyn Vowels, who has been with me for six years.

In 1979, when Garson Kanin interviewed you for *Quest* magazine, you seemed very optimistic about reaching your goals of making this nation a better place for the young, the old and the poor. Are you still that optimistic?

Yes, but I underestimated the time that would be involved. We are also putting more emphasis on our environment now. It is so endangered. But I believe we are really going to make it. TW

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Sacred Places

Oh where, oh where has my little lamb gone?

Out of nowhere my imagination placed me
at the foot of Thomas Merton's grave.

Without warning I was standing in a whirlpool
of grief I never knew I had.

The vortex inhaled me to other places,
an unknown gorge of brokenheartedness:
Kent State, Dallas, Soweto,
My Lai, Buchenwald, Memphis,
San Salvador, Wounded Knee, Mobile.

Places and places and places of irreparable wrongness.
I didn't know pieces of my heart were
scattered around the world.

Oh where, oh where has my little lamb gone?

In that vortex, I also found
unknown and unfelt rage.

I hate us white Christians.
We so conveniently dismiss those sacred places
with facile words: "guerrilla, rebels, insurgents, leftists."
We are glad it is them, not us.
We delight in the suffering of other people;
it makes us feel safer.
We profit from their misery, debate it, justify it,
but never, never touch it.
I hate us for our indulgence.

Oh where, oh where has my little lamb gone?

Maintaining this lily-white illusion
has been the source
of my greatest loneliness

We shall not be human
until we
fall into the vortex of suffering.

I would like to know,
where are the pieces of your hearts?

Michael Dwinnell

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Farewell to former WITNESS author

by William B. Spofford

The Rev. Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., a leading Episcopal Church liturgical scholar, ecumenist, and educator and a long-time contributor to THE WITNESS, died recently in Sacramento, Cal. at the age of 76. William B. Spofford, retired Bishop of Eastern Oregon and son of William B. Spofford, Sr., editor and publisher of THE WITNESS from 1925 to 1972, wrote the following tribute to his friend "Shep":

Someone once said that a person could be counted lucky if, during a lifetime, he or she had five great teachers. When I went to Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge in the early 1940s, the faculty line-up was comparable to that of the 1927 New York Yankees — heavy hitters "swaggering" for truth.

Angus Dun was dean and theologian; Sherman Johnson was holding down the New Testament spot; Charley Taylor was the Old Testament whiz; Joe Emrich was expounding ethics, the Niebuhrs and Baron von Hugel; Jamie Mueller was teaching Reformation history and canon law; "Daddy" Hatch was teaching Greek and St. Paul's Epistles, and Adelaide Case was making sense of it all in the Christian Education courses. Then out of Cincinnati came Joe Fletcher to teach applied Christian sociology.

But I have not mentioned one other member of that ETS faculty — a tall, cadaverous being named Massey Shepherd. His eyes were penetratingly dark (during beer-drinking sessions in Harvard Square pubs, we used to call him "Bambi") and his knowledge was broad and great.

During his career at ETS, and subsequently for an extended decade or two at Berkeley, "Shep" was perhaps the leading liturgical scholar and teacher in the Episcopal Church. His energy and insights informed the church during the development of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. His meditations to the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies at General Conventions enriched the spirit with the power of the Spirit.

For me, he is surely one of the teachers for whom I count myself lucky. He taught pre-Reformation history, the life and witness of the Primitive Church, the works of Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Ambrose, the monks and the hermits, right on up to the explosions of the 16th century. He also taught us the history of Hebrew and Christian worship, an area for which he later became noted.

His lectures were jewels of composition and clarity, and his examination questions were often functional and exploratory. For example, he would have us develop liturgies for varied age groups and church settings, or ask us to relate the ideas and power of worship to the front pages of the old *Boston Herald*!

All during this time, he was writing regular columns on liturgical matters for THE WITNESS, which were later published as a book called *The Living Liturgy*. For many readers, his columns were the first thing they turned to when THE WITNESS arrived in the mail.

Massey's greatest written work was undoubtedly his *Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary*. He left his greatest institutional legacy as chief founder of Associated Parishes, an organization devoted to the liturgical movement, and as "godfather" of the 1979 Prayer Book. In his own way, he probably did as much to keep the Episcopal Church in the 20th century, and get it ready for the 21st, as any other person. He also helped to moderate divisions between the Anglo-Catholics and the Evangelicals.

Shep used to say that when he was ordained by the Bishop of South Carolinas, the bishop preached, "Remember, Massey, the only people Jesus ever had any trouble with were the religious people . . . and, also, they were the only ones He could never help."

As we give thanks for the life and witness of a splendid WITNESS columnist and a great teacher, we can only say, contrary to the thoughts of that South Carolina bishop, "You gave us much, Shep, and you probably made us stronger religiously by seeking for truth, centering the altar and tying the actions of the Eucharist to the realities of the *Herald*'s front page!" TW

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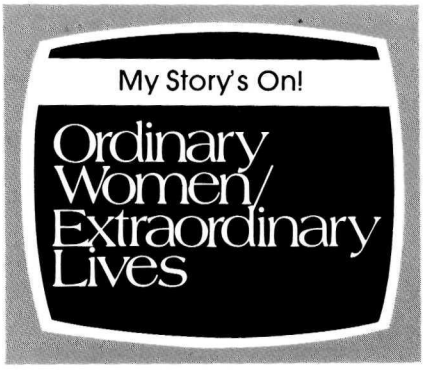

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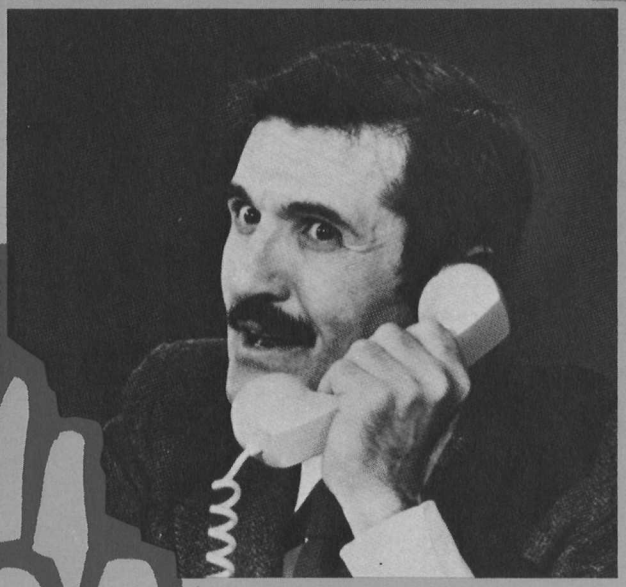
THE WITNESS



Sis Levin
Author, *Beirut Diary*



Jerry Levin
Hostage, 1984-85

Hostages yesterday & today
Interview with Sis Levin



All you peoples, clap your hands; shout to God with cries of gladness.

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Letters

Genteel oppression

Kim Byham's article in the April WITNESS presented Robert Williams as a devious egotist and publicity hound.

Byham might have examined whether the Episcopal Church is the Body of Christ or a whited sepulchre. He might have challenged the church to act against established injustices. Instead, Byham is intent on proving to his church superiors that Robert Williams is truly wayward and queer, while the rest of us gay and lesbian folks have been properly toilet-trained.

What matters most is why church leaders are now so eager to draw the line at the ordination of Williams and all other sexually active gay and lesbian people. Plainly, because Williams is significantly more aggressive, public, and controversial than other gay and lesbian priests. Certainly bishops now regret their toleration of the more quiet queers, because this allows the louder ones to sneak in and abuse the privilege.

Bishop Spong has assured the House of Bishops that he still upholds an ideal of monogamy against "promiscuous and predatory sexual behavior." Besides dualistic moralism, this reveals the fierce sexual projection of many straight people upon gays and lesbians, just as Williams has noted. (And those who think AIDS is the final argument for monogamy lack sexual imagination and a working knowledge of condoms.) A good many Christians — gay and lesbian, straight, and bisexual — maintain non-monogamous relationships which may be marked by deceit and abuse, or by decency and consent. I would not trust the House of Bishops to judge.

Since the church will not marry gay people, and since Christians can only have sex within marriage, it follows that gay Christians cannot have sex at all; and only gay and lesbian celibates may become priests. Church leaders rarely spell this out so severely, yet this and nothing else is the logic of the official church consensus on sexual ethics. When all the incense of Christian charity disperses, what remains is this rank doctrine of sexual and spiritual apartheid. I agree that "continuing dialogue" is needed here, but only if outrage, defiance, and satire are included.

Byham refers to Williams' "outrageous statements" without trying to refute them with his own sexual ethics. Entrapped by mechanical arguments and categories, Williams has so far failed to explode the current forms of debate. Charged with going too far, he has not yet gone far enough. Even if Williams is the devil incarnate, it's possible he has some good ideas. He disturbs ladies and gentlemen of all sexual persuasion, which Integrity might do more often to earn its name.

The Anglican/Episcopal sect is often guilty of making a religion of gentility. Williams, it seems, is charged with the sin of being rude. But he, at least, remembers what so many Episcopalians forget: namely, that Christ overturned tables in the temple.

Scott Tucker
Philadelphia, Pa.

Sad tale

What a strange and sad tale of Robert Williams! After reading Kim Byam's article, I'm not certain who said what to whom, but I do know that we are all diminished by it. None of this builds community, does it?

Josephine Merrill Kirkpatrick
Pasedena, Cal.

Silencing real scandal

Thank you for Kim Byham's thorough account of "The Rise and Fall of Robert Williams." I disagree, however, that Williams regarded himself as "the leading prophet of the lesbian/gay movement in the Episcopal Church." Although his aggresive, insensitive style and crudely graphic comments at the Detroit symposium were disturbing, Williams never presumed to speak for all sexual minorities; rather, he spoke directly from his experience rooted in accumulated pain, the pain of being treated as a child, incompetent, a non-person in a faith community that verbally acclaims the equality and dignity of all.

There is no scandal in Williams' suggestion that there is nothing authoritative about monogamy, or sexual exclusiveness; nothing ultimately written about what should be possible or tolerable. There is no scandal in two women or two men declaring their love for each other in the presence of God. The self-righteous, self-sufficient talk of religious leaders is the real scandal, the real blasphemy; their words veil and disfigure the face of God who loves freely and gratuitously. Their moderate, weak-spirited responses encourage the gay bashings that cripple our lives.

To be ostracized by one's former friends and colleagues is a terrifying experience. Williams now joins the ranks of lesbian and gay clergy who know what it means to be booted about the geographical and ecclesiastical landscape just for being who we are. His first and greatest challenge is to continue believing in himself, to trust himself and his own thinking and not allow others to convince him that his thoughts, ideas, plans, visions are unimportant, immature, immoral and sinful.

Of course he is not always right, but that is no prerequisite for sanctity. Being true to oneself is.

The Rev. Zalmon O. Sherwood
Jackson, Mich.

For the record

I would like to make two observations about "The rise and fall of Robert Williams." The Dignity/Integrity Richmond

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anniversary dinner at which Williams was invited to speak is not the largest gay/lesbian event in the Richmond community. The annual lesbian and gay pride festival attracts several thousand people. The D/I dinner has grown to 350 people. More importantly, the invitation to Williams was withdrawn after he made negative comments about Mother Teresa and Bishop John Spong.

William A. Harrison, Jr.
Richmond, Va.

Political card game

As a member of Integrity, Inc., I have long appreciated the many priests, bishops, deacons and leading lay members of our church who have been outspoken supporters of gay and lesbian civil rights and ecclesiastical privileges. We have, for nearly two decades now, played as partners in a political card game, attempting hand-by-hand and trick-by-trick, to establish those rights.

Bishop Jack Spong has long been a high stakes player in this game, and certainly there are many who have marvelled at the risks he has taken on our behalf. The ordination of Robert Williams by the Diocese of Newark stands in contrast to a "sense of General Convention" resolution passed in Denver in 1979 urging against such ordinations. That ordination — while prophetic and efficacious it may have been at that time — really is not what is upsetting the card table.

My diocesan bishop has promulgated the opinion of several of his colleagues that the real problem now before us is one of law and order. This holds that the Episcopal Church makes its mind known via resolutions of General Convention, and that when it does speak it ought to be heard and obeyed. When it is blatantly challenged we risk sowing the seeds of anarchy, and thereby potentially reap a harvest of discord.

On the surface this sounds like a sane and sober rationale for condemning the action of the Diocese of Newark and its bishop. But this sort of reasoning reveals an attempt to appease the people opposed to the idea of gay and lesbian clergy by playing on their fears and supporting their prejudices. Several other gamesters, including the board of The Oasis and Integrity president Kim Byham have upped the ante with their own opinions. Again, it is not the issue whether or not Bishop Spong was within his canonical rights to ordain the man; clearly he was. The real issue is the way in which he went about it.

As Byham has pointed out, the public fanfare and media attention Spong called into focus on this particular action was self-serving and provocative. He unduly politicized what otherwise would have been a run-of-the-mill affair. Spong played a political trump card called antagonism. The problem is that his partner, Integrity, Inc., would most probably have taken the trick with an ace in the hole in Phoenix '91. We can now only hope and pray that as this hand plays itself out, his gambit does not cost us too many points.

Todd E. Mashlan
Toledo, Ohio

Baffled by article

Kim Byham's article left me somewhat baffled. It pointed neither to a clear condemnation of Williams' actions before the media, nor to support of them. Maybe that is what the author intended.

My own opinion is that in his public statements, which caused so much uproar in the Christian community, Williams confuses reality with ideal. Yes, the reality is that humans murder each other every day of the week, but murder is, of course, not ideal nor is it in any way an acceptable given of life. And yes, people are not faithful every day of the week, but that does not preclude monogamy as an ideal life style.

One of the saddest things about the whole Williams affair is that by making his unorthodox beliefs and ideas a public media focus, Williams precluded the possibility of his initiating some real and serious dialogue between straights and gays, where the apparent need or predeliction among gays for multiple sex partners could have been a topic of investigation. It is not unfortunate that the Diocese of Newark — in consenting to and supporting Williams' ordination —failed to know about his views, but that it failed to detect his self-indulgent and immature behavior patterns.

Annette Jecker
Vernon, N.J.

Bad example

Bishop John Spong has created a bad atmosphere in the church by his poor handling of the Williams case.

In our Anglican tradition, clergy and lay people are seldom, if ever, asked to limit what they say or believe. If someone says, I do not believe in monogamy, but practices it, we should leave him alone. If he says, I believe in monogamy, and does not practice it, we should hold him accountable for lying, deceiving and breaking the marriage vow. I believe our tradition holds people accountable for actions, not ideas.

Where does Jesus say we are supposed to be monogamous in marriage? Where does the Book of Common Prayer, the Canons, etc., make monogamy absolute dogma, never to be broken? The fact that we allow the divorced to remarry, even after they have committed adultery, indicates we deal with each person's actions individually, not dogmatically.

I believe monogamy is the best standard for marriage and relationships. I am also satisfied that it does not work for all people all the time. To be Anglican means we hold varying, often contradictory, ideas in tension. Williams' state-

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THE WITNESS

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Editorial

How to lose adherents and respect

The following commentary on the Roman Catholic Bishops' latest draft of their pastoral letter on women is by guest editorialist Mary E. Hunt, co-director of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) in Silver Spring, Md.

Little was expected when the U.S. Catholic bishops recently released the second draft of their proposed pastoral letter on women, and half of that is what the bishops produced. Rhetoric favoring the new Roman centralism replaces the voices of women in the document, and many conclusions seem to have been reached before the questions were even asked.

The bottom line? This will not fly in 1990. The laity, especially women, demand and deserve far more.

The shoddy, timid quality of the 99-page draft clarifies several matters. First, the bishops are not the proper Catholics to write about Catholic women. Women are. But if the bishops insist, they are in fairness obliged to take women's experiences seriously, whether they agree with them or not. Women spoke critically in response to the first draft, but the bishops as teachers failed to be apt students. In the absence of basic survey research to justify their assertions that most Catholics agree with them, and in the face of reliable information to the contrary, we are left to conclude that the bishops simply followed the party line without internalizing the strong, clear statements made at parish feedback sessions and in written commentaries. Citing *Mulieris Dignitatem*, the Pope's outmoded ideas on "The Dignity of Women," is an unacceptable substitute and shows the firm hand of Rome in this draft.

Second, the draft reveals the duplicity of the institutional church. It is disingenuous to proscribe birth control and then lament abortions. I have had too much respect for the bishops to believe *that they believe* the institutional church's position on birth control. In 1990, with virtual unanimity among Catholics on the use of contraceptives, it would be honest of them to admit that they too have read "the signs of the times" but that Rome forbids changing the teaching. Then they would only lose adherents. This way they lose both adherents and respect. The bishops' recent multi-million dollar public relations contract to sell the institution's abortion position to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, a scandalous expenditure, leaves me wondering if I have had too much respect for them.

Third, any naive notion that Catholics might have had about women as "Partners in the Mystery of Redemption," the first version of this letter, is laid to rest. Ordained priesthood is ruled out, hence access to decision-making, sacramental ministry, and community leadership (i.e., partnership) is denied. It is easy to say that no sane woman would want to join such a club, but that diverts attention from the deep misogyny that underlies the theory that women do not resemble Jesus in the Eucharist.

Moreover, whatever happened to the partners is a mystery. Four of the six women consultants, hand-picked by the bishops, resigned prior to the publication of this draft. While we may never know precisely why they resigned, it is safe to say that Roman strictures, followed scrupulously by the U.S. bishops, led even these women to distance themselves.

What now? Whether the bishops approve the text at their November meeting, or shelve it as they will be urged to do by progressive feminists, they have shown their true colors on women's issues. Those colors are out of style. Equality, a word used throughout the document, simply does not exist for them. It cannot exist in a patriarchal religious system where male hegemony is sacrosant.

The pastoral reveals the very sorry limitations of the institutional church, particularly the unwillingness of ecclesiastical officials to share responsibility, much less power, with women. Fortunately, the Roman Catholic community has feminist theological and political resources, including scholars such as Rosemary Radford Ruether and Elisabeth Schussler-Fiorenza, to turn to. The task is to move the bishops out of the way, which may not prove as difficult as we once thought. They seem to be cooperating with drafts like this that take them another giant step backward.

(An earlier version of this commentary appeared in Conscience: A Newsjournal of Prochoice Catholic Opinion.)

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Hostages yesterday and today –

The U.S. hostages taken in Lebanon could have been freed years ago, had political energies been channeled into peaceful, diplomatic efforts.

So claims Sis Levin, whose husband, Jerry was kidnapped in Beirut in 1984 and managed to escape a year later. But instead of negotiating, Reagan administration officials opted for the secret arms-for-hostages deal — the Iran-Contra scandal — which makes Watergate look like a Sunday school picnic," Sis believes.

Since then, the State Department has had to "repair a broken bridge with Syria" to facilitate the release of Robert Polhill and Frank Reed, Levin said. Sis and Jerry attended the May luncheon in Arlington, Va. for friends and relatives of hostages who gathered to celebrate Reed's homecoming. They heard him urge the United States to "negotiate" for the remaining hostages, a word still spurned by the Administration.

Sis Levin rejects the government's reaction as "game-playing."

"We have always negotiated for hostages — for our journalist Nicholas Daniloff, for the 33 people held in the TWA hijacking incident — whoever," she says.

Levin offers her own experience in helping to get her husband out as evidence that an honorable alternative could have worked early on. As Sis tells it, she and a team of private citizens pursued quiet meetings with key figures such as Syrian's foreign minister Farouk Al Sharaa; Shiite leader Nabih Berri, Jesse Jackson, and many others at lower levels to set up conditions for Jerry's eventual escape.

Sis wrote a book about the process, entitled *Beirut Diary*. It reads like a spy thriller, and is on the way to becoming a movie, with talk of Sally Field portraying Sis.

Beirut Diary illustrates how women can bring their unique gifts as peacemakers to influence politics. Jerry Levin was abducted at gunpoint on the way to his job as Mideast Bureau Chief for Cable Network News (CNN). Sis had joined him in Beirut in January, 1984. Eight months before, 241 U.S. marines had died in a suicide bomb attack, and shortly before that, Christian Phalange forces had massacred hundreds of Palestinians at Shatilla and Sabra refugee camps while Israeli troops looked on.

After Jerry was kidnapped, Sis' plight might have been summarized: Episcopalian married to Jewish journalist caught up in Mideast Muslim crisis. She was living in a country where "Arabterrorists" and "Christianmurderers" were frequently used as one word by opposing factions.

Initially, fear paralyzed her, she admits, but she realized that if Jerry was ever to regain freedom, she would have to play a vital role. This was not easy for a woman with roots in Alabama, raised in the tradition of being submissive and not causing waves. "At my father's bidding, I had even memorized parts of *How to Win Friends and Influence People*," she laughed.

Levin soon found that she was facing the opposition of her government, the inertia of CNN, and the hostility of many friends at high levels. In spite of these odds, she worked for Jerry's release with a team, including her brother, attorney Francis Hare, Jr.; noted peace advocate and scholar Landrum Bolling, and retired Lebanese businessman George Malouf.

Bolling was especially helpful in convincing the Syrians to get involved. "He told them, 'You're always saying to the world that you don't hate Jews. Here's your chance to prove it by helping to release Jerry Levin,'" Sis recalled.

That argument helped convince the Syrians that they might establish a better



Sis Levin consults with former first lady Rosalynn Carter at '85 Peace in Mideast meeting, Washington, D.C.

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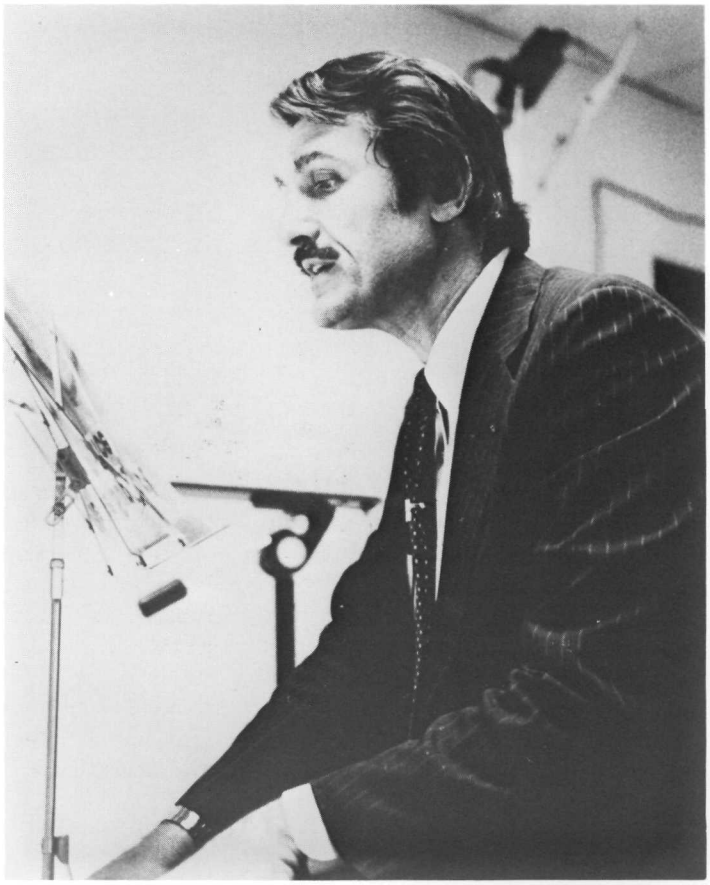
an interview with Sis Levin by Mary Lou Suhor

When Sis Levin's husband, Jerry, was kidnapped in Beirut, her plight might have been summarized: Episcopalian married to Jewish journalist caught up in Middle East Muslim crisis.



Former hostage Jerry Levin, in a speech after his escape in 1985, called for reconciliation among nations.

climate for U.S.-Arab relations. Levin's book describes how they intervened to have Jerry's captors improve his meager diet so he could gain strength. Then one of his guards carelessly left him unchained one evening. That very night, Levin escaped by tying his blankets together and lowering himself from a balcony. A Syrian patrol picked him up and within 24 hours he was delivered to the United States.

Sis feels that Syria was sending up a trial balloon when it played a role in getting her husband released, and "Ronald Reagan shot it down. Our team could have brought them all out," she is convinced. (At this point, CIA Chief William Buckley, Presbyterian missionary Ben Weir, and Lawrence Jenco, a Catholic priest, had been kidnapped as well. Jenco inherited Levin's room and knotted blankets.)

"That's what ought to make people mad," Sis exclaims. "To discuss the hostage situation you have to talk about it in context of the Middle East. My book begins chronologically with the U.S. battleship *New Jersey* firing from the Mediterranean just outside my apartment window into the hills of Lebanon. When those offshore naval guns were ordered to fire, innocent people were killed. Actually, you can go farther back than that for U.S. involvement, but my career friends in the State Department were sick over that decision to intervene militarily.

"When they retaliated for the *New Jersey* shelling by hitting the U.S. embassy in Kuwait, some Shiites got caught, and they thought we would exchange prisoners. They figured — we're at war — you're shooting at us and we're shooting back. Isn't this war? In war you exchange prisoners, right? Normally we would have. But now we know that Ollie North had a neat idea, so the answer was no, and it didn't play that way," she said.

The Iran-Contra scandal changed the rules, the actors and the currency of the game, Sis said. "They pulled the hostages largely out of Syrian capabilities and gave them to Iran and changed the currency to arms instead of diplomatic negotiation."

Ronald Reagan promised the American people when he became President, "never again" would we have a hostage situation, but if it should happen, he would deal with it firmly and immediately. "He was wrong on both counts," Levin said. "But to be fair, no one in politics wanted to touch it. I think the Democrats could have presented it that their man, Carter, was not far off in his approach to the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979-80. But the only political person to address it was Jesse Jackson, who spoke with firmness, balance and fairness." Jackson negotiated the release of Lt.

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Frank Goodwin, the U.S. naval pilot shot down over Syria, and also made an intervention in Jerry's behalf.

When videos of hostages Levin, Weir and Buckley were released, Sis "went barrelling to the State Department" to see Jerry's tape. In it, he said, *My life and the freedom of the other hostages depends on the life and freedom of the prisoners in Kuwait.*

"But we were constantly told by the government to keep quiet about the demands, that we would get the hostages killed. Well, that didn't add up, certainly not to a journalist's wife," Sis complained.

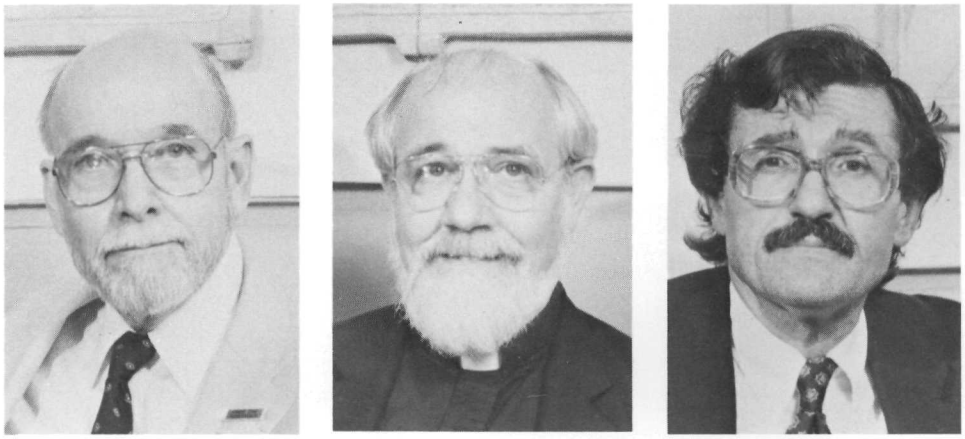
Sis said that she came to see that the hostages were only the tip of the iceberg. "There seemed to be a desperate cry coming out of Lebanon, and we were deaf to it. There was a context to the hostages' captivity that was full of history and insensitivity, bad choices and pain. The kind that comes when a nation abandons dialogue and embraces military force," she wrote in her diary.

Last month her husband Jerry wrote, "Westerners are not the only prisoners in the Middle East, and Muslim feelings have to be considered." Both Sis and Jerry believe that hostages in the Middle East should be freed across the board, and this applies to those held by Israel as well as those in Kuwait and Iran.

In her own efforts for Jerry's release, Sis found herself facing formidable odds. She was told that she was un-American to go against the government's wishes, that national security was at stake and that to negotiate with the captors was anti-Semitic.

She was appalled that CNN did not support her, and that the media in general was not digging for the story.

"I know how shocked Jerry was about the media's complicity with the silence called for by the government. He said he didn't expect people to agree, that there would be lots of debate and argument. What he didn't expect was the silence. I don't want to speak for him on that; he says he felt his colleagues truly thought they would get him killed. But he's more generous than I."



Protestant, Catholic, Jew: From left, former hostages Ben Weir, Presbyterian missionary; the Rev. Lawrence Jenco, of Catholic Relief Services, and CNN journalist Jerry Levin.

Shortly after Jerry's arrival in the United States, the President told him on live network television to be quiet about his experience, Sis recounted, "and every journalist who ever lived ought to have gone up in smoke over that one. That's gagging at the highest level. Jerry talked about reconciliation after he got out, and if reconciliation is so unpatriotic and un-American that a hostage released after a year in captivity can't talk about it something is wrong. But people just loved Reagan; it was 'happy time'."

Upon his return, Jerry formed a committee to help Terry Anderson, who was captured about a month after Jerry's escape, "and none of the big name jurnalists would sign on to the committee." Sis said. "Some are coming around now but it's late in the day."

Sis also bristles over the way CNN treated her "with raw chauvinism" and tried to stonewall her. She did not hear from CNN while Jerry was missing, "except for one phone call about insurance." Perhaps they feared, she said, that they would be accused of negligence by assigning a Jew to Beirut, "but Jerry would never have allowed that, and I would never have done that," she insisted.

"Instead, CNN spread the word that I was hysterical. Then the State Department told me that they had not been in touch with me in Beirut because they heard I was hysterical. Later the Ambassador apologized for how I was treated. But it was a scary time — there was no formula to handle these things. And shouldn't they have come running twice as fast if they thought an American in Beirut was in so much trouble she was hysterical? That's a trick of chauvinism, to try to make the woman appear emotional and unbalanced. Jerry looks on the bright side of this. He said if they had treated me in any other way he would still be in chains because it would not have driven me to try to get him out. And from a feminist viewpoint I find that quite interesting."

She described being called un-American as a way to silence debate. "I'm distressed, especially, that so many of my old friends in the South are taught to think without questioning. You have to try to turn some light on to that dark place."

As an example, she related her experience in a church in Montgomery, Ala., where she was speaking about her husband's kidnapping "just as carefully as I could" and a man jumped up and said,

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"Young lady, are you criticizing the U.S. government?"

"I said, 'Yes, sir, I am. And if a hundred years ago someone hadn't criticized the U.S. government we'd still have slavery.'

"You know what? Those people in that church still thought we should! I keep assuming we can talk sense in a liberal vein, but sometimes we can't. The reason why needs to be explored smack in the middle of an adult forum in an Episcopal Church, where we look at the Gospel and apply it."

Levin says she thanks God for Presiding Bishop Ed Browning, and particularly for his wife, Patti, and her formidable work around Middle East issues. She credits Bishop Bill Stough, currently head of the Presiding Bishops Fund for World Relief, with teaching her how to be a peacemaker when he was Bishop of Alabama. "When I got caught in the middle of a war I found all he was saying was true. It still sings in my heart."

Sis and Jerry were married by Stough in 1978 in Birmingham — "with my mother in the background, bless her, screaming 'be not yoked with unbelievers,'" Sis recalls. It was the second marriage for both, and Jerry at the time claimed to be an atheist. During his captivity as a hostage he experienced an "inward journey toward Christianity, and now, although still suspicious of organized religion, believes in God and does not blame Jesus for the offenses of Christians," she said.

Today she and Jerry, both Woodrow Wilson Visiting Scholars at Princeton, travel extensively to churches and college campuses to promote peace in the Middle East, and have returned to the area several times on good will missions. Both participate actively on the Washington Diocese Peace Commission for the Middle East. Sis is impressed with the Rev. Frank Wade's ministry at St. Alban's, "which is not afraid to deal with Middle East issues, but how many other parishes will do it?" Her St. Alban's T-shirt worn over blue jeans testified to her loyalty as she was interviewed at her home on 33rd Place Northwest, practically in the shadow of the National Cathedral.

At one point, Sis received unexpected support from noted Evangelist Jerry Falwell, who invited her to preach in his church. He told her he believed that her persistence got her husband out, and that "the hostages could be home tomorrow." The United States is a superpower, he said, in control of this situation, and he believed there were several options.

On this they agreed, she said. "There have always been several options. But the United States, for some unrevealed reason, decided to intervene militarily on one side of a conflict in the Middle East, and hostage-taking was the direct result of that," she added.

Falwell was unprepared for her message from the pulpit, however. "He expected me to be ready to throw all the Palestinians into the sea and deliver the straight conservative hard line. I preached instead on forgiveness. He told me afterwards, 'I don't understand. Don't you want to be raptured? To be with Jesus?'

"Then I asked, 'Mr. Falwell, if [Armageddon] were tomorrow, by your theological understanding, what happens to

Continued on page 13

The U.S. hostage crisis: 1984-90

1984

Feb. 10: Frank Regier, American University of Beirut professor, kidnapped; rescued April 15 by Shiite Muslim Amal militia raid on house in West Beirut.

March 7: Jeremy Levin, CNN journalist, kidnapped; escaped Feb. 14, 1985 from a house in Bekaa valley, Lebanon.

March 16: William Buckley, CIA chief in Beirut, kidnapped; reported killed Oct. 4, 1985.

May 8: Benjamin Weir, Presbyterian missionary, kidnapped; released Sept. 9, 1985.

Dec. 3: Peter Kilburn, American U. of Beirut librarian, kidnapped; murdered April 17, 1986 in retaliation for U.S. bombing of Libya, along with two British hostages and a British-American journalist.

1985

Jan. 8: Lawrence M. Jenco, head of Catholic Relief Services, Lebanon, kidnapped; released July 26, 1986.

March 16: Terry Anderson, AP Mideast Bureau Chief, kidnapped; **still in captivity.**

May 28: David Jacobsen, American U. of Beirut Hospital administrator, kidnapped; released Nov. 2, 1986.

June 9: Thomas Sutherland, American U. of Beirut acting dean of agriculture, kidnapped; **still in captivity.**

1986

Sept. 9: Frank Reed, director of the Lebanon International School, kidnapped; released April 30, 1990.

Sept. 12: Joseph Cicippio, acting comptroller of the American U. of Beirut, kidnapped; **still in captivity.**

Oct. 21: Edward Austin Tracy, author of children's books, kidnapped; **still in captivity.**

1987

Jan. 20: Terry Waite, aide to Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, kidnapped; **still in captivity.**

Jan. 24: Robert Polhill, Alann Steen and Jesse Turner, Beirut University College educators, kidnapped; Polhill released April 22, 1990; **others still in captivity.**

June 17: Charles Glass, ABC-TV newsman, kidnapped; escaped two months later.

1988

Feb. 17: Lt. Col. William Higgins taken prisoner in Southern Lebanon; killed July 31, 1989 in retaliation for the kidnapping of Sheik Abdul Obeid by the Israelis.

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Wage war on drugs with new weapons

by Harold J. Dwyer

A mood of frustration and fear is becoming more prevalent in U.S. society with each passing week. This mood, a response to the plague of drugs which seems to be destroying our people, has engendered a reaction that is likely to be even more destructive than the drugs we all fear.

From the floor of Philadelphia's City Council to the office of the mayor of Baltimore, as well as in scientific journals and church periodicals, we are barraged by the prophets of failure who would have us believe the only solution to our drug crisis is to sound a retreat. Some proposals call for a brief tactical regrouping, a legalization of "less harmful" drugs and controlled distribution of others. More libertarian schemes suggest the legalization of any and all substances. What these ideas have in common is the suggestion that since there has been no clear example of the effectiveness of current criminal justice approaches to the drug problem, it is time to throw in the towel.

A typical argument of this type is found in an article by Ethan A. Nadleman, which appeared in the September 1989 issue of *Science* magazine:

> *Drug legalization increasingly merits serious consideration as both an analytical model and a policy option for addressing the drug problem. Criminal justice approaches to the drug problem have proven limited in their capacity to curtail drug abuse. They also have proven increasingly costly and counterproductive. Drug legalization policies that are wisely implemented can minimize the risks of legalization, dramatically reduce the costs of current policies and directly address the problems of drug abuse.*

The article presents a simple idea, one with which few people would have difficulty. The criminal justice approach has not been effective in the elimination of drug abuse in our society. This fact should not surprise us since drug abuse is, in fact, a health care problem, not just a criminal problem. The crimes connected with the use of illegal drugs are only a portion of the destructive effects of the drug problem. In fact, studies indicate that some of the most "expensive" drugs, in terms of cost of abuse-related accidents, health complications, and lost time on the job, are the already legal drugs — alcohol and nicotine.

If we admit the cost of these legal substances, and if we acknowledge that we cannot in any way predict the effect of increased consumption that might result from the legalization of other drugs, dare we add more substances to the list of chemicals to which people might become legally addicted? The history of the abuse of prescription drugs obtained through legitimate sources and the added incidence of the "street" availability of prescription drugs easily leads to suspicion that "controlled legalization" would very quickly get out of control.

Another aspect of the argument for legalization is that if we eliminated the criminal element from the drug trade, we would eliminate the most severe drug-related problems in our society. I would suggest that some of the most serious problems caused by drugs are not only apparent in the life of the abuser or the crimes the addict commits, but also in the lives of those directly affected by the addict. If the truism that each alcoholic/addict directly affects at least four or five other people is accurate, then any spread in the availability and use of currently illegal substances could bring about consequences our society cannot afford to ignore.

The use of drugs by those who are unable to participate in the "American dream," who use alcohol or drugs to medicate away their anger and frustration, will not be decreased by this legalization. If anything, the removal of criminal sanctions and the increased availability would probably result in a sharp increase in addiction to a wide variety of drugs. The personal tragedies already seen in treatment centers, doctors' offices, clergy studies and city morgues would multiply. The potential loss of a generation of inner-city youth would become a harsh reality.

There is no single solution to our drug crisis. Our society, however, like the addicts we fear and pity, still seeks a quick fix. Solutions will be found in ongoing efforts on several fronts. The cost of criminal enforcement is high; the cost of increased treatment resources and prevention is high as well. I suspect however that the cost of the "modest pro-

The Rev. Harold J. Dwyer, Jr. is rector of the Episcopal Church of the Trinity, Coatsville, Pa., a member of the Addictions & Recovery Committee of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and chair of the Coatsville Drug Task Force.

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posal" of legalization would be many times higher. And I think we should stop measuring the cost in dollars alone.

Since the end of the Second World War we have justified the expenditure of countless billions to defend our nation from outside enemies. Whether or not this policy made sense in the past, it is clear we no longer need to continue this expense. If we wish to prevent the destruction of our nation from the forces which have already exhibited the ability to "bury" us, we might well consider directing these defense dollars to the war on drugs, a war that must be fought on every front — criminal justice, health care, community organization and education.

We must rethink other national priorities as well. We must be willing to see the connection between the cutbacks in social services over the last 10 years, the decline in availability of affordable housing, a minimum wage that has not kept up with inflation, the subtle and not-so-subtle effects of racism and other forms of discrimination, and the rise in alcohol and drug addiction and crimes connected with this rise. We must admit that the bankers who look the other way while large cash transactions take place, the luxury auto dealers, realtors and jewelers who willingly sell their most expensive wares to youth who pay with a large pile of $100 bills, are as much a part of the drug trade as the kids selling a few pieces of crack.

As a nation we must see that the drug problem is not confined to a few notorious street corners in urban areas. We must admit that the problem will not go away even if we deputize half of our citizens and empower them to arrest the other half. We can turn every unused military base into a prison camp; we can give up our constitutionally-guaranteed rights that guard our privacy and protect us from unreasonable surveillance, search and seizure; we can accept the most draconian tactic our fear and loathing of drugs and addicts will allow, or we can look at the whole range of societal problems that create the environment where the drug trade and drug addiction flourish.

None of this, however, should lead us to the conclusion that since the law enforcement model has not worked, legalization is the only answer.

The resources currently being dedicated to fighting the war on drugs are inadequate. Budgetary fictions that allow for the dedication of a few new dollars and the renaming of other funds already marked for anti-drug efforts will not do. The use of confiscated money solely for criminal justice agencies is imprudent. The largest portion of this money should be returned to the very communities from which it came. It is money that would have otherwise been spent on food, housing, health care and education if people had not been living under the power of the demon addiction.

"The weapons we need to win this war are education for prevention and education for decent employment."

The war on drugs will not be won by making drugs more available. The war will not be won by passing stronger laws. The weapons that we need to win this war are education for prevention and education for decent employment. We need to increase resources for the treatment of drug addiction and treatment of poverty and hopelessness. We must insure that the rights of all our citizens to adequate employment, housing, education and healthcare are finally met.

We can enter the 21st century with a commitment to serve the needs of all this nation's people. Or we can continue our useless efforts to fight against drugs, or dream up new and equally futile schemes and finally see our society destroyed not by external enemies but by our own lack of compassion for each other.

The choices concerning the fight against drugs made by federal, state, and local governments are important for our present and future. They will determine the kind of society we will pass on to our children. The church must continue in its long-standing role as an advocate for those our society would render powerless and voiceless. We must not succumb to fear. We must not retreat to the safety of believing that the drug problem is unrelated to the larger unresolved issues of racism, classism, and nationalism. We must instead continue to point out these connections to our members and to those who formulate government policy.

The powers and principalities that enslave God's children have not gone away or changed — they have merely adopted new tactics. The community of faith must meet these new tactics with the ageless message of life, truth and liberation which took flesh in Jesus of Nazareth.

Twelve Step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous teach that the secret to recovery is surrender. I believe this will also prove true for our society. The surrender we should seek, however, is not surrender to addictive drugs or the despair which seems to motivate many of the pro-legalization arguments. Instead, we should surrender to the will of a loving God. People in Twelve Step programs know their lives are under the care of a power greater than themselves. It is only this power that can bring healing to individuals and society. TW

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A woman's choice

by Jim Lewis

Not long ago, the phone rang at home and when I answered it, I was reunited with a woman I had not seen or heard from for 23 years.

She had seen in *Episcopal Life* a picture of me being arrested during the Pittston strike and searched me out.

Judy came in to my life during my first four years of ordained ministry in Annapolis, Md. She was working on a degree at the University of Maryland, and she was pregnant. There was no man on the scene and she wanted an abortion. It was suggested that she talk with me.

In those days, back before the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion, the options were poor. Women in search of an abortion were forced to leave the country to have the procedure done, if they had the money, or search out someone in this country who would perform the act illegally — an alternative often detrimental to the woman.

As we talked, I came to realize that even though Judy said she wanted an abortion, and I was willing to help her get it, something wasn't quite right. Pressing her on the matter, I discovered she wanted more information before going ahead.

I directed her to a gynecologist in the parish so that she could get medical advice. The doctor was trustworthy in my opinion. He was an excellent doctor and, like me, had no axe to grind in this situation. We both wanted to see her come to her own decision in the matter.

After talking to the doctor, she asked to speak to an Episcopal adoption service in Baltimore. I remember driving her there.

After all this counsel and discussion, including considering the possibility of keeping the child as a single parent, she chose adoption.

I arranged for her to live with a clergy family just outside of Baltimore. Once every two weeks, up through the birth of her baby girl, I met her at a restaurant in Pikesville, Md. where we talked about how she was doing.

Following the adoption, Judy went about her life and the child was raised by a family unknown to her. I saw Judy again only briefly before taking a parish in West Virginia.

Now, more than two decades later, she said over the phone, "You probably don't remember me." But I did remember. Through the years, Judy has come to represent for me the underlying question of abortion: Are women going to have a choice?

As I sat at my kitchen table holding the phone, Judy reviewed her history in the years since we had last seen each other. It was fascinating.

She is married with children of her own, and runs a business in a Pennsylvania town. She is a member of a small Episcopal church, and has talked with her bishop about the possibility of becoming a deacon.

A few years ago, she had tried to make contact with her daughter through the adoption agency. They told her the records had been destroyed. The woman she spoke with had been understanding and was troubled that the information no longer existed. The loss of the records represented an era of secrecy when birth mothers and adopted children were not meant to reconnect.

Strangely and fortuitously, Judy's daughter, engaged in her own search, later called and talked with the same woman, who then hooked them up with one another.

It was the start of an excellent relationship between the two. Her daughter's adoptive parents are wonderful and they all come together on special occasions.

She had called to reconnect and to tell me how important it had been for me to be there 23 years ago. She said she had to understand that the decision about abortion had to be her own — and not that of her mother, her friends, the church or the state.

Judy said her daughter told her later that she had become pregnant as a teenager and had chosen to have an abortion.

Before we closed the conversation, Judy told me that she was active in the pro-choice movement. "Women," she said, "just have to be able to choose what's right for them. What's right for me may not be right for someone else, even my daughter. Ultimately, what's right is the right for a woman to choose what is right."

I promised to come and visit when I was in the area. I then told her how important she had been to me early in my ordained years. She had been key in helping me understand the struggle women are up against in a society that treats them like children, unable to decide whether to give birth or not.

It was helpful to revisit those days, but I don't want to re-live them. TW

The Rev. James Lewis is Director of Social Ministries for the Diocese of North Carolina and a contributing editor to THE WITNESS.

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Hostages . . . *Continued from page 9*

my Jewish family and my beloved Muslim friends?' And he smiled and said, 'They go to hell.'

"He's completely consistent and I give him his eschatology but I don't give him his smile. Jesus wept. And if I believed that people were going to hell I'd be crying, too. That's the part I don't understand."

Tackling social issues on an ecumenical level is especially important to Sis, and in the early days of her struggle to free Jerry, such efforts were painful. Benjamin Weir was Presbyterian and her husband was Jewish and Jenco was a Catholic priest, but Episcopalians were reluctant to get into the hostage issue. She was unable to convince the National Cathedral to host an ecumenical service for the hostages. Later, then-Bishop John Walker went on sabbatical and wrestled with the question, and when he returned, "he took us all up on Capitol Hill to lobby for the hostages," she marveled. "But by then I had already gotten Jerry out."

Levin believes that the kidnappers picked up more hostages than they needed for a one-on-one exchange, so they could experiment with Jerry and Jenco and Weir and Jacobsen. "I have the feeling that they hold on to an exact number, a chip for chip. We knew they were saying 17 or something but thought they would really settle for exchanging two or three for their actual relatives."

At the very end would probably be Terry Anderson, who has become the most valuable in terms of negotiating, Levin said, "and he is the most interesting because I firmly believe that he will come out shaking his fist at the government for not acting earlier. And the government has to be totally aware of that."

If there is a recurring word in Levin's vocabulary when connecting the hostage situation to other global peace and justice issues, it is "forgiveness."

"I don't see how we can look at U.S. involvement in Central America, South Africa and the Middle East, which I insist are intertwined, and not see that we are a people who have to be forgiven. If we don't come to church to try to understand what we mean by this, how we can discuss the future of this country?

"You have to start with yourself. You look in the mirror real hard and when you get a handle on that you go from there. In Israel/Palestine right now the strongest voices are coming from the Intifada, and among them are the Christian Palestinians, who have been there for 2,000 years. Their houses have been demolished, their families killed and yet they say the only answer to any of this is forgiveness and peacemaking.

Sis emphasizes that neither is forgiveness alien to the Jews. "It is very much part of their theology, but they are afraid to trust again. And I understand that. Anti-semitism is alive and well and we know it. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, if you don't love both sides, you aren't much help.

"But when Jews tell me they have to behave this way toward the Palestinians because of the Holocaust, I take all my courage into my hands and ask if they really believe that those who died watching and weeping want them to do this to the Palestinians in memory of them.

"If we are truly friends of Israel, we would be honest with them. After all, we say friends don't let friends drive drunk. Analogously, Americans should not let America go down the tubes, or Israel either."

Levin, mother of six, jokes that her experiences in her dysfunctional family have given her valuable tips in how to handle international relationships and conflict resolution in the Middle East. She relates an anecdote about her identical twins, Isabel and Florence.

"When they were about three, they were quarreling in the living room and I heard a crash. I went in to find my favorite lamp in a million pieces, with them looking up at me white as ghosts. Well, Isabel said Florence did it, and Florence swore Isabel did it, and what's a mother to do? Then Florence piped up, '*God* did it?'

"I believe that's a good example of a civil war involving God, because God is always brought in when people grasp at justification. Holy War has got to be a contradiction in terms. We always seem to bring God's name in to justify what we want and are willing to fight for, so we baptize it."

That is illegal baptism, Sis Levin concludes, "and besides, God doesn't get a chance to vote."

Resource

Beirut Diary by Sis Levin, $14.95, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL 60515 (800-843-7225). TW



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Choosing integrity over Integrity

by Robert Williams

Kim Byham, national president of Integrity — the organization for gay and lesbian Episcopalians — wrote a story in the April WITNESS entitled, "The rise and fall of Robert Williams," describing how and why the openly gay Episcopal priest ordained in December of last year was asked to resign from his ministry only six weeks later. Here Robert Williams presents his critique of Byham's account.

I have given Integrity 10 years of my life, from founding a local chapter to working as a lobbyist at General Convention. For several years, when I lived in the extremely homophobic Diocese of Dallas, Integrity was my primary religious community. A handful of friends and I founded the Dallas chapter during Advent 1980, and it was my principal source of spiritual sustenance and the center of my social life. When I went to seminary, I felt it was Integrity, and not a parish, which had called me out and sent me.

It was not without some sadness, then, that I recently mailed my letter of resignation to Integrity. The vituperative article in the April issue of THE WITNESS by Integrity President Kim Byham was not the catalyst for my resignation; I had vowed to do so since January. It had become increasingly clear that Integrity, now established within the power structures of the Episcopal Church, and therefore more conventional and conservative, no longer represented my values, goals and vision.

One of the popular myths about lesbians and gay men is that we function as a unit, that there is clear and unified lesbian and gay opinion on any given issue. The use of a phrase like "the lesbian/gay community" can be misunderstood to imply a certain uniformity; but in fact, what is most obvious at a gathering of the lesbian and gay community, such as a Pride March, is our broad diversity — from the strident activism of ACT UP to organizations for gay Republicans; from an array of conventional religious caucuses to groups of gay pagans and atheists; from motorcycle and leather clubs to organizations of lesbian and gay professionals. The rainbow flag has been chosen as a symbol of the lesbian/gay community because it symbolizes diversity — not only racial, but ideological. The fact that I am gay does not guarantee that I share opinions, values, or vision with another gay man or a lesbian. I feel no more kinship with Kim Byham than I do with, say, George Bush (who is male, a Texas native, and an Episcopalian).

Still, I was shocked to find he was running a negative publicity campaign to undermine the positive media attention we were receiving for the founding of

The Rev. Robert Williams, former director of The Oasis, a ministry to lesbians and gay men in the Diocese of Newark, lives in Hoboken, N.J., and is currently working on a book about his spiritual and sexual quest.

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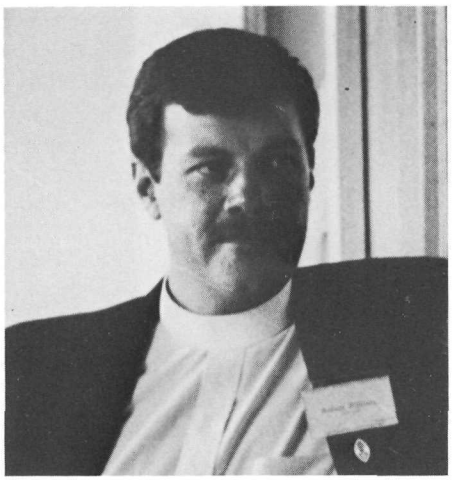
The Oasis last June. I couldn't understand why Integrity, supposedly representing gay and lesbian concerns within the Episcopal Church, should respond to the news about The Oasis with anything but joy.

It is not terribly surprising that Kim's article in THE WITNESS is riddled with inaccuracies, since neither he nor the editors ever contacted me (or anyone close to me) to verify any of the information. But one bit of misreporting that particularly angers me, because it is offensive to the parishioners at All Saints, Hoboken, who gave so much time and energy arranging the ordination, is his reference to the "small congregation." There were at least 300 people present at the ordination; there were around 50 people seated on the platform behind the altar alone; and these numbers do not include the news media, who were not seated. In fact, the media reported the attendance figures more accurately at between 250 to 300; Kim decided to revise them in order to make his point.

The article also incorrectly describes The Oasis as a "pastoral" ministry. In fact, the pastoral dimension was only one quarter of the vision for The Oasis as outlined by the mission statement — the other parts were evangelical, educational, and prophetic. I had repeatedly told The Oasis board my talents, interest, and passion were for constructive theological work, and while I could administer the pastoral ministry, I was not the person to do one-to-one pastoral work, because those skills are not my strong suit.

One of the other inaccuracies that intrigues me is the reporting of the presence of "only two openly-lesbian priests." Actually, I'm aware of only one — Carter Heyward. There were a number of lesbian priests present who are *not* open about their sexuality. Perhaps one reason the media tended to ignore Integrity's press release claiming there had been 60 ordinations of openly lesbian or gay priests prior to mine is that the release did not produce 60 names. The Diocese of Newark was acting on the best information it had available when they told the media I was the first ordinand since Ellen Barrett to go into the ordination ceremony publicly as a non-celibate, "practicing" homosexual. There are a number of priests who have come out as gay or lesbian since their ordinations, but so far as I know, no one who has been 100% out of the closet publicly prior to the ordination ceremony besides Ellen Barrett and me. If so, why did the media not pick up on the others — since we now know they *do* consider such ordinations newsworthy?

I suspect that most of the priests on Kim's list went through the ordination process with some degree of what Episcopalians usually prefer to call "discretion" (since "dishonesty" is such a harsh word). The most common way for either a lesbian or a gay man to be ordained in the Episcopal Church is to let a few major players (usually the sponsoring parish rector, the bishop and the bishop's closest advisors) in on the secret, and they in turn make sure the issue does not come up for general discussion during the pre-ordination screening process — God forbid the uninformed laity should have to deal with such information!



The Rev. Robert Williams

In fact, there is not a diocese in the country in which there would not be one or two people from such organizations as Episcopalians United or the Prayer Book Society present to make a formal protest, if they knew a non-celibate lesbian or gay man were being ordained. It seems to me, as long as we are committed to the present ordination liturgy which provides a forum for protest, it is our responsibility to give enough notice so that those who wish to protest can be heard.

But isn't this all beside the point? Isn't ordination of a proudly gay person a cause for celebration (particularly by the members of Integrity), regardless of whether it is the first, second or 150th ordination? It is true that the media has a perverse fascination with "firsts." When Les Smith, the Diocese of Newark press officer, wrote a press release playing up the unique character of my ordination, he was simply doing his job well. He did choose his wording carefully, consulting with me, so as not to make any false claims. At any rate, the diocesan press releases did what press releases are intended to do: *They got publicity.* What baffles me is why Kim Byham and the members of the Integrity board had any reaction other than elation.

On the other hand, there are some facts in Kim's article that are accurate, and significant, because they haven't been reported elsewhere. One is:

> *Williams has been making outrageous statements of this sort for many years; indeed outrageous comments were his stock in trade. He often used them to get people's attention when giving a presentation.*
>
> *It would be virtually impossible for anyone to have a sustained conversation with Williams without hearing comments of the general nature he uttered in Detroit.*

I couldn't have said it better myself. This is exactly the point I had been trying to make. What I did in Detroit —

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speaking out in a provocative and challenging way on issues of sexual ethics — is exactly what I have been doing for the past 10 years, what I very intentionally planned to do, what I feel I am called by the Holy Spirit to do, what I was ordained to do, and what I know I was hired to do, since I not only designed The Oasis but also wrote my own job description. So why is what I've done for the past 10 years *suddenly* too controversial for the Diocese of Newark? The only answer that makes sense to me is it was a "cover-your-ass" maneuver on the part of Bishop Spong, in response to the increased heat he was getting, including that from other "liberal" bishops.

As far as I know, Kim's article is also accurate in reporting the intense anger I feel towards Jack Spong. I don't remember my precise words on the night this house of cards came tumbling down, but something along the lines of, "I want to hurt Jack Spong," certainly captures the gist of what I was feeling. What appalls me is that I made such comments during private negotiations with The Oasis; and for them to have been shared with Kim Byham strikes me as a breach of privacy. At any rate, regardless of the pain and rage I was feeling on Jan. 27, what remains true today is that I would cooperate with anyone, including Episcopalians United or the Episcopal Synod of America, to see that Jack Spong is removed from the office of bishop.

My best assessment of this whole affair is that I was stupid — not so much in what I said in Detroit (although I have acknowledged the Mother Teresa comment was a mistake, albeit a minor one) as in my foolish trust in Spong, the Diocese of Newark, and the Episcopal Church. I was duped. Ten years ago, having just escaped from fundamentalism, I discovered the Episcopal Church. I was seduced into believing this church was willing to truly accept me for who I am. Who am I? A member of a very specific subset of a unique subculture: A late 20th-century urban gay male; an angry gay activist; a sexual radical. I spent eight wonderful years of my life living in an almost-totally gay environment in Oak Lawn, the gay ghetto of Dallas. In my 20s, I spent at least twice as much time in gay bars as I did in Episcopal churches. Even today, though married, my basic social patterns haven't changed that much. My partner Jim Skelly and I still love going to gay bars, and, if anything, I've become *more*, not less, radical. Ten years ago, a handful of Episcopal priests erroneously convinced me the Episcopal Church was open enough to accommodate me just as I am. They were misinformed.

*"Self-affirming lesbians and gay men . . . do **not** belong in the Episcopal Church or any mainstream Christian denomination."*

I was further seduced by Jack Spong. In spite of repeated warnings (including some from Kim Byham), I *trusted* Jack Spong. I truly believed he was the one bishop left in the Episcopal Church who was doing what a bishop is supposed to do — be a prophetic leader. It was a streak of my residual internalized homophobia, I think, that made me so desperately *want* to trust him. I really wanted there to be one bishop I could believe in, one I could respect, one I could obey.

I was clearly wrong about the Episcopal Church. It may be true that *some* lesbians and gay men are welcome in the Episcopal Church — those who play by the established rules, who aren't too radical or outspoken or impatient in their demands for total justice, who think it is appropriate that their sexual ethics should be dictated to them by heterosexual authority figures, and who behave in a proper, genteel, Episcopalian manner. In short, the lesbian/gay equivalents of "Uncle Toms." But I don't think the Episcopal Church has room for people like me — and we are legion. In fact, among my seminary community at the Episcopal Divinity School, I was thought of as somewhat conservative. There were dozens of other students more "radical" than I; and when I am compared to the lesbian/gay community at large, there are hundreds of people more radical than I. Does the Episcopal Church welcome them?

On a recent Thursday night, my spouse called and suggested I meet him at a popular gay bar in Greenwich Village. It wasn't until I stepped out of the train station that I remembered the New York chapter of Integrity had just ended its meeting a block away. Since I've encountered such vehement negativity from Integrity members recently, for a moment I was concerned we might run into some of them. But then I realized I've *never* run into an Integrity member in a gay bar — they live a totally different lifestyle than Jim and I do.

For those who want to understand this point, I would propose an experiment: Visit three gay bars in any major metropolitan area — and for the sake of variety, make one a drag bar and one a leather bar. Survey the patrons there, asking them where they went to church last Sunday. I am confident you will find most of them did not go anywhere. If you really want an education, ask them why they don't go to church. (This, by the way, would be what is called "evangelism" — *if* you had a welcoming church to invite them to.)

Now I ask: Which Christian churches would welcome these people — my

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people? I don't believe there are any, except the Metropolitan Community Church and a handful of independent parishes. Until January, I foolishly believed the Episcopal Church did welcome my people, but I was dead wrong. The sad thing is, the Episcopal Church probably is the most welcoming of the mainstream Christian churches. And the Diocese of Newark is probably the most welcoming diocese in the Episcopal Church. The inevitable conclusion for me is that self-affirming lesbians and gay men — or at least the gay ghetto types like me — do *not* belong in the Episcopal Church or any mainstream Christian denomination. For six months, as executive director of The Oasis, I tried to convince my people they should give the Episcopal Church a try. I owe them an apology.

Last I heard, Integrity's two main agenda items were to make it possible for qualified lesbians and gay men to be ordained, and to provide liturgical recognition of same-sex couples. It seems to me that Integrity is investing an incredible amount of time, energy and money struggling for goals that are immediately obtainable. If we believe the authority of ordination is conveyed by the Holy Spirit acting through the People of God, rather than by a patriarchal authority figure, why doesn't Integrity simply claim its authority to raise up and set apart its own indigenous priests? In the dioceses where the Episcopal Church is the most oppressive (i.e., Dallas), why don't Integrity chapters ordain lesbian and gay priests to serve their own community? And why don't these priests (or any of the hundreds of already-ordained lesbian and gay priests) just go ahead and publicly bless same-sex couples, without waiting for the approval of any bishop or convention? The answer, of course, is that Integrity is working for these things to be done with the official sanction of the institution. What that translates to is: Integrity doesn't just want to ordain lesbian and gay priests and bless same-sex couples, they want to do so *with the approval of straight people.* I submit this is a masochistic, self-destructive quest.

Sometimes it takes an outside observer to point out the obvious. In reporting this story, *OutWeek*, a lesbian/gay news magazine, described the polity of the Episcopal Church this way:

> *Compared with many Protestant denominations, the Episcopal Church has a fairly rigid, hierarchical power structure.*

I was struck by the accuracy of that description, and it made me ask why I was ever in the Episcopal Church. Whether or not the local bishop is benevolent, do lesbians and gay men and other marginalized peoples belong in such an inherently hierarchical institution at all?

Kim's article is painfully, prophetically accurate in its closing sentence, that speaking the truth may "set [me] free from the Episcopal Church." It is interesting that he chose such language (more accurate language, I suspect, than he consciously intended), implying the Episcopal Church is an oppression from which one needs to be freed.

I have come to describe the mendacity that pervades the Episcopal Church as being like a disease, and the more closely associated anyone is with the Episcopal Church as institution, the more likely he or she is to become infected with it. Perhaps Kim is correct: To tell the truth is incompatible with being an Episcopalian. It certainly seems true that to be a self-affirming, openly and proudly gay man is incompatible with being an Episcopalian. TW

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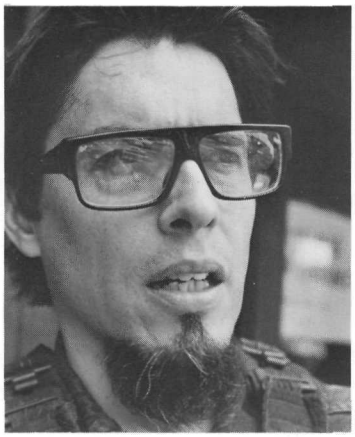
Squatter–priest fights for homeless

by Robert Hirschfield



"Squatting is Mary and Joseph finding a place in the stable to allow for the possibility of life."

The Rev. Frank Morales preached the above words at St. Clement's Episcopal Church on Manhattan's West Side, far from the squats of the East Village where for the last five years he's been both an organizer and a squatter.

A tall man whose boyish face is bisected by the hard black line of his horn-rimmed glassed, Morales, 41, was speaking about the diversity of the 25 or so squats in the East Village: "In Umbrella House, for example, there are homeless men who used to live in tents in Tompkins Square Park and political intellectual types like Seth Tobaccman (a radical artist) who edits the newspaper *WW III*. In the squats you find blacks and whites, ecological urban pioneers and anarchists."

A couple of years ago, the squat Morales was living in was set ablaze by arsonists. Developers were suspected — the East Village is locked in a fierce gentrification battle. Though the building was deemed salvageable by the squatters, architects and community, the city ordered it demolished. The police sealed off the street and kept back squatter supporters as a demolition crew leveled the building.

"We've won more battles than we've lost," Morales said. Tactically, he said, squatters have been able to mass supporters in and around squats threatened with eviction. In addition to blocking police, the supporters let them know that squatters have legal rights. Those who have lived 30 or more days in a building are entitled to a housing court hearing. In the case of impending demolition, said Morales, squatters must hold their ground, for a building cannot be demolished if residents are inside.

Morales' two daughters, Alita, two and a half, and Dakota, six months, live with their mother in a squat on Sixth Street. Until he and his wife separated, they lived as a squatter family, of which there are not many in the East Village.

Robert Hirschfield is a freelance writer living in New York City.

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Morales' roots are a few blocks from the squats. He grew up in the Jacob Riis projects along FDR Drive on the area's eastern rim. His father was a maintenance man at a senior citizen's home, his mother a cashier. They were Catholics. Passing the nice lawns of nearby Stuyvesant Town, a middle-class housing development, awakened in Morales the lonely pain of his poverty.

A Boys Club scholarship got him into affluent Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Mass. From there he went on to Hobart College, an Episcopal Church-affiliated school, where he came in contact with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Its members, who pursued peace wholeheartedly, became for him a community which spurred his conversion to the Episcopal faith.

"I decided to become a priest because the priesthood seemed like a vehicle that would lead me to a deeper spiritual and social involvement. I didn't see how any change could take place unless we harnessed the God energy that we are." The priesthood seemed the best way to harness that energy. But at times he's found its authority cumbersome.

"When friends invite you to a demo and say, 'Don't forget your collar,' it gets to be overbearing. But when you go into a jail, and because of your collar a prisoner gets to visit with a loved one, that's something else."

Morales began his ministry in the South Bronx. In 1977 he joined Operation Move In, a grassroots movement supported by local Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches. Move In worked to relocate homeless people in abandoned buildings. Morales squatted there, too. The acres of burnt-out shells provided squatters with the advantage of anonymity, and there were other advantages, such as ethnic cohesion and the absence of gentrification.

"It could take a year or two," Morales said, "before authorities found out about a squat. When the housing people came around to displace the squatters, the squatters would tell them, 'You don't own nothing here. Get off the block.'"

Morales was struck by the religious conservatism mixed in with the political radicalism of some Latinos. He recalled Steve, a member of the Young Lords, a Puerto Rican nationalist group, who had little time for authority figures.

"If we were walking down the street, and a cop was abusing a wino, he would always intervene," said Morales. "But he treated me in this special way, as though by being a priest I could perform magic."

Squatting, Morales is fond of saying, is self-determination in regards to housing.

"Since they are not renovating existing housing stock, squatting is the only option the homeless have," he said. "From an economic point of view it is cheaper and works out better for the government than the shelters. Squatters are able to raise money and buy materials. Broadway Lumber lets us have their damaged sheetrock for free."

The squatters' fierce individualism — every squat is autonomous — makes the formation of a united political organization difficult. "Many squatters," said Morales, "hate anything that has to do with an organization." But he noted that squatters will throw themselves in front of squats not their own to thwart evictions, and will show up at Tompkins Square Park to stand by homeless people being dislodged by the police.

In his sermon at St. Clement's, Morales said, "The liturgy of squatting is an action made in illegality, in clandestinity, yet crystal clear in the eye of God. Forming a group to go in, putting up a new door, cleaning the place up, the giddiness of appropriating some space for life and joy, space to see new personal and social horizons, putting an end to the suffering of having no home, working together. . ."

That is the New Jerusalem. TW

Warehoused apartments

The witholding of empty, habitable apartments — a phenomenon known as "warehousing" — is contributing to an unprecedented shortage of affordable housing in New York City.

Landlords warehouse apartments either for speculative purposes (to reap windfall profits by selling when the market rises to its peak) or to prepare them for conversion to condos or co-ops. From 1981 to 1987, over 204,000 apartments underwent such conversion. On average, the newly converted units are twice as expensive as the units they replaced, and thus the low-income New Yorkers who previously occupied the majority of them are permanently priced-out. The conversion process has continued unabated and the 72,000 apartments presently being warehoused assures more of the same.

The existence of these [empty] apartments is enough to stop hearts already fluttering at the sight and plight of 90,000 homeless people who inhabit our streets and subways. Add to these an additional 150,000 households living doubled or tripled up with family or friends — the so-called invisible homeless.

While it is true that New York's housing stock is larger and better than in the recent past, those changes have come at the expense of housing affordable to the bottom half of the population. Apartments renting for below $300 per month, precisely those apartments affordable to the 43% of New Yorkers with incomes below $19,000, have plummeted from 85% of the rental stock in 1978 to less than 35% in 1987. At the same time, the number of apartments renting for over $500 per month have increased by 708%, from 3% to 23% of the rental market. Apartments renting for over $1,000 per month increased by 295%.

— Carmen Trotta
***The Catholic Worker*, 5/90**

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Short Takes

Dangerous drug war rhetoric

When Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that "language is the archives of history," he never could have imagined how the drug war has borne out his aphorism. . . President Bush lets his imagery run amok, as others often did during the Vietnam era, when he vows the Administration will fight the war "neighborhood by nieghborhood, block by block, child by child." (How do you wage war "child by child"?) Drug Czar William Bennett's fondness for draconian punishments for dealers and users seems a flashback to Gen. Curtis LeMay, the man who wanted to bomb Vietnam into the Stone Age . . .The conclusion these policies lead to is inescapable. What the words of the drug war — like those of Vietnam — add up to is a formula for failure.

Ralph Brauer
***The Nation*, 5/21/90**

Learning from pain

I have found that pain, rather than being something to avoid — which is what we're taught — is something from which you get an awful lot. It's one of the areas of your life in which you are forced to see yourself. Therefore, it's quite a wonderful thing. If you can bear the self-scrutiny that always comes with pain, it's very enriching.

Alice Walker
***Common Boundary*, 3-4/90**

C of E Report: Accept gay priests

An official House of Bishops report that calls for the acceptance of homosexual priests and church endorsement of stable relationships between persons of the same sex is being considered by Church of England bishops. Archbishop Robert Runcie has requested that the report, a culmination of a two-year study, not be released publicly until the bishops decide whether or not they will act on it.

Episcopal News Service, 1/10/90



Excommunication

I lived on the streets on three separate occasions for a total of a year. Probably the most important experience of living on the streets is the sense of excommunication from the human community. It's total. It's not a partial state. The reason why (excommunication) exists theologically is to scare people to death.

Mitch Snyder
***Pax Christi, USA*, Spring 1989**

Sobering statistics

Number of soup kitchens in New York City in 1980 — 30; in 1989 — 600. Ratio of the U.S. government's budget for housing to its budget for the military in 1980 — 1:5; in 1989 — 1:31.

***Peaceweaver*, 3/90**

Christians revoluntionary

What makes Christians revolutionary? A deeply held conviction that everyone is our neighbor to be welcomed, treated with justice and dignity, to be granted all the human rights we would ourselves enjoy. But being a revolutionary implies acting in accord with those beliefs — holding firm, refusing to back down or buckle under when prudence and common sense suggest retreat.

David A. Spieler
***The Human Quest*, 5-6/90**

Anger at hostage situation

Frank Reed said that he had spent part of his [43-month] captivity in Lebanon with four other hostages — two Americans and two Britons — and that he was "very, very angry" that they had not been freed.

"For God's sake, it's nearly the sixth year for these men. I'm absolutely embarassed I'm out before they are."

***The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5/3/90**

> What do you suppose will satisfy the soul, except to walk free and own no superior?
>
> **Walt Whitman**

The true price of militarism

The United Nations calculates that by the year 2000, if present trends continue, people in 64 nations will not be able to obtain even minimum nutrition. By the year 2020, there will be eight and a half billion people on the planet, seven billion of those in the Third World.

Eight or nine percent of the world's current military budget could be used to end all topsoil erosion and deforestation and launch a viable program for renewable energy. The amount channeled into global military spending in just two days could end desertification as a phenomenon on the planet; the amount allocated for 15 days could end the water crisis for two billion people. More people die now of hunger in two days than were killed by the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

Daniel Maguire
***Creation*, 5-6/90**

Say what?

Appearing with Ronald Reagan at a New York anti-abortion gathering, Peter Grace, chairman of H.R. Grace Co., declared: "Everybody who's for abortion was at one time themselves a feces. And that includes all of you out there. You were once a feces."

***The Militant*, 2/10/89**

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Bringing God out of the closet

by Anne E. Gilson

One day, when I was digging in my closet, shoving the pile of outgrown clothes to the side, looking for a matching pair of whatever, I found God. I can't tell you how surprised I was. So was God.

I said, "Well, God. What are *you* doing here?" (After all, it was *my* closet, you see.)

And God said, "I might ask you the same question."

I huffily replied, "Well, I'm reorganizing my pile of outgrown clothes and trying to find a matching pair of whatever. It seems to me, God, that it doesn't matter what I'm doing here. This closet is my space, after all. How long have you been in here, anyway?" I thought to myself, *some nerve* — closets are pretty personal and you don't go traipsing around in other people's closets.

God sort of twinkled and said, "Well, I've been here for ages — right beside the outfit you never wear because you think it's weird — just waiting for you to notice it *and* me."

God's losing it, I thought. God has lost God's way and *somebody* had better help God . . .

First things first. "I'm not wearing it. It's a horrible shade of lavender. *Lavender is the symbolic color of the gay and lesbian liberation movement.* What would people think? And only those . . . those extremists wear that sort of outfit. Besides it doesn't . . . fit." I must admit I sputtered a bit.

Enough is enough, I thought. I'm just going to go about my business and pretend God isn't here. And I busily set to work digging in my closet, looking for that matching pair of whatever . . .

"Oh, terrific. This is *not* amusing, God. I must let you know that this is not convenient. And what are you doing with those socks? Wait, those used to be my best impressing-people socks, and you've made them *lavender*. First the outfit and then the socks."

God said, "I just thought you'd need these to wear with that outfit."

"Well, you thought wrong. I'm looking for that matching pair of whatever and *that's* what I'm going to wear."

God's losing it, I thought. God has lost God's way and *somebody* had better help God . . .

Maybe if I just keep doing what I'm doing, someone will come along and handle this.

"Listen, God. I'm trying real hard to find that matching pair of whatever and you . . . you . . . Oh, damn. Those are my standing-up-in-front-of-people shoes and you've turned them into . . . hiking boots . . . *lavender* hiking boots."

God said, "I just thought you'd need these to wear with that outfit and those socks."

"Well, you thought wrong. I'm looking for that matching pair of whatever and that's what I'm going to wear."

And then I actually said, "God, you're losing it. You have lost your way, God, and somebody had better help you."

And I looked. And God was holding my matching pair of whatever . . . My matching pair of *lavender* whatever.

"Is this what you've been looking for?" God asked.

"Well, yes. But I certainly don't remember them being lavender." And I looked at God suspiciously. "God, I thought you were losing it and now you've found it and . . . and . . ."

I looked again and — I don't know how to say this — God *was* there, I *know* God was, but in God's place was a mirror. I looked in the mirror and there I was wearing that lavender outfit — lavender socks, lavender hiking boots, and lavender matching pair of whatever. Then I remembered. This is what I had been digging for.

And for the first time in a long time I noticed the pile of outgrown clothes and the pile actually began to glimmer and pulse and sort of act like an ocean wave.

"I'm losing it," I thought. And then I remembered that I had found it. And I sort of grinned and said, "Oh!"

And — well, I tell you — that outgrown pile of clothes just nudged me right out the door of my closet. TW



Anne E. Gilson is a feminist theologian working on a Ph.D. in systemic theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

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Break bread, break barriers

by Paddy Kennington

"Therefore all things are not good by the divine goodness, but by their own goodness."

St. Thomas Aquinas

Last spring after working nine years in soup kitchens, a night shelter and food bank, I left to go to graduate school in the fall. During the summer, I wrote a one-sided, imaginary dialogue between myself and a street person.

I struggled over what I wanted to say about poverty and more to the point, about life with poor people. Most of my attempts resulted in moralism, frustration, shallow romanticism, or the pain of my own naive, stumbling efforts to make sense out of the non-sensible. I really believed that when the majority of people saw and understood the pain and suffering of people struggling for life on the streets, a great tidal wave of indignation and advocacy on behalf of street people would result. Slowly, I began to realize this would not be so.

It is nonsense that one group of people dominates another to the point that some must live in suffering and squalor so others can enjoy the lion's share of wealth, comfort and basic necessities. But every time I began to write about street people, I ran smack into my own prejudices. Worse, I realized with searing remorse and shame how stupid and blind I had been in doing and believing some of the same things that I see thoughtless and insensitive people doing and believing about the poor.

Paddy Kennington teaches literacy education to homeless people in Raleigh, N.C. and is a Third Order Franciscan in the Episcopal Church.

I wanted to say through my imagination what I have tried to live out daily in the shelter and soup kitchen:

Bread, Broken and Shared

I came here offering my bread. I thought that was a charitable, good thing to do. I could have stayed home or pretended you and your needs didn't exist or allowed my fear of you to turn to hate. But I didn't. I say that I'm here on your behalf and not for reward or honor. But you know better. It is true though, that I choose to be here. But you are here because you need food and shelter.

I realize now since I have met you and have come to know you day after day at the soup kitchen, that we have to live with each other here or fall back on violence as a way to communicate. I don't want to hate you or ignore you or make you invisible. You have shown me that I did expect you to be grateful and to like me in "payment" for my charity. I see now that this is violence to you and your freedom as a person. These are burdens I put upon your shoulders. Maybe you do need bread and soup, but I also need to offer my brokenness, my bread, to you.

Now that we are friends, I can't simply give you soup and a sandwich then smile and turn away. Somehow I must give you bread in such a way that you are not lessened

and I am not exalted in the exchange. Can't we sit here at this table and share a bowl of soup and cup of coffee together? I want to tell you something.

I have been changed by your presence, by our friendship, and by the unspoken words and unanswered questions between us. If I were honest with myself and you, I wouldn't presume to know what is best for you, what you need and want from life. I can't know what your life is like; I can only put myself in your path.

Help me to be broken and share bread as you have shared your brokenness with me. Please be patient with me when I am condescending and patronizing, insensitive and rude. Help me to accept what you have to offer and not to focus on your indignation and hostility. Our lives depend on getting beyond our differences and sharing our common Spirit. You are already halfway there.

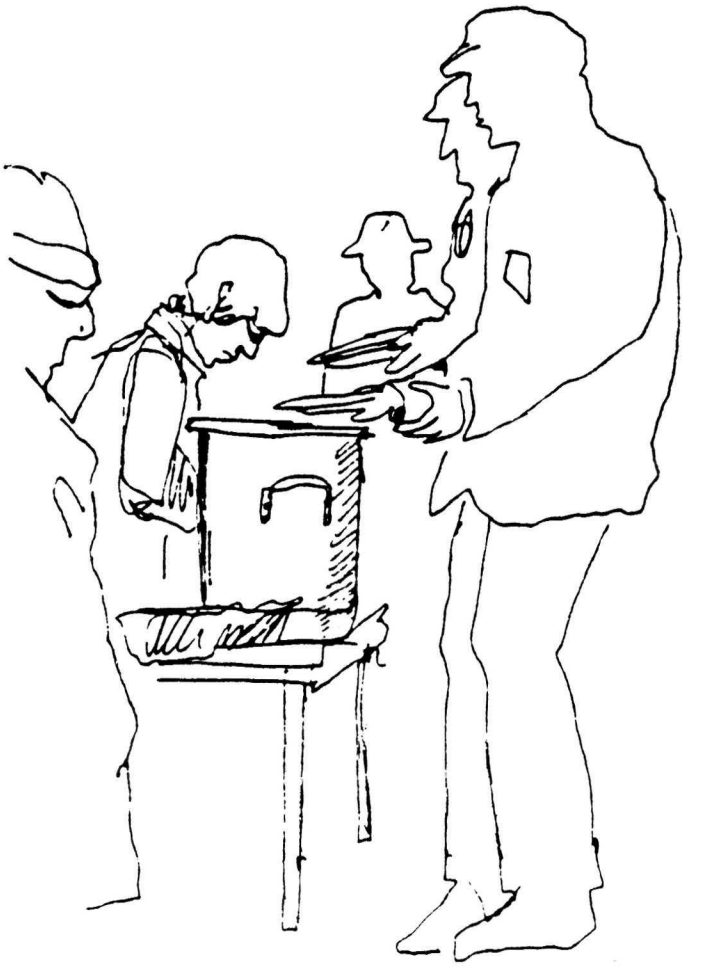
Now I know that I must come to you not because you have needs and I think I can help you. I must walk up to you because you are. The world sees you as weak and helpless and me as strong and capable. I can pretend to shut you out of my world, or hate you, or pity you. But you can choose to do these things, too. I don't want to share my brokenness, my bread, with you because you are poor but because you are you. Maybe you can help me to share my bread with the rich for the same reason.

For if I am ever to offer my broken bread to those who live by the law of violence and to love them even when they strike out at you and me, then I must also offer my broken bread to victims of that same violence. There is no home with violence, no life with violence. So, you see, I am homeless, too.

* * *

Lots of people, myself included, came to the soup kitchen to "do good works." I was Dr. Feel-Good and I saw the poor, hungry and tired people as objects of my *doing good.* My mental and spiritual horizon was pointed in the right direction but incomplete. I believed that when I washed a dirty wound or gave a shivering person a blanket in 10-degree weather, I was in some way fulfilling God's plan of creation. But in failing to keep in my awareness the goodness of people and nature because of their own being and worth, I had allowed myself to relate to other as *thing.*

Shortly after I began working at St. Luke's soup kitchen in Atlanta, I drove past a group of our guests who were lounging on a downtown street corner. I recognized Al, John, Raymond and others. I remember to this day the realization that they weren't bums, but people I knew personally. Before I came to St. Luke's, I wouldn't have given a second thought to the terms "bum" or "derelict." I would have admitted, if asked, that they were God's creation in the same way that anyone or anything is loved by God. The difference, after becoming involved in friendships with these men, was I became aware of their own dignity because they were who they were and I knew them. At that moment, the category "bum" ceased to exist for me. TW



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Womanist theologian inspires

Mention the Episcopal Divinity School to 10 people in the Episcopal Church, and you'll likely get 10 different reactions. Some know the school for Joseph Fletcher and his ground-breaking work with situational ethics. Others know it as the "new" (since 1974) incarnation of the former Philadelphia Divinity School and the Episcopal Theological School. Some folks' eyes will light up as they praise the school's work on inclusive language. Others will roll their eyes and groan that EDS is so radically left-wing that it flirts with heresy.

It's also the place where some of the leading women of the Episcopal Church have come to do their work: Carter Heyward, Suzanne Hiatt, Alison Cheek, and Fredrica Harris Thompsett. Bishop Barbara Harris has been a trustee of the school for nearly 10 years.

And now an ordained Presbyterian African-American woman on the faculty at EDS is a leading light on the theological horizon for her remarkable work in black womanist ethics. The Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon is an internationally acclaimed ethicist and theologian, and one of the most popular professors on campus.

Cannon isn't a typical seminary professor. Born in the Southern textile town of Kannapolis, N. C., she grew up in a working-poor black family who, like most of the other residents of Kannapolis, were directly connected with Cannon Mills. She shares a surname with the textile giant because her grandfather's family were slaves on the Cannon cotton plantation which later became Cannon Mills. She says she's "always been a pioneer and a groundbreaker." On April 16 she celebrated 16 years as a Presbyterian minister — the first African-American woman to be ordained in the denomination. "Being a front-runner is part of what makes me who I am."



The Rev. Katie G. Cannon

It's from this experience that she began the work of black womanist ethics. Womanist ethics is a whole new genre which starts with black women's reality as a point of departure. The term "womanist" was coined by Alice Walker in her 1983 collection of essays, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*. Walker herself sets forth a complex definition of womanist: the first component involves the word's derivation from *womanish* (as opposed to *girlish*) and its essential meaning "black feminist" or "feminist of color"; the second, as a woman who loves other women, is committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people; third, it celebrates what the womanist loves — in Walker's words, "music, dance, the moon, the Spirit, love, food, roundness, struggle, the Folk, herself"; and fourth, comparing womanist to feminist as purple is to lavender. Not all womanists agree about Walker's definition, but Cannon says, "I'm one of the people who say you can't be a womanist unless you embrace all four components." She sees herself and the womanist theologians as "the first generation" of black women to address ethical issues in this way.

Why don't womanists just call themselves black feminists?

Cannon believes it's because "so much of the feminist movement in the United States was white, middle-strata women, and what they were working for was to get what their fathers, their brothers, their sons, and other men in their social location had — not realizing that on the pyramid there were a whole lot of us who didn't have white privilege, who were not located at that same place.

"And so there are white feminists who do race/sex/class analysis. And there are black feminists who clearly say that they will not embrace the word womanist — they would rather hold to 'feminist' and make feminism live into what it should be about, inclusive of all women, and all peoples' well-being. Those of us who are theologically trained are basically moving out of a womanist place, because we don't want to fight white women to say, 'you've got to include us'. There are feminists who say they can't do their feminist work unless they're inclusive of all women. We say, well and good: increase your cloud of witnesses. Get more white women with that kind of political critique."

Cannon's classes are known for their intellectual — and emotional — rigor and the enormous amount of reading, writing and thinking she demands of her students. Despite the heavy requirements, her courses are always overbooked, because so many EDS students,

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students to work for justice by Susan Erdey

as well as numerous others from the nine Boston-area seminaries in a consortium with EDS, want to study with her. One of her classes had over 70 students this year.

She describes her courses as "aerobics ethics — my students sweat blood! Every course I teach is three courses in one," she says. It's remedial work; "they get the white male normative tradition, they get feminist critique, and African-American culture."

Aerobic ethics is about urgency, she says. "We don't have the luxury nor the leisure to sit around and say, 'Well, I want to do my grief work, and let me think about this, and don't rush me' — people are *dying*. There are 50,000 people who will die as a result of racism in 1990 alone." Cannon said that figure was based on "the manifestations of the way white supremacy impacts the black community.

"It's so systemic, it's hard to pick out the specifics" that contribute to the figure, she said. She pointed out a few examples: "The high infant mortality rate, the lack of care for elderly black people, the fact that young males in Bangladesh have a greater chance of reaching adulthood than young black men in New York — these are all forces working against blacks," she said.

And, she noted, a new ethical model is vital for all people. "I think part of what it means to do womanist ethics is to put the urgency of what we're about before other people as well . . . not only because of black people dying, but because the life we save may be our own. The fact that we're destroying non-renewable resources — what we're doing to the earth itself, the rain forests — that's the urgency."

It's about survival, she says. "In a situation where a person is dealing with racism, sexism, and classism, to manage to survive is moral action, moral agency. That's one of the reasons I do aerobic ethics."

Cannon's rigorous pedagogy isn't necessarily grade-oriented, however. Students don't claw and scrape for an A, but rather seek transformation. "Each semester, the way I evaluate whether my ministry is effective or not is if one person out of a course can make a life change as a person committed to doing justice. So I'm under pressure — I'm after transformation to happen."

Her students agree. Sister Jayne Simon, an African-American Doctorate of Ministry student from Mississippi and a member of an ecumenical religious community for over 32 years, says that Cannon is basically "scratching away 500 years of lies. This is just the tip of the iceberg. That's what the task is about — demystifying, debunking, unmasking racism, the lies and the oppression. I resonate with her teaching. It's made me realize that racial integration has overall been detrimental to us — it's been a process of indoctrination and assimilation, rather than being true to our ontological and historical vocation as African-American people."

Master of Arts student Joanna Kadi says Cannon is one of a very few models of working-class women in authority. For Kadi, a working-class Arab-Canadian woman, Cannon's model has helped her make the connection between the personal and political. "She sees how racism and sexism impact people's lives," says Kadi. "I have incredible respect for her. She's very caring and accessible — she doesn't put herself above people even though she's in a position of authority."

Tony Coleman, an African-American studying for a Master of Divinity degree, says Cannon's "call by God on earth, in this place, is to teach, to cause change, and she's doing it. I don't know of any person, especially the black people, in her class that have not been turned upside down and around. It's kind of what it must be like for the eggshell as the chicken is being born — breaking out of that which imprisons us. And Katie is responsible for the breaking of that shell."

"There's a rumor that there are two Katie Cannons," Cannon laughs. "There's one that's a Presbyterian minister, and there's one that's an Episcopal priest. But there's only one — I am the one. As my mother used to say, 'Ain't but me one.'

"I can't think of a better place for me to do the work that I do. Because it's got to be in an environment where people have been exposed to the most rigorous field education, where people have the physical material comfort to wrestle with the hard issues, so it's not life-threatening. EDS has a tradition for being a prophetic institution. We're the only seminary of the nine in Boston that has a black woman full-time on the faculty. That in itself is a testimony.

"My mother is still not pleased that I'm in New England. She said, 'Katie, that's not what we ordained you to do.' And there's a real concern about the brain drain in the black community. Why do our best minds go to work in a predominantly white situation? And it's about legacy. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, we all want a long life, but longevity isn't a promise, a full life is. Jim Cone is the one who said you've got to choose what you're going to do. And so writing and publishing is what I'm going to do, and I can do that here." TW

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WITNESS wins cheers from its peers

THE WITNESS magazine took eight awards — four first places and four honorable mentions — in two prestigious competitions, the Associated Church Press (ACP) and the Episcopal Communicators' Polly Bond awards at annual conventions of each group in Nashville April 18-21. The two agencies were among some 60 Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish press groups which cooperated to produce the Religious Communication Congress (RCC '90) at the Opryland Hotel, where 1,300 participants explored the theme, "Communication Power."

Notables on the program were Bill Moyers, who gave the keynote address and was honored with the RCC Communicator of the Decade Award, and comedian Steve Allen, who presided over the closing media event.

For the second year in a row, THE WITNESS was awarded first prize in the *general excellence* category by the Episcopal Communicators. Judges said: Writing has gravity and substance; graphics, photographs visually appealing; content qualitative and effective, addresses controversial issues; design, clean and creative.

Other firsts in that contest were for Beth Seka's July-August *cover*, War in the Coal Fields; best *series photography* in the coal strike story that issue (by photographers Mary Lee Simpson and Jim Thrall); and best *series on a single subject* — the April WITNESS on the election of Barbara C. Harris as first woman bishop in the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. Polly Bond Awards of Merit also went to THE WITNESS for best *news story*, "Requiem for a common man, an uncommon bishop" (on Bishop John Walker's funeral) by Mary Lou Suhor in November and best *magazine layout* of a two page spread, "Athens church joins 'overground railroad'" by Suhor in March.

Episcopal Communicators judges were particularly laudatory of the photographic sequence by Simpson and Thrall accompanying the coal strike story, commenting "good layout, nice cropping, good expressions — each photo is an award winner in its own merit — best of show."

From the Associated Church Press, THE WITNESS earned two honorable mentions, one for magazine photography, entire issue — the April issue on Barbara Harris; and for Lynne R. Nelson's "The face of God: Stories from the front line" in a devotional/inspirational category, introduced for the first time this year.

About the former, ACP judges said: "This issue covers Bishop Barbara Harris. Beginning with her high school graduation picture, it uses warm photographs of her with the first woman Anglican priest from China, with friends and family and in the rituals of her consecration. The images are presented clearly, if sparsely. Good play is given most of the photographs . . . The print quality of the magazine is somewhat gray, but the images of Barbara Harris chosen present a good biography."

About the Nelson article, judges commented: "Excellently written stories of care given to patients with AIDS, each of them different, each calling for distinct adjustments and responses on the part of the caregivers. Very impressive work."

Although the magazine did not receive an ACP award for General Excellence, judges gave it an 8 on a scale of 1 to 10 in their critique.

The ACP this year received 658 entries, and the Episcopal Communicators nearly 500 in their respective competitions.

This year's awards bring the total of firsts captured by THE WITNESS over the past five years to 19 — seven from the ACP and 12 from the Episcopal Communicators, plus 12 honorable mentions — four from the former and eight from the latter.



THE WITNESS joins winners of Polly Bond General Excellence Awards at Episcopal Communicators meeting in Nashville. Lower left: Leonard Freeman, editor, *Cathedral Age*, Washington, D.C.; Kay Collier-Sloan, editor, *The Advocate*, Diocese of Lexington. Upper left: Frances Antonucci, editor, *Washington Diocese*; Susan Pierce, assistant editor, THE WITNESS; and Mary Lee Simpson, president of Episcopal Communicators.

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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

ments questioning monogamy are well within the broad scope of Anglican freedom of thought.

Williams' remarks were in a conference setting, not a pulpit. He spoke his own ideas, not Spong's, mine, or the church's in these free sessions searching for new and current ideas and thinking.

The late Bishop Jim Pike used to say that the vocation of the Christian is to speak to the church as well as for it. Williams has that right, too. He suggests we, the church, need to re-think our position on fidelity.

Bishop Spong has done intellectual freedom in the church, the homosexual rights movement and Robert Williams a great disservice.

The Rev. Robert Warren Cromey
San Francisco, Cal.

(See Robert Williams' response to Kim Byham's article on page 14.)

More on Methodists

I appreciate THE WITNESS so much! The Cuba issue (March) will help Americans have a better perspective, hopefully.

But let's give the Methodists some credit. After all, their mission promoted more than Coca Cola. Could we have some further report?

Ernie Troutner
Lodi, Cal.

(On the positive side, Bishop Armando Rodriguez, who just retired after serving 22 years as Methodist Bishop of Cuba, was one of the few ordained clergy to remain after the revolution. He was a pastor at the time — the bishop lived in Jacksonville, Fla. But he remained to lead the church into autonomy. It was largely through the faithful witness of the laity, who took over the regular duties in the local churches after the pastors left, that the church remained alive. And Methodists were among the ecumenical denominations that kept the Protestant seminary open until new clergy were trained. — Ed.)

Praise for election report

Susan Pierce's article on the Nicaraguan elections (April WITNESS) was exceptional. I felt it really covered the whole "nine yards" of an incredible experience. In fact, it was probably the most thorough one I have read.

Patti Browning
New York, N.Y.

Account accurate

Thank you for sharing Susan Pierce's delightful eyewitness account on the Nicaraguan elections. I can attest to its accuracy since I was there.

The piece provides the reader with rural/urban perspectives, the dynamics of the voting place, the invasion of observers, the shyness of the victors, the euphoria of the defeated. The vignettes on Doña Carmelita and the militia man elicit our solidarity. And the article points out the shortsightedness of "our" experts and seems to evade the tears of many "pro-Sandinista international residents."

Yes, voting is a sacrament. That touches deep at my Hispanic soul. It is a sacred moment because it carries the identity value of baptism, the memory of the Liberator and the nuptials of the citizen with the beloved country.

I particularly would have enjoyed a profile of Doña Violeta — the white Dolorosa descending from the White House — surrounded by her Chamorro clan, always in the winner's circle, since Nicaragua is Nicaragua.

The Rev. Juanleandro Garza
Tucson, Ariz.

Job well done

Thanks for the article Susan Pierce wrote on the [Nicaraguan] election experience. It is well done — moving and accurate. She did a good job.

Gail Phares
Raleigh, N.C.

Re the above three letters: Patti Browning, wife of Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, was an observer in the Witness for Peace Opinion Leader delegation at the Nicaraguan elections. Gail Phares, a co-founder of Witness for Peace, led the Episcopal delegation. Juanleandro Garza was a member of the Presbyterian delegation. — Ed.)

Insulted Appalachians

I am astonished to read the "joke" in your April Short Takes about the mountaineer who supposedly never saw a mirror, and his wife, the "old hag." What will your next joke be about, Polacks screwing in light bulbs?

It is especially appalling to read such a bigoted piece in THE WITNESS. You owe Appalachian people an apology, "by cracky."

The Rev. Denise Giardina
Durham, N.C.

(With profound apologies. — Ed.)

Magazine challenging

I am old and ill and my eyesight has deteriorated. I can no longer read all the fine magazines I used to enjoy, and I'd not ask people to read them to me. So I am letting my subscription expire.

I assure you that this has nothing to do with my occasional difference of viewpoint from that of your writers. For instance, women clergy have not been among my priorities. And in the culture in which I grew up, abortion was sort of an obscene word. One would no more mention abortion in polite company than one would speak of the irresponsible sex which occasions the abortions.

Nevertheless, yours is a great publication. I have always found it, like Christianity itself, challenging, thought-provoking, and inspiring.

Dick Lyon
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Correction

Mary Meader-Wostrel's name was inadvertantly omitted from the list of Episcopal Nicaraguan election observers in the April issue. Sorry.

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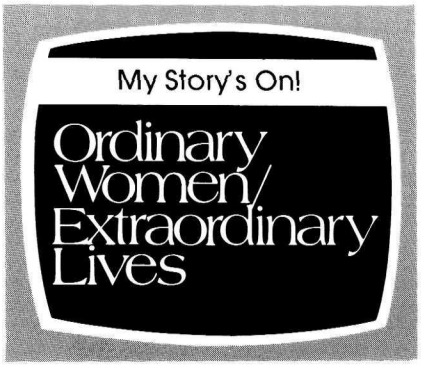

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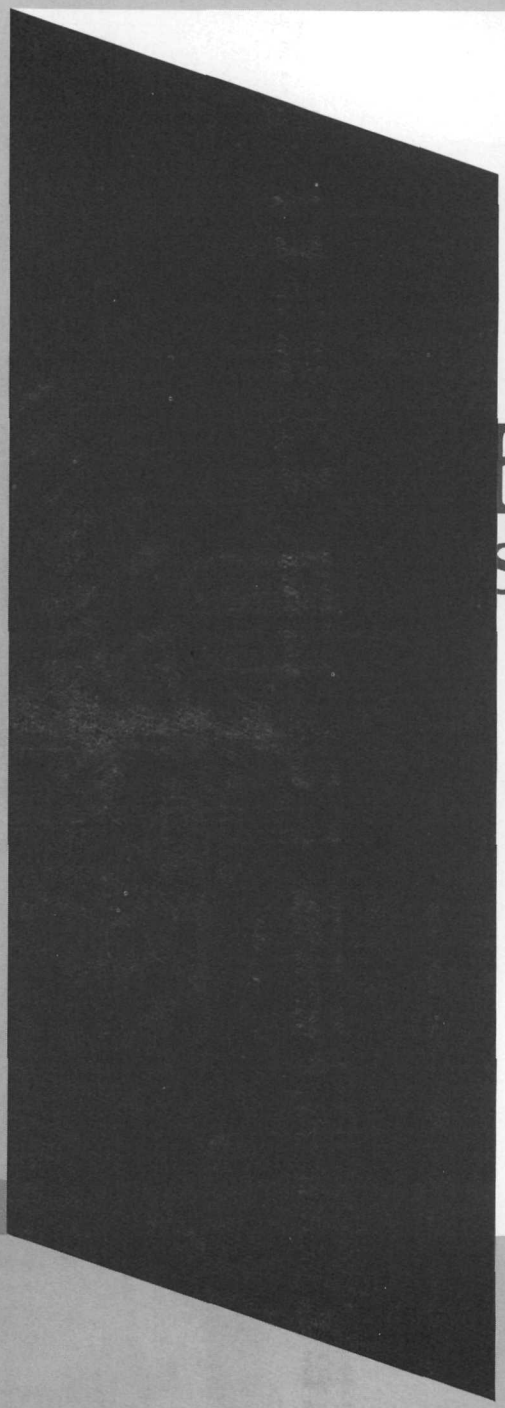
THE WITNESS



Breaking silence

Clergy and sexual abuse
Lindsay Hardin

A survivor's journey
Mary Meader

Shameful secrets
Faith Evans

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Letters

Article biased

All across America, law-abiding inner city dwellers (white and black) are saying, "We won't stand this any more," and have been organizing to reclaim their youth and their streets from the drug culture and the often random violence. In my city, whose social programs are among the best and most extensive in the nation, the two blacks on the City Council are in the lead to enforce swift justice (i.e., prison) for those who sell crack and who murder. But Michael Manning [*sic*] in "The myth of equality" (April WITNESS) says that this push for law enforcement and justice is a racist conspiracy to place "millions of young, poor black men and women . . . in a prison cell." Sorry — that is woefully simplistic — and false. Yes, the broad masses of people everywhere want murderers brought to justice, but in Alexandria, and many other communities, every family is contributing hundreds of dollars every year for drug education and rehabilitation programs.

Manning criticizes Douglas Wilder for abandoning "racial politics"; sorry, the vast majority of Virginians are fed up with racial politics. We still proudly keep our Wilder bumper sticker on our car.

Manning eulogizes Jesse Jackson for his "advanced, progressive agenda for social justice," but does not mention Jackson's urgent exhortations through the years to black youth to stop always blaming "the system" and to take advantage of their opportuniies.

Manning sees other conspiracies — "the system uses the rhetoric of equality to hide the process of oppression" and "it is hardly accidental that (crack) has been unleashed within the very poorest urban neighborhoods." In Manning's view, those who sell crack or who murder cannot be blamed; rather it is the "system" to be blamed, i.e., the dominant whites who are engaged in "a one-sided race/class warfare." This is drivel, not worthy to be placed in the same issue with the most perceptive and sensitive articles I have seen in recent years on the labor movement and on Nicaragua. In my community, Alexandria, and in Virginia, I see conscientious, devoted leadership, white and black, working together to make some dent in this awful problem, sometimes at risk of life. (A policeman who lived a few blocks from us was recently murdered by a crack dealer.)

The short biographical note at the beginning of his article states that Manning is on THE WITNESS editorial board. Does this obligate THE WITNESS to publish such a biased and racial article?

Robert T. Jordan
Alexandria, Va.

Author responds

Since the end of the Civil Rights Movement, the demise of affirmative action enforcement and the acceleration of institutional racism, it has become fashionable for many honest and sincere Americans to "blame the victim" when it comes to race relations. When African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and other people of color state statistics or present evidence indicating the widening gap of inequality between the races, we are accused of "reverse racism," and promoters of a "racist conspiracy theory." Despite the emotional character of Robert Jordan's tirade against me, I suspect that his motives are honest enough. He is obviously concerned about the very valid economic and social problems in black urban communities, and he is sympathetic to black politicans who have attempted to build multiracial bridges. For this he is to be commended.

Yet it is equally regrettable that, despite his honest intentions, Jordan fails to recognize some basic truths about the state of race relations in our nation. If Jordan would care to refer to any serious studies of patterns of sentencing in the criminal justice system, he might discover that blacks and Hispanics who had the identical criminal records as whites received significantly longer sentences. Moreover, since the death penalty began in this country, not a single white person has ever been executed by the state for the rape of a black woman or the murder of a black person. This is not rhetoric; this is fact.

Progressive and black Americans welcomed the election of Wilder as governor of Virginia. But it is also true that the black Democrat repudiated many of his former liberal beliefs in order to achieve the support of white voters. The central flaw in Jordan's argument is his inability or unwillingness to comprehend that political, economic and social structures prefigure the daily experiences of individuals. If the system deliberately destroys job opportunities in a ghetto, eliminates decent health care facilities, and tolerates the sale of crack in our schools, destructive, antisocial behaviors are the result. This is not to excuse individual behavior, but to explain it.

Finally, the same care which reader Jordan took in misreading my article is characteristic of his inability to read my name correctly.

Manning Marable
Boulder, Colo.

On staying put

Bless THE WITNESS for "raising" Daniel Berrigan from the dead silence that surrounded the Plowshares Eight in most of the religious as well as secular press. To Daniel's "If he [Jesus] had only stayed put," (April WITNESS) I would add "or risen with a pension in hand fully funded by God in adequate measure to get God's message across, with blare of trumpets and the gleam of gorgeous vestments; making a show of it to beat anything the temple crowd or

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Caesar's hordes ever dreamed of . . ."

Instead, he rose as naked and as dirt poor as the day he was born — with 40 more days to fund — and nobody waiting in the wings with any gold, frankincense and myrrh . . . "It would have been easier for the Pharisees and Sadducees" if Jesus had risen as rich as the high priests and Herod/Pilate — an equal to them in worldly goods — or if Jesus had made a lot of money on his resurrection with his beyond-the-grave appearances. The scandal of Jesus is that he did "stay put" in the poverty he was born into. No "up the ladder" into financial solvency, much less financial excess like the Big Boys at the temple, or government ladder-climbing practitioners; he rose as poor as he lived and died. Not much of a role model for the Pharisees and Sadducees and priests of his day or those clergy of our day who desire higher and higher status and financial rewards and more and more power.

Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska

Questions quote

Last fall I saw twice a moving video tape put out by an interfaith group of church organizations which have been trying to stop U.S. aid to El Salvador for many years. It includes a statement by Dr. Charles Clements, who told of his conversation with a peasant who said, as closely as I remember, "You Yankees don't understand violence. You think violence means shooting with a gun. I worked on a hacienda where I had to feed bowls of meat and milk to the dogs. My children never had meat, and rarely milk. I had to see them die for lack of food and medical care. You will never understand violence until you see your children slowly dying of hunger."

I was troubled, to say the least, to find a very close repeat of this story in the May WITNESS in the article by Parker Rossman, "Liberation philosophy for retirement." It is possible, of course, that the young political prisoner and Charlie Clements' informant came from the same hacienda; or perhaps many wealthy hacienda owners feed their dogs meat and milk. But nearly identical wording troubles me.

I am in no way questioning the achievement of Margareta and Lars Inglestam, or the fine example of faith in action they give us. I believe, however, you can understand the doubt cast upon the veracity of both her informant and Charlie Clements by the near identity of their accounts. I will appreciate any genuine help you can give me.

Dr. Helen M. Corneli
Stevens Point, Wisc.

Rossman replies

Dr. Corneli's concern about the quote is justified and difficult to clarify. Any of us, when we make our reports at home after a long exploratory journey to many countries, may get confused about where we learned certain things that moved us. My article took the story from Margareta Inglestam's mimeographed report to her friends when she got home. She also visited El Salvador and perhaps she saw the video tape and forgot the source and country of the story. In any case, I thank Dr. Corneli for commending the explorations of the Inglestams as examples of "faith in action." Her passion in repeating the story was genuine.

Parker Rossman
Niantic, Conn.

Dozier brought joy

I want to say how wonderful Verna Dozier's May article is — how it brought me joy. That is my faith, too, and that of all God's wounded ones — to say yes in the face of so many no's. I was performing at a conference on Benedictine spirituality recently when the speaker, the Rev. Lawrence Freeman, said that "Civilization, as per Kenneth Clark, began with monasticism — a few white, male celibates in the 5th and 6th centuries — on a rock off the coast of Ireland." He then went on to say that contemplation, meditation and the experience of God are at the heart of civilization.

I knew that if Jesus was sitting there he would find that a strangely inadequate definition. I agree that one's experience of God is the heart of civilization, but with Verna Dozier, I would see that most magnificently shown in human courage and faith, in God and oneself — under the slave master's whip, or in the crippled bodies of the poor, the aged, the harassed and pregnant mothers. Their wisdom, their prayer life, their meditations — that's the great "Yes." For me, too, as a child of sexual abuse (which, incidentally, Fr. Freeman called "quite a *fad* these days in the church"), I know of countless survivors who remembered praying during the abuse, and then pulling down their dresses, pulling up their pants and carrying on with life, as I did!

No, Sir Kenneth and Fr. Lawrence, "civilization" is a little larger than monastic life. Yes, that is an important part, and one our churches need to recover, but perhaps we need the grandmother wisdom of a Verna Dozier more than the "sirs" and the "fathers" and the "superiors." Look at the compassion and humility in her face!

Roberta Nobleman
Dumont, N.J.

Lutherans seek reprint

We would like permission to reprint excerpts from "Saying 'Yes' in a 'No' world" by Verna J. Dozier in our July/August issue of *The Vanguard*. In this issue we are focusing on white racism and its varied affects on different communities. This article presents the kind of thinking we want to emphasize — one that recognizes the problems in society

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THE WITNESS

Breaking silence

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Editorial

The buck stops where?

As summer burst into full flower and with General Convention only a year away, THE WITNESS ventured to find out how well the Episcopal Church was fulfilling its mandate concerning socially responsible investments, including its proxy voting record. It is important to track; the Episcopal Church was actually a pioneer in socially responsible investing. In 1971, it was the first church to file a shareholder resolution calling on General Motors to withdraw from South Africa. It is also a founder and member of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, a coalition of institutional investors, including 22 Protestant agencies, pension funds and dioceses, and more than 220 Roman Catholic religious communities, pension funds and dioceses.

These church investments as a group wield considerable influence. According to ICCR, the corporate responsibility movement now includes activist churches and public and private pension funds with over $500 billion in total invested portfolio worth.

The Rev. Brian Grieves, the Episcopal Church's Peace and Justice officer who oversees its socially responsible investment program, was commendably forthcoming about national church investments. He sent a copy of the ICCR publication, *Church Proxy Resolutions* — an impressive 66-page book showing in detail 219 church-sponsored shareholder resolutions for 157 corporations. It lists the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church as a sponsor of such shareholder resolutions as one calling on Comcast, a cable TV company, to integrate its board of directors; and another asking AT&T to give a full accounting of its management safety record at the Sandia National Laboratories' nuclear weapons plant.

The Methodist Church's General Board of Pensions appeared over and over in the ICCR list as a sponsor of shareholder resolutions on issues ranging from the end of trade with South Africa to forgiving Third World debt, as did the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board of the American Baptist Churches. Conspicuous by its absence in these sponsor lists, however, was the Episcopal Church Pension Fund.

Our inquiry about the CPF's proxy voting record elicited an informal accounting only of resolutions it voted *for*. But judging from available information, the CPF does not take a leadership role in sponsoring resolutions. Used to operating unto itself, not accountable to the national church or the church's Executive Council, neither has the CPF seen fit to release the complete record of its votes on shareholder resolutions. Such information must be kept by law and should be a matter of public record.

There is some precedent and cause for concern about the CPF's accountability. The 1988 General Convention passed a resolution supporting divestment of shares in Royal Dutch Shell and other oil companies doing business in South Africa and backing a boycott. Not long after, the CPF bought 150 shares — $6 million worth — of Shell stock and held them for nine months until church activists called attention to the fact (see WITNESS editorial, March 1989).

Eighteen percent of clergy compensation is paid into the CPF, money which comes out of the tithe of the person in the pew. Churchpeople of conscience should call on the CPF to make public its proxy voting record and use its financial clout to support the church's witness to justice. TW

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Clergy and sexual abuse

by Lindsay Hardin

The young woman, a college student home on vacation, had gone to her parish priest for counseling. She found him particularly responsive to her and hoped for some guidance regarding a personal problem.

His interest, she found out, was strong. Within the hour, he had kissed her, touched her breasts and told her of his deep admiration for her.

Although she never went back, years later she is still bitter.

"When I see him I'm angry," she says. "I'm angry for letting it happen. To this day, I feel like I should have done something more, said something more, gone to the bishop."

Some 10 years later, the priest is still in the same parish. The woman, now 28, believes he has seduced and exploited other parishioners, both men and women, and wonders how many.

That kind of situation, according to both the Diocese of Minnesota and the state legislature, happens too often and must stop. Toward that end, Minnesota church, civic leaders and mental health professionals have lobbied for the passage of stricter laws regarding the conduct of professionals.

Their persistence paid off in 1984, when two laws were passed saying that clergy may now be found guilty of civil and criminal charges for a range of sexual contact, even that which falls short of intercourse. Similar laws have also been enacted in two other states.

Under the statute, sexual contact that would otherwise be a gross misdemeanor is a felony if it occurs during psychotherapy. In a major break from the past, clergy are considered therapists under the law.

Although there is some debate as to when a clergy person is administering psychotherapy, the message is sharp: Bishops, priests and deacons may be found criminally responsible for entering into sexual relationships with parishioners. Making the legal situation even more serious is the fact that the consent of the parishioner cannot be used as a defense if the case comes to trial.

Even without the law, say several Minnesota clergy and mental health professionals, sexual exploitation of parishioners is always wrong. Such an interest led to a national conference in St. Paul early this year to begin planning for a church-wide response to sexual misconduct by clergy.

"The problem is not a new one," said conference co-sponsor Bishop Harold H. Hopkins, Jr., executive director of the Office of Pastoral Development for the House of Bishops.

"The church has often looked the other way when exploitation has occurred. Our commitment is not only to recognize that the problem exists, but also to begin immediately to take preventive and educational steps."

Similar work is also being undertaken by at least two other church bodies: the Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ, which are developing national policies on sexual-harassment issues. The Diocese of Minnesota is just completing a Code of Ethical Principles, which organizers hope will be a model for national Episcopal Church policy.

"Sexual abuse and exploitation by clergy *is* serious," says Gary Schoener, a Minneapolis-based psychologist who directs the Walk-In Counseling Center of Minneapolis, and specializes in treating victims of sexual misconduct by professionals. "It happens much more often than we realize and most cases go unreported."

Schoener, who authored the book, *Psychotherapists: Sexual Involvement with Clients,* believes that as many as 13% of clergy may have had sexual relationships with parishioners one or more times in their ministry.

Because an employer is ultimately responsible for the conduct of employees, Schoener believes that national church organizations may soon find themselves with large settlement debts to pay. Such litigation, he says, is underway against several church groups, and "could literally sink the mainline denominations."

According to one source within the Episcopal Church, there are about a dozen cases now pending against the church for clergy sexual misconduct.

Although some clergy who become involved with parishioners are repeat offenders and mentally ill, others find themselves straying into dangerous waters during a troubled marriage or isolated professional life.

An August 1989 *Newsweek* article characterized the typical offender: male, middle-aged, disillusioned with his calling, neglectful of his personal life and marriage, isolated from clerical colleagues. And, equally important, he's

The Rev. Lindsay J. Hardin is a priest and free-lance writer living in Silver Spring, Md.

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met a woman who needs him, depends on him, and makes him feel special.

"Sexual exploitation by clergy is unethical conduct with serious psychological and spiritual ramifications," says the Rev. Susan Moss, former chair of Minnesota's Clergy Wellness Committee and a member of Minnesota's Interfaith Task Force on Sexual Exploitation by Clergy.

"What makes it so unethical is that there is always a power imbalance between someone seeking counseling and a clergy person," says Moss, one of the Minnesota conference planners.

"A parishioner has a right to be vulnerable — to express that vulnerability and not have his or her trust betrayed."

The Rev. Margo E. Maris, canon to the ordinary for Minnesota Bishop Robert M. Anderson, agrees. Part of her ministry involves dealing with victims of sexual misconduct by clergy in the Episcopal Church and other mainline denominations.

"Clergy are the ones who need to take the responsibility for keeping appropriate boundaries, for they are the ones with greater power in the pastoral situation. They're also the ones entrusted with the care and shepherding of souls, and to take advantage of that sacred trust is always wrong."

For several years, Maris has worked to heal the hurt experienced by those who have been exploited: She brings the parishioner face-to-face with the clergy person who has abused the trust. Although the meeting may take place years after sexual contact occurred, she believes it is necessary to include the bishop or other denominational authority figures.

"Our purpose is not to go after offending clergy so much as it is to help victims become survivors. In order to begin the process of both healing and trusting the church again, those who have been hurt need to be heard. They need to say, 'You will not have that power over my life anymore.' And the bishop must know what happened so he or she can insist on whatever discipline or treatment is needed."

Susan Moss believes that such reconciliation is necessary between the two parties involved in sexual contact. But she also has learned that entire congregations are affected when their clergy become sexually abusive or exploitative.

"In many ways, the parish is a family," she says. Inappropriate sexual involvement is, therefore, tantamount to family incest.

"The dynamics are the same. Parishioners come to church expecting that clergy will help provide a nurturing, caring environment, a safe place to grow in the faith. When that trust is betrayed, the whole congregation becomes the victim. Secrets are kept, denial expressed, people are hurt and take sides, often against the one who has been victimized," she explained.

In addition to clergy exploiting the trust of adult parishioners, Moss believes that such behavior also takes place in other situations: clergy with children or teenagers; college chaplains with students; bishops with clergy, clergy spouses, or staff members; rectors with assistants, both lay and ordained.



Kelsey Brannick, Ph.D., a faculty member at a large midwestern university, experienced such a trauma in her parish five years ago when the rector was expelled by his bishop, ostensibly for recurring alcohol problems. Two years later, her fears were confirmed. The unspoken reason for the dismissal was that he had become sexually involved with a male teenage parishioner.

"I'm not sure the congregation has recovered yet," she said. "Denial, anger, depression, blaming — we've gone through an entire range of emotions and are still working at it.

"In addition, we lost a lot of our members, good ones. People who were loyal to the rector left soon after all of this happened. We've lost over a third of our pledging units and are still working to rebuild.

"In the Episcopal Church, work is just beginning with the victims of sexual exploitation. We're also offering treatment to the offending clergy person, which is good. But we're lagging way behind on knowing how to heal broken congregations once misconduct has occurred.

"We were not allowed to mourn," she said. "It was a highly charged situation, a very ambiguous one, and we weren't given the resources we needed to deal with it and go on."

Brannick believes there should be what she calls "diocesan action teams": trained clergy and laity ready to react quickly in a crisis, to offer resources, both psychological and educational, and to help the parish family mourn and heal at the same time. "I would hope that the diocese would have a repository of carefully selected people to facilitate healing. There are so many layers of denial that you need people who are very patient as well as capable of dealing with hard issues."

Such healing, according to Susan

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A survivor's journey

by Mary Meader

I see the leafless winter sticks sprout green buds, leaves, blossoms; I see them swell into this fruit that I hold in my hand, this fruit that is itself a seed. And so for me the constellation of things becomes an experience of renewal, and I feel it in the flesh of my own woman's body, which seems so vulnerable, so mortal; yet I can know, with a sense deeper than words, how it renews itself.

— Starhawk

Several years ago, in a shelter for homeless young women where I was a counselor facilitating a weekly support group, I felt the presence of evil. My faith is one that has always rejected personified evil, but I could find no other name for what I felt that evening in our midst. The topic we had chosen for discussion was sexuality and relationships, a major concern, as the women's rejection of abusive situations was partly the cause of their homelessness and despair. But we never got to these issues.

Instead, we began and ended by sharing the violence and pain of our earliest sexual experiences — incest and rape. The 10 women in the group were all victims and survivors. Some of us had mothers, friends, or institutions that had intervened on our behalf, making the pain more bearable, but most of us did not. While the stories differed in detail, the common experience was a profound, death-dealing loss of innocence and betrayal of our trust in the safety of home and community. I left grieving for our stolen childhoods and with an overwhelming visceral response to what I could only name as evil.

As an incest survivor, I shared their pain, but mine was not so raw and repressed. I had years of healing behind me, accepting reluctantly that healing is a long process, not a single event, knowing "in the flesh of my own woman's body . . . so vulnerable, so mortal . . . with a sense deeper than words, how it renews itself." I asked myself how I could help my young sisters.

Ellen Bass in her book *The Courage to Heal* speaks of the healing process, the "experience of renewal." She names 14 stages of healing, including remembering, breaking silence, trusting yourself, anger, confrontation, forgiveness, spirituality, and finally, resolution and moving on. My young sisters had begun their remembering and had broken silence; all I could do was walk with them for a while on the long road that lay ahead.

Shortly after that evening, I wrote the following reflection for a class in feminist ethics at the seminary where I was studying. It is a remembering of my own time of "leafless winter sticks." In recalling my own lost childhood, I was able to see the "sprouting green buds and leaves."

> My daughter Rebekah, age 17, home from school and needing help with an English paper, decided in her own wonderful grounded way to write her philosophical essay on saying goodbye to her childhood. This is a phrase she has used for many years when I exhorted her to rid her room of clutter or to give away her children's books or games. "No," she would say, "I can't give away my childhood." We would laugh and hug and she would continue to squirrel away her treasured bits. I rejoice today in her happiness. But after so many years, I continue to mourn my lost childhood. It was snatched from me before I was ready.
>
> I remember the summer I came of age. The memories of that time come to me in waves of emotion and of the knowledge that surely there was something more to the memories than I can recollect. It was in a way a birth. I left something and was given something. I said goodbye and never said hello. It was the summer my mother entered forever her world of madness and it was the summer my father touched me in my private places. With adult words I now can name my mother's escape and my father's violation but then I could only stand still and survive. It might not have been summer and these events might not have taken place at the same time but I remember them as having done so and thus they are for me the markings of the days of my coming of age.
>
> It was August because that is the month of my birthday. I was going to be 12 years old and in some unnamed space I felt the earth sinking and there was no warmth. The air was heavy and hot as my mother sat in her room giving and receiving messages through her "automatic writing" as she conversed with the unseen people in her world. My father's presence was heavy and threatening and I knew I was not

---

Mary Meader, a graduate of the Episcopal Divinity School, counsels abused women and is a lay deputy to General Convention from the Diocese of Massachusetts.

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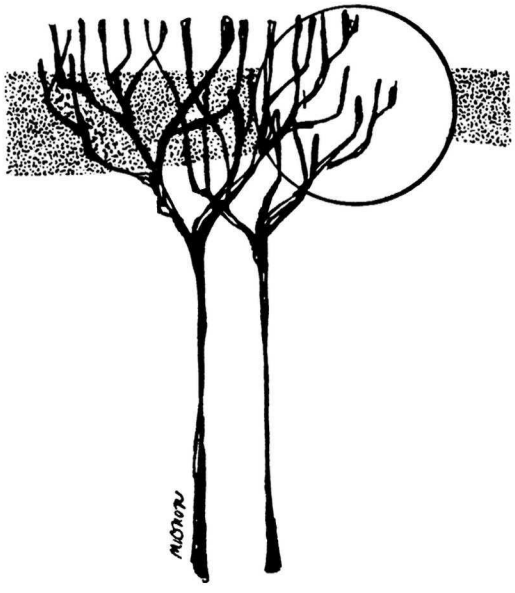


safe. Mother did not talk to me directly and I knew she did not see me. But I always went to see her when I got home from wherever I had been. I recall the desperation with which I tried to enter her world — a world that excluded me, but I so wanted to be with her. I remember talking to the "people" exactly as she instructed me. If only I could enter her world, I would be safe, and the earth would stop its sinking and I would not feel so cold.

I had never had a bicycle. There had never been enough money and I wanted one to ride to the ballfield with my friends. My birthday was approaching and my mother promised me that she would get me one for a present. She said she had ordered one and it was going to be delivered on my birthday.

The window seat in my mother's room looked over the driveway. When the delivery man came with my new bicycle he would have to pass the window. My mother told me to watch for him. The day was still and hot as late August days are, and I waited in eager anticipation. My mother was giving me a gift; she had made the arrangements, and I believed my mother. I needed to believe that she saw me and heard my longings. I was there early in the morning — no time had been given for his arrival. I waited, accompanied by my mother's reveries, her endless writing, and her occasional comment, "Do you see him?"

I never got the bicycle. No one ever came, no explanation was ever given and I never asked. I learned that day that I could not enter my mother's world, that there was no safety in my home, and my childhood was snatched away before I was ready. I left the room when the shadows of the night were long. I said goodbye but I never said hello.

My mother left me then. She escaped into a world that I could not enter and I began another life that day. I came of age. I was born that hot and still August day so many years ago.

For many years I have grieved and mourned with and for this little girl, orphaned by violation and betrayal. Slowly, over time, I learned to say hello, to trust and to feel the earth as solid.

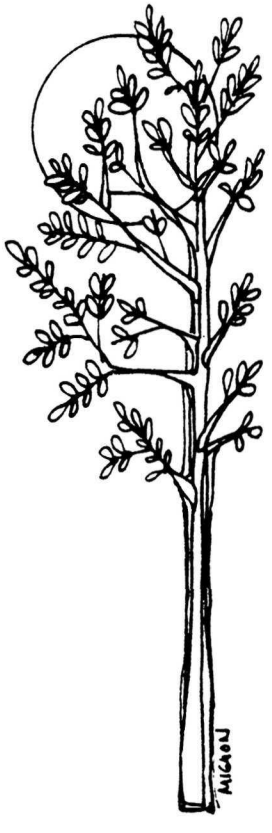
I have four children now. I have two daughters. I do not know what shadows will stand between them and the world. But I bought them bicycles and I tried hard to hear them, to see them, and to keep them safe.

My father, now dead, was an Episcopal priest. He abused his children and wife, had affairs with parishioners and eventually left us and active parish ministry. He was a troubled man, but one of great charm and intelligence. He died unable to acknowledge or to return to us what he had stolen. Yet he remained a priest "in good standing" with the blessings of his bishop, continued his work as a supply priest, and retired with a church pension.

Today the world and the church is paying attention to sexual abuse in the family and the institution. It is good but difficult work. If we are faithful to our resolve to break silence, we will create a safer world for ourselves and our children.

I serve on a Diocesan Task Force on Victims' Rights which is addressing the issues of professional misconduct and sexual abuse. My involvement is both a blessing and a burden, but I agreed to participate, recognizing with gratitude the opportunity it presents for me to complete my healing. "Having gained awareness, compassion, and power through healing," Ellen Bass tells us, we "will have the opportunity to work toward a better world." It is a way God gives me both to heal myself and briefly walk with my younger sisters on their long road.

Yes, the world and the church is paying attention. Almost any publication we



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read today bears witness. In a recent edition of *The Boston Globe*, which I read just as I sat down to write this piece, two articles caught my attention. One headline proclaimed, "Clergy Sexual Abuse: Dirty Secret Comes to Light"; the other, "Daughters Win $1.2M Jury Awards in Sex-Abuse Case Against Father." The first article reported a major ecumenical conference on professional/sexual ethics for clergy featuring the Rev. Marie Fortune, a United Church of Christ pastor, noted author, and director of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle, Wash.

The second article reported on a precedent-setting Denver, Colo. case brought to court by two sisters who had been sexually abused by their father from 1944 to 1965. They decided to prosecute him many years later after reading a news account of the suspended sentence given a young man who had pleaded guilty to the rape of an 8-year-old girl. The judge commented that he had suspended the sentence because of the character witnesses who appeared on the accused's behalf, among them the man's pastor. The two sisters stated that they had filed suit because they "wanted to tell that little girl that not everyone who abuses a child will walk away without knowing what they have done to your soul."

Increasingly, the story of sexual abuse and incest and the damage done to the victims is being told. Statistics give shape to the prevalence of such abuse, and help us to recognize the extent of the problem, but they don't tell the whole story — the story of how one lives with lost innocence and stolen childhood, the shadows cast on a life, and of the long process, the miracle, of healing.

Violence against women is deeply embedded in Western history and culture and our religious traditions. It is woven into the very fabric of our lives and thought, so securely that we often cannot perceive its presence nor acknowledge the consequences. As a community we must begin to comprehend our complicity in the individual acts of violence which occur on a daily basis.

For me the long process of healing is mostly complete. I have been helped by long years of therapy, the women's movement, living and loving, mothering four children successfully, learning again and again to trust myself and others, and finally discarding old beliefs so that I now know an abusing priest/father is not synonymous with my God.

Significantly, my spiritual healing has been most often in spite of, not within, traditional theology and liturgy. Many women report the need for spiritual healing but feel further abused and marginalized by traditional structures, language and imagery. At present roughly 60% of women victims/survivors leave the churches of their childhood seeking a safer, more affirming place of comfort and worship.

With the help of feminist scholarship and theology, we are learning to celebrate women's experience as a new paradigm through alternative, woman-centered ritual and worship. We are discovering what it means to envision a God/ess that is not defined by patriarchal, male ideation. We are learning to love and honor ourselves, our embodied female sexuality, by reclaiming a God/ess in whose image we were created. "An image . . . that inspires women," says Carol Christ in *Why Women Need the Goddess*, "to see ourselves as divine, our bodies as sacred, the changing phases of our lives as holy, our aggression as healthy, our anger as purifying . . . through the goddess, we can discover our strength, enlighten our minds, own our bodies, and celebrate our emotions."

For many survivors of incest and sexual abuse, final healing proceeds from the way we image and speak of God. Perhaps this place, where the healing survivor's journey ends, is where the church's journey begins. For as Naomi Goldberg in *The Changing of the Gods* reminds us, "Our images of God dictate who will feel worthy in society and who will feel inferior, who will be respected, and who will be despised." TW

Hardin . . . *Continued from page 7*

Moss, is at the heart of the work being done by those who participated in the Minnesota conference.

"We're working at two levels," she said. "First, we're training a group of 10 to 12 people who can respond quickly when exploitation has occurred. Their role will be to work with the one whose trust was betrayed and the offending clergy person — to bring those two together in the presence of the bishop.

"Second, we're working to educate people at all levels: from how to do pre-employment and pre-ordination background checks now required by law to responding quickly and effectively with the congregation once the knowledge of exploitation takes place."

According to Bishop Hopkins, another conference goal is to train clergy to respond effectively when a person victimized by a professional seeks help. It is also his hope that seminaries will take an active role in assisting future clergy to avoid potentially hazardous situations.

Another conference, "Instruments of Thy Peace: Strategies for Intervention and Reconciliation," has been scheduled tentatively in Minnesota for the fall. Designed for bishops and assistants of their choice, the conference will discuss the risks and ramifications of clergy sexual exploitation as well as the effect of such misconduct on congregational systems.

"It's crucial to have strong resources to address the problem," Bishop Hopkins says. "Our job is to help people mend — both laity and clergy — and get on with the mission of the church." TW

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Lesbian/Gay Ordination group seeks supporters

A Task Force for Continuing Lesbian/Gay Ordination, comprised of members of several Episcopal social justice ministries, is collecting signatures of those who have participated in ordinations of openly gay and lesbian persons or would be willing to do so.

The Task Force is composed of members of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, the Urban Caucus, Integrity and other groups that "have traditionally worked together at General Conventions."

A recent letter from the group said, "Bishops don't ordain alone. A bishop can ordain only with the approval of the duly-elected Standing Committee of the diocese and the consent of the people of God there gathered. A few people in our church are trying to capitalize on some Episcopalians' dislike or disapproval of Bishop John S. Spong and/or an individual ordinand. They insist that it is not the will of most Episcopalians that our church ordain non-celibate lesbians and gay men.

"But the issue is faithful response to the movement of the Spirit in our lives and in our church. It is time for us to say — if you want to censure Spong on the grounds that he ordained a non-celibate gay person, then you'll have to censure me, too."

Those willing to sign the statement below are asked to return it to the Task Force for presentation to the House of Bishops' meeting in Washington in September. Note that some information items on the coupon are optional, recognizing some people's need for anonymity.

Dear Bishops,

The issue at stake in the current debate is not Bishop Spong or any particular ordinand. It is our church's practice of ordaining non-celibate lesbians and gay men. Count me in!

_____ I have participated in/attended the ordination of a lesbian or gay man and would do so again.

_____ I have not knowingly participated in/attended such an ordination but I would if the opportunity presented itself and I knew the candidate to be qualified.

Name _____

(All the following information is optional. The more you give, the more power your statement will have. However, we recognize some people's need for anonymity. Tell us what you can. We have no wish to press for more.)

Parish _____ I am: ____ gay

Diocese _____ ____ lesbian

____ straight

I am a: _____bishop _____priest _____deacon _____lay person

Mail by Sept. 1 to: Task Force for Continuing Lesbian/Gay Ordination
P. O. Box 5202
New York, N.Y. 10185

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The unforgivable sin

by Carter Heyward

We have become a nation of addicts and survivors. Consequently we are witnessing today a revival of interest these days in recovery and survival — recovery from addictions and survival of abusive relationships. In the United States, we are inheritors and bearers of much shame, regardless of how happy our childhoods may have been.

An assumption I make about my audiences these days is that they are either in recovery themselves, need to be in recovery, or are close to someone who is or should be; moreover I assume that every lesbian and gay man is a "survivor" of abuse in a homophobic patriarchy, whether or not he or she realizes it.

We live in a society in which neither children nor adults grow easily into a strong sense of themselves as good people deserving of dignity, joy and profound respect.

The prevailing cultural motifs which have shaped everyone in this country have shamed us into feeling bad about how deeply we need one another's affirmation, acceptance and tenderness in order to grow joyfully and fully. We Western Christians have learned to be ashamed of our strongest dreams of radical and passionate interconnectedness and interreliance.

Often we lack adequate comprehension of the social and political character of our life together. Our shame is rooted in emotionally, spiritually, and often physically violent power structures such as heterosexism, sexism, racism, ablebodyism, classism, and so on. Thus, we are inclined to interpret our feelings of shame as a personal problem, or as something endemic to our families or relationships, rather than as a signal that something is wrong with the larger social order.

The mystical prophetic voice speaks through the pages of the Book of Revelation: "God will wipe away every tear." We are likely to wonder, how can this be?

In the Gospel according to Luke, we hear Jesus say: "I tell you, my friends, don't fear those who kill the body and after that can do no harm. But I will warn you whom to fear: Fear the one who, after killing you, has power to cast you into hell."

And Jesus continues with a cryptic, visionary warning about the so-called Son of Man — the apocalyptic "Human One." Contrasting the relatively sacred character of the Human One with the absolute sanctity of the Holy Spirit, Jesus says something that has intrigued me over the years: "Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven."

As a child, I heard this literally as a warning never to say anything bad about the Holy Ghost — no jokes, no cursing. I want to suggest what I now believe is the link between our tears and shame and the reality of hell by reflecting on what the Holy Spirit may be in our lives, what it means to blaspheme against it, and why this particular sin is not forgiven.

Jesus, our brother in the Spirit, spoke of this Spirit as a gift God would offer to comfort and strengthen us. Augustine referred to the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between the Father and the Son, or between the creative source of all life and particular forms of life, especially as they seek to know, love and worship the Creator. The doctrine of the Trinity implies that this source of all love, justice and creative power in the universe is moving among us eternally as a spiritual force — the Holy Spirit — connecting our lives and generating right relation. In other words, the Holy Spirit of God cannot be known as an icon or symbol of a static principle or as one person. The Spirit pushes us beyond getting stuck spiritually with any fixed image of God.

Anglicanism is founded theologically (though often not very well in practice) upon a doctrine of spiritual "participation." This doctrine originates in the faith-assumption that the God whom Jesus loved, the God who was revealed in the work and person of Jesus, is with us now: the Spirit who we reveal, embody, share and enjoy. She is the One Holy Universal God whose very being is with us. She is the connecting link, or bond of love, between and among us. She is the power that enables me to know who I am in right — mutual — relation with you: I am your sister. She is the blessing that assures me it is only in right relation to you that I can know who I am. For she, the Holy One, teaches me that without you, I am nothing. Without one another, we have no identity, no accurate sense of ourselves. The basis of our humaness is our right-connectedness, our mutuality. Without it, we are nothing.

Without the Holy Spirit's active involvement in our lives, joining us rightly with one another, we are not fully human. The Spirit literally shapes our humaness. This is the metaphysics of who

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we are. As we form together our ethics and the ways we live, we embody God. We become ongoing incarnations. From a Christian perspective, we embody Christ — the sacred, liberating cooperation of divine and human which was the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Our shared vocation is to notice this sacred power in our lives together.

If we literally are constituted together, if this is our natural human state, and if our power in this relatedness is the Holy Spirit of God, then to blaspheme or sin against this Spirit is to break the connections with one another, to disconnect.

To sin against the Holy Spirit is to act as though we were not brothers, sisters, friends; as if each of us were on his/her own in the world, not responsible for one another. This spiritual sin sets the stage for addictions — which are essentially diseases of isolation or disconnection — and for abuse. Emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual or political abuse is done most often not by evil, conniving villains, but by people out of touch with one another and, hence, with ourselves as we are called forth to be by the Holy Spirit of God. The vast amount of abuse done in the world is accomplished by good folks, you and I, when we lose touch with each other as brothers, sisters, and companions on earth.

And to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit is the unforgivable sin. But why? Surely, it is not because God has no mercy upon us in our disconnected places of isolation and despair. It is rather because it is in the very nature of being disconnected to fear connectedness, to fear love, to fear God. Alienated from one another, we are incapable of experiencing the love — the Spirit — which is God.

To live without a sense of the power and presence of the Spirit of mutual relation in our lives is to live unforgiven lives. It is literally to live in a vicious circle from which there is no exit. In this state, we cannot hear, take seriously, or trust the invitation of those who may reach out to us by God's grace to invite us into right relation with them and hence with ourselves. So we remain stuck in isolation — prisoners of fear, loneliness and shame — hidden in our places of disconnection, which for many are addiction and/or abuse.

Unable to trust, or accept, the forgiveness of a God who calls us into right relation, we remain unforgiven — and this, my brothers and sisters, is hell. I am not speaking metaphorically but literally of a place in which we cannot experience the love of God — not because God is not yearning for us but because we are shut down to the possibility of being touched and moved by the Spirit of God.

"To sin against the Holy Spirit is to act as if we were not brothers, sisters, friends . . ."

Hell is any place, any time, any event in which we are stuck in shame and frozen in fear.

But a feminist liberation theological perspective pushes us further: What is the difference, in this dreadful schema, between the hell in which the abusive person is caught and that in which the abused person is trapped? What is the difference, theologically and ethically, pastorally and politically, between the powerful and the powerless in relation to disconnectedness, isolation and hell? Is each unforgiven in the same way?

No, they are not. In an abusive situation, the victim is not responsible. Black people are not responsible for racist violence against them. Children are not responsible for physical or sexual abuse imposed on them. Gay men and lesbians are not responsible for the homophobic treatment we receive. Women are not responsible for sexism. In any relationship, only those with power over others — the power to disconnect and abuse — are responsible for wrong relationship. They sin against the Holy Spirit.

But there is a very real danger here as well for the powerless, for all victims of abuse. It is the danger of being sucked into the hell of the abuser, being pulled into despair and isolation by those already there. This is the danger of identifying with the oppressor, of learning to act like and feel like those who violate and abuse us. It is, I believe, the danger against which Jesus counsels when he says, "I will warn you whom to fear — fear the one who, after killing (raping, trivializing, hurting or rejecting) you, has the power to cast you into hell."

It is against this danger and this hell, this unforgiven place that survivors of abuse and people recovering from addictions are learning together to say no. And we are learning *because* we are together. We may be physically alone. We may often choose solitude. But more and more we know ourselves as sisters, brothers, and friends — our lives, dreams, destinies and freedoms connected at the root, a forgiving and forgiven people. A people more and more aware of the grace of God as a blessing which enables us to experience love together as a joy rather than as something to be feared.

As we come into an embodied realization of the Spirit that connects us, we begin to see that she is an open invitation to shape the future together. We begin to realize that in the Spirit of forgiveness, the future is always open. And this irrepressible blessing draws us into the heart of that power which is love, which is mutual, which is movement, which is constant and which is God.

And God shall wipe away every tear from our eyes — and the shame will be over. TW

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Shameful secrets

by Faith Evans

For a little over a year I have been meeting with a small group of persons to discuss a shameful secret we each have been carrying around with us for most of our lives. We meet about once a month to provide ongoing support for each other around a vast problem, now critical in our society, which is largely ignored or hidden because it's too shameful for us to face. Most of my group have not exposed their secret to any others than those in the group.

When I was a child, I was sexually assaulted before I was nine by three different persons — twice by males and once by a female. Each of these were individuals to whom I had turned out of a deep sense of fear and pain resulting from the mental and physical abuse I received at the hands of foster parents.

Both males involved in this sexual abuse were ordained representatives of the church, who had developed a very close relationship with me as substitute fathers. The female, who knew of my foster parents' abusiveness (she rented their upstairs apartment), provided a comfortable haven for me. Actually, I never thought what she did to me was sexual abuse until several years ago.

When I was eight, I got very attached to one of my teachers, who was also a minister in the church I attended. He was great at sports and taught science — one of the subjects I really loved. And he counseled kids who were in trouble. At the time, I was a very mean-acting kid who was always in fights at school. He and I had worked out this deal — I wouldn't fight in school, but on Fridays after school I could put on boxing gloves and duke it out in the gym privately. He began to call on me to help him in class and after school with various things he paid me to do. He got me passes to movies and took me on trips to Coney Island and the Bronx Zoo. We talked a lot, and he learned quite a bit about the physical and verbal abuse I got at home. He would buy me clothes and invite me over to his house to eat. He would ask my foster parents' permission for me to help him out on weekends, so I would often stay over at his place and we would bathe together and sleep in one bed. He hugged a lot in private.

At the time I felt strange about where and how he was touching me, but compared to the other comforts I was enjoying, I accepted this as part of our relationship. When I turned nine he got permission for me to attend camp at Bear Mountain with a church group. I was his chief honcho at the time and primarily stayed in the cabin with him. During that two-week period I was sodomized nightly and forced to commit oral sex a number of times. I cannot hope to get across in this article the real pain of that two-week experience. The only thing I can compare it with is someone being raped by a close friend or having a parent commit incest. The physical pain I was able to suppress, for I thought of myself as a tough kid hardened by the abuse I had been receiving most of my life. It was the utter shame and feeling of total violation I couldn't shake. It was clear to me when I left that camp that I could never trust anyone for the rest of my life. I could never talk to anyone about what had happened, for the only person I could talk to about such a thing was the very person who had done it to me.

For almost a month afterwards, I literally terrorized those around me. I remember almost smothering my foster parents' child to death. I spent my days and nights thinking up ways to kill them, everything from burning down the house to putting rat poison in the food. Instead of going to church every Sunday, I would sneak off to the movies. I dreaded the end of summer because I knew I would have to go back to church or school and run into this teacher/minister. The closer I got to this time the meaner I became. Just before I was to return to school I pushed my foster mother down the stairs and plunged a knife into the chest of my foster father.

As I reflect on that time, I would have to say the most serious impact of that abuse was the loss of my childhood. It seems to me that I leapt over what should have been the most formative years of my life. I can't remember times when I acted or played or thought like a child. I remember just trying to survive a day without being in some kind of pain. I don't remember a childhood friend or buddy. Everything I enjoyed doing I did alone most of my life. It made me feel safe not to be around human beings. I remember envying kids my age who had families that seemed to love them, who had homes to go to. They got Christmas and birthday presents and a party. They bragged about what they got and wore



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new clothes and sometimes I hated them because of it. I also remember how I could always feel someone else's pain, but could never feel or accept that someone loved me.

As an adult, most of my work has been with women's groups, especially low-income groups. I found myself developing strong bonds with women in these groups because I actually could feel the pain they were trying to express about their lives and the conditions they were forced to live under in this society. Their pain overwhelmed me, and I so identified with it that even today those relationships formed back in the '60s have held and bonded us together. On the other hand, several intimate relationships I had grew into distrust, as the result of my partner's need for me to respond to her love. When the subject of loving me came up, I ran as fast as I could.

I believe the difficulty I have had being intimate with women — even though I have been married three times — is also related to those early events. Throughout those marriages I would jump if touched in bed at night. I always used to steel myself to have sex. It wasn't that I never lusted or wanted to have intimacy, but I just couldn't without some mental effort. Alcohol was my greatest help during these years, because I could at times seem to forget with enough of it, and when I couldn't perform, it was a great excuse.

I had also relied on alcohol to get through the days when I was younger. From age 11, when I ran away to live on the streets, part of my reputation was that I "had no throat." That meant that whenever everybody chipped in to buy a gallon of wine, I was not allowed to drink first because I could drink down a quart without taking a breath. Every day I drank anything from wine to whiskey. I was known all over the neighborhoods. Adults would buy me drinks just to see how much I could drink before getting



drunk, which I never seemed to get. When I was 14, a new drink called Thunderbird came out. I remember putting the bottle to my lips and trying to guzzle it down. I have no idea why, but I got sick and threw up on the spot, and from then on, until I was 22, I was never able to drink anything.

But since that time I have on several occasions returned to alcohol as a way to sleep or to take away the pain I felt about my relationships. At times when I am lonely, I find myself going to a bar to drink and get away from the pressure I put on myself because I'm alone.

There was also a period in my life when, as a single parent, I felt I was a potential child abuser. When I say "potential," I mean that I never abused my children, but felt that if I touched them I would kill or hurt them very badly. For almost three years I didn't touch them because of this fear. I kept them from pain and harm, I sheltered them.

During those first three years, being a parent was like being an alcoholic, taking one day at a time without a drink. Then one day I was sitting in the dining room, and my son came in with tears in his eyes and said his sisters wouldn't let him play with them. I announced it was meeting time. The other three came in and began crying because their brother was crying. I didn't know whether I wanted to cry or laugh at the situation, but I do remember all of us just hugging and laughing and crying at the same time. From that point on, all I ever wanted to do was hug them and make up for all the times I felt I should have touched them. Ever since that moment, I have never felt that fear again. A giant internal weight had been lifted. I wish I could state that something really important or dramatic made that moment happen, but I can only attribute it to my belief in God's loving mercy.

Throughout my life I have had inexplicable things like that hit me out of the clear blue. When I was taken from my last foster home and institutionalized for two years, I spent many nights dreaming of how I could get vengeance on my foster parents. When I was 22, I took a train to New York City, got on a subway and went to their house in Brooklyn. I had no idea what I was going to do to them. I just knew I needed to do something. I arrived just before sundown. As I reached the gate my former foster mother was sitting in front of her little garden. She called out to ask who was there — she could not see well. She looked very old and sickly. As I entered that yard, every bit of the hate I had carried for all those years seemed to disappear and I answered, "It's Faith, one of your boys." As I sat next to her, I was overwhelmed with pity and I touched her hand tenderly. I left an hour later, feeling very empty. From that moment on I don't ever remember being able to stay mad at any human being for more than 24 hours.

As an adult, I have wondered why I so

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totally suppressed my anger at the persons who sexually abused me. In discussions with others like me I have learned there seems to be a fairly consistent pattern — we tend to blame ourselves for what happened, as if we were willing participants. We are always asking what we did to encourage someone to do that to us. I got caught up with the need to relate to someone. I trusted and let myself get comfortable and enjoy the little pleasures and kindnesses. Yet I made myself vulnerable and that also was unacceptable. What would people think if they found out? My reaction to those events was part of my denial of what happened to me.

A few years ago, in a private discussion with a black male minister for whom I had a lot of respect, I disclosed the incidents of sexual abuse in my life. Several months later during a debate I was having with him on sex discrimination, he implied that my stance on women's rights was because of these incidents and that I needed help to rid myself of this anti-male problem.

After my initial response of anger, I concluded he was right. Because of the abuse, I definitely grew up with a strong dislike and distrust of adults in general, and a hateful attitude against white males, for both male abusers were white. Even today, I always find myself challenging the authority of any males in positions of power.

I have also decided that this isn't something I need to cure. I believe I have survived with some humanity because I have refused to join this elite, sexist male club that has held sway over the world from time immemorial. Perhaps in some way I've been lucky in that regard.

I don't have many male friends. I have strong non-sexual relationships with many females from different cultures and classes. I am considered by some to be a feminist. That doesn't mean I am free of sexism, but I can admit to being conscious of my sexism. If the sum total of seeking help for my supposed problem is to make me more understanding of the "problems" of males, I think I'd rather continue to sit with a group of economically, politically and socially-oppressed women and nurture some of the anger that's there.

When I discuss this period in my life, people want to hear about what helped me get through or make it as a human being. They want to understand how people overcome some of the most horrible conditions in life and still retain some humanity.

"I would have to say the most serious impact of that abuse was the loss of my childhood."

I don't have the answer most want to hear; I cannot point to the times where I am convinced God responded to my prayers. If anything, I became disappointed in God and her inability to respond when I needed her. But I have a very strong belief that God is at work in the world and that who I am *now* has been a part of that work.

Underlying it all is a deep and abiding faith that I have felt from the time I was a child. At certain points in my life I have seriously questioned it, but have always relied upon it. This gave me a foundation to work at not becoming what society and its oppressive institutions, including the organized church, would have me become. Somehow my separation of God from the institution at an early age really made a difference in my functioning as a unique human being. I also know that the faith I possess came out of those same institutions. I don't have an answer for how that happens, but I see it around me all the time in South Africa, slavery in this country, the oppression of Eastern European nations, or the Philippines. Somehow out of all that oppression against human beings there seems to be a real and personalized faith experience that defies all logic.

I compare my experience with those persons who have, no matter what the oppression, retained a deep and abiding faith in God and her ability to eventually help them keep their humanity.

It has only occurred to me in the last few years what a tremendous impact the three people who abused me have had on my life. I also know there are millions of children and adults in our society who are going through similar experiences. Many of them go through life as I did, harboring this experience as a deep, dark shameful secret locked away in their minds, and refusing to deal with it. They live their lives not knowing why they can't seem to nurture trusting relationships with their partners or children or why they keep even their closest friends at a certain distance. We survivors seem to defy the conventional wisdom of counseling or analysis because we tend to suppress those experiences and not relate them to anyone. How can we ever again trust someone so totally?

As a black male who will be 50 years old this year, I've come to realize how huge a problem sexual abuse is in our society. I also realize that the simple act of being able to discuss this shame can change one's future. It's not the exposure of the abuser (though that may be incentive for some), but the release of this burden that can make a difference. Time after time when I have exposed this secret in groups the number of people who have talked to me about their own abuse has overwhelmed me. Recently someone I've known for the last 20 years, who is a school district administrator, came to me and related her

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experience with a school teacher 35 years ago. She told how, after going through years of analysis, she is now responding because she finally decided to discuss her sexual abuse with her analyst.

I have run into people who have at times contemplated suicide as a result of this shameful secret.

I'm hoping that some of you who have sheltered this secret might expose it soon for your own wholeness. Those of you who work with people out there might consider taking an extra look at those whom you counsel and help them rid themselves of this secret.

Granted, it is no easy task to discern who has been affected by abuse, especially years after it has taken place. But it stands to reason that those who always seem to defy conventional methods for addressing relationship problems, or who seek counseling but seem not to want to discuss certain aspects of their childhood, or avoid touch, or find pleasure in spending a great deal of time isolated and alone, are people who have probably been abused.

I am no expert just because I have been through the experience of sexual abuse. But in the past couple of years I have only begun to feel really liberated after I began to relate these experiences in presentations to church people. On the whole there has been a very good response, and even more surprising has been the number of people who have called, written or talked to me afterward.

This has surprised me because I have never considered myself the type of person who people walk up to and feel comfortable with right off the bat. I found it a little uncomfortable at first. But then I realized my presentations were touching a group of persons (almost entirely female) who really had a need to relate to someone who would understand, and they connected with what I had to say.

As one who was sexually abused, let me state that writing this piece has not been easy for me, and it will not be easy for others to reveal their abuse, whether they are very young or very old. I don't know what life will hold for me in the 1990s, but I do know that there is real potential for me to function more healthily because of my exposure of this most shameful secret. I sincerely hope it can encourage someone out there to do the same. IW

Pauli Murray fund established

A Pauli Murray Minority Scholarship Fund has been instituted at General Theological Seminary in New York to encourage enrollment of minority students, according to Elaine Silverstrim, one of the prime movers for the fund. With $1,400 already collected, a minimum of $5,000 must be raised within three years or the amount will revert to a General Scholarship Fund.

The Murray scholarship bears the name of the noted civil rights activist and feminist, an alumna of GTS, who became the first black woman to be ordained in the Episcopal Church.

The idea for the fund grew out of a racism audit at the seminary which investigated staffing, faculty and student recruitment. As a result of this study, an Affirmative Action Committee was formed which worked with the dean to develop an affirmative action checklist for hiring of faculty and staff.

In looking at the recruitment process, the committee realized that the high costs of tuition was a significant impediment to minority enrollment, Silverstrim, who chaired the group, said.

A single student living frugally can expect to spend between $18,000 to $20,000 per year; for married students, especially those with children, costs run from $22,000 to $35,000. "New York is both a blessing and a bane as a seminary site," Silverstrim said. "The opportunities for experiencing the broader church and world are unlimited. On the other hand, even the most mundane items, from laundry detergent to coffee, cost more."

Two black students received Master of Divinity degrees this year and only one had been in residence for the full three years. In terms of Latino enrollment, there is only one Puerto Rican student presently in the M.Div. program.

"A minority scholarship in and of itself cannot give out the message, 'we want you, we welcome you,' but it can be a step in that direction," Silverstrim said.

It seemed logical to name the fund after the late Pauli Murray, a pioneer in other fields besides the church. She was one of two women to enroll in Howard University Law School in 1941 and was the first black deputy attorney general of California. She was also a Freedom Rider in the 1960s and one of the founders of the National Organization for Women. The fund "seemed a fitting way to honor her life and work, while looking into the future with hope and perseverance," Silverstrim said.

Those wishing to contribute can send checks payable to the Pauli Murray Scholarship Fund to Patrick O'Hagan, Development Office, General Theological Seminary, 175 Ninth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.

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Rural reign of terror in Guatemala

by Lawrence Lack

Two leaders of the paramilitary Civil Patrol shot and killed 47-year-old Maria Mejía outside her home in the remote Guatemalan mountain town of Parraxtut in March. Mejía's husband, Pedro Castro Tojin, 42, was seriously wounded. The family had been receiving threats since this past fall when Pedro, his wife's three sons by a previous marriage, and four other men had resigned from the Civil Patrol after learning of their legal right to do so.

Mejía's murder and subsequent events in Parraxtut have fueled a national debate about whether the Patrols should be dissolved. The Civil Patrols give Guatemala's army virtually absolute control over the rural areas of the country.

About three-quarters of a million men, one-fifth of all the men in Guatemala, serve as unpaid reservists in the Civil Patrols, making Guatemala one of the most thoroughly militarized nations on earth. In the hundreds of impoverished Mayan Indian towns like Parraxtut that stretch north to the Mexican border, every male from 15 to 60 who can walk is enrolled.

Patrol members must serve at least 24 to 48 hours every week or two. Generally barefoot and wearing only their ragged clothes, they tramp the impossibly rugged mountain and canyon country in search of a phantom guerrilla enemy they almost never encounter. This is probably best for them, since they are issued only a limited number of antiquated guns. Most are armed solely with machetes and sticks. When they are allowed to camp, they have no equipment beyond a few shared blankets. More often, even when they are away from home for several nights, they are expected to stay up and on the march almost continuously.

Often, when they come home from duty, they are too tired to work their plots of corn and beans, but they must try, because without a harvest, their families will face starvation. Patrol members who work on the plantations of the south coast sometimes are required to come home for Patrol duty every week — a trip that can cost half a week's pay or more in lost time and bus fares. (Others pay "fines" to Patrol leaders while they are away.)

Besides the exhausting routine of policing their villages and the surrounding countryside, Patrol members are encouraged and, some say, expected to denounce their fellow villagers to the army as guerrillas or guerrilla collaborators. This policy creates suspicion and sometimes violence.

The Guatemalan Army claims that Patrol service is completely voluntary, that Patrollers sign up and work to protect their families from an ever-present communist threat. Patrol leaders and members are taught to echo this rationale. But Parraxtut and hundreds of highland towns like it live in the shadow of army counter-insurgency campaigns that took the lives of close to 100,000 Guatemalans nationally in the late '70s and early '80s. Most observers agree that fear of the army, not the guerrillas, is what motivates service.

Those who have tried to leave the "voluntary" Patrols have been branded as communists and subversives. In Parraxtut, as in many other towns, they have been threatened and sometimes tortured by other Patrol members or the army. According to Maria Mejía's oldest son Juan, some who tried to leave the Parraxtut Patrol had their limbs bound and, under the supervision of army personnel, were submerged in ice-cold water to the point of drowning until they agreed to re-enlist.

In a number of highland towns where men have resisted duty they have been killed outright or kidnapped, tortured and then killed. Witnesses and family members who have spoken with human rights groups say these killings are the work of the army or of Patrol members acting under army orders.

Late in the summer of 1989, Juan Mejía, who by then had already served nearly eight years in the Civil Patrols, heard a paid announcement on the radio by anti-Patrol crusader Amílcar Méndez. A schoolteacher and head of CERJ, Méndez said that Civil Patrols are unconstitutional and that men have the right to refuse to participate in them. (CERJ, an acronym that stands for "Ethnic Communities — Everyone Equal" in a combination of Spanish and the Maya Quiché language, is based in Santa Cruz del Quiché, the capital of Quiché State where Parraxtut is located.) Some time later Juan, his two younger brothers, their stepfather Pedro and some other men from Parraxtut met with Méndez. All the Parraxtut men who went to this meeting were veteran members, most having served since Civil Patrols were

Lawrence Lack, a free-lance journalist, is a former volunteer with Peace Brigades International in Guatemala.

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initiated in 1982. "The army has always told us and everyone else that it was required," Juan says.

In December, the four family members and four of their friends informed the leadership of the Parraxtut Civil Patrol that they had decided to resign.

Even before that, Maria Mejía had been in trouble with the army. Her first husband was killed in an army sweep of the area in 1982. Parraxtut's population of about 3,000 includes over 150 widows, a small proportion for a town in the northwest highlands. Most of these women lost their husbands to indiscriminate army violence in the early '80s. In 1988 Maria had helped organize a Parraxtut chapter of CONAVIGUA, a national widows' mutual support group, and because of this her life had been threatened several times. Now that her family was seen as the core of a revolt against the Patrols, she was viewed as a subversive, and from December on she and her family were frequent targets of verbal abuse and harassment.

The owner of a local mill told Maria he would no longer grind corn for her because she worked with CONAVIGUA and was "in contact with guerrillas." Later she, her husband, and her sister Magdalena were ordered to come to a meeting of Civil Patrol leaders which was also attended by several army officers. Magdalena brought a copy of Guatemala's constitution which states that no one can be forced to join any kind of civil defense organization against their will. Army officers told her "that law has changed."

At about 6:30 p.m on March 17, Maria, Pedro and his two sons Francisco and Diego were eating when two men approached the house. Pedro's sons ran and hid in the bushes while their father and Maria went out front and asked, "Who is it?" Receiving no answer, Pedro turned his flashlight on the two. "They were only two meters from us; we could see right away who they were," says Pedro. He later identified the men as Juan de Leon Pérez and Domingo Castro Lux, Patrol leaders who are also military commissioners — local officials who work for the army as recruiters and military intelligence agents. The two had threatened Maria and her family on several previous occasions.

When Pedro turned his flashlight on them the two men began shooting. They fired a few rounds in the air, then lowered their guns and fired on Pedro and Maria at point blank range. Hit in the chest, Maria staggered into the house. Pedro, wounded in the back and sides, went with her. The two gunmen followed. One fired at Pedro, collapsed in the corner, but missed him in the dark. The other put his weapon to Maria's head and "gave her the '*tiro de gracia*'," as Pedro said later. The killers then left. Pedro went to where his wife was lying and saw she was dead.

Had it not been for some rather atypical connections with the outside world, the story of Maria's murder might have ended with her burial, as have scores of other killings by Civil Patrol members and military commissioners in the highlands, receiving at most a few lines in one of the Guatemalan papers. But since February, Maria's son Juan had been living and working at the CERJ office.

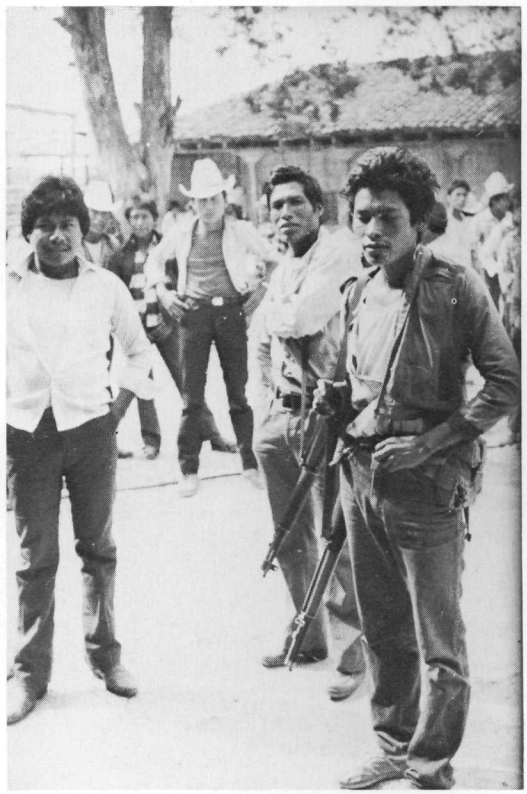
After Maria's burial, a number of the mourners who tried to go home were threatened by gangs of Civil Patrol members. Juan and Amílcar Méndez invited a dozen of these terrified Parraxtut refugees, plus six of their small children and a now near-catatonic Pedro, to Santa Cruz where they were housed in the small unfurnished rooms of the CERJ office.

Juan and Méndez contacted the press and international human rights groups, including Amnesty International and Americas Watch, about Maria's murder. They also took steps to have her murderers brought to justice. Pedro and his sons gave depositions before the local human rights attorney and a judge, who authorized an order for the arrest of the two killers.

On March 27 the Quiché human rights attorney for the Guatemalan government, along with his superior, the national deputy human rights attorney César Alvarez Guadamuz, and several of his staffers traveled to Parraxtut in a three-car caravan. Also included were Amílcar Méndez, Juan Mejía, two international human rights observers and two uniformed members of the National Police. The policemen carried arrest warrants for the two men who killed Maria.

At the entrance to Parraxtut the three cars were stopped by a crowd of over

Continued on page 24



Civil Patrol members in Parraxtut

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Mary Brent Wehrli:

From affluency to radical activist

by Mary Lou Suhor

Mary Brent Wehrli made front page news earlier this year when she interrupted a Los Angeles speech by President Bush and was dragged out by a Republican who tore her blouse.

LA Times photographer Larry Davis caught the action, and peace activist Wehrli and five other protestors who infiltrated a $1,000 a plate fundraising dinner dinner made headlines the next day. "I didn't even know a photo had been taken. I was focused on my message," Wehrli marveled.

That message, which caused the President to break off his address was: *"Mr. President, self-determination is what the people of Central America want. Self-determination is what the people of Central America deserve. President Bush, you are an Episcopalian. I am an Episcopalian. You profess to be a man of God. I ask that you listen to our Presiding Bishop who has called for an end to all military aid to El Salvador."*

Wehrli and the other activists interrupted the dinner intermittently to protest U.S. domestic and foreign policies. Michael Breault, a Jesuit, shouted, "George Bush paid for the bullets that killed my Jesuit brothers. The killing has to stop." Fredericka (Freddie) Schrider, who with Wehrli attends St. Augustine's, Santa Monica, intervened, "Stop the killing in El Salvador." A woman claiming to have AIDS shouted down the MC and asked, "What's George going to do about AIDS?" Some 600 protestors who gathered outside the Century Plaza Hotel, site of the dinner, were broken up by 80 Los Angeles police in full riot gear, who arrested nine.

Wehrli, executive director of the Southern California Interfaith Task Force on Central America (SCITCA) since 1985, was the fourth to interrupt Bush from the same dinner table. "I thought they were going to throw all of us out. I sat there as they ejected the others one by one, trying to look properly outraged until I could speak," she said. Wehrli over the past months has been involved in setting up weekly interfaith liturgies, demonstrations and programs in front of the Federal Building to expose U.S. military intervention in Central America.

Her work has also attracted the attention of former Salvadoran Death Squad members who have come to Los Angeles to live. Wehrli's name appeared on their 1988 death list, and she has had threatening calls at her office. Such harassment is not dismissed out of hand; in a neighboring office, Yanira Corea, who worked with the Salvadoran Women's Union, was abducted and raped with a stick two years ago. But Wehrli persistently coordinates weekly demonstrations for the Coalition for Peace and Justice in El Salvador and the United States, which has resulted in something under 1,000 arrests for non-violent civil disobedience.

Wehrli herself has been arrested more than 20 times. Noted labor unionists, educators, health care professionals, lawyers, religious leaders, and actors and entertainers such as Martin Sheen, Ed Asner, David Clennon, Jackson Browne and Holly Near have appeared in protests she has helped to organize.

SCITCA tries to educate by making connections between violence at home and violence perpetrated abroad. "U.S. military funding kills people in El Salvador and Guatemala, and results in domestic budget cuts which sever aid to the poor, minorities, and AIDS research, producing homelessness and institutional violence which kills people here," Wehrli said. "It comes full circle. In the '60s the administration declared a war on poverty, but today the war is on the poor themselves."

Notables who have participated in SCITCA programs are liberation theologians Robert McAfee Brown and Enrique Dussel, medical activist Dr. Charles Clements, and the late journalist Penny Lernoux. The religious community, including prominent bishops and rabbis, is largely responsible for keeping the momentum going behind high-level lobbying efforts and weekly demonstrations in front of the Federal Building, Wehrli said. SCITCA, now in its 10th year, with a paid membership of 400 and a mailing list of 1500, will honor Episcopal Bishop Fred Borsch of Los Angeles at an anniversary dinner in November for his strong support of Central American refugees living in the area.

The dynamic SCITCA director believes in a lifestyle which witnesses to her commitment. Wehrli follows a simple diet and wears rummage items and hand-me-downs. "But the blouse I wore to the Republican dinner was a hand-me-up from my daughter," she laughed.

Wehrli is a graduate of UCLA, and in June attended the 30th anniversary of her graduating class from the Marlborough School, "which Nixon's daughters attended." She describes her transformation from affluent, Episcopal suburban housewife to radical activist as a "faith journey."

"I was apolitical during the Vietnam



Larry Davis/Los Angeles Times

Mary Brent Wehrli is dragged out of a Republican fundraising dinner after she interrupted an address by President George Bush.

War." she said. "My oldest, Bill was born in 1964, and as I read the paper I couldn't figure out 'who started this' or understand the strange names and changes in borders. One day I just closed the newspaper and decided 'I'll let them handle this.' I've festered ever since."

Her politicization began in 1970 when she volunteered to work in a gang divergency program at the Neighborhood Youth Association in nearby Venice.

"I left the world of privilege I had been born into and worked for five years with Latino and black children in a world of poverty just five miles away," she said. "I was appalled that the NYA could not get funding for its programs, when on the international scene we were experiencing a horrendous buildup of nuclear weapons and escalation of intervention in Central America. That's when I began to make connections about what was going on.

"Later, I went to social work classes and was assigned to the Interfaith Hunger Coalition as my field project. They were analyzing why people were going hungry when enough food could be produced to feed them. I didn't want to make sandwiches in soup kitchens the rest of my life when I realized there were structural obstacles to reaching those in need. The government is willing to sentence certain people to poverty and homelessness. These are moral issues."

In 1982, she became active with Women of Conscience, an ad hoc group of church women who came together to do acts of civil disobedience to protest U.S. policies in Central America. Today, many of them supply the paid and volunteer labor to groups in solidarity with Central and Latin America.

Wehrli's husband, Martin, a lawyer in Century City; her daughter Gail, now a first year medical student; and son Bill, who works as a carpenter and is pursuing a teaching degree, are all supportive of her politics.

"When the children were growing up, I wasn't always around like some mothers to bake cookies and drive them places," Wehrli admitted. "But neither do working mothers who get home at 6 p.m. have time for these things. My children understood that what I was doing was not just 'gallavanting'."

She is deeply appreciative of her family's support. After her speakout with George Bush, "spirits were floating" in the solidarity offices where she worked. Her colleagues saw her protest as their story too.

"But Martin goes to work to mixed reviews," she said. "And my daughter is at a school not necessarily known for its progressivity."

Wehrli has traveled to El Salvador three times, having returned recently from leading an ecumenical delegation to the capital and to a repopulated area. She has been to Guatemala twice.

In her view, Guatemala is the more oppressed. "We trained their forces, gave them more technological help and 'Vietnamized' them earlier than El Salvador. In the early '80s, 440 villages were wiped out, and 100,000 people died. So today you hear generals in El Salvador strategizing, 'Why don't we use the Guatemala solution?'

"From a general's perspective, they ask, is it worse to kill 100,000 in a short time, as in Guatemala, or to kill 10,000 a year in El Salvador, which is now up to 70,000 dead? They are actually debating whether to simply kill the opposition and rebuild the country to their image," she said.

After the photo of Mary Brent Wehrli appeared in the *LA Times*, reader Katherine Callen King wrote a Letter to the Editor comparing what happened to Hipparchia at a dinner party 2,000 years ago. "Her skillful argumentation so frustrated the philosopher Theodorus that all he could think to do was to pull up her dress . . . Hipparchia was neither panicked nor distracted by her disarranged clothing. The photo shows that Ms. Wehrli was not distracted either. Both women apparently kept right on making their point."

"Some repetitions of history," classicist King concluded, "are more inspiring than others." TW

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Lawyer spurns grand jury, faces jail

by Susan E. Pierce

Attorney Linda Backiel believes in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights — and may have to go to jail to prove it. A former public defender in Philadelphia, Backiel has spent much of her career fighting what she calls the "inquisition" of the secret grand jury system, as well as defending political prisoners. Now, because she has refused, on principle, to testify before a grand jury concerning the case of a former client, Backiel could face 13 months in prison.

Her client, Elizabeth Ann Duke, was arrested in Philadelphia in May 1985, along with Dr. Alan Berkman, and indicted when a cache of arms and explosives were found in a shed they had been renting. Backiel was one of four lawyers working for the defense.

Duke disappeared two days before her court appearance while staying at the home of one of the other attorneys.

In March of this year, a federal grand jury seeking to gather information on Duke's disappearance subpoenaed Backiel, who refused to testify. She said afterwards, "It is not the job of the defense lawyer to appear as a witness. It's a betrayal of the client's trust."

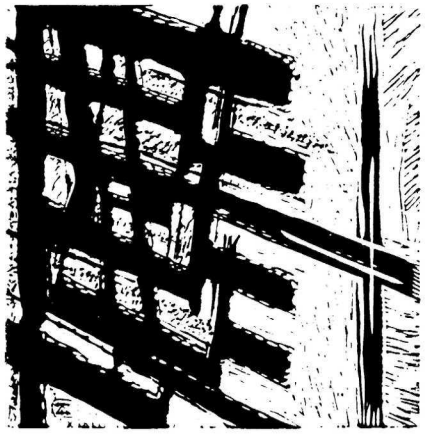
Backiel, who now lives in Puerto Rico, has for several years been involved in an international human rights campaign on behalf of political prisoners in Puerto Rico and the United States. Her attorney, Leonard Weinglass, argued in court that the U.S. government was targeting Backiel because of her work defending opponents of U.S. policy.

She has also long been active in the movement to stop grand jury abuse. For four years, Backiel was staff attorney for the Grand Jury Project of the National Lawyers Guild. She has trained lawyers in grand jury work, and testified before Congress against grand jury abuse.

The institution of the grand jury in the United States originated in the colonial era, and was designed to protect the individual against the power of the government to arbitrarily decide who to bring to trial. The authors of the Bill of Rights felt that no citizen should suffer the emotional and financial penalty of standing trial unless an independent panel of citizens — the grand jury — decided that the evidence warranted bringing the accused to trial.

A grand jury is required every time a federal prosecutor seeks a felony indictment. The process, Backiel and other activists say, has been manipulated to turn the grand jury into an instrument of political repression.

"Normally," said Backiel, "grand juries just hear summaries from investigators, like FBI agents. It's very brief. That could have been done in this case, without calling for me to testify. But the government is using the grand jury's power to call witnesses and impose immunity to obtain information and evidence that the FBI hasn't been able to get otherwise. This enables prosecutors to get around the Fifth Amendment right which prohibits compulsory self-incrimination."



Backiel served as a consultant to the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publisher of THE WITNESS, during the U.S. government campaign to suppress the Puerto Rican liberation movement in the 1970s and '80s.

In 1984, Steven Guerra, then a member of the ECPC Board, and Maria Cueto, former director of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, were sentenced to three years in jail for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating alleged terrorist activities of the FALN, a Puerto Rican liberation group. Cueto had already spent 10 months in prison in 1977 for refusing to testify before a similar grand jury. Both Cueto and Guerra said they believed that the government was using the grand jury process to intimidate Hispanics, especially those who supported independence for Puerto Rico.

In an interview before going to prison, Guerra said, "This action by the government is a method of chilling the opposition. I'm not going to become a willing partner in their efforts to chill political activity. It's not a question of knowing something or not knowing. This is a method of persecuting not only you, but your whole movement."

Backiel knows well the difficulties faced by grand jury resisters. On March 9 at her home in Puerto Rico, she was served with a subpoena ordering her to appear in Philadelphia before a grand jury four days later, even though the U.S. District Attorney knew she was due to appear in New York to appeal one of her cases. When told that because of flight schedules, Backiel could not ap-

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pear on such short notice, the prosecutor insisted on her presence. She and Morton Stavis, head of the Center for Constitutional Rights, arrived at the courthouse in Philadelphia only to find the courtroom locked. Apparently no one but the prosecutor knew about her appearance, she said.

After a series of hearings, Backiel's attorneys filed an appeal in April and a decision was due to be handed down April 20. But as of mid-June, no firm date had been set for her appeal hearing. Throughout this process, Backiel has been living in limbo, never knowing when she would be called to appear in court, and if called, whether or not she would go from the court directly to prison or be allowed to go home first. "For months, I'd been living my life in 24-hour increments. I have a case in Boston — the poor woman, I'm her lawyer and I may end up in jail."

Even though facing prison, Backiel is continuing her work as an advocate for U.S. political prisoners. She and others in the movement are currently concerned about Dr. Alan Berkman, who was arrested with Duke and sentenced to 10 years. A physician who worked with the poor and minorities before his arrest, Berkman had just begun his sentence when diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease, a form of cancer which is curable if treated in time.

However, Berkman was sent to the U.S. Penitentiary at Marion, Ill., the only U.S. prison condemned by Amnesty International for violating the UN's Standard Minimum Rules for Treatment of Prisoners. It holds more political prisoners than any other prison in the United States. Prisoners are isolated in their cells and subject to great physical and psychological stress. Medical care at Marion is reported to be less than adequate.

After finally receiving radiation therapy, Berkman's cancer went into remission. In 1988, Berkman was transferred to the District of Columbia jail to stand trial on conspiracy charges. This past winter, the cancer recurred, but the Bureau of Prisons delayed treatment.

Berkman is finally getting chemotherapy. But he told *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis, "I'm not the sort of person who assumes the worst about the people who deal with me. But I feel like someone forgot that meanwhile the cancer is growing."

Despite what Backiel knows of the prison system, she faces her impending jail sentence calmly. In a letter to supporters, she quoted a phrase James Baldwin had written to Angela Davis after her arrest: "'If they come for you in the morning, I know they'll be coming for me at night.' Such is the nature of repression. I was aware, with each grand jury witness I represented, that sooner or later my name would turn up on the list . . . I will be much happier and at peace with myself in jail than I could ever be after having testified against a client in the secrecy of a grand jury room."

Backiel summed up her beliefs in a statement to the grand jury in March:

"Like many other defense lawyers in the country today, and all who care about the rights of individuals, I have watched in dismay as various courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States, whittle away what for decades have been vital protections against government lawlessness. Someone has to call attention to this problem. Someone has to say 'No.' " TW

Resources

Movement Network Support News, a newsletter on political repression, and *You, Your Rights and the FBI*, a pamphlet in English and Spanish, are available from The Center for Constitutional Rights, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012, (212) 616-6464.

Until She Talks, a film about a woman caught up in the grand jury process, can be rented for $15 by writing to Kit Gage, National Committee Against Repressive Legislation, 236 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Suite 406, Washington, DC 20002.

Fundraising appeal creeps toward goal

Our once a year, low-key but sincere fundraising appeal is creeping toward its goal as of this writing. We ask your urgent attention to our recent letter soliciting your assistance.

As many of our readers know, we operate largely on an endowment inherited from the publishing days of Editor Bill Spofford.

But because of rising costs of printing and funds spent on other worthy advocacy programs supported by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company in the past (such as its Racism and Grand Jury Abuse Task Forces, publishing of study guides on social justice issues and feminism, etc.), we have been consistently digging into the principal of a now-dwindling endowment. And we face another whopping rise in postal costs early next year.

We know a number of our subscribers have also been hit in the pocketbook by fluctuating interest rates and an uncertain stock market. A recent survey revealed that one out of 13 are continuing to check the $8 limited income box when they renew, rather than pay the regular $20 subscription. We count on fundraising efforts to augment these, as well as to help subsidize subscribers in Third World countries hard-pressed to meet the full rates.

So if you still have that return envelope floating around, please do speed it off to us with your tax-deductible contribution. We will be printing a list of our loyal friends who contribute to this appeal in a future issue. Many thanks!

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Lack . . . *Continued from page 19*
100 Civil Patrol members brandishing guns, clubs and machetes and shouting threats. The human rights attorneys showed the armed mob their identification and told them what they were there for. This resulted in a fresh outburst of shouting that grew even louder when Juan and Méndez were recognized. The threats directed at Méndez became so intense that he turned his car around and drove away. A number of shots were fired toward the car, but neither the car nor any of its occupants were hit.

While this was happening, one of the human rights attorneys continued to try to get through the cordon of enraged Civil Patrol members. His words were drowned out by shouts and slogans, and he was shoved and struck on the arms, hands and back by screaming Patrollers, while his staff cameraman somehow managed to record the whole scene on videotape.

That evening, Maria's sister Magdalena and other family members told Méndez, Juan and the refugees staying at the CERJ office that everyone in Parraxtut had been rounded up by the Civil Patrol that morning. Four soldiers and two army officers held a meeting to "orient" the town about the anticipated visit of the human rights officials and Méndez. "You don't want the human rights attorney or Amílcar Méndez here," one of the officers told them. "You are honorable people. They are communists."

The vigilante-like conduct of the Civil Patrol in Parraxtut and the unmannerly reception given to the human rights attorneys there made headlines in the Guatemalan press. The Parraxtut confrontation came only three weeks after another mob of about 300 Patrollers in an outlying section of Chichicastenango, about 65 miles south of Parraxtut, stoned and injured members and leaders of GAM — the Group for Mutual Support, an organization made up of relatives of some of the 40,000-plus Guatemalans who have "disappeared" in recent years. The GAM delegation had been on its way to show support to local GAM members whose houses had been burned by Civil Patrol members who accused them of being communists and guerrillas.

After the mob scene in Parraxtut, members of the Guatemalan Congress, political figures, trade union groups, and others expressed indignation about Civil Patrol behavior. Some even called for the dissolution of the Patrols, although most took the safer position of saying there should be stricter control over the units.

In the wake of Parraxtut, a Guatemalan columnist referred to the Civil Patrols as "cannon fodder," pointing out that when the army does detect guerrilla units they will often arrange to have the poorly equipped and obviously expendable Patrols sent to do the fighting instead of the army.

The violence in Parraxtut and Chichicastenango can be viewed in a similar light. When the army wants to attack protest groups like CERJ or GAM in rural areas, it now uses the Patrols to do so — in urban areas, anonymous death squads are used. The Patrol units are carefully drilled in advance so they will know exactly what to do and say, and they know that questioning, much less disobeying, army orders can be a capital offense.

CERJ leaders and human rights groups say that concerted international pressure for dissolution of the Civil Patrols could be effective now. But without such pressure, since the army holds de facto power over all important decisions in Guatemala, the debate about the Patrols is unlikely to result in their disbanding or even in significant changes in the way they are used. And while it has raised doubts about the Patrol system, the debate has also shifted media and public attention away from Maria Mejía's murder and the plight of her relatives and other Parraxtut refugees still sleeping crowded together on the floor of the CERJ offices.

The effort to arrest Mejía's killers seems to have been shelved for now. Her murderers are walking around free. By doing so, they advertise the fact that Civil Patrol members can kill dissenters without facing any consequences.

Those like Maria Mejía who rebel against the army's totalitarian control in rural areas by making contact with national protest and human rights groups are often killed. Over recent years the army and its political allies have evidently adopted a strategy of killing off people like Mejía, *campesino* organizers who are unknown outside their villages or regions. Apparently the army hopes that when their families and communities see these loved ones dead, while Amílcar Méndez and the leadership of other protest groups are alive, holding press conferences and traveling abroad, they will turn against the leaders and drop out of the fight.

This strategy of trying to drive wedges between leaders and their grassroots supporters isn't working very well. As it has done in the past, the army has underestimated the courage and tenacity of "ordinary" Guatemalans, who are determined to keep on working for a better future even if it means facing torture and death.

The army might have considered Maria Mejía a nobody they could murder with impunity. But in the long run, the bullets that killed Mejía and others like her may ricochet and end the military dictatorship that arranged for such deaths.

The situation continues to be tense in Parraxtut and the highlands. Visitors to Guatemala who wish to know more about the situation in this region and about the Civil Patrols should contact CERJ through the Peace Brigades International office, Avenida Elena B, 2-62, Zona 2, Guatemala City. Tel. 20085. TW

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Short Takes

Poverty kills children

Over 12 million children in the United States are living in poverty. Many will die in their first year. Between 1980 and 1988, the federal government cut billions from programs that help poor children and their families — from Head Start, from food stamps, from Medicaid, from education, from housing for the poor. During that same time, we spent over $2 trillion on weapons.

Marian Wright Edelman
Children's Defense Fund

Treats torture victims

The Center for Victims of Torture in Minneapolis had treated 147 survivors of torture and their relatives as of mid-1989. They came from 21 countries, including South Africa, El Salvador, Honduras, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Iran and Vietnam.

With its myriad church and state refugee programs, Minnesota has the highest per capita political refugee population in the nation: 39,000 out of 6 million residents, not counting Central Americans and illegal aliens, who aren't classified as political refugees. All told, it is believed that there could be 6,000 torture survivors among them.

***Miami Herald*, May 1989**

ECPC Bishop-maker?

The Rev. Chester Talton, rector of St. Philip's, New York, and a member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company Board of Directors, was elected Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Los Angeles in June. He is the second ECPC-related official to be elected bishop recently, the other being the Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris, who served as ECPC's Executive Director before her Massachusetts election as first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion. In unrelated business, but a promotion nonetheless, Susan E. Pierce was named Managing Editor of THE WITNESS magazine, published by ECPC, according to Mary Lou Suhor, editor. Pierce has served as assistant editor since 1988.



Mort Broffman/ENS

Armed Forces Suffragan Charles Keyser, left, and EPF dissenter Ann McElroy.

Protests Armed Forces bishop

Episcopal Suffragan Bishop for the Armed Forces Charles Keyser was consecrated recently at the National Cathedral, but not without dissent. When the Presiding Bishop said, "if any of you know any reason why we should not proceed, let it be made known," Ann McElroy, chair of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, came forward to object "to this or any other consecration to the office of Suffragan Bishop of the Armed Forces." Among reasons cited:

The consecration places the church "in the position of being aligned with the military system," which compromises and corrupts the church's message.

It is an election and consecration "without the votes of the clergy and laity over whom the bishop is to have authority."

It is "not necessary to provide a full sacramental ministry to members of our church in the armed forces."

And, concluded McElroy, it is the "visible symbol of a system that identifies the church with what for many is a sign and source of oppression."

The Presiding Bishop thanked McElroy but said the consecration would proceed.

Episcopal News Service 3/29/90

Staggering statistics of abuse

Journalist John Crewdson includes a comprehensive discussion of the available (sexual abuse) statistics in *By Silence Betrayed: Sexual Abuse of Children in America*, Harper and Row. Citing a national survey in the *Los Angeles Times* conducted in 1985 in which 27% of the women respondents and 16% of the men reported childhood abuse, Crewdson writes: "If those percentages were applied to the current (U.S) population, it meant that nearly 38 million adults had been sexually abused as children, several hundred thousand more than voted for Walter Mondale in 1984."

In the *LA Times* survey cited by Crewdson, one-third of those identifying themselves as abuse survivors told the pollster that they had told no one until that very moment.

***Resist Newsletter* 1/89**

Priests ordain Catholic women?

From the 1930s to the 1950s, historical research discovered the existence of three papal bulls authorizing priests who were abbots to ordain monks to all minor and major orders and, in two instances, to priesthood itself. What may we conclude? A (Roman Catholic) priest with papal approval may function as a valid, legal minister of the sacrament of orders. What if a priest ordains without papal approval? The ordination would be valid but technically illegal. Thus, if priests were to ordain a woman she would be validly ordained but under existing canon law the ordination would be illegal.

But how can an all-male college truly symbolize or represent a church at least half of which is woman-church? It cannot. Integrity of service, ministry and witness calls for the ordination of women.

The temporary friction caused by illegality would be a small price to pay. It can be done and should be for the good of all women and men.

Paul Surlis
***National Catholic Reporter* 11/10/89**

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The story of Princess Tamar

Based on 2 Samuel 13 to 14:27

by Sharon Swedean Muhlenkort

When we were growing up, Amnon and I spent hours together around the palace. I looked up to him so much. He was my big brother, prince of Israel, who would one day be king! We used to play a game, where we would pretend that he was king and I was his maid servant. I would sit and listen to him dream of the battles he would win, the wealth he would bring back.

I had dreams then too, but they were very different from his. I would dream of my wedding day, and the daughter I would one day give birth to. But I would not speak of such things to him.

I was so proud of him. I loved our brother Absalom too, but my heart belonged to Amnon. Our father, King David, favored him also. He was the firstborn. There's nothing like the firstborn son. I used to long for father to speak to me the way he did to Amnon — even if he would just look at me, smile at me. I felt as if I didn't exist for him. It was as if he didn't see me, except to ask me to make cakes — which I did, and I made the best cakes around! Amnon was so much like my father — he was strong and powerful, and so handsome. That's probably why I loved Amnon as I did.

It was father that sent me that day to Amnon, for he was sick. He asked me to make fried cakes for his nourishment. I felt honored.

When I was with Amnon, I stretched out my hand to give him food, but he grabbed my wrist and squeezed it so tightly. It hurt and I didn't understand what he was doing. Then he said, "Come lie with me, my sister," for he hungered for my body, not my gift of cakes. "Come lie with me, my sister," said this brother of mine whom I loved, listened to, and honored.

I reasoned with him, spoke wisdom to him, "No, my brother! Do not shame me! You know our law. If you do this, there is nowhere for me to go." And I looked at him with all the love I had for him, that he would not do this horrible thing to me.

And then my brother overpowered me. He forced himself inside of me — my brother . . . my brother.

And when he was through, he wanted nothing to do with me. His lust turned to hatred. Greater was the hatred with which he hated me, than the desire with which he desired me.

I told him that if he drove me out it would be far worse than what he had already done. But he sent for his servant and told him to put me outside and bar the door after me. When he barred that door I knew that so, too, were all doors barred to me forever. No man would take me into his home. No daughter would ever grow in my womb.

I wept. I screamed tears of anger for an evil done to me that could never be undone.

My brother Absalom found me, and had compassion for me. It was he who desired justice for my sake. And it was he who has given me a place to be with my shame all these years. Oh, my father, King David, was angry when he heard. Angry for what had happened to Amnon, not for the violence done to me, his daughter. At first, I grieved that my father never acknowledged what happened, that he never asked about me, that he could so completely disregard my pain. I longed for his love. But as the years went by I saw him for who he really was. I heard the stories of his adultery with Bathsheba.

Amnon did what he saw our father do — take any woman he wanted, without a thought for her life or her dreams. Father never acknowledged how Amnon violated me, because if he did, he would have to face his own violation of so many women.

When I saw this clearly, I could begin to let go of my longing for my father. I still weep, but for him, because he has lived a life and never really loved.

For a long time, after all this first happened, I was angry at God too. I couldn't pray to Yaweh. You see, God reminded me too much of my father, David the king, or my brother, the one to be king. To call God king says to me that God has the same qualities my father and brother have. God the king is a God who rapes and ignores and uses women.

But I know now that God has other names. Names that speak to me of a loving God. Names that bring back memories of the way someone held me when I wept, or laughed with my joy. Names for a God I can worship, a God I love.

And this tender God has given me a most unexpected gift, four children whom I love. One niece and three nephews, the children of Absalom and his wife. I have watched them grow, and as I did I found my heart growing open again. Sometimes we all sit outside and take turns listening to one another's dreams. My niece shares her dreams with her brothers. Oh, I ache with the desire for her to have the same chance her brothers will to live her dreams. Her name is Tamar. TW

Sharon Swedean Muhlenkort is a free-lance writer based in Berkeley, Calif., where she is working on a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at the Wright Institute.

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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

yet promotes the courage to overcome these problems.

We are a non-profit organization supported by Lutheran congregations across the country. Our mission is to combat racism and sexism in the church and society.

David Knox
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Judaism omitted

In the May issue under Short Takes, you have discussed the percentage of members of the major religions. I strongly object to the omission of Judaism from this list.

Judaism is a major religion. What percentage of the world's population is Jewish? I would like to see this information added to the list and reprinted. As Christians, it is important to remember our mother!

Legia L. Spicer
Watertown, S.D.

(NCC's ***Ecu-link*** *opened with the fact that with more than 1.7 billion believers, Christians make up almost one third of the world's population, followed by Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, percentage-wise. From there the 1989* ***Encyclopedia Britannica Book of the Year*** *lists atheists, 4.5%; Chinese Folk Religionists, 3.4%; New Religionists, 2.2%; Tribal Religionists, 1.8%; Jews, 0.3%; Sikhs, 0.3%; Shamanists, 0.2%; Baha'is, 0.1%; Jains, 0.1%; Shintoists, 0.1%; and other religionists, 0.2%. — Ed.)*

Son at Mideast march

Paul Washington's moving account in the May WITNESS on the Christmas/New Year's peace demonstration in Jerusalem was a special reminder for me.

My son, Dennis, a student at Cal State/Long Beach has been an active member and leader of a campus Peace and Justice group, especially concerned about the Israeli/Palestine situation. He was chosen to be part of the 16-member U. S. delegation to participate in "1990 Time for Peace." Like Paul, he was there for the Women in Black march and joined hands with the 30,000 encircling the walls of the Old City. In the two weeks he was there he visited many Israelis and Palestinians, went to the Gaza strip and West Bank. It was an experience he will long remember. He visited us right after his return with his personal reaction of the Intifada and has since shared his story on campus and in the community.

The recent remembrances of the Holocaust and the resurgence of anti-Semitism in the USSR are bitter reminders of the agony of the Jewish people. That agony is joined by the suffering of the Palestinians. There must be a just and peaceful solution. As the psalmist (51) tells us: "Create in me a clean heart, O God and renew a right spirit within me."

The Rev. Arthur Kortheuer
Charlotte, N.C.

Seeks Taylor for text

This is a request to reprint two articles by the Rev. Barbara Taylor that appeared in your January and February 1988 issues of THE WITNESS: "Meditations in the city."

I am in the process of developing a *Reader in Urban Ministry*, a working title for a text to be used both by local community organizers within urban settings and professors who teach within theological education.

Those of us who are critically interested in urban communities and urban ministry are in need of better tools of analysis and practical application to help guide our work in the field and in the classroom. Your publication is a very helpful one (I am a long-time subscriber) and I would like to use these articles not only for their own merit but to signal the importance of your journal in this field. We seek a variety of types of literature and the meditations fill an important need for such a book.

The proposed volume developed from a small group of folks made up of local community organizers/pastors and seminary professors who met in 1989 to work on a set of issues that we share. We have written about our work but recognize important topics that go beyond what we address. We would like for the reader to have breadth and depth. Our request to you comes out of this vision.

Eleanor Scott Meyers, Academic Dean
St. Paul School of Theology
Kansas City, Mo.

WITNESS seeks new editor

A search for a new editor of THE WITNESS to succeed Mary Lou Suhor, who will retire in 1991, has been announced by the Rt. Rev. J. Antonio Ramos, chair of the board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. THE WITNESS offices are located in Ambler, Pa., a suburb of Philadelphia.

Suhor, managing editor since 1976 and editor since 1981, will leave the post following the Episcopal Church's General Convention in July next year.

Persons wishing to apply for the editorship are asked to submit to the Search Committee no later than August 15 the following items: A letter stating the writer's interest in the post and qualifications for it, not to exceed 500 words in length; a professional resume; and photocopies of recently published examples of the applicant's writing, not to exceed five in number. The Episcopal Church Publishing Company is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. Preliminary applications and inquiries are to be sent to: Carman St. John Hunter, Chair, Editor Search Committee, Episcopal Church Publishing Co., 300 Gerard Building, 434 Lackawanna Ave., Scranton, PA 18503.

These preliminary submissions will be acknowledged with more detailed information on THE WITNESS, its publisher's vision for its future, and how to submit a formal application.

The board hopes to select the new editor in October with a view to having the person start work in early 1991, Ramos said.

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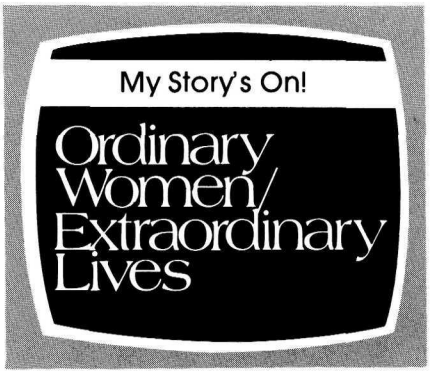

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— The Rev. Carter Heyward
Episcopal Divinity School

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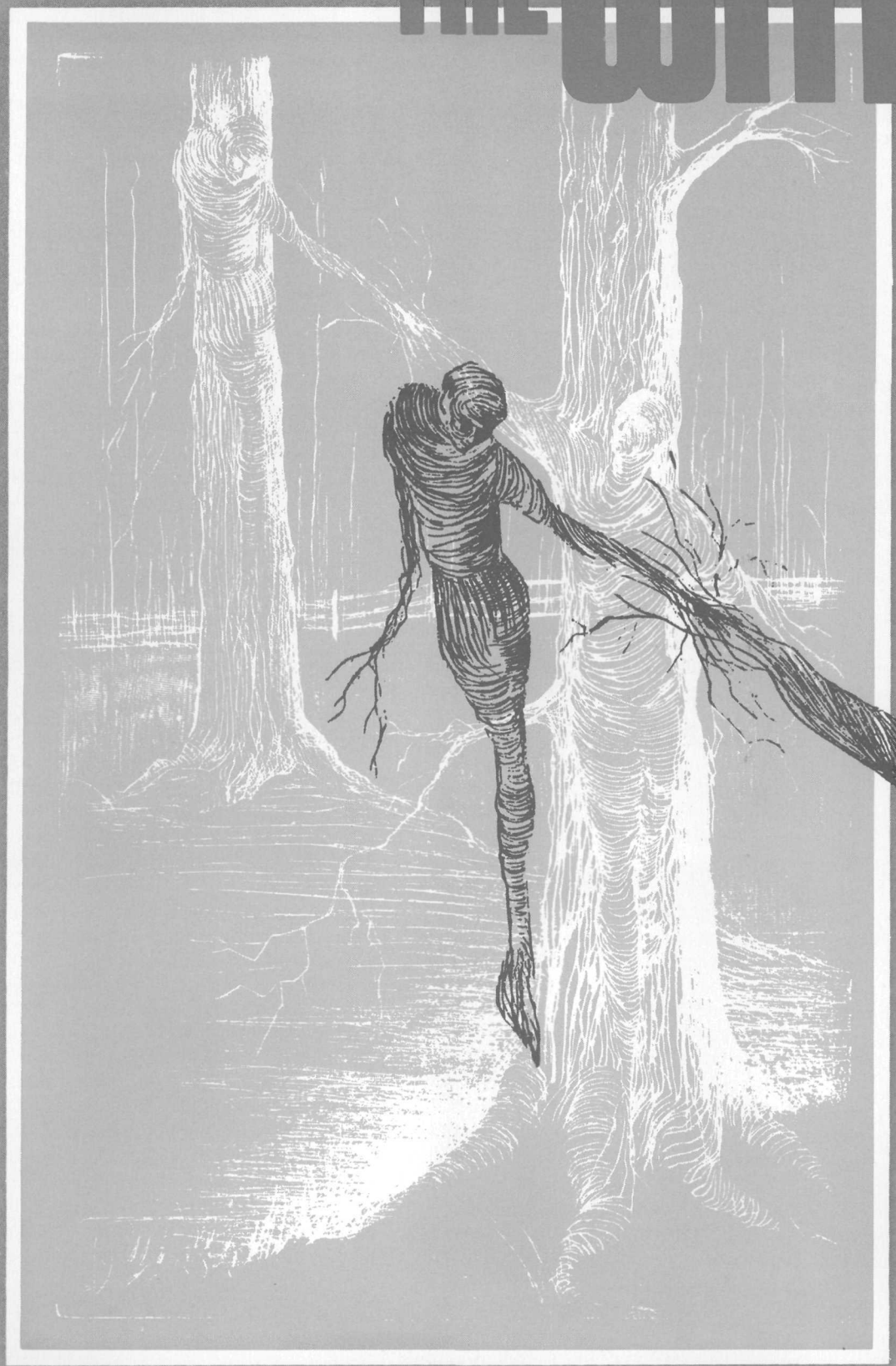
THE WITNESS



Creating a new heaven and a new earth

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Letters

On finding devils

Carter Heyward's May article relating her experience during the Nicaraguan elections is yet another in an apparently endless stream of unreflective narrow-mindedness one encounters in THE WITNESS. I am doubly disappointed with Heyward's authorship because it discredits her theological brilliance. It seems that she went in search of evil contras and, with or without substance or fact, found them.

Reading her narrative I was reaching quite a different conclusion. The account tells me that the Sandinista powers-that-be were attempting to prevent a strong UNO victory in territory not fully under their influence. At the conclusion of the article I realized that both the author and I had found the devils we anticipated. I wondered if there hadn't been at least one other explanation: Someone made a mistake. Given the remoteness of the village, the general level of tension stressing everyone involved, and the singularity of the event, a mistake would be likely.

Heyward defined evil as anything associated with the U.S. government, be it foreign policy or the contras. Good, then, is anything opposed to that associated with the U.S. government — a type of reductionism common among extremists. By her own admission, Heyward has difficulty holding even a casual converation in Spanish. Language ability is a requisite for an informed assessment of the situation. That Heyward did not return to El Toro, or seek news from the village after the election, concludes a troubled report with simply inadequate journalism.

Finally, I am puzzled by people who must associate every wrong with our nation-state. When I lived in Bogota I asked people not to disassociate me from the actions of my nation-state; I am responsible, as a participant, for its actions.

It puzzles me that for being so judgmental, Heyward avails herself of the wealth, power and privilege associated with the United States. She and fellow citizens flee the village in the only available vehicle. I am saddened because I looked to her for a more sterling example of faith and courage. Perhaps Heyward and I should be satisfied with her courageous theological insight and set aside hopes for political or journalistic brilliance as well.

Myles Graff
Minneapolis, Minn.

Episcopal bishops invoke 'collegiality'

Kim Byham's piece was helpful on the ordination of Robert Williams. But there is much more to be said of the Episcopal hierarchy's notion of collegiality — a new low in gentlemen's agreements. Williams may or may not have said some foolish things, but these are genuinely insignificant when compared with the hierarchy's willingness to allow unchallenged the gay-lesbian bashing which is nearly the last frontier for the so-called traditionalists. I look for their unwarranted attacks to grow as the "communist menace" recedes.

The hierarchy should be holding up the gay community for all to see: documented change in sexual habits never seen before; utterly heroic service to those dying of AIDS; exposure of a health system which serves no one, gay or straight, as it should — one could go on. Instead, our hierarchy wrings its hands because of some inconvenient remarks by a man attracted to the priesthood, for God's sake, as a means to serve — only to find, as have many, that he has to leave that priesthood if he truly is to serve.

I see the truth about the ordaining of homosexual persons to be the following (on the whole, the hierarchy knows what follows to be true, which makes its failure to teach even more reprehensible):

1. The Bible is not the sole authority with respect to the formulation of church doctrine and ethics. Resort to "the Bible condemns homosexuality" is not enough with respect to this or any other question before the church. How often does the church need to be reminded that from the time of Hagar to the closing of the Canon, the Bible affirms slavery? Furthermore, the Bible universally condemns usury, that is, the lending of money at interest, but we have established a world economic order based on the lending of money at interest, claiming at the present moment that such an order is responsible for the collapse of communist tyranny and is the basis upon which a world democratic order can be established. Clearly, most church people in the West do not accept that the Bible answers all moral questions.

2. The Episcopal Church does not have a settled position against the ordination of homosexual persons. The 1979 General Convention resolution was a recommendation against such ordinations, not a canon. The debate clearly established that ordination is a local event, occurring under the direction and authority of the bishop acting with the commission on the ministry and the standing committee of a diocese. Even this recommendation brought forth an absolutely unprecedented act on the part of more than 20 bishops who participated in the debate. That act was a signed declaration repudiating Convention's action and declaring the intent of the signatories to abide by the ancient practice of the church; namely, the local determination of candidates suitable for the ministry.

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Heyward responds

Myles Graff suggests that in El Toro we found "the devils we anticipated." Nothing could be further from the truth. We didn't have to go to El Toro, or even to Nicaragua, to see that the U.S.-sponsored contra war was evil. But the El Toro experience showed us no "devils" — no evil people (contras, Sandinistas, others) — just much chaos and confusion and, to be sure, our participation in, and fear of, this chaos. It was a humbling and instructive visit.

We reported the experience through Witness for Peace. As best we could tell, the electoral irregularity became a moot point in the context of the UNO victory. We have been in touch with people in El Toro, though we still do not know (and we suspect they do not know) what caused the voting system to break down on Feb. 25.

My speculation on what, exactly, transpired in El Toro happens to be very much what Graff suggests from reading the account (i.e., that "someone made a mistake"), but it seemed important to present a first-person, eye-witness account without speculation.

My *interpretation* of the U. S. role in El Toro (as throughout Nicaragua for the last century) as *evil* was, and is, sharp and uncompromising. It is an interpretation shared by many thoughout the world. It is, for many of us, framed in the context of a liberation theological commitment that makes no claim to perfection. If Myles Graff admires my theology but not my politics, he does not understand my theology.

Carter Heyward
Cambridge, Mass.

'Round the world at 50

Parker Rossman's article "Liberation philosophy for retirement" in the May issue is a wonderful proposal for all clergy. I can testify to its value.

I decided that when I came to my 50th birthday I would resign whatever employment I had at that time, take a year off to review what I had done, and chart my course for the coming years.

In 1966-67 I did exactly that. I resigned as pastor of the Disciples congregation in Great Falls, Mont. and started out on a 'round the world trip with my wife and 16-year-old daughter. We had no reservations. We traveled by whatever local transportation was available and lived as the people of the area lived. I never worked so hard in my life as I did dealing with strange money, customs

Continued on page 27

to oppress Spong, gay community

3. In fact, many openly gay and lesbian clergy have been ordained since 1979. The practice of the church, which occurs in many different dioceses over years, is more predictive of church doctrine than is a single resolution, which does not have the force of law, adopted at a single General Convention.

4. The move to censure John Spong arises because he "violated collegiality." This is clearly a novel concept, entirely without precedent in our precedent-loving church. There is a defensible collegiality, and it would be the settled, publicly debated Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, along with its Book of Common Prayer. Since these were not violated by Bishop Spong, one has to assume that there was some kind of secret agreement which defines "collegiality" in a new way. That agreement apparently was not to ordain openly gay or lesbian people, at least not to notify the press if such ordinations were undertaken. If there is such a secret agreement, the House of Bishops has been taken over by those ancient enemies of God's Truth, the heretics, who continually talked of secrets handed by God in some mysterious way to secret servants. Our newly defined "collegiality" smacks of the ancient secrets and is unworthy of a church which claims to be the People of God, openly proclaiming the Good News of a more abundant life for all.

The church has always insisted that the Gospel and its teachings were the public gift of God to humanity without any hint of secret teachings or rites. Since there is no public, open agreement of the church against the ordination of lesbian and gay persons, I have to ask when and where the secret agreements not to ordain, or not to ordain with publicity were made. One might further ask whether the laity of the church are comfortable with the notion that the bishops have a secret collegiality by which important questions are decided without one house of the General Convention.

5. Once again the church hierarchy debates the place and position of lesbian and gay persons without our presence and/or meaningful input. What is happening with this issue is not the Church Catholic attempting to wrestle down ancient bigotry. It is rather that closeted bishops and straight bishops, utilizing the same intellectual rationalizations which led to the death of Jesus on the Cross, are attempting to avoid responsibility for the church's immoral witch hunt against lesbian and gay persons.

The service which those of us who are lesbian and gay have given to the church merits honor and dignity, not the shabby little game of politics which the Williams ordination unleashed. It is this small-minded shabbiness which is killing the church, not the service of a sexual minority, which continues to serve and to love in ways not even imagined by Episcopal High Priests.

Richard Kerr
San Francisco, Cal.

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THE WITNESS



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Editorial

The price of greed

Wealth is indeed a treacherous thing. Haughty and unable to rest are those greedy as Sheol, who are like death, insatiable, who assemble all the nations for their own end, collect all the peoples to their own advantage.

— Habakkuk 2:5

As THE WITNESS goes to press, the tense situation in the Persian Gulf, with the United States and Iraq poised on the brink of war over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, is a good example of the treachery of wealth.

The United States has sent troops to Saudi Arabia to protect its "vital national interests," as the Bush Administration puts it. What's tiresomely familiar here is the premise that the United States has a "right" to unlimited access to Persian Gulf oil, just as we had a "right" to protect business interests in Vietnam and Panama.

U.S. support of the deposed wealthy Kuwaiti monarchy was also based on sheer self-interest. The concerns of the have-nots of the Arab world — the suffering of the Palestinians, the endless war in Lebanon — are barely worth attention.

And, once again, the people we support are disliked not only by their neighbors but also their own people. The Kuwaitis earned the enmity of other Arab states, particularly the impoverished non-oil producers, by selling cheaply to the West and not sharing the wealth even with their own less-fortunate. Also, Kuwait's ruling family routinely suppressed democratic opposition, and held all important government posts. This does not justify the government's overthrow by Iraq, but pre-invasion Kuwait was not the shining example of democracy lionized by the Bush Administration.

The Administration should also beware of its own rhetoric when it condemns the Iraquis as "outlaws and renegades." After all, only a few months ago, U.S. troops were sent to take over a sovereign country, depose the leader and install a "friendly" government. Similarly, there has never been a negative response from the United States concerning Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon and its 23-year occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Golan Heights.

Ever since the Iran hostage debacle, the U.S. military has been itching for action in the Persian Gulf. Over the past 10 years, according to a briefing paper from the American Friends Service Committee, the United States has been implementing a major military build-up in the Gulf, including a $1 billion military facilities construction program in a dozen nations across North Africa, the Middle East, and Southwest Asia.

Ironically, this build-up was intended to counteract the Soviet threat. With the Cold War over, the U.S. military behemoth in the Gulf is all dressed up with nobody to fight. Iraq's timing was perfect. But if the United States takes on Iraq, it is not going to be a cakewalk like Grenada.

The Iraqui Army is the region's largest — a million strong — well-armed and well-seasoned after a 10-year war with Iran. And Iraq has chemical weapons. Our young men (and possibly women) may find themselves staggering through desert heat, suffocating in chemical warfare suits as Iraqui mustard gas shells rain down — all for the sake of a continued supply of cheap Hi-Test.

Americans didn't learn anything from the oil shocks of the 1970s. The money and time being put into renewable energy research and development is a fraction of what it was 10 years ago. And we're destroying the ozone layer and fouling the seas with the oil we do have. Now we're ready to fight for the right to continue to drown in our own waste.

Instead, this crisis should be a time to look at our consumption habits, heed the warnings, and make significant changes in lifestyle.

Unfortunately, the U. S. government has grown deaf to appeals for reason both at home and abroad. It paid no attention to pleas for an Arab solution to an Arab problem. Lacking a strong deterrent such as the Soviet presence once afforded, Bush is unrestrained in his response.

Greed, like death, is insatiable, and knows no limits. If the American people don't put limits on the Administration's possessiveness and unbridled military power, the price will indeed be death. TW

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The challenge of ecojustice

by Robert C. Morris

I drive to work through a landscape rapidly being "developed." It is the beginning of the real estate gold rush of the '90s. Bulldozers are carving lots in the spacious fields and felling the remaining woodlands to make the newest suburbs of Newark. For the first time, I see and feel this as an assault.

These subdivisions will house only upper middle-income types, where before a mix of great wealth, middle-income merchants and farmers, and low-income workers prevailed. Where once vast estates shaded off into woodland and swamp, dotted with small towns and village crossroads, $750,000 houses now loom on rigidly-sliced three acre lots. The swamp is already being clogged with the runoff from their lawn fertilizer. The number of local endangered species grows.

Meanwhile, in Newark, one whole ward has no supermarket, older housing is being torched, and the number of homeless grows in both the city and the bulldozed countryside.

People in the parish say that this is great "development." My mind tilts. Who and what is being "developed?" According to whose vision is this land being recreated?

In Isaiah's biblical vision of the new Jerusalem, development is seen in a different way. The vision claims to be rooted in the very heart of God. The world is seen working as the Creator knows it can work. And humans are invited into the heart of the vision so that we can experience a heart-changing *metanoia*, a turning around in the way we build the earth.

Isaiah sees a human development that honors connections the bulldozers sever, and enhances the dynamic balance of every part of the whole earth community. In this new Jerusalem the well-being of all the parts is interwoven: infants and elders, rich and poor, humans and other creatures, soul and body, earth, air, water, and God are all inseparable. Babies are healthy, elders robust, and people productive at labor that really serves human need and enriches human skill. The housing stock is durable, and the soil of the vineyards charged with fertile life. All this can happen, in part, because the nations "study war no more," their energy redirected toward tending the earth, building the community, enjoying the creatures, and communing with God.

This vision does not stop at either the economic or psychological bottom line. The city is as conducive to prayer as to productivity. Communion with the "holy in the midst of life" is open to all. The social justice folk and prayer and praise people have found a common God. They are joined by the pioneers who even now seek to be ambassadors to the animal world, bringing us tales of order, communication and animal society to replace the chaos human fears imagine is out there in the wild.

All together, the Isaiah visions speak of an animal-human connection opened up by human alliance with the unifying wisdom of life, which flows like God's breath through the earth. Wolf and lamb and lion are in greater accord. Attuned to her Presence, "a little child" can play over the serpent's den, and lead the wild beasts, unharmed (*Is. 65:25, 11:6-9*).

This community flourishes because it works in harmony with earth's real shape and with humanity's real needs. Meanwhile our present civilization is still bulldozing the planet into submission. Led by a pack of resource-gobbling First World countries, our civilization is now compromising basic resources and life-support systems. As suppliers, the Third World nations are both enchanted by and dragged into the consumer frenzy, which is actually increasing the sufferings of the poorest nations, and burying the First World in drugs, unhappiness, and social chaos.

As realization of the crisis grows, human beings fall into our usual Tower of Babel divisions, seeing everything as a conflict to be settled by battle: conservation vs. jobs, ecosystems vs. employment, economic justice vs. the integrity of animals, First World ecospirituality vs. Third World economic growth.

Isaiah sees that if it doesn't all work together, eventually it won't work at all. The new Jerusalem goal looks further than any politically correct cause of the moment, or the next quarter's profit. It also looks further than the theo-ideologies that have bolstered our short-sighted human chauvinism since the Renaissance. The new Jerusalem is the only possible goal for the long-term viability of our species on the planet. It is God's long-term pragmatism against our short-term excitability.

Many people are beginning to see the world a bit more the way Isaiah's God sees it. An architect and developer I know asks, "Why take 40 acres of a farm

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and cookie-cut it all up into the same dreary 3.5 acres with five basic housing designs? Why not keep a third of the land in farming, let a third of the land go back to the wild, and cluster the housing on the last third?" He's done it, too, in two projects. Each cluster of human habitation is designed for many income levels and ages, with condominiums, rental apartments, semi-detached homes, and detached houses arranged around a common green. The nesting sites of the great blue heron are on the verge of the development, and the bird's rights written into the housing contracts.

These little outposts of the new Jerusalem grow faithfully from three major roots in the biblical vision of the human story: the mandate to exercise "dominion"; the reality of humanity as "Earthling"; and the importance of the whole earth and "all that dwell therein" — what environmentalists now are calling "the earth community."

Scripture says we bipeds are given dominion. This means responsibility, not the right of exploitation. Taken together, *Genesis I* and *II* spell out a human task that comes to fruition in Isaiah's City of God on earth.

Realistic dominion must be rooted in the fact that all humans are "earthlings," "adam" drawn from "adamah," the ground, just like all the plants and animals (*Gen. II*). This describes exactly what we are made of, and our humble position among the life-systems of the planet: our bones alive with the same calcium as the limestone; our bodies common with stuff in the compost heap; our blood filled with the flow of the local water table. Brain research is showing that we share our oldest brains with reptiles, our middle brains with the rest of the mammals, and part of our higher brains with the rest of the primate family. Like almost every native creation tale the world over, the ancient Hebrew story makes much of our kinship with everything else.



The way we are called to exercise this humble, earthy power is in community. It is not the solitary privilege of one person at the top of a hierarchy, much less the male's job. We are given the task of "naming" the creatures, and each other.

We need to do it well, for naming means relating in a way that evokes the potentials of the creature named. "Fellow primate" is a label more liberating to a chimpanzee than "just a dumb beast" which leads easily to "laboratory animal." "Protecting our resources" is a very different activity from "mutually beneficial relationships with life-support systems" and "the environment" is much easier to exploit than the biblical "earth with all its creatures, great and small."

The emerging world crisis demands that we expand our sense of community to include everything it takes to run a world. As Paul saw clearly, "The whole creation waits with eager expectation for the revelation of God's true human offspring" (*Romans 8:19*).

When a Philadelphia nun decides to convert her convent's old barn into a solar-powered house, she's practicing First World repentance and turning toward a better use of energy for the sake of the whole world community. When she takes the technology she's learned to her community's remote sister village in Mexico and helps their chicken business survive competition from the nearby invasion of the agribusiness lords, she preserves the richness of the earth's diversity.

What will the future of the Mexican village be? The fate of the affluent First World as it realizes the party has got to stop? The future of the remaining great apes and elephants and dolphins, and the humbler flora and fauna? "Behold," says the God of Genesis, "they are delivered into your hands!" That God expects us to work toward the new Jerusalem, which will only come when the "heavens" have different ruling powers in them than the ones our bulldozers now serve.

As Christians join with others of good will to work for peace, justice, and the integrity of creation, we need to bring the heart of the Scriptural vision with us as our contribution to the emerging world culture. It is actually much more concerned about the fate of the earth and much more serious about the pivotal role of human beings in that fate than most of the other sacred visions on the planet. Needless to say, it is much more concerned about the earth than Christianity has ever realized.

A simplistic return to pre-industrial or even pre-agricultural spiritualities is hardly likely to suffice for a pluralistic, international world. A romantic nature worship will not give us the tough and hard-headed "wise-as-serpents" know-how we need to figure our way through this. Any theology of "original blessing" without a sufficient account of how the dark side of human nature twists our creativity into destructiveness won't help us stop treating earth and each other like dirt. A humanism which has no wild and reckless faith in a Creator irrevocably committed to the success of this planetary venture does not have either the mythic magic or the songs for the dark nights of defeat and frustration which we need to face the coming days.

Isaiah saw Good News for planet Earth. Jesus called humanity toward the kingdom of the new Jerusalem. So should we. We'd better, because the tough news is that the world has been delivered into our hands. It will take all our wit and wisdom, and whatever help is available, to get through this one. TW

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Environmental racism and the struggle for justice

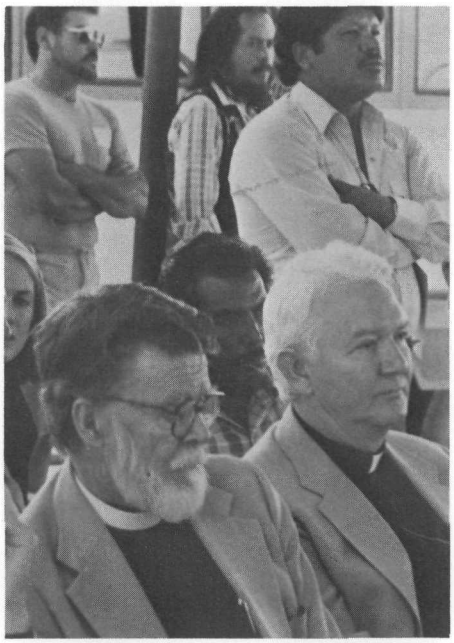
by Louis Head and Miguel Guerrero

The systematic exposure of people of color to hazardous wastes is probably the most insidious form of racism today. It manifests itself in the high number of polluting industries and hazardous waste dumps in communities of color, and people of color's routine exposure to extreme health and safety hazards in the workplace. The underlying assumption in these practices is that certain people are expendable.

U.S. government policies over the last 10 years have worsened conditions for poor people of color, as reflected in economic and drug-related violence in urban areas, unaffordable housing, skyrocketing infant mortality rates, and a host of other symptoms.

Commenting on these trends, African-American scholar Manning Marable wrote in 1983, "Without gas chambers or pogroms, the dark ghetto's economic and social institutions might be destroyed, and many of its residents would simply cease to exist." A short seven years later, this is beginning to happen. The irony in Marable's observation is that an element of the "gas chamber" does exist, figuratively, in the form of toxic poisoning.

In 1983, a U.S. General Accounting Office report showed that three of four landfills studied in the Southeast were located in poor African-American communities, including Chem Waste Management's facility in Emelle, Ala., the nation's largest hazardous waste dump. In 1987, the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice released its landmark study *Toxic Waste and Race in the United States*, which found race to be the most significant of the variables associated with the location of commercial hazardous waste facilities, and that three out of five African-Americans and Latinos live in communities with uncontrolled toxic waste sites. Research by the Center for Third World Organizing in Oakland, Calif., shows that most of the 200 metric tons of uranium tailings — radioactive residue from mining — in the United States are located on Native American land.



The Rev. Paul Saunders, left, and the Rev. Gene Hutchins, right, represent the Episcopal Church at the Inter-Denominational Hearings on Toxics in Minority Communities in Albuquerque, N.M.

Two threads of history explain the disproportionate impact of toxic wastes on communities of color. One is the United State's long legacy of oppression of people of color, from indentured servitude, slavery and colonialization to newer forms of institutional racism. Another is the incorporation of people of color into heavy industry and agribusiness. Historically, people of color have obtained the worst industrial and agricultural jobs, and have for a variety of social, economic and cultural reasons lived in areas where polluting industry is most likely to be located.

Industry seeks communities which are politically disadvantaged, economically depressed, and therefore subject to economic blackmail. Depressed communities are sold the notion that hazardous waste landfills and other deadly industries offer hope of employment and economic development. Instead, the result is long-term devastation of lives and resources, in return for a few jobs. When industry is challenged on its polluting practices, the community is threatened with plant shut-downs and job cutbacks to pay for pollution control and clean-up.

Government regulators such as the Environmental Protection Agency were formed primarily because government and industry realized that use of hazardous chemicals needed to be regulated. Regulatory development has focused on allowing industry to pollute to certain limits, rather than preventing pollution. In response to growing sentiment in this

Louis Head and Miguel Guerrero are staff members of the SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP), in Albuquerque, N.M.

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country for government and corporate accountability, industry and government have undermined and controlled environmental legislation and limited the enforcement capacities of the EPA and other government agencies. Also, industry has fled U.S. regulation and imposed the burden of environmental degradation on Asia, Africa and Latin America.

According to Alex Varela and Arthur Ray, staff attorneys with the EPA, the agency "has never acknowledged that many environmental problems adversely affect minority groups to a much greater extent than the population at large. Even more frightening, it appears that many of the EPA's actions in carrying out its avowed mission have adversely affected poor and minority communities." They point out that endangered species such as the blunt-nose leopard lizard are provided more pesticide protection under federal law than farmworkers, 95% of whom are Latino and African-American.

In September 1989, the Albuquerque, N.M.-based SouthWest Organizing Project (SWOP), a multi-racial, multi-issue community organization founded 10 years ago, and the Eco-Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches conducted Inter-Denominational Hearings on Toxics in Minority Communities. The hearings, held in Albuquerque, reflected the ongoing partnership developing between community-based justice organizations like SWOP and regional and national religious institutions in order to address environmental and other social and racial justice issues. The hearings were funded in large part by agencies of member denominations of the Eco-Justice Working Group, including the Episcopal Church.

At the hearings, an ecumenical panel of church leaders, including representatives from the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, heard several hours of testimony outlining the role government and industry play in toxic waste dumping, and the impact of toxic pollution on people of color in the Southwest. To cite some examples:

• Former Los Alamos National Laboratories employee Jerry Fuentes told of how he was fired after confronting supervisors and safety officers on the careless handling of plutonium and uranium. "Buildings and lab tables are 'hot,' and buckets of radioactive residues are thrown out on the ground. Workers suffer loss of hair, brain tumors, and high cancer rates," he said, adding that Chicano workers were forced to work in unsafe areas, but feared speaking out "because they need their wages."

Environmental issues cannot be separated from the broader context of social, racial, political and economic justice.

• Betty Griego of Mountain View, a community south of Albuquerque, fought back tears as she told how her six-month old son turned blue and nearly died in her arms after drinking formula made with tap water from wells contaminated with nitrates. However, she and other low-income residents are unable to afford a hook-up to city water. And evidence suggests, she said, that much of the pollution was coming from nearby Kirtland Air Force Base.

• Representatives from El Centro del Obrero and La Mujer Obrera in El Paso testified about chemical spills and working conditions in *maquila* industry operations on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. These industries are often "runaway shops," and tend to employ teenage women workers. The increase in severe workplace hazards resulting from the development of *maquila* industries have been accompanied by marked increases in toxic waste in surrounding communities. Said Guillermo Glenn, "We feel that the location of this toxic zone is not a coincidence. In fact, we believe that because this area is a low-income Hispanic community, city and state officials have allowed it to become a haven for unregulated hazardous waste material companies and this also affects what is transported and brought back across the border. It is a kind of no-man's zone, a low-regulation zone, where the authorities really do not understand what is being taken across and what is being brought back."

• Virginia Candelaria testified how she and hundreds of other women workers are suffering and dying from several forms of cancer due to years of exposure to solvents in an Albuquerque General Telephone and Electronics (GTE) plant. During the resolution of a lawsuit brought by 465 plaintiffs against GTE, the poisonous section of the plant where Mrs. Candelaria had worked was moved to Juarez, Mexico. Workers there are being paid *maquila* wages to do the same work.

• Bernardo Ponce and Carlos Casas told of working at the Fenix Junkyard in Juarez, where a defunct radiation machine used for cancer treatment was discarded as scrap metal by a U.S. disposal company. When the machine was dismantled, cobalt pellets spilled out and got scattered throughout the neighborhood, contaminating the workers and at least 500 residents — three children died, and many people still suffer from radiation sickness. The contaminated metal was made into restaurant tables and reinforcing bars which were eventually sold back in the United States.

• Residents of the Rio Puerco area of the Navajo Nation near Church Rock, N.M., told how they have been exposed

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to high levels of radiation from water contaminated by uranium tailings, byproducts of nuclear weapons and fuel production. A Navajo medicine man fell into a pond containing tailings and sulfuric acid and was badly burned. In 1979 the dam at a United Nuclear Corporations tailings pond broke, resulting in a 94-million gallon spill which contaminated the water and bed of the Puerco River, and has affected community residents, livestock and the local school's water supply.

• People from Espanola, N.M., testified that Chicano public school employees in their district were forced to clean up asbestos in local school buildings without adequate protection. The district showed no concern regarding the impact of this dangerous material on school children or the workers removing it. An elderly maintenance man who was exposed to it was told by his supervisor not to worry because he was not going to live 20 more years anyway.

The hearings showed that environmental racism is very real and that environmental issues cannot be separated from the broader context of social, racial, political, and economic justice. Unfortunately, this has not been the perspective of environmentalists over the years.

The environmental movement enjoys high visibility today in the United States and globally. Millions of dollars now fund the major environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, and Friends of the Earth, which are affiliated as the "Group of Ten." Much of this money comes from membership, which has skyrocketed over the past decade, with some groups now claiming millions.

But a significant amount of the funding for several "Group of Ten" organizations comes from major corporate powers, including GTE, Exxon, Dow Chemical and many others. The CEO of Waste Management, Inc. sits on the board of directors of the National Wildlife Federation. Indeed, many corporations are now labeling themselves environmentalists. They provided the money and the hype which made the Earth Day activities this year such massive media events. However, this new-found and loudly expressed corporate environmentalism coincides with deindustrialization at home and runaway shops abroad. It raises the question of whether the poor are going to continue to pay for past and present environmental negligence in the United States and around the world.

As environmental groups enter the mainstream of U.S. society, they claim that there is increasing interest among people of color about the environmental movement. It is generally expressed that people of color are finally "coming around" to the importance of what the environmental movement has been advocating for a long time.

However, people of color have been historically involved in struggles for environmental justice, and have taken on environmental issues as community, labor, or civil rights causes. Farmworkers, mostly Latino, have for many years spearheaded the fight against pesticides. Occupational safety and health issues have been addressed by labor unions, or in the case of the border industries, by immigrant rights groups. The problem of lead-based paint poisoning has been taken on by housing organizations.

The reality is that the environmental movement has not shown much willingness to put its resources towards supporting the struggle to end the poisoning of communities of color. The mainstream environmental groups have only a few token people of color involved in their operations and policy-making bodies. Finally, like the EPA, some of these groups have taken steps which have been detrimental to people of color's interests.

In early 1990 letters signed by SWOP and hundreds of other social and racial justice activists and organizations were submitted to the "Group of Ten." These letters raised concerns about a host of issues and called for dialogue to take place between people of color and members of the group. Initial discussions are now taking place, with potential for a new understanding between the environmental movement and organizations working for social and racial justice. Key questions in this process involve better defining how environmental issues fit into a social, racial and economic justice framework, and what the role of environmental groups will be in the emerging social and racial justice movement in the United States.

This new movement is exemplified by the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice, which was recently formed out of a SWOP initiative, and includes over 75 individual activists of color and representatives of community and labor organizations from Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona and California. This network reflects the fact that there is as much or more local organizing taking place today as in the 1960s and early '70s. After surviving a decade of Reganism, activists are looking for ways to mutually strengthen their efforts.

These days the work is quieter (i.e unreported) and is much less likely to be empowered (i.e. extinguished) by government funding. Issues being addressed include employment, workers rights, affordable housing, education, municipal services, immigrant's rights, and many others. As part of this broad agenda, organizers from around the country point to the environment as being "the issue" of the '90s. Perhaps it will be a unifying issue. TW

Resource

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The face of God

by James Wright

I was there. I am you.

I was there many ages ago when a man named Moses said to God: "God, show me all your glory." God said, "Yes, all my goodness I will show you, and my name I will tell you. But you cannot see my face; it is not time, for no person can yet see my face and live."

Yes, I was there, and I saw the fear and tenderness, the anticipation and sadness, and a vision of what was to be.

I was there. I am you.

I was there on the mountaintop with the man named Jesus. We were not alone. There were Peter, James and John. There was also the man named Moses, with his friend Elijah. I wondered: "Is it time?"

The glory of God began to radiate from Jesus' face, and Moses, with Elijah, joined in the light. But Peter and his friends were still afraid, and knew not what to say.

I was there. I am you.

I was there in the valley with the man named Jesus. And it's funny, you know, but I could always see him for who he was. Perhaps that is because I have known him for so long.

I would often look at his face and rest. Within his countenance I would always see the reflection of a beautiful blue-green pearl laid out on the jet-black curtain of the sky. It was a holy sight, this face of God. I call it Earth.

When I rest with my friend Jesus, and adore the face of God, I see that which you now call heaven. It is perfect, it is one, and it is a kaleidoscope of color, a tapestry of texture and hue.

But I was there, and so were you.

Yes, I was there when Jesus was in the valley, with all the people of the world. And I remember, through the pain, what the people saw when they looked into his blue-green face.

I remember the people who were wedded to power and fear, and how they would reach out and order the colors, and assign values to the textures and hues. I remember how they broke up the pearl into little pieces — this part for you and this part for me. I remember the tools with which they scratched his face; lines to separate one part from another. Man separate from woman, young separate from old, country different from country, and one picture-face of God better than another.

I also remember Jesus' friends. Sometimes I could catch a look of recognition in their eyes, a glimpse of understanding. But even they could not know the face for long, nor could they see its depth. When it was finally kissed by greed, scratched and spat upon by pride, they thought it had been destroyed, and they left it to die alone.

But mostly I remember the small-tall ones. I remember the beautiful women who had been made to feel low, but saw in Jesus' face the beauty of their true stature. I remember the blessed poor, who had been made to feel irrelevant, but saw in Jesus' face a reflection of their true worth. I remember the many who were sick and cast aside, and had been made to feel dirty, but saw in Jesus' face the source of life and light. And I remember the children who had been thrust aside by an illusion of the more important, but saw in Jesus' face a world in which there are no divisions and no rankings, a kaleidoscope of color and a tapestry of texture and hue.

I remember the small-tall ones very well. Yes, I remember them very well.

I was there. I am you.

I was there when Jesus died. The people were not ready for the face of God, so rather than blind the people, Jesus allowed his own light to be put out. But since light is all there is, it could not be put out forever, and it still shines even to this day, a beautiful blue-green pearl laid out on the jet-black curtain of the sky. I can see it in your face, you small-tall one.

I am here, and so are you. Honor the face, the Earth-Heaven, the blue-green pearl of great price, the kaleidoscope of color and tapestry of texture and hue. It is time. IW

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Fighting the poison of despair

by Susan E. Pierce

Poor and minority communities have for years borne the burden of this country's waste. For example, an 80-mile strip along the Mississippi between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, La., is dotted with small, impoverished, rural towns mostly populated by African-Americans. This strip is called "Cancer Alley" because 136 petrochemical plants and other industries have so polluted the region that the cancer rate there is 20 times the national average.

In addition to the health hazards, entire communities have been displaced. Revilletown, a small town near Baton Rouge founded by ex-slaves after the Civil War, was heavily contaminated by vinyl chloride emmissions from a nearby Georgia Gulf plant. In response to lawsuits, the company bought all the homes and relocated the residents in an out-of-court settlement.

In Appalachia, where local residents have traditionally been at the mercy of the coal companies, often losing their land to strip mining and their health and lives to black lung disease, the new growth industry is toxic waste dumping. As coal mines shut down and unemployment rises — in some regions of West Virginia and Kentucky it is as high as 50% — the toxic waste dumping industry exploits the need for jobs.

Sandy Elledge of the Appalachian Peoples' Service Organization (APSO), which builds coalitions between the Episcopal Church and advocacy groups, told of going to a hearing concerning a proposed hazardous waste dump in economically-depressed McDowell County, West Virginia. Much to her surprise, one of the proposal's biggest supporters was a local man whose family would probably be endangered by the dump.

"I was so stunned," said Elledge, "that I asked him, 'How can you risk the health and safety of your family?' His answer was, 'Ma'am, I have a right to choose how my family will die.' "

However, despite the seemingly overwhelming task of combatting a sense of powerlessness and reversing the tide of toxic waste sweeping over poor and minority communities, grassroots organizing by advocacy groups is bringing hope and change to these areas.

In Louisiana, a coalition of unions, black tenants rights organizations, and environmentalists have come to together to force government and industry to clean up polluted areas. Pat Bryant, executive director of the New Orleans-based Gulf Coast Tenants Leadership Development Project, explained how his group combined its program of advocacy for adequate housing and economic development with environmental issues.

"We discovered that the same communities most affected by the government's economic policies were also the most affected by industrial poisons," said Bryant.

Bryant pointed out that the struggle to combat toxic pollution had to be waged on the political front as well because of the state government's close ties to the petrochemical industry.

"Politicians here are like pelicans after an oil spill — they're so soaked in petrochemical money that they can't lift their wings to fly. They are mortgaging our future for petrochemical campaign financing," he said.

In 1988, in order to raise public awareness and protest the widespread contamination of the region, said Bryant, his group participated in the Great Louisiana Toxic March, an 11-day, 100-mile long march through Cancer Alley. According to newspaper polls, the march significantly raised local awareness about the dangers of hazardous waste. A second march was held in the spring of this year, and, Bryant said, was a major factor in passage of legislation to cut toxic emissions by 50%.

The marches were organized by a multiracial coalition of civil rights, religious, labor and tenants organizations working with mainstream environmental groups. As an African-American, Bryant was aware that white-dominated environmental groups were not used to sharing leadership with minorities. However, he said, these groups would have to learn how to work with people of color because, he said, "Unless this movement is based in the Third World communities, it's not going anywhere. It's the people in the communities, the local leadership, who will sustain the struggle."

Grassroots organizing is also proving effective in combatting toxic waste dumping in Appalachia. In the Cumberland Mountain region of Tennessee, a group called Save Our Cumberland Mountains (SOCM) was originally founded around issues of land use and taxes. According to staff member Lisa McLeod, a five-county survey done in the early 1970s found less than 10 corporations owned the majority of land and mineral rights but paid only a fraction of the property taxes.

The group also worked on coal issues — strip mining and its effects on the people living nearby.

Toxic waste has become an issue for SOCM in the last two years. McLeod said, "We had a fight in 1989 because the state was trying to take away county control over the placement of hazardous

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waste sites. Folks in local areas want control over whether waste will be dumped in their community."

Fighting the influx of hazardous waste involves understanding the economics of the region. "There are tensions over dumps," said McLeod, "the same kind as there were with strip mining. When there are no jobs and you need to put food on the table, it makes it a harder choice. I've been working with a community group fighting a solid waste landfill which they suspect will change to hazardous and radioactive waste. The waste will come from all over the country and no one knows what will be dumped. The people are saying, 'Yes, we need jobs, but not this kind.' "

A member-run organization with 11 chapters throughout the region, SOCM believes people have the right to control their surroundings. Therefore, it works on issues as they impact people — economic, health, and education.

Mary Helen Nichols, a chapter member in Roane County, described how working with the group had changed her life and the lives of others in her community during a campaign to stop the construction of an incinerator. The project was backed by state legislators, one of whom was going to build and own it. County executives were involved as well.

"When the hearings started about the incinerators," Nichols said, "we started calling people to tell them what it was, and handed out flyers. The professional way the flyers were written — SOCM gave us the information — made people believe what was in them."

"Before people had just said, 'It won't do any good.' SOCM didn't promise we would win, they just said we could do it," she added.

The organizing campaign was so successful, she said, that "we stopped two incinerators and a dump in less than a year. It was really exciting."

And residents learned to wield their political clout. "We scared the politicians," said Nichols. "At one of the hearings last winter, one of the commissioners voted against the incinerator, saying, 'People have risen up all over the world against the abuse of power — we'd be crazy to think it couldn't happen here.' "

The activism provides hope in the face of frightening environmental deterioration. Nichols lives on the Tennessee River, eight miles downstream from the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Nuclear Reservation, one of the sites where the first atomic bombs were developed, which still produces weapons-grade plutonium.

According to Department of Energy reports, said Nichols, the river, which provides water for the area, is contaminated with radioactive waste, PCBs, and mercury. She and her family drive 80 miles round-trip to obtain uncontaminated drinking water. "The river was part of us," she said. "They can't ever give us back what they took away."

A native of the area, Nichols has seen the human toll taken by the pollution. "When I was kid, nobody died of cancer. In the last 20 years, 80% of the people I know who have died, have died of cancer," she said. She is concerned about the future for her three children and grandchild.

But working with SOCM, said Nichols, has taught her "not to be afraid. The organization has given us confidence. We could never go back to the way we were." TW

Resources

Gulf Coast Tenants Leadership Development Project
P.O. Box 56101
New Orleans, LA 70119
Tel. (504) 949-4919

SOCM
PO Box 457
Jacksboro, TN 37757
Tel. (615) 562-6247

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Ecofeminist vision must spur action

by Mary Zeiss Stange

In response to the classic Freudian quandary, "What do women want?", contemporary ecofeminism offers an answer startling in its bold simplicity: to change everything about the way we imagine, experience and act in our world, and to do it now, before it is too late. As Canadian ecofeminist Judith Plant characterizes it, ecofeminism is "a truly international movement that has the power to radically transform our human perceptions of our species and its place in the natural world." Ecofeminism looks toward "human cultural possibilities as yet uncharted but which hold the promise of a world built not on fear but on love; which thrives not on self-interest but on the joyful experience of differences; which values not money and materialism above all else, but the real security of mutual interdependence."

In its radical anti-sexist, anti-classist, anti-racist agenda, ecofeminism is in many ways a logical outgrowth of the women's movement of the 1960s and '70s. Indeed, some have challenged the very use of the "eco-" prefix, as implying that environmental awareness is a recent addition to feminist thinking, whereas in truth feminism has always been actively concerned about the relation between the oppression of women on the one hand, and environmental degradation and depredation on the other. The direct parallel between the rape of the earth and the rape of women in patriarchal culture is a familiar motif in 20th-century feminist discourse.

Mary Zeiss Stange is Director of the Women's Studies Program and Associate Professor of Religion at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

The close affiliation between "woman" and "nature" has long been regarded as the foundation upon which patriarchal oppression rests, and the theoretical underpinnings of this system of exploitation have been painstakingly worked out by environmental historian Carolyn Merchant. In her authoritative *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution,* Merchant demonstrates how attitudes toward women (or more broadly, the "feminine") and nature (the realm of the non-human) have historically been mutually reinforcing. From the 17th century forward, "Mother Earth" has been subjected to technological domination and control on a scale unthinkable prior to the age of science. If today we are poised on the brink of global environmental catastrophe, Merchant suggests, it is in large part because science has been aided and abetted by being able to draw upon an older tradition which believed that nature, like woman, is an untrustworthy creature ever in need of taming, bridling, and breaking under the whip of male ("rational") dominion.

Of course, there has been ample theological justification for this view. In its development, Christian patriarchal orthodoxy itself drew upon older Judaic and other pre-Christian views of female inferiority. Biology was destiny, woman's reproductive capacity tying her much more closely to the natural/physical world than the fundamentally more spiritual male. Eve's punishment in *Genesis 3*, that she suffer in childbearing and be submissive to her husband, was conventionally interpreted to mean that male dominion over the female was not merely "natural," but divinely ordained.

In focusing on the necessity of female suffering in a fallen world, Christian theology laid the groundwork for what contemporary feminism recognizes as a theology of violence against women — and, perhaps by extension, against the earth. Given the background of a theological tradition that does not merely acknowledge, but in some profound sense requires and even celebrates female suffering, it is hardly surprising that women in a patriarchal system readily identify with the suffering of animals and of the earth itself. Such identification has led at least one radical feminist, Andrée Collard, to declare, "No woman will be free until all animals are free and nature is released from man's ruthless exploitation." That the majority of animal rights activists are women further suggests that identification with non-human suffering plays an important role in female psychology. And this identification is simultaneously encouraged by ecofeminism.

Carolyn Merchant, however, warns of the hazards inherent in feminist "celebrations" of the connection between women and nature:

> *If women overtly identify with nature and both are devalued in modern Western culture, don't such efforts work against women's prospects for their own liberation? Is not the conflation of women and nature a form of essentialism?*

In other words, does ecofeminism — along with the often allied animal rights and "deep ecology" movements — unwittingly buy into precisely that cultural construct which it ought to be busy overturning? That the leadership of both the animal rights and deep ecology movements is predominantly white and male

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suggests there is cause for concern. So, too, does the fact that most of the prominent spokeswoman for ecofeminism are white, Western, and middle-class in experience and education.

The majority of ecofeminists acknowledge the problem of springing free from the system of patriarchy. In its sheer massiveness, the structure of institutional oppression of women and the earth throws up practical obstacles at every theoretical turn. It is one thing to talk of a new vision of a new earth, but quite another to go about realizing that vision in an ever more complex world.

Activist Ynestra King, often cited as a founder of the ecofeminist movement, argues that seen in the proper light, the woman/nature connection is a strength, not a weakness, when it comes to implementing the vision of a world transformed. King bases her critique on Murray Bookchin's "social ecology," the view that directly links social oppression to natural despoliation. At the root of this link, she asserts, is misogyny. Woman is on nature's side as "the other," from the point of view of male culture. What needs to be overcome is precisely the male fiction of "otherness," that is, the alienating split between male culture and female nature.

In theological terms, the image that must be overthrown is that of the male God "above" nature, which sets the pattern for the identification of the male spirit with super-nature, and the relegation of the female body to the natural "order" of things. Social ecology rejects any and all alienation of the human from the natural. As King holds, this provides the foundation for a powerful transformative vision.

Ecofeminist writings are replete with vision: Of a world where everything that is, is holy. Where values of inclusivity and interconnectedness outweigh the forces of division and conquest. Where the lion and the lamb live, if not exactly in peace, at least free from human interference.

But, unless vision spurs action, it is vulnerable to the kind of criticism columnist Molly Ivins recently leveled at New Age thinking (which, not insignificantly, is espoused by a number of ecofeminists). In a column in the August, 1990 *Progressive*, while recognizing that "They do spend a lot of time Visualizing Peace," Ivins asked whether any of these people "ever feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or shelter the homeless?" A deep ecologist might dismiss such a question as "anthropocentric," and an animal rights advocate would call it "speciesist." However, by virtue of ecofeminism's claim that its transformative vision cuts through all barriers of class, race, and culture, just how it confronts this question is a test of its validity as a vision for the future.



Two of the more influential religious theorists in contemporary feminism — one a witch, the other a Christian theologian — have addressed this issue. Starhawk, speaking from the vantage point of the earth-centered "Old Religion" of Wicca, picks up on the theme of "liberty and justice for all." She writes:

> *And when we say "for all," we include the animals and plants and the environment itself as part of our community. And this value is not an abstraction, but becomes manifest in the opportunities we create that feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, provide health care and education to all as right, and place the sacred value of each being above the right to exploit the earth and profit off others' labor. To do this, we need to construct a new economics, with sustainability as its base.*

Inverting Gandhi's oft-cited remark about a nation's humanity being reflected in the way it treats its animals, Starhawk seems to be saying that a society's attitude toward the environment is best reflected in the way it treats its people. Yet while many ecofeminists talk in terms of transformation of consciousness and self-renewal, few — especially North American ecofeminists — seem overly willing to confront the tough economic challenges Starhawk raises. Often, it seems as if the hungry and the homeless, being in effect a part of the patriarchal system, fall outside the purview of ecofeminist activism. The socially disenfranchised are convenient objects for meditation, yes, but difficult to work with in practice.

Speaking from the perspective of Christian feminist theology, Rosemary Radford Ruether also confronts the social implications of ecofeminism. She says what is necessary is to "convert our minds to the earth," and explains:

> *(This) cannot happen without converting our minds to each other, since the distorted and ecologically dysfunctional relationships appear necessary, yet they actually support the profits of the few against the many. There can be no ecological*

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"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind.

But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more. Never again will there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or the elderly who do not live out their years; he or she who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth; those who fail to reach a hundred will be considered accursed. They will build houses and dwell in them; they will plant

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The return of the heron

by Rosalinda Ramirez-Yrizarry

This is the world that I was born into.

I saw the dew sparkle like diamonds on the green earth. An orchestra of song filled the air — crickets, coquis, birds, horses, cows, dogs, children — all playing by the river's edge. Branches stretched out to provide shade and the brilliance of colored flowers.

The water, tumbling carelessly over the rocks did not complain or cry, but gurgled and sang until it was at last freed into the expanse of the ocean. The whales, keepers of sacred history, gathered off the coast to celebrate their own birthing — and the children of the sea surfaced to greet the children of the land. Patient and calm, the dolphins would come close and exchange signs of affection, accompanying us.

Eventually turning towards the shore, we'd bid farewell until next time. In the field, the old dog and the heron walked side-by-side. An unlikely pair, they were inseparable until the time of the migration would come. Heron would return at the same season every year to check in on its old friend. Who knows what stories they told each other as they walked slowly through the field? The elders, watching the magic sight, lived season-to-season because of the gifts of the forest — the plants, the herbs, the flowers. A hundred heron migrations would not be too much to see in a lifetime.

Rosalinda Ramirez-Yrizarry, a Puerto Rican, is Co-Director of the Southeast Center for Justice, Atlanta, Ga. Her home is in the Uroyan Mountain country. Of Taino-Arawak and Spanish lineage, she is also known as Catitonauh.

This is what I want to tell you.

The heron did not come back this season. Oil weighed down its wings, they say. The old dog waited until he fell asleep in the field. Dog never woke up, his spirit soaring with the heron's in some secret place of rendezvous. The elders don't make it through so many seasons. The forests no longer offer healing. The heron has not returned and the forests are being taken. The shores are eroding with the bodies of dolphins. Victims of the stranger's net, their desperate cries fill our sleep. But the stranger's ears hear only the rustle of Paper Dollars. Dollars don't breathe. Dolphins do. How can the absence of life have more value than life itself? The number of whales on the coast grow fewer with each passing season. Fear grips the shore as the time of birthing draws close. The birthing comes naturally. Paper Man brought the fear.

The water does not sing as loudly. Foreign items weigh it down, destroy the life within it. Signs tell us that it cannot quench our thirst any longer. The colors are fading. Acid they say. It's in the rain. The trees are dying. The songs of the Mountain forests grow weak. Poisons passed in the air by Paper Man kills the bird's song, chokes the coquis' cry, paralyzes the cricket's excitement, sours the cow's milk, destroys the horse's pasture, leaves the dogs sterile. And the children — pushed from the womb to the light too soon — never have a chance to open their eyes to catch the sparkle of the dew.

Paper Man takes all of us, you and me,

as he takes the earth. He measures us against his Paper and buys and sells our labor. Families and entire villages live and die now so that Paper Man can accumulate his Paper wealth. We build houses for them to live in while we go homeless. We gather the crops for them to eat while we starve or are poisoned like the coquis.

Extinction is upon us. Life is being traded for a piece of Paper. The Paper People and the Mountain People are distinct. We cannot live together. Extinction will take us all. The Paper People will wander away beyond the stars forever. But the Earth never dies. It is simply transformed . . . over and over again in its own time. The Mountains will rise again, and the Mountain People with them, because the Mountains and the People are one. The very stones will thrill with our memories. Our feet will once again be conscious of the Earth's sympathetic touch. There will only be a change of worlds, a new creation. The heron will return.

I face into the wind and pray for the world to change.

I cry for ancestors of Mountain heritage — whose loving made us possible — to touch the Paper People, for Paper has blinded them to the magic. The Paper Children come to Earth not knowing how to breathe and how love can change the world. They have no memory of the songs that must be sung. They feel no connection. Their fathers have abandoned them to Paper. If they do not learn to listen and hear the songs, to see and recognize the magic, they like their fathers will not know transformation. Disconnected, they will not return with the heron.

To be faithful to the heron, one must love deeply.

The words ecology and justice leave a bitter taste in my mouth. They parch my throat, as if lining it with salt and I'm forced to grit my teeth so that I do not explode. Paper People terminology. Save whose ecology? Justice for whom? History testifies that it is never for all. The Paper Dollar underwrites the definitions of ecology and justice. The systems that support the Paper People and their Dollar cannot support ecology and justice. The priorities are natural enemies. Ecology is an all or nothing proposition. The true ecologists speak of Mother and Brother and Sister and Grandfather, and a love relationship defines the justice that forms the underlying spirit.

At times I wonder how long I can sustain my love for these United States of America with its suicidal lifestyle and the uncontrolled brutal determination with which it pursues Paper and power.

When I was an adolescent, this country seemed full of possibilities. I'd lift my fist in protest and all my anger towards oppression would surge forth tempered by the consolation that I was helping this country move towards change. I lifted my fist so many times for this country, until I found myself alone, with my fist high in the air, in the middle of a great emptiness.

Then, one day this country sent me the disturbing news that friends had been killed, each one in a different place, at a different time, connected only by their common love of people, the land and life. The reasons were unclear. Paper. It was for Paper. That is what I understood. They said to protect such Paper was the same as defending democracy. To save the Paper People those who did not value it enough had to die. To assure the "life" of the Paper they had to contaminate the land. Non-violent resistance was a dangerous practice and the Paper Society had to be protected from it. I couldn't make the connections.

It was then that I realized this country would not listen to my pleas, to what they considered my naive ideas and radi-

vineyards and eat their fruit. No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat.

For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people; my chosen ones will long enjoy the works of their hands. They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the Lord, they and their descendants with them.

Before they call, I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy in all my holy mountain."

So says the Lord.
Is. 65: 17-25

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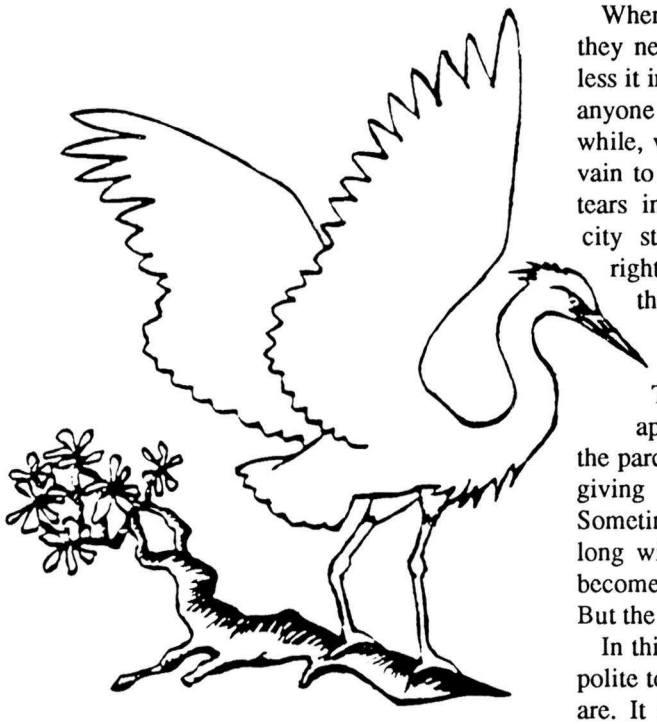

cal ways. It simply would not listen.

I felt rage against this country because of what it had unjustifiably taken from so many. I was angry because of all that it pretended to be and was not . . . its unkept promises and blind suicidal path, its destruction of so many lives for the profit of a few. I came to reject it so strongly that I ended by not respecting it, by wishing it evil, and blaming it for everything bad that had happened or would happen. I even went so far as to decide that this country did not deserve my efforts. I stopped being able to enjoy this country like one becomes unable to enjoy the company of a friend who has forgotten how to smile.

This was when I realized that Paper rules the world, the over-congested streets really lead nowhere, and the Paper People are the rulers of the lie, of the "no," of the "tomorrow," of the "maybe." And I decided a country that is not even sure of where it stands today or tomorrow on issues of life is profoundly, spiritually barren.

When one talks to the Paper People they never seem to know anything, unless it involves profit. They never accuse anyone unless it is for their gain. Meanwhile, widows, isolated and poor, try in vain to bring back their dead with their tears in the middle of blood-drenched city streets, and those people whose rights are violated are unable to prove their innocence. Men and women with children are left homeless, crying in the streets for mercy. Trees, animals and mountains disappear, causing the sun to scorch the parched earth and preventing it from giving forth its fruit in due season. Sometimes I can't help thinking, how long will it be before my family and I become numbered among the victims? But the fact is, we are.

In this country one learns that it is impolite to name things the way they really are. It is more "correct" to speak half truths, hypocritically, so as not to disturb or offend anyone or make an inappropriate implication. When you ask disturbing questions, you might be told more directly that certain things cannot be because they do not fulfil the (Paper) requirement; or, because it is simply not the way it is done — (Paper) People don't think that way; or, because there are not enough resources available (available is the key word — Paper People's resources must be preserved at all costs).

Sometimes I want to explode saying this country is so confused that perhaps it should not be anyone's country! But, it is someone's country — mine, yours and all of ours who choose to be here — and we have to deal with it as it is because that is the price of having a country.

Besides, the passage from hate to irrational love is but one step. This contradiction is as great as the immense and passionate love I express through my work and struggles which I entrust to this country's existing, though fragile, possibilities.

The best part is that, in spite of itself, this country does return the gesture. Every time the dog, wild with excitement, calls me to come and see another squirrel, as if to say, "Look. They are still with us!" Or the cats draw my attention as they roll and purr with pleasure upon a plot of grass as if exclaiming, "Ohhh, it's still here. It's sooo good." Or I see the eyes of a young child filled with wonder and mystery as a butterfly alights on her finger, as if inviting the child to "something more." Or the glowing face of an old woman filled with tears of joy at the touch of a newborn infant who, delighted in the warmth and closeness of another human being, raises his tiny hand to caress her face in a gesture of uncomplicated affection. Yes, the bird that stays with us through the winter, the tree stump that grows back again, the people who place their bodies in the way of the bulldozers to save a forest, a home. There is still life here!

These are the things to which we must be careful not to become blind as we find ourselves becoming more and more outraged. In our outrage, we must not become disconnected like the Paper People in their greed for Paper Power.

This is a time that requires the best we have to offer. We will be our own results. We must remember to remain connected to the heron. TW

THE WITNESS makes a switch

After almost a year's research, THE WITNESS has switched to recycled paper for printing stock and office supplies. Production costs have risen because the price of recycled paper is still higher than that of regular stock, but we feel it is well worth the extra expense.

Buying recycled paper, recycling metal, paper and glass we use in the office, and other conservation methods are all part of THE WITNESS' commitment to environmental stewardship.

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Stange . . . *Continued from page 15*

ethics simply as a new relation of "man" and "nature." Any ecological ethics must always take into account the structures of social domination and exploitation that mediate domination of nature and prevent concern for the welfare of the whole community in favor of the immediate advantage of the dominant class, race, and sex.

Ruether calls for an "ethic of ecojustice," placing upon humanity the heavy responsibility of curtailing the process of social/cultural evolution for the sake of saving the planet. We must do this, she says, because by virtue of our cultural consciousness, "we alone can 'sin.' . . . We are the rogue elephant of nature."

What steps are ecofeminists taking to tame this elephant? Ynestra King stresses the importance of taking direct action, to effect personal change as well as to accomplish long-term goals. She writes:

Direct actions include learning holistic health and alternative ecological technologies, living in communities that explore old and new forms of spirituality which celebrate all life as diverse expressions of nature, considering the ecological consequences of our lifestyles and personal habits, and participating in creative public forms of resistance, including nonviolent civil disobedience.

How, more precisely, such "direct actions" will transform human society beyond isolated pockets of mostly white middle-class Americans is, alas, an open question.

This points toward one of the major problems with current ecofeminist theory. For the most part, it remains little more than theory. Retreat into alternative communities and ritual guerrilla theater is certainly of benefit to some individuals, mostly on a personal level. However, in a world of increasingly limited resources, ecofeminists (along with their colleagues in animal rights and deep ecology activism) frequently seem to be overvaluing environmental concerns at the expense of the realities of human suffering. Perhaps it is somehow easier to work toward saving dolphins or seal pups, than to identify with crack babies, teenage mothers or street gangs. It was reported last year that anti-fur demonstrators in New York complained to the police about panhandlers getting in their way. A proposition recently passed in a California referendum calls for the diversion of funds from several social service programs, in order to "protect" the mountain lion, which is not an endangered species. Something is seriously out of focus here.

Ecofeminist writers in this country have a tendency to sentimentalize the nature they identify with — perhaps because many of them are urban-based. One who does not live on the land, or depend upon it for one's sustenance, can risk being sentimental about it. Not surprisingly, there is also a good deal of romanticism about Native American belief and practice in ecofeminist theory. This has occurred to the extent that at least one North American Native, Gitksan Tribal Council member Marie Wilson, has politely, but pointedly, asked environmentalists and ecofeminists to pay more attention to their own tradition, and leave hers alone.

Internationally, the ecofeminist movement is alive and well in Third World nations. Yet things like the Chipko or "tree-hugging" movement in India, like Native American spirituality, tend to be misappropriated by American ecofeminism, yielding romanticized images of something like nature-worship, rather than stories of grassroots struggles for survival. The women in India hug those trees to prevent developers felling them, not because they love the trees, but because they need them for firewood for cooking. All the while, the women themselves are living in a system of severe patriarchal oppression.

The promise of ecofeminism, the promise of a world in which all may thrive in dignity and harmony falls short in so far as it does not recognize the primary importance of human need and suffering. Building upon the best insights of 20th century feminism, ecofeminism may be equipped with the ideal tools for transforming society. Meditation, working on compassion, recognizing what some have called the rights of nature, are important preliminary steps to take. Sadly, though, they too often seem to be the ends, rather than the means. We must do better than this. Our lives literally depend on it. TW

We need your help

Our annual fundraising appeal for continued publication of THE WITNESS is still far short of its goal as the end of our fiscal year — Oct. 31 — approaches. As of this writing, we have only heard from some 250 donors.

Perhaps our once a year, low-key but sincere appeal letter was tossed along with the junk mail after you returned from vacation. We hope not, but if that was the case — HELP!

We can't afford to send out another mailing on our 1989-90 budget, so we earnestly solicit your support through this notice in the magazine. If you still have that envelope somewhere on your desk, do speed it off to us. If it got tossed, feel free to enclose a tax-deductible gift with your next renewal notice, or other correspondence coming our way.

We will be publishing a list of our friends who respond to this appeal later in the year.

Many thanks!

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Make environment ministry a priority

by John DeMott

Earth — Suddenly pictures were taken from miles away (from a spaceship), and we saw it at last for what it truly is. It is about the size of a dime. It is blue with swirls of silver. It shines. The blackness it floats in is so immense it seems almost miraculously not to have swallowed it up long since. Seeing it like that for the first time, you think of Jesus seeing Jerusalem for the last time. The ass he's riding comes clipclopping around a bend in the road, and without warning there it is. His eyes fill with tears, as Luke describes it. "Would that even today you knew the things that make for peace," he says. "For the days shall come . . ." (Luke 19:41, 43). The holy city. The holy earth. We must take such care of it. It must take such care of us. This side of Paradise, we are each of us so nearly all the other has. There is darkness beyond the dreams of avarice all around us. Among us there is just about enough light to get by.

— Frederick Buechner
Whistling in the Dark

We stood at the summit of Har Meggido. The rediscovered ruins of the ancient city sat astride the military and commercial route connecting the centers of antiquity's "fertile crescent."

Below, stretching northeast towards the mountains of southern Lebanon and Syria, lay the great plain known as Armageddon.

On that plain, we heard a guide telling his Christian tour party, would be fought the final, decisive battle between the forces of good and evil.

I shuddered.

The chilly wind bit sharply, whipping our raincoats about us. It had begun to rain. We felt the storm approaching.

But the approaching storm was not what made me shudder. Rather, it was my knowledge that many American pilgrims to Palestine/Israel's "Holy Land" *do* believe as gospel truth that the end of our age will come in a blazing conflict between modern armies at a place like Armageddon in the Middle East.

"Well," I said to a companion. "That's a nice definition of our problem, isn't it?"

He nodded in agreement. He understood fully for he, too, was an activist in the environmental protection movement.

What's our problem? It's one of fostering an ethic capable of inspiring international commitment and devotion to the cause of protecting our plundered planet Earth from continuing injury and damage that may well spell the end of human life.

John DeMott, Ph.D., Professor of Journalism at Memphis State University, is a member of the News and Information Committee of the National Council of Churches.

That challenge is immediate and urgent. Perhaps already we have ignored it too long. It's quite possible, science tells us, that there's been set into motion a compounding process of ecological destruction impossible to arrest, let alone reverse.

Whatever our chances of survival in what is certain to be a difficult future, today's challenge requires the dedication of people everywhere, regardless of faith or creed.

Given such a need, we are naturally inclined to look for leadership from society's religious leaders and the institutions they serve or represent.

It's disheartening, therefore, to realize that much of humanity's failure to come to grips with today's overriding crisis is rooted in this country's Judeo-Christian faith.

Despite mainline religion's tradition-based acceptance of stewardship over the earth and its natural resources — frequently described as the "greening of religion" — two strong forces in modern religion continue to constitute major obstacles to society's efforts to create the environmental protection ethic so desperately needed today. Those forces are generally related to apocalyptic and Armageddon doctrines and, unfortunately, both appear to be growing in U.S. society.

Before probing the relationship of those forces to the environmental protection movement, let's examine a bit of recent history.

During the 1960s and '70s, a number of prominent historians and environmentalists criticized religious leaders and theologians for ignoring the growing environmental crisis. Some even went so

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far as to say that the ancient Hebraic scripture's call to be "fruitful and multiply" was the cause of the crisis.

Consequently, the environmental protection movement generally was unable to attach itself to the grassroots church network as had the civil rights and peace movements — except in the case of Appalachians opposed to strip mining and a few Native American causes.

An inevitable convergence of theology and ecology, however, had been predicted by early conservationists such as John Muir, French bacteriologist and ecologist Rene Dubos and Jesuit philosopher and paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin.

As a result of those insights and other explorations such as George Hendry's trail-blazing book, "The Theology of Nature," more and more religious leaders around the world began to call for a greater awareness of our relationship to — and responsibility for — the state of our natural world.

In 1986, the World Wide Fund for Nature, as part of its 25th anniversary observance, convened an interfaith ceremony at Assisi, Italy, the birthplace of St. Francis. It was attended by representatives of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Moslem and Jewish faiths; and it marked the first time in history that official representatives of five of humanity's major ethical systems stated categorically that their beliefs led them to conservation.

"Let us declare," said Hindu leader Karan Singh, "our determination to halt the present slide toward destruction. To rediscover the ancient tradition of reverence for all life and, even at this late hour, to reverse the suicidal course upon which we have embarked. Let us recall the ancient dictum: 'The Earth is our mother and we are her children.' "

And in Moscow, in the *glasnost*-tempered Russian winter of 1989, religious leaders from throughout the world — many Americans among them — broke bread and pondered the following insight: "We did not inherit the earth from our ancestors. Rather, we have borrowed the earth from our children, grandchildren, and their descendants."

Time and again, contemporary moral philosophers — Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem, Jewish — point out that a sense of the sacred, combined with science and reason, presents the solution to our problems.

In today's Western civilization, that prospect inevitably demands a rigorous re-evaluation of Judeo-Christianity as an established source of strength for the protection of the environment.

Re-examining Judeo-Christian scripture from the standpoint of an environmental protection ethic, one can encounter some disturbing things. For instance, Psalms 115:16 says, "The heavens are the Lord's, but the earth He has given to the sons of man."

The religious establishment can play a leading role in the determination of our ecological fate.

Environmentalists have argued that the Judeo-Christian tradition is intrinsically anthropocentric, meaning that the human species looks upon itself as the center of reality. Under that interpretation, Mother Nature bats last. In Eastern religions such as Zen Buddhism, however, enlightenment and well-being are attained only when one lives harmoniously with nature.

That view was popularized by historian Lynn White, Jr., in a 1967 essay, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," in which he called Christianity the most anthropocentric religion in the world and claimed that the medieval church was directly responsible for today's polluted skies and waters.

"We shall continue to have a worsening ecological crisis," he wrote, "until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason except to serve man (sic)."

The Judeo-Christian legend of the Messiah — and the Islamic legend of the *mahdi* — are forces that have made it difficult at times to foster the development of an environmental protection ethic.

When one believes that the return of one's Savior is imminent — perhaps even next Tuesday at 5 p.m. — it is difficult to commit oneself to long-term restoration of the environment. Long before global temperature elevation floods our seacoasts, the Messiah undoubtedly will have appeared and taken his children to their reward. Or long before the rainforests have burned or cut away, our eternity will have been decided on the battlefields of Armageddon.

Unfortunately, for people committed to salvation of the human race and the earth, much of today's conventional interpretations of Hebrew and Christian scripture is based on writings created centuries before we became aware that we had acquired the power to destroy the entire human race.

With its primitive analysis of ancient history and anticipation of future events, apocalypse doctrine clings to its literal interpretation of Holy Writ. The Armageddon network survives, encouraged by U.S. involvement in the Zionist adventure in Palestine. And religious crazies persist in predicting the date of Judgement Day.

A pathetic picture? No, it is more alarming than pathetic, because religious groups of apocalyptics and Armageddon believers are enjoying steady growth.

Moreover, many Christians and Jews not associated with apocalyptics end up aligning with them through a blind trust

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in God's goodness to humanity, which was created in God's image and therefore favored over other creatures.

"If God wants it to happen," such good folks say, "then it will happen. If it isn't God's will, then it won't happen."

Smiling beatifically, such folks go about their accustomed activities without feeling any urgent need to commit themselves to protection of the environment — except perhaps for purging it of obscenity, alcohol advertising or other affronts to their piety.

While these people are not beyond conversion to the religious environmental protection movement, they are presently a dead weight upon the "greening of religion" in this country.

And they have kin in the many Americans who possess a blind faith in the capabilities of modern science to meet the challenge of environmental degradation by achieving some miraculous cures for acid rain and similar ills. Before the earth is destroyed, they believe, science will have met the challenge. That kind of Pollyanna mentality is as dangerous as the fatalism and predestinationism of apocalyptics.

Despite the fact that the recent 20th observance of Earth Day was supported by virtually all U.S. main-line denominations, it received little notice in many churches. Whenever I attend some of the largest churches around the country, I find myself greatly distressed at their fixation on one's "personal relationship" with Jesus Christ, rather than social action and justice. Given the dominance of such churches in some of the fastest growing Christian denominations, the environmental protection movement obviously will have great difficulty making progress in the immediate future. Similar obstacles exist in ultra-conservative segments of other religious groups.

Judeo-Christianity's faith in God is commendable, I concede; but we need to augment it with an appreciation of human responsibility.

That has been occurring. Many U.S. Christians have been active in the environmental protection movement for years. But while teaching in Egypt, I discovered an old Arab proverb that has much to say about the effort to develop a stronger environmental protection ethic in modern religion.

"Trust Allah," it advised. "But you must tie your camel."

While many American faithful trust the Lord absolutely, I fear their camels are running amok, wreaking havoc through the country as a result of insensitivity to environmental damage and ignorance of its serious consequences.

What progress could be achieved, I often ask myself, if all the hours spent in today's church activity, much of it devoted to the reinforcement of religious bigotry, could be devoted to fostering a desperately-needed environmental protection ethic?

We need not renounce institutionalized religion in order to obtain salvation for Spaceship Earth. On the contrary, the essential character of the Christian faith has always cherished a close relationship to nature. Witness the following words of one of Christianity's most beloved hymns:

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And see the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze
Then sings my soul, my Savior, God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Though religion generally has been slow in responding to the environmental crisis — and certain forces in contemporary religion constitute major obstacles to be overcome — the religious establishment can play a leading role in the determination of our ecological fate.

The religious press, broadcasting and other segments of religious journalism have a special part to play. We cannot depend upon the commercial mass media, enterprises devoted to the revenue-enhancing reinforcement of conventional wisdom. Reflecting today's popular concern over pollution, the commercial media have been giving a lot of attention to the environment and attempts to protect it effectively. However, we need to remember that the commercial media are notoriously fickle, and will jump ship immediately whenever their audience appears to be losing interest. Above all else, they are advertising-driven adjuncts of society's marketing system. Ratings, readership or audience share dictates the nature or character of their public service. The public interest is incidental to profit-seeking for commercial mass media. Until the environmental ethic becomes an established part of society's conventional wisdom, we can expect no solid commitment from the mass media.

In the meantime, the mainline religious media must assume leadership in this field. And, in the exercise of that leadership, those media must able to command the confidence of their supporting institutions.

Care-for-the-earth ministry and mission must be the basis for worldwide religious liturgy, catechism, education and social service. For as British poet Laurence Housman observed many years ago:

How shall we love thee,
Holy hidden being
If we love not the world
which thou hast made. TW

MOVING?

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Short Takes

Panama holocaust

Eight months after the U.S. invasion of Panama, the Panamanian death toll is still unknown. The figures continue to swell as mass graves are discovered. Human rights groups now put the number of civilians killed at 2,000 to 4,000 . . . 14 common graves have now been identified.

The first such site . . . was exhumed on April 28 and May 5, yielding a terrible harvest of dismembered bodies, broken bones and crushed skulls. All were buried by the U.S. Army during the December invasion, according to eyewitnesses.

These exhumations uncovered 123 bodies, though the actual number thrown into the trench is not known. The grisly toll includes several children buried in one plastic bag, two bodies with hands tied behind their backs that showed signs of bullet wounds and a small bag containing the arms, legs and torso of a woman.

Valerie van Isler
***The Guardian* 8/15/90**

Bush chops tree budget

Number of trees George Bush has pledged to plant in the United States in the next five years: 5,000,000,000.

Amount he has proposed to cut from existing Forest Service tree-planting programs next year: $32,000,000.

***Harper's Index* 6/90**

Lesbian/gay ministry seeks director

The Parsonage, a San Francisco-based ministry to gay and lesbian people supported by the Episcopal Diocese of California and the national church's Jubilee Ministry program, seeks to fill the new position of executive director. Qualifications include: experience in lesbian and gay ministry and advocacy; strong administrative and volunteer management skills; ability to articulate Christian theology and witness regarding lesbian and gay experience and faith. Laypersons and clergy are encouraged to apply. For information and an application, write Deborah Frangquist, Chair, Search Committee, The Parsonage, 555-A Castro St., San Francisco, CA 94114. The application deadline is Oct. 1.



Hopi wisdom

The world has to get together because we are living on this earth. We are children of Mother Earth and we were sent to use our language, our ceremonies, whatever we develop to help keep this life and land in balance. We have no business going around disturbing other peoples' land and life. We can help them with every invention we have, but not use that to try and control them.

Thomas Banyacya, Hopi elder
***Ground Zero*, Winter 1990**

Grand jury resister wins victory

Attorney and political activist Linda Backiel, who in July faced a jail sentence for refusing to violate lawyer/client privilege by testifying before a grand jury (see July/Aug. WITNESS), recently won a unprecedented victory. Her grand jury hearing has been delayed until early October, when an appeal to dismiss contempt of grand jury charges against her goes before the U.S. Supreme Court.

A different sort of Archbishop

The Rt. Rev. George Carey, 54, who next year will become the 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury and spiritual leader of the world's Anglicans and Episcopalians, is likely to be a very different sort of head of the English church.

Like many of his predecessors, he is primarily a scholar and writer. But unlike the overwhelming majority of past archbishops, Carey is not a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge, and he is not the son of a clergyman, a professional man, a nobleman or a member of the gentry.

His father was a hospital porter. Carey grew up in public housing in London's tough East End, began his working life by dropping out of school at 15 and taking a job as an office boy, and finally entered college at age 21 at the University of London. Carey wrote recently that he did not experience "living Christianity" until he was 17, when his 13-year-old brother took him to the local Anglican church. There he found "the worship appallingly boring but the fellowship and the preaching riveting."

In his present post as bishop of Bath and Wells, Carey is known as the "green bishop" because of his concern for environmental questions. He is a supporter of the ordination of women, which is still not permitted in the Church of England although the Church of Ireland recently ordained its first two women priests.

William R. MacKaye
***Bread* 8/5/90**

EPF on the move

The national office of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF), formerly housed at Christ Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., has moved to the Church of the Epiphany in downtown Washington. The new address is P.O. Box 28156, Washington, DC 20038; the new phone number is (202) 783-3380.

Blueprint for Mid-East showdown

Anticipating increasing chaos in the poor countries, the Pentagon is shifting from an East-West to a North-South posture. The North-South war game is not one of defending the boundaries of ordered societies, but of rapid strikes for purposes of rescue, retaliation or intimidation, in pursuit of specific Western "interests" — the sort of war described in the 1982 U.S. Army manual as "AirLand Battle 2000." That document incorporated a concept of integrated conventional, nuclear and chemical warheads for use on the electronic battlefield deep in enemy territory.

Diana Johnstone
***Middle East Report* 5-6/89**

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New woman bishop prefers 'ragged boundaries of the church'

by Julie A. Wortman

It seemed suspiciously coincidental that the women of Dunedin, New Zealand should choose June 29, the day Penelope Jamieson was consecrated bishop of Dunedin, to march to the city's center to "Reclaim the Night," and protest violence against women. Admittedly, revolution was in the air that afternoon as the Anglican Communion's first woman bishop, Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts Barbara Harris, joined in what New Zealand Anglicans call an episcopal "scrum" to make Jamieson the Communion's first woman diocesan bishop. But the revolution has to do with New Zealand's women taking back the church and much more.

It is easy to equate physical violence against women with the church's traditional and canonical sanctions against women's full participation in church life. The 20 local Roman Catholic women who stood outside waving placards that read "Yipee! We're for Penny!" and "Congratulations Penny!" left no doubt that as women they find their church a painful place to be. While their own bishop, Leonard Boyle, has attended Anglican episcopal consecrations in the past, he made a last-minute decision not to attend this one.

The Rev. Catherine Milford, representing England's Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), admitted to occasional despair over the resistance to women's ordination among Anglicans at home. "At this time, when women deacons in England dare to 'lay down their lives' for a parish, they are thrown back from the powerful electric fence which guards the sacred places," she said. "Something prevents our Church of England from a corporate recognition of the Spirit at work in the ministry of women and from being able to respond with joy," she added.

During services the following Sunday, Jamieson's first chance to lead worship in her own cathedral, Milford asked Bishops Harris and Jamieson to join in lighting a flame that Milford and other MOW supporters would keep lit until women get the right to be ordained priests in England as well.

Although New Zealand approved women's ordination in 1977, few women were ordained early on. Jamieson, who began studying theology in 1978, was among those qualified for ordination, but forced to wait until a bishop was willing to ordain them. It was an experience which makes her unsympathetic to concerns that the orders of men she ordains might not be accepted in Anglican provinces where women's ordination has not yet been approved. "The issue seems to be new because it's affecting men," she said. "Women clergy already face that problem."

"I'm part of changing order," she said matter-of-factly, accepting this will mean continuing controversy. "But it's more what I am that concerns people than what I say or do," she added with a slight edge to her voice. Pausing to a moment, she then conceded with a wry

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Julie A. Wortman is staff writer for *Episcopal Life.*

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The Rt. Rev. Penelope Jamieson, Bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand, and the Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris of the United States, the only two women bishops in the Anglican Communion, light a flame which will remain lit until women win the right to be ordained priests in England.

smile, "There is an ontological quality about my position that does infuriate."

Few women had thought it likely that the conservative southernmost Diocese of Dunedin, which did not begin ordaining women to the priesthood until 1984, would be the first to elect a woman bishop.

Nevertheless, the Rev. Claire Brown, a priest on the cathedral staff, decided it was time to propose a woman "to remind the church that women are eligible." When the women of the province heard that Jamieson had been elected, they were stunned but elated.

At one point during the consecration ceremonies, 20 lay and clergy women took over the service in an unscheduled demonstration of support for Jamieson and a stronger role for women in the church. They gathered in the center of the cathedral and began singing a familiar Celtic blessing which ends, "May God hold you in the hollow of her hand," gradually moving forward to enclose Jamieson in their circle. Jamieson joined them in singing the benediction. The congregation rose to its feet in a spontaneous outburst of applause as the women presented the new bishop with a carved wooden crozier one of them had designed.

And yet, as Pat Scott, a lay delegate to the electoral synod pointed out, Jamieson's gender is only a part of what made the outcome of her election "awesome."

"The miracle is not that a woman was elected, but that the old values were overturned," Scott told women in the diocese afterward. "Lay ministry was valued alongside ordained ministry, commitment to a Pacific Island community was recognized to be as important as being on Standing Committee. Make no mistake, this is a revolution in thinking."

Jamieson's broad experience in the church will enable her to meet the challenges of this new role, according to Brown. "Penny has 30 years of experience in Christian ministry — a much wider experience than many who have spent their whole adult life in the ordained ministry," Brown said. "Only those who have no real belief in the value of lay ministry could deny that."

Barely a week following the electoral synod, New Zealand Anglicans began using a new prayer book, one that proudly affirms an English heritage transplanted to a late 20th-century, Pacific island world. Twenty-five years in preparation, the new book has shaped an image of what the Church of New Zealand intends to be — a church which increasingly affirms its Maori and Polynesian heritage, validates God's motherhood along with God's fatherhood, values lay ministry as much as ordained, and prefers partnership to individualism.

At her installation Jamieson told her diocese, "It will be my most profound pleasure to be among you as one who both celebrates and shares the Christian life which is so dear to me — and may we, all of us, grow together in that life as a community of Christians of diverse shapes and hues."

In 1965, following her marriage to Ian Jamieson, a lecturer in medieval English at Wellington's Victoria University, English-born Jamieson taught Sunday School and served on the vestry, but she was especially attracted to the edges of parish ministry, helping operate a drop-in coffee bar, and working with Wellington's inner-city ministries. While studying theology, Jamieson worked as a lay parish assistant in one of Wellington's poorer neighborhoods.

She was ordained a priest in Wellington in 1983, and in 1985 assumed the position of vicar in an ailing parish where she proved herself an able administrator. By delegating responsibility and focusing on the parish's spiritual life, she nurtured the struggling congregation into a thriving and active faith community. When talking about what she will miss most as she assumes her episcopal duties, she said, "It's easier to be close to people in a parish."

As bishop, however, she expects to continue with the focus she has had as a priest. "I'm more interested in working in or on the ragged boundaries of the church than being at the center," she said.

She will also continue upholding efforts to honor the country's — and the church's — early commitments to New

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Zealand's native Maori people. Before pursuing ordination she did doctoral study on a Council for Educational Research project involving Tokelauan children who were learning English. Ironically, the only New Zealand bishop who failed to attend her consecration was Wakahuihui Vercoe, bishop to the church's Maoris.

While Vercoe does not formally object to Jamieson's episcopacy, he says the Maori people are not ready to address women's roles, either in the church, where some Maori women already serve as priests, or in society. His people, he insisted, must have time and space to step back from 150 years of enforced assimilation and determine how Maori and white roles can be equalized, a position Jamieson and others support.

"A democracy doesn't really give minority groups a chance to be heard," Jamieson said, noting that Anglican Maoris are expressing "a need that has arisen out of our history" and are not asking to create a separate province.

Despite Vercoe's reticence, the Maoris in Dunedin seem enthusiastic about Jamieson. At her installation, a Maori priest, the Rev. Tom Kahuki, carefully pointed out before reading the Old Testament lesson, "I do not stand here as a representative of the Maori, but I'm here to honor our Mother-in-Christ."

Jamieson seems to find special grounding in Maori spirituality. As her consecration procession entered the rear of the cathedral, a 92-year-old Maori woman cloaked in ceremonial feathers slowly backed down the aisle before the diocese's new bishop, calling her into the sacred meeting place, where in Maori tradition only truth can be spoken. She cried in Maori, "Bring your mother under the umbrella of the Almighty!"

In the chancel, a young Maori cried back in the same tongue, "This is your family!" Following Maori custom, Jamieson was accompanied down the aisle by about 30 friends, parishioners, and colleagues from her home in Wellington who were there to support her.

Once described as "too untidy" in appearance to be a bishop, she is living out her new role with awkward grace. If resigned to miter and crozier, she remains unwilling to allow English ceremony and tradition to isolate her on the throne. Throughout it has been an Annunciation experience, she reflected, "a situation not of choosing, but of being chosen — and then finding the heart and the spirit to say 'yes.' " TW

Barbara Harris: Bishop

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place.

To feel alive,
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know your own waters
and hills, but know
more.

You have stars
in your bones
and oceans
in blood.

You have opposing
terrain in each eye.
You belong to the land
and sky of your first cry,
you belong to infinity.

— Alla Reneé Bozarth

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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*
and languages. But it was the most profound and rewarding learning experience a person could have. We traveled by costal steamer down the Yugoslavian coast, over the Alps near the Albanian border by local bus, by train through Greece, deck passage on an Egyptian ship to Egypt. Another deck passage to Beirut, a taxi to Jordan and then Baghdad. We rode the train to Basra and took a ship down the Arabian Gulf with a stop in Kuwait. A month in India and Nepal, then a ship to the Malay Peninsula and onward to Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Hong King, Japan, Hawaii and home.

We had many opportunities to visit with local officials, missionaries and leaders from other religions as well as countless encounters with the citizens of these countries. Such experiences gave us a depth of understanding and appreciation of other societies that we could never experience from reading alone.

Prior to this trip we spent two years researching the areas we planned to visit. Then we borrowed money on our insurance and on our home and started out. The cost of travel wasn't excessive when we lived as the local people did. The kindness and helpfulness of those we met was most gratifying. Rossman's article brought back memories that have enriched our lives immeasurably.

D. Franklin Kohl
Arlee, Mont.

Sub WSCF for WCC

I enjoyed Parker Rossman's article about the Swedish couple taking a sabbatical to celebrate their 50th birthdays. However, the conference at which he first met them was held in Strasbourg, France and was not sponsored by the World Council of Churches, but by the World Student Christian Federation. The WSCF is entirely independent of the WCC and frequently critical of it; at the same time WSCF has been, since 1898, a training ground for future leaders of the churches and the ecumenical movement.

I was organizing secretary for the Strasbourg conference and it was, as Rossman says, a major turning point in the modern ecumenical movement. There was open rebellion against the conference agenda and leadership by young people from Asia, Latin America and Africa, who were no longer willing to be dominated by Western modes of theological thinking and who insisted on the priority of regional concerns over global ones. This was an era in which liberation theology was just beginning to emerge in Latin America and colonialism was still being fought against in Africa and Asia. A great many of the current leaders in the church were formed in the crucible of the encounter. It was there that I first met the young leaders Philip Potter, Burgess Carr, Emilio Castro, Samir Kafity, and many others. Unfortunately, the WSCF almost literally fell apart after the conference. The next generation had become politicized and deeply involved in the struggles for justice in their own lands with little interest in a "world" organization. Things are just beginning to turn around again.

Charles H. Long
Forward Movement Publications
Cincinnati, Ohio

Different class game

I found Parker Rossman's article interesting and stimulating *for a certain class of people*. I wondered, however, how it would sound to people without the economic security which is assumed throughout the article. "Liberation philosophy for the well-to-do retired" might have been a more appropriate title.

Rossman writes, "By age 50, Margareta explained, most people's children are educated and grown, and careers have matured to success." Tell that to poor families. Describing where the retired couple went, Rossman lists places one can hardly afford on social security.

The latest data I saw said one out of three black women over 65 in the United States is living in poverty. Read Rossman's article as a black grandmother taking care of her uneducated black daughter's crack-addicted baby and you have a different class game.

This is just a plea that THE WITNESS not come off with the arrogant stance so common to us Episcopalians. We assume the rest of the world has the same amenities we have and can afford our exemplary, godly behaviors.

Margaret E. Ferry
Palm Harbor, Fla.

Correction

Our July-August editorial incorrectly stated that the Episcopal Church Pension Fund bought 150 shares of Royal Dutch Shell stock worth $6 million after the 1988 General Convention vote supporting a boycott of oil companies trading in South Africa. The correct number was 150,000 shares. — Ed.

Even controversy helps

In recent issues, Kim Byham, national president of Integrity, has assailed actions of a newly ordained gay priest in the Diocese of Newark, Robert Williams, and Williams has responded with a blast at Byham. All praise to THE WITNESS for giving us the views of both men in their own words!

Both are right, in a sense.

Williams makes the point that his "talents, interest, and passion were for constructive theological work" rather than pastoral work among gays and lesbians. Hasn't the theological work already been largely done by persons such as John McNeill whose *The Church and the Homosexual* led to his ouster from the Jesuit order, Bishop John S. Spong's *Living in Sin* and others? Yet maybe someone is needed to systematize this in a way acceptable to the Anglican tradition.

In practical terms, what we lack — and what I understand to be the long-term goal of Integrity — is reception and understanding of this theology in our church, along with infiltration of our seminaries by learned priests who will teach the next generation of clergy the new theology.

And Kim Byham is right in suggesting that Williams' words and actions have not helped this process at all but probably have hindered it — although to the extent that the Holy Spirit is moving the church forward, even controversy helps.

Bill Day
Springfield, Ill.

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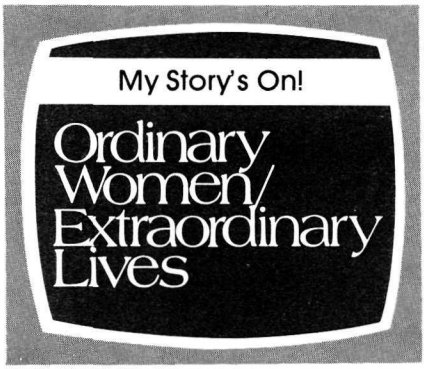

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THE WITNESS

Statement on the Persian Gulf

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship calls on the U.S. government to cease the deployment of military forces to Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, withdraw those forces that have already arrived and instead work toward an internationally negotiated settlement, addressing both the present crisis and the underlying, unresolved problems that precipitate war.

Further, as a major arms supplier to the region, the United States has contributed to the militarization of the Middle East, encouraging a "might makes right" attitude, and insuring that any conflict could easily escalate into a conflagration . . .

Continued on page 5

Capitalism's fate

Philippines: Chris Cobourn
Brian Grieves

Mexico: Matt Witt

Germany: Dorothee Sölle

Mideast challenge

William Rankin
Pat Washburn

. . . and more

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Letters

Infertile need coverage

In his "Ethics of embryo freezing" (February), Charles Meyer shows himself to be informed and thoughtful about the serious issues facing infertile people and their doctors. As a veteran of the infertility wars — including four failed IVF attempts — I, too, am troubled by the apparent headlong rush to cryopreservation of embryos.

Meyer misses the mark, however, when he suggests that "in a world teeming with babies in need of nurture," there is a question whether more ought to be produced through such treatments as IVF — and, indeed, by extension, that perhaps such care ought to be rationed.

One reason for the low success rate of IVF and its high cost in this country is a failure of will at the national policy level to help the infertile, who by a conservative count number 2.5 million couples of childbearing age. One emblem of this failure is a more than decade-long refusal by the government *against its own mandate* to reconstitute an ethics advisory board in the Department of Health and Human Services to rule on the acceptability of IVF research, effectively banning all federal funding — the lifeblood of all scientific study in this country — for that purpose. Were money to be made available, advances in IVF research could increase its effectiveness and reduce its cost to the patient.

In countless other areas related to reproduction — the unwillingness to fund a national prevention program for sexually transmitted diseases, a factor in an alarming rise in infertility among 20- to 24-year-olds, and to support contraceptive research — America betrays its squeamishness about anything having to do with sex.

It is all too easy for the fertile majority to suggest that, simply because we cannot reproduce as easily as you, infertile people should therefore resign ourselves to our fates. But we the infertile are not selfish to consider ourselves entitled to at least reproduce ourselves! The loss of our ability to do so and to carry on our genealogical lines strikes deep to the core of our very humanity, and is a grievous loss that should be mourned and addressed not just by us, but by society as a whole.

Practically nobody questions that pregnancy care should be part of any reasonable system of medical coverage. Many of us believe that infertility is a *pregnancy-related problem*, and thus deserving of coverage for all treatments — — including IVF — that a specialist deems to be appropriate, *to the same extent* that a system provides for maternity care. Anything else is simply discrimination against the infertile.

Wendy W. Contos
Conshohocken, Pa.

Meyer responds

In her thoughtful reply, Wendy Contos is right on target regarding the need for the redevelopment of the federal Ethics Advisory Board and a national prevention program for sexually transmitted diseases. But 37 million Americans are medically indigent, our healthcare system is on the verge of economic collapse, access to care (particularly emergency care) for the poor and elderly is daily diminishing by the closure of inner city, rural and teaching hospitals, and we are 21st in the world in infant mortality (behind Spain, Japan and Costa Rica). Choices must be made regarding who gets care, how much, who pays, when it is appropriate or required to stop treatment, and when or in which cases treament should not be begun — or even be available.

It is a decidedly Western, industrialized luxury that we can even *discuss* the issues of IVF/cryopreservation, along with organ transplants, treatment of futile illnesses, resuscitation of under 600 gram birthweight babies and other dilemmas resulting from our technological lavishness. In the world community, such issues are last priority behind immunization, refrigeration, potable water, nutrition, pre/postnatal care and simple disease prevention.

Even if we myopically exclude the rest of the world's needs, the United States will have to ration healthcare in this decade in order to bring under control the upwardly spiraling percent of our GNP consumed by medical costs. There is no right or entitlement to reproduce one's genes any more than there is a right or entitlement to demand an organ transplant, or futile chemotherapy, or respiration/hydration/nutrition for a brain dead person, or 24-hour home nursing care for AIDS patients, stroke patients, accident victims — all of whom (including the infertile) have drawn a deficit in the physical lottery.

One can and does feel sympathy for all of the above groups and others. But until we have an equitable distribution of healthcare resources (nationally and globally), the use of such resources for the expensive (cryopreservation) treatment of such a non-life threatening occurrence as infertility must be considered an unwarranted extravagance.

The Rev. Charles Meyer
Austin, Tex.

(In the November WITNESS Charles Meyer writes about "The Afterlife": Is it a place? Do children who die "grow up" in the next life? Can spirits mature there as bodies do on earth? Are suicides treated differently? Meyer explores the questions most commonly posed to him as a hospital chaplain and medical ethicist. Don't miss it! — Ed.)

Cites 'three errors'

Harold J. Dwyer, in his article on drugs in the June WITNESS perpetuates three *errors* which frequently surface whenever the drug problem is addressed.

1. Drug abuse is specifically con-

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nected to poverty. The use of hard drugs reaches into every level of U.S. society. If the much-needed social programs — affordable housing and health care, equitable wages and employment opportunities — were to be put into place tomorrow, the drug problem would not go away, although it might become less visible. In fact, it is the money of affluent Americans which finances the drug industry. The great majority of poor people, the very old and the very young, are not involved with hard drugs.

2. All drugs are equally harmful. While addiction to alcohol or nicotine is potentially hazardous and costly, most alcoholics and smokers survive into middle age, or at least long enough to seek treament. A single hit of crack can send an 18-year-old to his grave. To equate a double martini before dinner, a pack of cigarettes a day, or a joint of marijuana on Saturday night with a dose of cocaine or heroin in a super-refined state, is to trivialize the seriousness of hard drug abuse. To point to the illegal traffic in prescription drugs as a deterrent to legalization is to lose sight of relative scale and risk.

3. Education is the answer. On a long-term basis, perhaps. The problem is that the target population has slipped out of the hands of the educators. The emphasis is on "perhaps." Many states have provided sex education classes in the public schools for more than a decade; yet teenage pregnancies are on the rise.

Our goal, as a responsible society, should be to keep potentially harmful objects and substances out of the hands of children. To that end, we have enacted laws which specify the legal age at which a person can operate a car, possess firearms, buy a drink at a bar and purchase a pack of cigarettes. Corollaries to these laws regulate adult behavior.

We are able to mitigate potentially harmful situations by making them qualifiedly legal, that is by subjecting them to regulation. Enforcement may not be perfect, but perfect enforcement of any law implies consequent loss of liberty.

If total elimination of all substance use in any human society is realistically impossible — and history hints that this is so — the next logical step is regulation. Regulation (control) is possible only through legalization (limited access).

Since all else has failed, what have we to lose except fear of the devil and some wrong-headed but well-intentioned rhetoric?

Elizabeth Hansen
Delmar, N.Y.

Dwyer responds

Let us, indeed, not contribute to the proliferation of rhetoric. Therefore, I offer a quick, point-by-point response.

1. I have read and re-read my article and cannot find any statement that implies a belief that drug abuse or the attendant crime problem is linked solely to poverty. However, let me be very clear. Ten years of volunteer and paid work in the fields of prevention and treatment leave me absolutely convinced that addiction is a disease, and no respecter of class, race, age or gender. More than any of the great social programs of the last five decades, this is the great equalizer. (Of course, this equality does not exist when we consider the very limited availability of addiction treatment for those without health insurance or personal financial resources.)

2. In 1987, the last year for which I have been able to find statistics, 105,000 people died as the result of alcohol abuse (*New York Times* 3/27/90). I do not believe that this number is trivial.

3. The problem with education is not that the target population has left the system; the problem has been that much of the effort for education has started too late. Effective drug and alcohol abuse education should begin in kindergarten. We do not wait until our children are in junior high to tell them not to eat Draino. But education is not the answer. There is no single "right" answer. The problem of substance abuse is so pervasive that a significant restructuring of our society's priorities will be required if we are to deal effectively with this crisis.

Finally, I am convinced that those who live in Christ need not fear the devil. On the other hand I would rather not tell the devil, "You are O.K. as long as you leave our children alone."

The Rev. Harold J.Dwyer
Coatesville, Pa.

Kudos for 'abuse' issue

Thank you so very much for your July/August WITNESS on the theme, "Breaking silence." It was so painful to read article after article about sexual abuse because it was so real. Part of me wants to scream at the injustice, part of me wants to fold under the oppression of it, and part of me rejoices at the exposure of a criminal abuse of God's most intimate and creative gift: our sexuality — our human identity — our very souls. Keep telling the story!

Deborah Johnson-Elder
Alexandria, Va.

Willing to risk

The July/August WITNESS hit on a topic that is very current in our diocesan life. Thank you all for "breaking the silence" and affirming what we've been learning through the national network on abuse. It's wonderful to know you are there as a resource and willing to risk exposing the "incest"-like attitudes that exist in our church family.

I would like to share copies of the entire magazine with others. Would you please send 10 copies?

Mic Pickard
Chester, N. J.

More Letters on page 21

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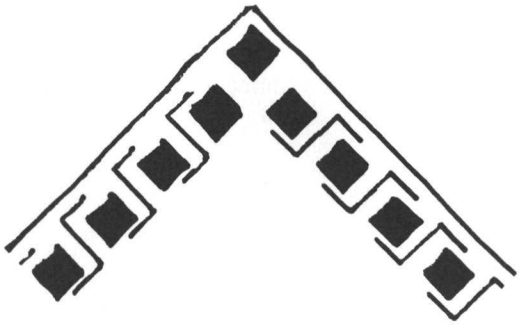
THE WITNESS



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Editorial

Continued from cover

The presence of U.S. troops will serve to exacerbate long-held Arab resentment of Western colonialism and Western policies insensitive to the cultural and religious values of the Middle East.

From a moral viewpoint, it is wrong to block the shipment of food and medical supplies to the innocent people of Iraq. Our mandate from our Baptismal Covenant is to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being." This applies not only to North Americans or Episcopalians, but to every human being, since all have been created and made in God's image.

We will continue to pray for the President of the United States, the President of Iraq, and for a peaceful negotiated settlement to this latest conflict. We especially pray for the U.S. troops, for their families, and for the people of the Persian Gulf. We urge our members in their respective chapters and congregations to participate in prayer vigils asking God's guidance for those in authority and for the nations of the world. May we all be instruments of God's peace.

Executive Committee, Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Statements against U.S. intervention in the Persian Gulf from groups such as the Episcopal Peace Fellowship (above) are not likely to earn headlines in the mass media, revved up to support White House policies. We deplore the absence of such strong condemnations from heads of major religious denominations, who could best command prime space.

Failure of Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning to speak out is instructive in this regard. At a press conference during the House of Bishops meeting in Washington, D.C., he said that on this issue, he has chosen not to be "in an adversarial relationship" with President Bush, an Episcopalian, but rather "in partnership" with him.

THE WITNESS applauds Bishop Orris (Jay) Walker of Long Island for warning the House against "the shallow patriotism of the Bush White House" and "wrapping ourselves in the flag."

Longtime policies of the Reagan and Bush Administrations, abetted by wimpy Democrats, have set the public up for the present crisis. "March for peace and vote for war, and you get war," author Lenni Brenner reminds us (*The Nation* 9/24/90). In Congress, only Rep. Henry Gonzalez of Texas has called for debate about Bush's flagrant violation of the War Powers Act. (Gonzalez twice introduced legislation to impeach Reagan after the Iran-Contra scandal.)

Further, if the United States continues to consume 30% of the world's oil, filling the coffers of the oil magnates, we will continue to be called upon to fight rich men's wars "to protect our vital interests."

U.S. citizens are now beginning to make connections between wars of aggression, the Third World debtor nations and our own deteriorating economy, the global environmental crisis — and who wins, who loses as the "Haves" are pitted against the "Have-nots."

Grass roots groups across the country are rapidly mobilizing around the Gulf intervention. A mass demonstration is planned Oct. 20 in New York. For further information: Mobilization for Survival, 212-385-2222.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation is exploring the possibility of U.S. "witness for peace" volunteers going to Iraq: FOR, P.O. Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. 10960.

The American Friends Middle East Peace Education Program is preparing resource literature, speakers for events, information for Persian Gulf teach-ins, etc.: AFSC, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102.

In other words, for those seeking involvement, help is on the way. TW

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The struggle to save the Philippines

by Chris Cobourn

The mountains around us are barren, save for patches of scraggly corn and an occasional clump of banana trees. We can see the village of Midsalip in the distance, the steel metal roofs twinkling in the early morning sun. It was a 30-minute walk across rice fields and up steep paths to reach the reforested hillside. Jun Balayon, our guide, is pointing out the different hardwoods and fruit trees which the members of Midsalip's ecological group have planted on the five hectare (11 acre) site. After two years, the trees are six feet tall, and the ground is thick with vegetation. Jun says the people of Midsalip hope tree-planting like this will help to stop the six-month-long droughts and the starvation which results.

Residents of Midsalip hit the headlines three years ago when they set up a human barricade to stop illegal logging in the surrounding forests. Sunville Logging, the company operating in the area, was in gross violation of Philippine regulations. The environmental group — the People Power Picket Movement of Midsalip (PPPMM) — grew out of strong basic Christian communities in the local Catholic parish. Residents guarded the road day and night for five months, despite harassment by the loggers' armed goons. Finally, the group succeeded in having the logging concession in the area cancelled.

The battle to save the forests of Midsalip is being repeated throughout the Philippines, as communities seek to preserve what remains of a badly damaged ecosystem for their children. The church is key in many of these educational and organizing efforts. In 1988, the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines issued the first pastoral letter on the environment, entitled "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?" In it, the bishops decry the pervasive despoliation of the land, seas, air of the Philippines:

"We often use the word 'progress' to describe what has taken place over the last few decades. There is no denying that in some areas our roads have improved and that electricity is more readily available. But can we say that there is real progress? Who has benefitted most and who has borne the real costs? The poor are as disadvantaged as ever and the natural world has been grievously wounded. We have stripped it bare, silenced its sounds and banished other creatures from the community of the living. Through our thoughtlessness and greed, we have sinned against God and God's creation."

The Philippines has a primarily agrarian economy, with well over a third of its population (some 39 million people) engaged in agriculture-related activities. Rice is an important crop, and its cultivation is now heavily dependent on irrigation. Fish and other seafood provides 54% of the protein consumed by the average Filipino household. Many coastal families rely on fishing for their livelihood.

Yet the resource base on which these

Christina Cobourn is a staff member of the Columban Peace and Justice Office in Washington, D.C. An Episcopalian, she served as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer in the Philippines from 1983-86, and has returned for extended visits, most recently in August and September of this year.

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vital economic activities depend is seriously threatened. Since World War II, rapid deforestation has degraded many of the country's vital watersheds. Logging concessions were a source of quick and easy wealth for the elite, and a rich font of patronage for the politicians who granted the concessions. Failure to reforest was overlooked. But today, the effects of that deforestation are being felt with a vengeance. Sharp climatic swings from heavy rainfall to drought have caused crop failures and destroyed rural infrastructures.

Forest destruction is fast approaching the level of irreversibility. In a tropical environment like the Philippines, soil on the steeply sloping hillsides washes away easily once the trees that held it in place are gone. Massive erosion of the topsoil has led to the silting-up of river beds, irrigation systems, estuaries and coastal areas. The mud flowing into the sea smothers nearby coral reefs, choking marine life, and destroying one of the breeding grounds for fish. The fish population has also suffered from unrestrained fishing by commercial trawlers, illegal dynamite and cyanide fishing, and environmentally unsound fishing practices of small fishermen deprived of their traditional catch.

The rapid destruction of coastal mangrove swamps is another serious threat to the health of Philippine fisheries. Mangroves serve as protective nurseries for young fish and supply 78% of the breeding grounds for important species of marine life. Despite this, nearly 80% of the country's original 450,000 hectares of mangrove swamps has been destroyed; 60-65% of this destruction is reportedly due to fishpond construction.

Prawn farms have been the prime culprits in recent years. Commanding a huge price in Japan, prawns have been touted as a miracle crop, and the rich have rushed to profit. Dole Philippines was actually granted a four-year tax holiday to encourage the development of prawn farming in southern Mindanao, and the sugar barons of Negros saw the large shrimp as the answer to declining world sugar prices. Yet prawn ponds are environmentally dangerous even after they are built. Large quantities of fresh water are pumped continually into the ponds, which require a delicate mix of salt and fresh water. The heavy demand in western Negros already has depleted the fresh water supply, causing wells on which people once depended for drinking water to dry up. The poor are now forced to buy water, which they can ill-afford.

This rapid environmental destruction is rooted in an economic system which benefits the few (consumers in the North and the elites in the South) at the expense of the many. It is also based on a vision of continual economic growth which fails to take into account environmental costs, and assumes that the earth can sustain increased consumption.



Multilateral and Western aid agencies base their development policies for Third World countries on a model of export-oriented industrialization which seeks to provide cheap consumer goods to Northern markets, while providing jobs for the poor. But, while some jobs are created, wages are extremely low, and there is little connection with the agrarian economy. Many factories are simply assembling parts already manufactured elsewhere. An ecologically sound "food first" development policy would benefit both people and the earth.

Consumer demand for wood and other

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natural resource products, tropical fruits, cheap industrialized goods, and the powerful, "efficient" corporations which supply those goods are part and parcel of a way of life we accept as normal. Yet the ecological destruction about which Western democracies are now so concerned is intimately bound up with our economic demands and the "security" policies pursued by our governments.

Since the turn of this century, when the United States seized the Philippines from Spain, the country has been governed by a relatively small number of families who control the majority of land and domestic corporations. The system of skewed land ownership and wealth was established under Spanish colonial rule, but was never challenged by U.S. colonial administrators. If anything, the dominance of these families was strengthened, and efforts to redress the severe inequities were firmly suppressed. American corporations entered the Philippine economy in a massive way, linking up with domestic firms to make profits in the exploitation of the country's forests, mineral resources and agricultural potential.

While corporate interests are strong, the more important U.S. interest in the Philippines lies in the presence of strategic military installations. President Marcos assured the continued presence of U.S. military bases, particularly Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base, after the imposition of martial law in 1972. This factor became primary in the determination of U.S. policy toward the Philippines, despite the clear evidence of Marcos' corruption, gross manipulation of the domestic economy, and crude use of military force to suppress internal dissent. Even the Carter administration's vocal opposition to human rights abuses was muted by a fear of losing the bases. The United States abandoned Marcos only when it was obvious he could no longer govern. In addition, his replacement, Cory Aquino, was not only popular, but also sympathetic to a continued U.S. economic and military presence.

U.S. military aid covers 83% of the procurement, operations, and maintenance budget of the Philippine military. Last year, as part of the Military Bases agreement, the United States provided $200 million in military aid, and an additional $160 million in security-related economic support funds. Development assistance, by contrast, amounted to only $55 million.

After three weeks of meetings with church workers and people involved in grassroots development efforts in Negros and Mindanao, two islands to the south, a consistent theme emerged. Efforts by ordinary poor people to form self-reliant organizations through which they could improve and gain some measure of control over their lives are being labeled subversive.

Cooperatives, through which farmers could get a decent price for their corn and rice, have been destroyed by a military threatened by organizations not under their control. Efforts by the church to form strong base Christian communities are denounced by the military in anti-communist seminars, and attacked with bullets at night. Even planting trees in some areas is suspect, particularly if an organized group is involved. Exposure of illegal logging or denunciation of corruption invites threats or violence and retaliation.

Yet it is precisely these strong, organized communities which are needed for people to improve their lives economically, to begin to repair the damage done by generations of poverty and lack of self-esteem, and to escape from the pervasive sense of fear engendered by unrestrained militarization. Organization and hope are also essential ingredients for communities working to prevent the environmental destruction which is threatening their very survival.

Reforestation has become a popular concept throughout the country, but the actual work of replanting and tending the remote, denuded watersheds is hot and difficult and requires sustained commitment. The monitoring of municipal fishing waters to prevent commercial trawlers from illegal overfishing, and the guarding of forests against illegal logging can only be done by concerted community action.

It is a tribute to church workers and members of non-governmental organizations and others that, despite militariza-



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tion, they have continued working to transform the passivity engendered by poverty into a "joyous noise." Increasingly, this cry of the poor has included the pain of the earth, for environmental issues are increasingly linked to survival.

Basic Christian communities have been at the center of many of the successful efforts to protect the environment and to develop alternatives. Church-based organic farming and ecology seminars have provided essential training for farmers and development workers. Those most deeply involved in grassroots environmental education are seeking both an appropriate spirituality and a new vision which incorporates the deep respect for nature still felt by tribal peoples. In most communities, ecological liturgies which celebrate this interrelation of people and the earth provide a spiritual basis for continued action.

Today, members of the environmental group in Midsalip with farms in the surrounding hills guard against illegal logging by reporting to the local police. They have given up trying to get action from the corrupt local forest guard, and have petitioned the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for his removal. They are suggesting instead that members of the community be appointed forest guards.

In another part of Mindanao, members of the San Fernando parish basic Christian community succeeded, after several years of picketing and hunger strikes, in obtaining a ban on logging in the province. They have paved the way for other groups to take similar action. Presently, a church-based group from central Luzon is fasting outside of the DENR in an attempt to have the logging concessions in their area cancelled.

In western Mindanao, another parish team is working to establish an ecologically sound farm, and to reforest the nearby watershed area. Small organized communities throughout the country are replanting mangroves, regenerating coral reefs, and through community pressure, trying to stop destructive fishing practices.

These efforts are small, but each time a group or program succeeds, others are encouraged to follow their example. There is a growing excitement around environmental work, in part because it is life-giving and creative.

Americans can join Filipino communities working for peaceful economic and social development by promoting sensible changes in our own patterns of consumption, and by protesting U.S. policies which are not life-giving. The continued flow of military aid is strangling the efforts of ordinary Filipinos to change their lives for the better. Representatives and senators need to hear from their constituents about the fundamental contradictions of U.S. policy.

An organized lobbying effort against the continued provision of military aid is being coordinated by the Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, an ecumenical coalition based in Washington, D.C. A separate, but related coalition of environmental, development and religious groups called the Philippine Development Forum has joined with Philippine NGOs to promote an agenda of participatory, sustainable and equitable development. The PDF critiques U.S. AID policies and programs and is promoting alternatives suggested by Philippine NGOs.

The Philippine bishops stated in simple but profound terms both the challenge and the promise: "The task of preserving and healing is a daunting one given greed and the relentless drive of our plunder economy. But we must not lose hope. God has gifted us with creativity and ingenuity. He has planted in our hearts a love for our land, which bursts forth in our songs and poetry. We can harness our creativity in the service of life and shun anything that leads to death." TW

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Philippine church: 'Close U.S. bases'

by Brian J. Grieves

Declaring that "sovereignty is God's endowment to every nation and should not be mortgaged for a pot of porridge," the Philippine Episcopal Church called for the closing of U.S. military bases there. The unanimous vote took place May 2 at the first synod of the newest Anglican province. Prior to the synod, the PEC had been a part of the U.S. Episcopal Church.

The U.S. church's Executive Council passed a companion resolution in June. However, the Council amended the proposed resolution to take note of U.S. willingness to accede to the wishes of the Philippine government. To some observers, the church's message translates as, "It's O.K. with us if it's O.K. with Uncle Sam."

Many Filipinos deeply resent U.S. insistence on defending its national interests on Philippine soil. The year 1998 will mark a century of U.S. colonial and neo-colonial domination of this island nation. The American psyche is so deeply rooted in Philippine life that it is a widely-held view that true sovereignty for the Philippines will never occur until the bases are closed.

U.S. and Philippine negotiators are now discussing an extension on the current bases agreement which expires Sept. 16, 1991. Mass demonstrations in Manila and other areas calling for closing the bases have been frequent enough in recent months to win even the attention of the U.S. media.

On my first visit to the Philippines last year, I asked people how they felt about continuing the bases agreement. The answer always came down to this: "It doesn't matter what we think. The United States will do what it wants. Your country holds the cards."

One priest complained of America's messianic complex, that America always knows what's best for others: "We have been made second-class citizens in our own country."

However, on a visit earlier this year, I noticed both a growing opposition to the bases and an increasing sense of empowerment among the general population. The Episcopal Church there has moved from being divided over the issue to calling unanimously for closure.

This maturing attitude towards genuine sovereignty is a dramatic shift. A U.S. soldier on the streets of Manila once commanded the envy of many locals, who offered cheerful greetings to "Joe." Now G.I.s are not allowed off base in uniform and are often confined to base for their own protection.

Several U.S. military personnel have been killed by members of the New People's Army (NPA), an insurgency movement committed to removal of U.S. social, economic, and military dominance. Communist-influenced, the insurgency grows out of the poverty and displacement of the people. It is a response to the same old story of alliances among multi-national corporations, the U.S. government and Philippine generals and oligarchies.

The Aquino government is committed to total war against the insurgents. The U.S. government provides covert assistance and financial resources to arm the counter-insurgency campaign.

The NPA is targeting military bases during the period of negotiations. Should the bases agreement be renewed, violence against the U.S. presence will no doubt escalate, as will U.S. covert operations. The Philippines are at war and the United States is in the middle of it. Meanwhile, the masses suffer.

The U.S. position towards remuneration for the bases is perhaps the best indication of the attitude which infuriates Filipinos. The United States insists that the bases exist not only for U.S. security interests, but for the security of the Philippines as well. Several years ago, then-Secretary of State George Schultz was appalled at the Philippine suggestion that the U.S. government should pay rent. Doing so would clearly imply that the United States is only a guest and not a co-government, a hard thing for a former colonial master to accept. Thus the insistence on the co-dependent need for the bases.

There is, perhaps, a co-dependency between President Corazon Aquino and the bases. During the coup attempt against her government earlier this year, Clark Air Base provided firepower to help bail out her tottering government. This action may have saved Aquino for the moment, but it also further fueled resentment against U.S. intervention.

Ironically, those segments of the Philippine military who attempted the coup find themselves on the same side as the NPA in calling for closing the bases. Add to that the 11 senators who oppose the bases — whose votes could veto a new agreement — and one wonders how the Aquino government can continue to support a U.S. military presence.

In addition, the Philippine constitution contains a nuclear-free provision, which in itself would seem to negate a new agreement. But to avoid this, the United States invokes its long-held policy of

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never revealing the whereabouts of its nuclear arms.

There is quite genuine fear among Filipinos that closing the bases will have a terrible economic impact on the country. This concern is strongest in places like Olongapo, home of Subic Naval Base and Angeles, host to Clark Air Base. Aside from the jobs the bases provide, the bases also support a thriving sex industry involving women and children. AIDS is a growing reality and drug abuse is a fact of life. Outrageously, U.S. officials blame the prostitutes for passing the AIDS virus to U.S. personnel.

I was introduced to this "hospitality world" one evening when my hosts took me to one of the many bars in Angeles where I was treated to an hour of women's boxing. It was a bizarre and distressing sight to see Philippine women whaling away at each other with oversized gloves while American servicemen whistled and cheered between gulps of beer. Apparently the "boxers" were available later for other entertainment.

Another social dimension of the military bases is found in Baguio, formerly a ranching area. The United States bought the land, although the agreed-upon price was never paid. Under the Burnham Plan of 1909, the area was converted into a city designed as an R & R center for U.S. military personnel, because the weather there is delightfully cool.

The city was planned for a population of 30,000, with Camp John Hay covering one-third of the land area, and 14.4% of the rest set aside for local residents. But because of the lure of new commerce from the base, and deteriorating conditions in the rural areas, including displacement from the land, migrants flooded in, expanding the population to 100,000. Today, without enough land to support the population, most of the migrants have become urban squatters, living on land they cannot own. The poverty is devastating. One group lives on top of a garbage dump, eking out an existence by sifting among the refuse.

But the adverse social impact of the bases is not addressed by U.S. policy makers. They invoke national security as the reason for keeping the bases. Now that the United States has imposed itself into the latest Middle East crisis, it will want the bases all the more, because naval vessels in the Persian Gulf are serviced at Subic.

Adversaries of the United States logically perceive the Philippines as supporting U.S. military adventures, thus making Filipinos a potential target of those who have their sights aimed on the bases. It is hard to promote sovereignty when one plays host to the world's most powerful military.

Yet the United States insists that what's good for it is good for the Philippines. Properly interpreted, that means if the Philippines want to keep the money pipeline from Washington open, there had better be a new agreement. In October 1988, the United States promised $481 million in assistance during 1990, only to have that unilaterally reduced by Congress to $96 million. But even that amount is more than what will be offered if the bases are phased out. In that case, financial aid would likely be channeled instead to development in eastern Europe.

In calling for closing the bases, the Philippine Episcopal Church is not asking that the United States simply leave. In place of the bases, it is calling instead for "a general treaty of friendship and cooperation based on equality, non-interference and respect for sovereignty . . . in order to strengthen traditional relations of friendship."

That new relationship would need to include U.S. economic support. The support would not be charity, but restitution. Resources from Philippine land have flowed to Western markets for years, depleting its forests of trees and its earth of copper, gold and minerals. Yet the Philippines finds itself deep in debt to Western countries and Japan, the burden of which is carried on the backs of the poor.

The United States would require a great change of heart to move towards closing the bases and opening a new and just relationship with the Philippines. But such a change holds the promise of a new relationship between the United States and all Third World countries, and that is a goal worthy of pursuit. TW

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Hearing two voices in Mideast strife

by William W. Rankin

Following an itinerary designed by both the pro-Israeli American Jewish Committee and the pro-Palestinian Middle East Council of Churches (MECC), I was in the Middle East this summer with the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Peace. We visited Israel, the Occupied Territories and Jordan, trying to gain a deeper understanding of the burning issues between Israelis and Palestinians.

The historic roots of the conflict became apparent soon after we arrived. The road from Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport to our hotel in Jerusalem was marked by wreckage from the 1948 War; military vehicles destroyed in battle had been painted with rust-resistant paint. Near each vehicle was a sign in Hebrew, reminding people of the cost of Israeli statehood and the need for continuing security.

The Rev. Mark Brown, who works for the MECC, met us in Jerusalem. He told us he lived across the street from a Muslim private school for girls 7 to 14 years old in Arab East Jerusalem, and that lately the school got tear-gassed about once a week. However, the parents still sent their children there, and they went happily. When asked why tear gas was used, he said he couldn't be sure — maybe the army suspected one or more parents of wrong-doing.

We visited a Palestinian village on the West Bank and met with a number of faculty members of Bethlehem University, now shut down. Each told how others had been "detained" — that is, arrested and held without charge, usually for six months, but more recently for up to a year. Only one professor claimed to know his offense, which was, he said, teaching the people how to plant home gardens. We heard that 600,000 Palestinians had been imprisoned since 1967, which is apparently nearly a third of the Palestinian population.

As we moved through the region, we learned about the complicated system of license plate colors which enables everyone to identify where vehicles come from — Israel, the West Bank, etc. To a significant degree, this indicates which cars are owned by Jews, which by Arabs, which by other groups. Our bus bore "Arab" plates when we traveled through the occupied territories. A large sign in the front window written in Arabic was designed to deter rock-throwers.

We traveled to Bethlehem to meet with its mayor, Elias Freij, who gave us figures highlighting the Palestinians' plight. Wages for Palestinians are about one-third those for Israelis, he said. In the Gaza Strip there are 25,000 people per square kilometer, "equal to the highest population concentration anywhere in the world," he noted.

"The future leaders of Palestine and Israel are growing up to hate each other," he continued. "I declare my mistake in forbidding our two children to emigrate to the United States, where their children could have gotten jobs, homes, education. Here my grandchildren are taught to hate."

Mayor Freij believes that the *intifada* is reaching a suicidal level because suffering has reached a suicidal level.

"The United States gives Israel a $4 billion blank check every year," he added. "For this there are no conditions, no accountabilities, no requirements for moral or legal justice." He told us that as U.S. citizens we could ask Congress to put some human and civil rights strings on our aid money.

On Sunday, we worshipped at St. George's Cathedral in East Jerusalem. The service was mostly in Arabic, though the preacher gave his U.S. visitors a brief summary of the sermon: When Jesus told the disciples to launch out into deep water he meant that people should dare to risk, hope, persevere despite the dangers and their fears. His Arab congregation, a fraction of the 3% of Palestinians who are Christian, got the point.

After the service we connected with a Palestinian woman who told us her teenage sons are afraid to leave their village homes because Israeli soldiers pick up young males, frequently beating them and breaking bones.

In the afternoon our Israeli guide took us to Yad Vashem, the Memorial to the Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes. The Holocaust, and the philosophy of Zionism, are crucial for understanding the Israeli people. We entered the memorial by walking down the Avenue of the Righteous Gentiles, lined with trees planted as memorials to Gentiles who risked or gave their lives to save European Jews.

Inside the memorial are photos of European Jews and what the Nazis did to them. Among the visitors to Yad Vashem are young Israeli families with small children. Would I take my young children to see these photos? I don't know.

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On the way out of the complex was the recently completed children's memorial. This honors the 1.5 million Jewish children killed in Europe. Author and Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel once said that if the names of all the Jewish children killed in the Holocaust were read aloud everyone in the audience would be dead of old age before the recitation could be completed. Not all the names are known, because frequently no one was left to report who had been killed.

The children's memorial was quite dark, lit only by tiny candle flames multiplied seemingly a million times by mirrors, twinkling like stars in an immense blackness. Playing in the background was a man's voice chanting a lament in Hebrew, as a woman's voice recited in English the children's names, their age, and country. This experience was infinitely poignant and unforgettable. I wish that all the people of the world — no matter what their politics or nationalities — could visit this place, and gain a better perspective on the urgency of making peace.

Later, at the Israeli Foreign Ministry office, we met Uri Gordon, shortly to become Israel's ambassador to Turkey. Gordon, a Harvard Ph.D., gave us the official line of the Shamir government. He said Israel refuses to talk to the PLO because they are terrorists. A rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism is sweeping over the entire Middle East, he added, including the administered territories of Israel and taking hold in the refugee camps there. Therefore, he said, Israel needs all the territory it can get to provide a security barrier against "Arab fanatics."

He described Palestinian children as tragically "abused" by their parents, and, behind the scenes, by the PLO. "It is child abuse to exploit those children, making them the front rank of the *intifada*," he said.

We found all this increasingly frustrating, and tried to raise other points with him: The PLO recently accepted the right of Israel to exist; why not talk with them, since the Palestinians have said that only the PLO represents them, and since any presumed settlement without PLO concurrence would be no settlement at all? Why not talk with the PLO all the more if there is a trend toward Islamic fundamentalism? Wouldn't it be even harder to talk with fundamentalists later than with the PLO now? Isn't shooting children also a form of child abuse?

One of our group said to Gordon, "I have studied the Holocaust carefully all my life, read thousands of pages, and seen the pictures. I am ashamed of what Christians did not do to help the Jews of Europe, and I am afraid of my own cowardice if I should ever be asked to do the sacrificial thing for my Jewish sisters and brothers. I and most of my friends have been among the strongest supporters of Israel all our lives. But the treatment of the Palestinian people by this present government is wrong and unjust. Israel is now in serious danger of losing the approbation of me and many like me in the United States and elsewhere."



Our next meeting was with Danny Ben-Simon, a reporter for an Israeli newspaper who briefed us on the political and economic aspects of the *intifada*. He conceded that the government's treatment of the Palestinians is immoral from a human rights point of view.

"The only hope for a solution," he said, "would be for the United States to force talks between Israel and the PLO toward the establishment of a demilitarized Palestinian state to include the West Bank and Gaza. Jerusalem should remain an open city. Israel is enormously dependent on the United States; it will do what the United States wants."

We visited the Knesset — the Israeli parliament — and had a private interview with Lova Eliav, a Knesset member from the Labor party. Eliav was born in Moscow in 1921. His parents brought him to Palestine in 1923, as they fled the Bolsheviks. He met his wife, whose entire family had been killed in the Holocaust, when he commanded a blockade runner bringing refugees into British-mandated Palestine in 1946.

During the Second World War, Eliav served with the "Jewish Brigade" of the British army in the Middle East and in Europe. His resistance and regular army records are impeccable from a Zionist and military point of view. An outstanding diplomat and author of 12 books, in 1988 he was awarded the "Prize of Israel," the highest civilian honor.

Eliav stated about the situation: "Israel must talk with the PLO. Israel can settle its many immigrants in southern Israel without using the occupied territories for the purpose. There can well be a demilitarized Palestinian state in the West Bank, and this would be infinitely better for Israel's security than hostile posturing against the Arab world, which has intermediate range rockets in Baghdad

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Germany: Unification or *Anschluss*?



Given the current interest in German reunification and the decline of socialism, THE WITNESS contacted noted feminist theologian Dorothee Sölle at her home in Hamburg for responses to the questions which follow. Sölle holds graduate degrees from the Universities of Gottingen and Cologne and has taught philosophy, literature and theology at several universities, including Union Theological Seminary, New York. She is the author of ***Revolutionary Patience, Suffering, Of War and Love,*** *and* ***The Window of Vulnerability,*** *the latter to be published this month by Fortress Press.*

Some time ago, you wrote an article entitled, "On being Christian and socialist." Given the recent vast changes in Eastern Europe in general and East Germany in particular, how does one go about being Christian and socialist in Germany today?

Christianity has persecuted, tortured and killed Jews, "faggots," "witches" and others in the name of faith, and yet, I am a Christian who trusts in God's freeing and healing love. Socialism has persecuted, tortured, and killed peasants and bourgeoisie, dissenters and other innocent people, and yet, I am a socialist who hopes for an economic world order with less hunger and injustice. *Abusis non tollit usum* — (misuse does not abrogate use) and Stalinism does not abolish socialism.

Can East and West Germany unite the best qualities of both societies to produce a more just and humane social order?

I read this wonderful question to several groups I worked with; all agreed that one needs some distance from the European context to ask so. Our sense here is that the goal is not "to produce a more just and humane social order" but to increase political power by annexation. People talk about *"Anschluss,"* (referring to Hitler's takeover of Austria in 1938), rather than of unification, in which both sides would give their best.

Our minister of interior recently remarked that the GDR (East Germany) has nothing to offer that might enrich the process. The constitution of West Germany will be imposed on East Germany, although the minorities on the left still hope for a new common constitution which would include ecological and pacifist principles and advocate the human right to employment. *(Recht auf Arbeit).*

What do you see as the role of the middle class in today's social upheavals, in Germany in particular?

The "new social movements" are to be understood in the tradition of civil rights movements. Their objectives are: the integrity of creation, equal rights and equal chances for women, peace instead of more enforced militarization, rights for minorities, and solidarity with the oppressed in the Third World. These movements are basically formed from lower strata of the middle class, people who know more than they can put to use and have little access to the ability to protect themselves and neighbors, earth and wildlife, from being squashed.

These carriers of liberation in today's industrialized parts of the world seem to be "overeducated" and "underpowered" at the same time. They have been instrumental in bringing about change during the recent decade in West Germany. Right now in the process of reunification they are much less visible, though. When NATO decided to take over East Germany without more than cosmetic change for its own role, there was no public outcry. Some claim the movement to be dead, but as a believer in the Resurrection, I do not.

Is there a danger of resurgence of German xenophobia and anti-Semitism because of reunification?

Xenophobia, yes; anti-Semitism, less so. The new outburst of anti-Semitism is stronger in France on the one side, Poland

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on the other. In West Germany, I am more afraid of national triumphalism, going along with the envy of Polish and African guest workers who receive unemployment benefits. In the former GDR, racism was, for good or ill, along with other forms of liberal self-expression, strictly forbidden. There was only *one* official opinion, strictly opposed to racism, fascism, revanchism, the exploitation of the female body in ads, etc. Now with the breakdown of the old order, all those feelings and mindsets creep into daylight once again.

In capitalist terms, a unified Germany with 78 million people would have a Gross National Product (GNP) about 45% larger than France and almost 70% larger than Britain, according to a recent *New York Times* report. In that same article, the director of a 22,000 employee, state-owned *kombinat* in East Germany said that he would have to cut his work force by 30 to 40% and raise sales by 50% to enter the capitalist era. What will happen with such high unemployment?

The enormous economic power of a reunified Germany is threatening to many European countries, and to many groups of the opposition inside of both Germanies as well. The non-violent revolution of November 1989, was made by a civil rights movement with many Christians in it. "In October we went through the Red Sea and escaped Pharaoh," a pastor in East Germany remarked, "but in November we knelt down in the desert to adore the Golden Calf." Who, then was the God who led them out of Egypt? And in whom are we going to trust in the future? The eco-pacifist groups, or the bankers and real estate speculators?

Some are portraying events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as the triumph of democracy, in the best sense, and others as the triumph of capitalism and individualism in the worst sense (i.e., the yearning for color TV sets, designer clothes and rich people's toys at the expense of creating an underclass). How do you read the changes?

I shared this question with some folks in a recent conference "for an emancipatory political culture." I think it is not possible to consider it as an either/or. On the one hand, I see the victory of capitalism with all its cultural destructiveness. Experts estimate that 60% of all bookstores in the former GDR will close down. East German publishers cannot compete with West German giants. Organ concerts which took place in small towns are cancelled this summer. Moreover, it is the political culture which finally becomes "Westernized" and de-solidaritized, of course (*Entsolidarisierungsphanomene*). More competition, more performance pressure, less interhuman consideration, a different sense of time will be features of the future GDR. There is a lot of fear among the elderly, the handicapped and the many who were not too efficient and competent.

On the other hand, it would be misreading reality to trivialize the desire for more democracy in those enormous changes. It is true that a majority voted for the Deutsche Mark, symbolized in Chancellor Helmut Kohl, but we have no right to forget one of the most remarkable phrases in German history, coined last fall by those resisters who forced the authoritarian and blind old government out of place: *Wir sind das Volk!* "We are the people" — a slogan that follows the plebian-democratic traditions, of people over against governments and rulers — and not so much the nationalist-militaristic tradition, concerned with national unity and defense against other nations. But what happened was that "We are the people" became "We are one people."

I see a certain danger in the cynicism of the Left; under its spell people do not recognize the democratic element of the change and read it only as the final victory of capitalism. This perspective is the rabbit's view of the serpent; it destroys our capacities to counteract. The exclusively economic view leads to a reduction of awareness, and an all too reductionist understanding of history. Our task will rather be to find out about the democratic elements inside of capitalism; we need to reflect on the historical fact, that democracy has joined with capitalism, not with state socialism. It may sound strange, but in the last months or so I felt forced to use the term, "democratic capitalism" — not one of my favorites! Yet, it clearly expresses the enormous tension we live through. Is it possible that the tail wags the dog — and democracy runs capitalism?



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In a previous article, you pointed out that there were class struggles "from above" and class struggles "from below." What did you mean by that? How does the situation in Germany differ from the struggle in Nicaragua in that regard?

In Nicaragua, class struggle from above shows in the restrictive measurements of the Chamorro government against the poor, such as closing down of worker owned cooperatives, firing of public workers, etc. The Sandinista opposition responds to these threats by traditional means, basically the strike.

In both Germanies, the class struggle from above is much more bridled through legal restrictions. The transition into the capitalist market, though, will exact its price, especially in unemployment. The idea of getting fired is new to people who lived 40 years without it.

The concept of "social market economy" as opposed to both brutal earlier forms of capitalism and a centralized planning economy has created much wealth and satisfaction in West Germany. Some people fear that this concept will lose its "social" quality and become more "Americanized," that is, bringing joblessness, homelessness, lack of public health, pauperization of the elderly.

You once wrote, "to see with the eyes of the victimized is the way Christ looked at the world," and the Gospel does not allow neutrality. Who are the victimized in today's world? Who are the oppressors?

From a biblical perspective, the victimized are "the poor," not in a spiritualized sense, but in a material sense. Social scientists identify them as "marginalized" in diverse forms. The breakdown of the "Second World," which presented an alternative to the capitalist economic order, is seen by many observers as a catastrophe for the poor countries. Not only did their — sometimes doubtable — political allies disappear, but also their indigenous attempts to keep their own pre-capitalist forms of production and search for a "third way" between the superpowers. The victory in the Cold War signifies the defeat of those hopes. The citizens of Third or Fourth world countries become increasingly "expendable people."

At the World Council of Churches meeting in Vancouver in 1983, you used the parable of the rich young man in your theological reflection. As the next meeting of the WCC in Australia nears, do you think the world has progressed or regressed in terms of justice issues? Where do you now find hope and a vision for the future?

I am not too optimistic, but rather feel that my people have moved directly from Egypt into Babylon. There was almost no time to root ourselves in freedom's land. I saw two young women in the yet East Germany putting a pretty obscene ad on a wall. They have not yet lived in a world where female bodies are "used" to make the economy run. They smiled because they didn't know what they were doing, here in Babylon. We live in exile here, in the imperium of wealth. Sometimes I see God's people coming close to the situation of early Christianity, being a tiny minority under an almost perfectly structured system of power, luxury and destructiveness. What French philosophers call "post-histoire" signifies the end of the struggles for more justice. A post-metaphysical compensation. Recent events have not expanded this ideology, but challenged its validity. Will the thirst for justice die in our world? My prayer these days is "Keep us thirsty, God of the living water. Make us thirstier." TW

Blind man at Bethsaida

I see men, but they look like trees walking.
(Mark 8:24)

He spit on my eyes and laid
his hands upon me. The first time
this is what I saw:
A hoar-headed patriarch
awakening, waving the flowery rod
of Aaron into springtime wind —
the almond tree. I saw
a sacred circle, oak and terebinth
moving, dancing
around an ancient sacrifice.
I saw the acacia spread
her hard thorny limbs, I saw the red
black heartwood of the ebony.
Tall righteous cedars strode
into the sun.
And then beyond, I saw
the slender branches of a thousand
thousand palm trees strewn on a road
before a king passing on a borrowed colt.
I saw all that, and that was a mistake.

He touched my eyes a second time.
I saw real men of normal size
crowding around, some with limbs
gnarled or withered, waiting
to be healed. I saw women
stooped and bleeding. And beyond
I saw three bare trees
against a cold sky.

— Anne Carroll Fowler

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Short Takes

Political witness of the church

The posture of the Christian is inherently and consistently radical. The Christian is perpetually in the position of complaining about the status quo, whatever it happens to be. His or her insight and experience of reconcilation in Christ is such that no estate in secular society can possibly correspond to or much approximate the true society of which the Christian is a citizen in Christ.

The Christian is, everywhere in every society, an alien . . . always, in any society, in protest. Even when a cause which he or she has supported prevails, the Christian will not be content, but will, so to speak, be the first to turn around and say — "That's fine. We have now done this or that, but it is not enough."

William Stringfellow
***THE WITNESS* 12/3/64**

Rated 'S' for smoke

Since the Public Health Cigarette Smoking Act of 1970 prohibited tobacco ads on American radio and TV, the tobacco industry has turned to another medium to promote its wares: movies. The National Coalition on Television Violence recently reported that 89% of R-rated films, 100% of PG-13 films and 87% of PG films contained at least one smoker.

Cigarette companies cough up big bucks to have their brand names go up in smoke.

Joe Tye, editor of *Tobacco and Youth Report,* calls the practice "an unfair and deceptive way for tobacco companies to attract children." The editors of the *Wellness Letter* are more blunt. They call the practice "murderous."

***Dollars & Sense* 6/90**

Why troops still in Korea?

What is going on when we are maintaining 43,000 troops at a cost of $2.6 billion to maintain the defense of a nation that is twice as big as its neighbors, has an eight times bigger economy and which has a $10.6 billion trade deficit against Uncle Sam? It does not make sense.

Sen. Dale Bumpers quoted in
***The Defense Monitor No. 2,* 1990**



Counseling youth re military

During 1990 the Pentagon will spend over $2.2 billion to attract new recruits. It will target teenage youth, who will be promised adventure, travel and education by fast-talking recruiting sergeants. But for many the military will be the wrong choice. They need facts.

Young people only a year or two out of high school were part of the invasion of Panama. U.S. troops in the Philippines, Korea and Central America are in the midst of violent revolutions where youth understand little about the nature of the conflicts, yet pay dearly when bombs are thrown or shots fired in rage against the occupying U.S. forces. Anyone thinking about enlisting would be wise to think *about what he or she is getting into.*

For directories listing military, draft and pre-enlistment counselors and activists, and films, comic books and other material which addresses the questions of human ethics and values for young people, the following resources can be helpful:

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, 2208 South St., Philadelphia, PA 19146, tel. (215) 545-4626.

Episcopal Peace Fellowship, P. O. Box 28156, Washington, D.C. 20038.

> Twenty-seven years ago when I went to jail I had no vote. I have come out and I still have no vote.
>
> **Nelson Mandela**

Justice delayed in El Salvador

One of the barometers of the current reality [in El Salvador] is the process of investigation and prosecution in the case of the Jesuit murders. The international pressure to bring the killers to justice is intense — and everyone is aware that continued U.S. military aid hangs on this. But the case itself proceeds very slowly; the chief aim being to appear to be doing something to placate the North Americans while not in fact doing anything which would offend the military.

The most recent development is that the case is about to be transferred to the jurisdiction of another judge which should slow everything down for a few more months while the new judge and court familiarize themselves with the case.

The Jesuit provincial and the rector of the Jesuit university have said that they are satisfied that the cases of those who have been charged with the murders are proceeding in a legally correct manner, but that they and everyone else know there are others much higher up who made the decision to kill the priests and that nothing is being done to bring them to justice.

Both President Cristiani and the chief of the Military High Command have admitted signing the order to search the houses and offices of the Jesuits three days before their murder, which certainly opens up the possibility of their complicity in the murders.

Josie Beecher
***Carta de La Gracia* 7/90**

Keep the pressure on apartheid

Wherever I went [in South Africa] people told me that it was economic sanctions that had forced the white government to *make concessions. Apartheid's rulers* didn't just become nice overnight and decide to release Mandela. Nothing happened until they couldn't get any more U.S. bank loans and all new American investment was banned. Everyone I talked to kept saying the same thing: "Keep up the sanctions."

Dumisani Kumalo
***The Africa Fund* 5/90**

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Mexican unions seek jobs with justice

by Matt Witt

Faith and anger, mixing together like fire and kerosene, burned brightly one evening in the main square of Juchitan, a small town in the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca.

A young man active in his church had been called upon to give the invocation as part of a commemoration of the assassination of Emiliano Zapata, leader of Mexico's peasants during the revolution early in this century.

Campesino men with sandals and straw hats, and women with embroidered blouses and flowery dresses listened intently as the young man spoke:

"God, make it clear that it is an injustice that a rich man has more than all the poor people gathered here in this square tonight.

"Make it clear that this is not because you want it so, but because there is a hell on earth, made by man against man.

"Make it clear that it is your wish that this hell on earth be eliminated through the struggle of the poor."

These words captured the feeling of many Mexicans that their poverty is not an act of God but is largely "Made in the U.S.A." — the result of profiteering by U.S. multinational corporations with the support of government policies in both countries.

Since 1982, daily life for most Mexicans has grown increasingly desperate as a result of the so-called "debt crisis," which has diverted billions of dollars needed for job creation, education, housing, and health care into the coffers of U.S. banks.

Matt Witt is director of the Mexico-U.S. Labor Project of the American Labor Education Center in Washington, D.C.

"The debt is one of the principal obstacles to improving the standard of living in Mexico," said Antonio Vital of the Center for Ecumenical Studies in Mexico City. "Removing that obstacle ought to be the goal of any North American who is concerned about immigration, about the movement of U.S. jobs to Mexico, and about social peace in a country which shares with the United States one of the world's longest borders."

For many Americans, the word itself — debt — defines the issue. If one has debts, it is one's duty to repay, no matter the hardship. Mexico owes the United States billions of dollars, the media reports, so Mexico has no choice but to tighten its belt.

The issue becomes clearer, however, if one thinks of other situations in which the word debt has been used. One can recall, for instance, the practices of coal companies which used to force American miners to trade at the company store. The companies set both miners' wage levels and prices at the store, with the unsurprising result that, even after 10 or 12 hours of hard work, a miner found himself "another day older and deeper in debt."

Clearly, before accepting the word debt at face value, one must identify who in Mexico borrowed the money, as well as who in the United States lent it and why.

Mexico is potentially a wealthy country, with large reserves of oil, silver, and many other minerals; ample land and a suitable climate for food production; and long coastlines for the development of fishing and maritime industries. Yet, its people have long been poor because that wealth has been extracted, first by the Spanish and later by U.S. corporations and the tiny elite which has run the country under one-party rule for the past 60 years.

In the 1970s, that elite, like the ruling groups in other Third World countries, was encouraged by U.S. banks to take out loans worth billions of dollars. The banks needed a profitable way to lend huge sums of money deposited by oil-producing nations after the large price increases of 1973.

As a result of these loans, profits from foreign operations of the seven largest U.S. banks soared from 22% of total profits in 1970 to 60% in 1982, according to the Institute for Policy Studies.

In the early '80s, however, a series of events threatened the ability of the government of Mexico and other countries to repay the loans. Floating interest rates they had to pay soared, driven up in part by the Reagan administration's massive borrowing to cope with its simultaneous military spending splurge and cuts in taxes on corporations and the rich.

At the same time, prices Mexico received from the United States and other industrialized countries for oil and other commodities dropped sharply.

Since 1982, private banks and the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have been making new loans to keep Mexico from defaulting on its interest payments, while the principal owed continues to grow.

In order to get the new loans, the Mexican government has had to agree to an IMF-imposed austerity program which includes a wage control program and severe cutbacks in spending on human needs. Meanwhile, more than half

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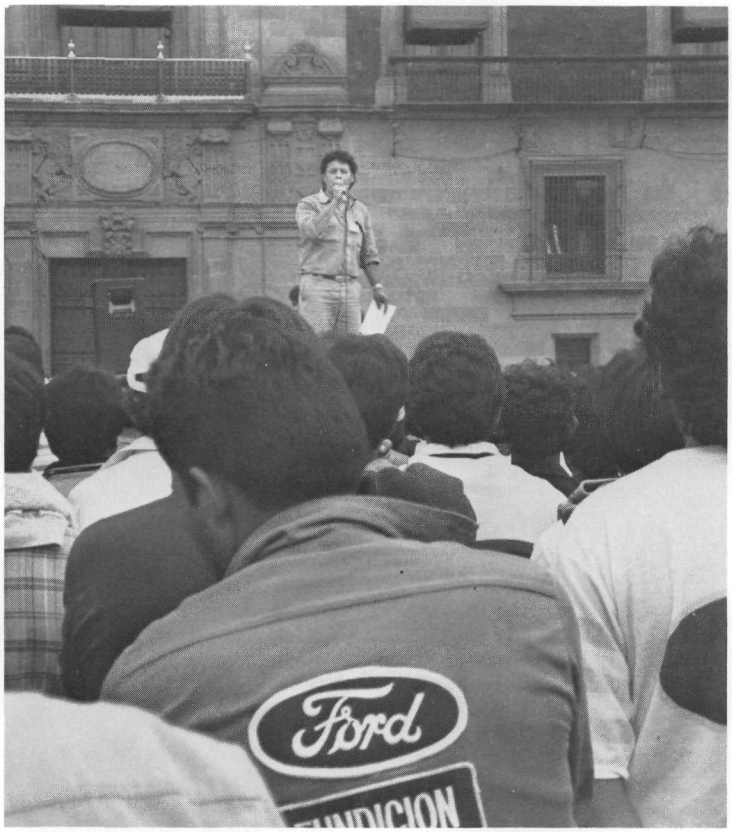

Mexican workers like these Ford employees demonstrating outside President Carlos Salinas' office question whether exploitation by multinational corporations is the best route to development.

of the government's total spending goes to pay interest on debt.

On the occasion of Pope John Paul II's visit to Mexico in May of this year, a group of 1,500 lay church members published an open letter detailing the effects of these events on the Mexican people during the past eight years.

From 1982 to 1989, they noted, Mexican workers' real income dropped by more than 60%. About half the people able and willing to work are unemployed or underemployed. Nearly half of Mexicans who do have jobs make only the minimum wage — about $3.70 *per day*. (In Mexico City, where one quarter of the country's population lives, a pound of cheese costs about $3.40; a pound of low-grade meat, about $2.75.)

Low wages that mean misery for Mexican workers spell higher profits for U.S. corporations. There are now close to 2,000 runaway U.S. factories in Mexico, taking advantage of Mexican wage levels to produce goods exported to the United States and sold at normal prices. The difference in labor costs means that each Mexican worker paid between $4 and $10 per day by a U.S. firm is providing that company with a subsidy of at least $23,000 per year. Meanwhile, hundreds of U.S. communities have been devastated by the social upheaval caused by plant closings.

The laypeople's letter to the Pope also described the impact of cuts in social spending. Overcrowding and a lack of materials in the schools were aggravated in the 1980s by a 50% cut in real education spending. A similar cut in health care spending added to the shortage of staff and supplies in hospitals and clinics. Even the government concedes that there is a housing shortage of 6 million units.

"Behind the statistics and figures, we are living through grave tragedies — as individuals, as families, and as communities," the people told the Pope. "There are the specific faces of indigenous peoples, children, *campesinos*, workers, women — all of whom have suffered severely . . ."

Yet, not all Mexicans have suffered. In a massive transfer of wealth from the lower classes to the rich, the percentage of the annual gross national product which went to owners of capital rose over seven years from 48% to 65%, while the percentage going to wage earners dropped from 41.7% to 27.7%. A national business association in Mexico estimates that 5% of the population controls 90% of total wealth.

No one has been able to fully document the amount of money loaned to Mexico which was skimmed off by the country's rulers and deposited in personal accounts abroad — often with the same U.S. banks which lent it in the first place — but some estimates put the figure at $60 billion. A study by Morgan Guaranty Trust estimated that, without that capital flight, Mexico's debt could be $12 billion and not well over $100 billion.

Popular discontent with the economic policies of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) was reflected in the outcome of Mexico's 1988 presidential elections. Results collected from throughout the country by independent observers appeared to show that PRI presidential candidate, Carlos Salinas, was defeated in a three-way race by Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, candidate of what is now called the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). After several days' delay, however, government officials claimed that Salinas had

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received 50.1% of the vote and installed him in office.

Since then, PRI has used fraud and violence to overturn PRD election victories in Michoacan, Guerrero, and other states. PRD members of the Mexican congress have been attacked by police, and top party spokespeople have received repeated death threats.

The government and its affiliated labor federation, known as the CTM, have also used violence against workers' movements which challenge exploitation by U.S. multinationals. In January, a young worker at Ford's Cuautitlan plant near Mexico City was gunned down on the assembly line and eight others wounded in response to weeks of protests demanding pay illegally withheld by the company and the right to democratic union elections.

The Bush administration, while claiming great interest in democratic rights in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, has said nothing about human rights violations in Mexico. When Vice President Quayle visited the country earlier this year, he came only to praise the Salinas regime's openness to foreign investment. PRI's policies have been labeled "a model of free market economic development, not only regionally but globally" by Commerce Secretary Robert Mosbacher. The two governments have started the process of negotiating a so-called "free trade" agreement which would make it even easier for American corporations to exploit cheap labor in Mexico and export products back to the United States.

This October, a broad coalition of Cardenas' supporters, lay church activists, independent unionists, and other Mexicans will take part in a national demonstration against what they see as the government's subservience to U.S. multinationals. The action is timed to coincide with demonstrations on the debt issue in other Latin American countries.

Some opponents of the government's policies would declare a moratorium on debt payments while the country uses its resources to improve its economy — the same approach used in the United States when a person or company declares bankruptcy. Others would limit debt payments to a fixed percentage of the country's export income. Still others argue that all or most of the debt is already paid. (Between 1982 and 1988, Mexico paid $66 billion on an external debt of $85 billion, but with interest charges the debt actually *grew* to $110 billion during that period.)

"The money wasn't borrowed by the Mexican people, it wasn't used to benefit the Mexican people, and a peaceful solution to our country's problems requires that there be a limit on the sacrifices we are asked to make to pay it back," said Alfredo Dominguez, a leader of the Authentic Labor Front (FAT), an independent organization established with support from the Christian Democratic World Confederation of Labor.

During the week of the demonstration, the Center for Ecumenical Studies (CEE), a research and education center in Mexico City funded mainly by Protestant church sources, will co-sponsor with the independent Washington-based American Labor Education Center, a conference for U.S. and Mexican labor activists to discuss common interests.

The key common interest, according to CEE's Antonio Vital, is in improving working and living conditions in Mexico. More purchasing power would allow Mexicans to buy goods that they and American workers produce, leading to more secure employment, balanced trade, and stable communities in both countries.

"It is in the interest of the United States that Mexican debt payments now being used to inflate the profits of U.S. banks be used instead for creating decent jobs in Mexico," Vital said. "North Americans should also recognize that there will not be social peace in either country until the transnational corporations respect workers' rights and both the Mexican and U.S. governments recognize the desire of our people for democracy." TW



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Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

Sexuality rarely studied

I write in response to your article "Clergy and sexual abuse." I was a priest in the Diocese of Minnesota for five years, early in my ministry. I am glad that the diocese is investigating sexual abuse by the clergy.

What concerns me is the tone of the article, which is evident even in Carter Heyward's excellent piece in the same issue. The emphasis is on misbehavior and blame. Obviously the church should police its clergy when they abuse their trust. A deeper problem is the power of sexuality and its relationship to the sacred connection and disconnection about which Carter writes. It seems to me that the church has gone about as far as it can go as an arbiter of correct behavior, however that arbitration is put into theological language.

Some 50 years after Freud's death, and 30 after Jung's, the meaning of sexuality, particularly its transcendent meaning, remains as obscure as ever in Christianity. In my days at Virginia Seminary, the matter of sexuality was rarely mentioned, let alone plumbed. From what I've seen in nearly 40 years since, the situation has changed hardly at all. The divine and demonic aspects of sexuality, the power instinct has to overwhelm any human being, the sexual entanglement in all manner of life — these are legitimate theoretical and mystical concerns of the church, one would think.

Eugene Monick
New York, N.Y.

Victim voices pain

Heartfelt thanks for covering clergy abuse. At last, someone in our church is paying attention. When I was molested by a therapist-priest a decade ago, what carried me through a long period of intense and devastating pain was support from secular agencies — a local rape-and-assault counseling group, for one. Thank God, God isn't limited to the church!

My attempts to curtail the power and influence of the abuser *within the church* were flops — even though the abuser did not deny his behavior, claiming that sex was "part of the therapy." Both the bishop of that diocese and the rector of the church where the abuser was on staff refused to remove him from his position. And, although both bishop and rector gave me sympathetic words (because I was so evidently distressed) there was no acknowledgment that the abusing priest had done anything wrong or that I had been really, and seriously, harmed.

Because I pursued a remedy through the legal system, I ask you not to publish my name or town, although I can document everything I say. Six years of *good* therapy have helped heal my wounds, though the scars still ache. It hurt so dreadfully at the time that people in Christ's church did not care what had happened to me. Thank you for caring now.

Name withheld by request

Correction

In the September issue, the incorrect zip code was given in the address of the Gulf Coast Tenants Leadership Project. The correct zip is 70156.

EPF correction noted

Thank you for your continued excellence in your coverage of peace and justice issues in our church, nation and world. The July/August issue was especially exciting to me because I have had the privilege to know many of the authors. Mary Meader, Carter Heyward, and Susan Pierce were all official election observers in Nicaragua in February, and each contributed so much to our Episcopal delegation. And your article on Mary Brent Wehrli was a real inspiration to those of us who hesitate to speak out among a non-friendly or hostile group.

Thank you also for the picture and Episcopal News Service report of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's dissent at the consecration of the bishop for the armed forces (Short Takes). We appreciated the coverage by ENS, but the way portions of our statement are quoted gives the impression that EPF feels "it is not necessary to provide a full sacramental ministry to members of our church in the armed forces." This is not true. The men and women in the armed forces need the sacramental ministry as much as we all do. The complete statement reads: "A suffragan bishop for the armed forces is not necessary to provide" (this ministry). There is a big difference, and unfortunately because of the ENS condensation, we have received many hostile letters. Please let your readers know that a complete copy of our statement is available from the EPF national office, P.O. Box 28156, Washington, D.C. 20038.

Ann P. McElroy
Cupertino, Calif.

Better 'n better

The WITNESS keeps getting better and better. I treasure the time spent with it.

Pat Grimala
Portland, Ore.

WITNESS, no way

I am not in favor of your views, nor have I ever been, nor shall I ever be.

The Rev. Vernon F. Searfoss
Scranton, Pa.

Sharing vision

In contrast to those who cancel their subscriptions, I find tremendous encouragement in your publication. Were it not for THE WITNESS and similarly minded groups and individuals, I would feel I had made a great error of judgment when I joined the Episcopal Church: The conservative tide would overcome me.

Thanks to you I know I have compadres and comadres: Fellow pilgrims to share my vision and bread.

The Rev. Shari Young
San Francisco, Calif.

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Rankin . . . *Continued from page 13*

and Damascus anyway.

"Yes, a Palestinian state would enact a law of return for its expatriates, like Israel did. But not that many Palestinians would return. To worry about hordes of Palestinians is a smoke screen." He concluded, "Israel's struggle over the Palestinian issue is a struggle for its own soul."

Jeremy Milgrom, a reform rabbi born in the United States who had lived most of his adult life in Israel, met with us. He served his time on active duty in the army, and serves now, as most male Israelis do, a month or so each year on reserve duty, until his 50s. He said that out of the 20 members of his high school graduating class, three were killed in the 1973 war and another was permanently injured.

A member of "Yesh G'vul," which means "There is a limit," a peace group strongly skeptical of army treatment of Palestinians, he is also a founder of both the Rabbinic Human Rights Watch and Clergy for Peace. Milgrom joined an interfaith (Jewish, Christian and Muslim) peace group when the *intifada* started in December 1987.

He used the term "outrageous" frequently to describe the army's treatment of the Palestinians, and thought it imperative for all people of good will to take significant risks for peace and justice.

We next visited Bheisheh, a West Bank refugee camp controlled by the army and served by UNRWA, the U.N. refugee organization. One of 19 camps in the West Bank, it holds over 8,000 people, refugees from the 1948 War and their descendants. One physician for the entire camp sees 120 patients a day. We learned that out of the approximately 1.7 million Palestinians living in Israel and the Occupied Territories, more than 70,000 have been detained, beaten and/or imprisoned without charges for up to a year.

A U.N. supplemental feeding program for children provides one daily hot meal of rice and beans. When there is a curfew, which can last sometimes as long as two weeks, the children do not get their supplemental meal. Nor do sick people go to the clinic. Anyone violating curfew may be imprisoned or shot.

We didn't see any men anywhere in the camp. Some work outside, others are sick, wounded or in the hospital. Many hid inside their huts, because once a day, on average, the army sweeps through, frequently beating and breaking bones of any men or older male teenagers.

I asked the U.N. official in charge what his long-term plans were. In a monotone he said, "I cannot do this work any more than another year." He nodded slightly toward the camp and said, "This is undeclared apartheid."

In Ramallah, a politically active city of about 35,000 in the West Bank, at the law office of the organization Al Haq, we learned about the formidable task of seeking justice for Palestinians in Israeli military courts. Our interviewee said, "The worst cases we handle are the murders of Palestinians by the army. There have been over 900 of these since the start of the *intifada* in December 1987. Some 48,000 Palestinians have been hospitalized since then, newspapers and books have been censored, schools and universities closed. There are plenty of legal cases to be worked on and very few legal successes."

Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian human rights lawyer said, "Certainly there must be a secure Jewish homeland. But when the Holocaust is raised to the level of a metaphysical absolute, there is nothing that can come into consideration as its equal — not an appeal to justice, nothing. For an absolute, by definition, is absolute. You have seen what a terrible price is being paid by the Palestinians for this absolute.

"In truth, Israel does need security. But Israel owns 200 nuclear devices, not to mention the unmentionable — biological and chemical weapons, too. Israel is the most completely militarized country in the world today. You think some countries are in search of a powerful army? Israel is an army in search of a country!"

Next was a visit to the infamous Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, where the intifada began.

Open sewers ran through the camp, which contains 70,000 people. The dirt, wreckage, garbage, and stench was almost unbelievable. The medical clinic was right down the street from the barbed wire compound surrounding the local army headquarters. Boys 8 to 10 years old repeatedly darted out from behind a building at the end of the block, throwing stones at the military installation. A soldier in a tower aimed his Uzi machine gun at the children. He was out of their range, but they were not out of his. The previous week two Palestinians had been shot here.

In the U.N.-run clinic, a physician who had been there only a few months said that 400 outpatients were treated daily except when curfews are imposed. "Yes, some die when they cannot come here. In fact some patients die when ambulances are intercepted and detained by the army. Daily the soldiers enter the clinic and harass the medical staff and nurses; sometimes they break windows here," he said.

We were shown tear gas cannisters, made in Fredericksburg, Va., and Salzburg, Pa. The gas allegedly gives healthy people asthma, can kill asthmatics, and can cause pregnant women to begin labor prematurely. Some Palestinians think it is experimental gas being tested on them.

We examined rubber bullets, with metal inside. The U.N. doctor showed us a photo of an infant with one eye. The other was lost when a soldier fired a rubber bullet into a crowd.

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In front of the clinic, boys started yelling, picked up stones, and ran behind the buildings. An army vehicle suddenly sped down the street, headed for the military compound. The children appeared in front of us and hundreds of stones were hurled at the vehicle. Our guide shouted at us to board our bus immediately. Later we heard the clinic area was tear-gassed.

At the Gaza Center for Rights and Law we learned that since the *intifada* began, 22 Gazans have been beaten to death by the Israeli army, and a 13-year-old was recently sentenced to six and a half years in detention.

Our last stop in Gaza was the Al Ahli Hospital, currently run by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. We were told this is the hospital of choice for 70,000 Gazans.

In one bed was a 17-year-old boy. The doctor showed us his bandaged left leg, and an X-ray showing a plastic bullet lodged exactly in the middle of the knee joint. In the next bed was a 65-year-old man, who claimed he was on his way to worship in the camp mosque when an incident arose and he was shot in the back. The rubber bullet pierced part of his liver and spleen and severed a number of blood vessels.

In a meeting with Yoav Ossiya, an army reservist representative of the Jewish group Peace Now, he used first-hand experience to explain the army's treatment of the Palestinians.

"The reserves are not trained to deal effectively with riot situations," he said. "You are thrust into all this scared, and you sometimes end up with only two hours of sleep over a two or three day period. And, yes, there are lunatics and sadists in the army, and there are the same on the other side as well. The situation is dangerous, it escalates, and finally overwhelms; then reason, logic, forbearance are swept out of the realm of possibility. You just react. That's when people end up not being themselves, and people are hurt, or killed."

Colonel Ra'anan Gissan of the Israel Defense Force, a Ph.D. from Syracuse University, admitted there are "mistakes" in the army's treatment of the Palestinians, but insisted that complaints are carefully investigated and the guilty are punished. He believed the army was doing an unusually good job handling a complex situation.

One of our group later questioned Dr. Mark Heller at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, University of Tel Aviv when he told us during a meeting that Israel needs the West Bank to enable early warning of attack from its many surrounding enemies.

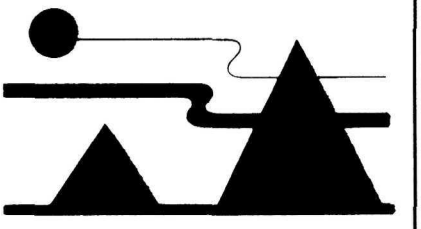
Challenged about the necessity of this space, given advanced satellite technology and the fact that intermediate range missiles can strike as easily with or without the West Bank buffer, he conceded the point, but reminded us that a military fighter plane can traverse the narrowest width of Israel in less than four minutes.

U.S. Consul General Philip Wilcox met with us a few days later in Jerusalem, and explained that U.S. policy recognizes the state of Israel and the need for a peace process, is not opposed to a Palestinian state, but is not yet on record as favoring one. He said that if a peace process results in a Palestinian state, involving the approval of the Palestinians, Israel, and Jordan, then the United States would support that arrangement.

I came back to the United States impressed with the great things Israel has done to develop its land. Convinced of the need for a secure state of Israel in a world where brutalities have historically been practiced against Jews, I was however deeply troubled by the violations of Palestinian human and civil rights by the Israeli army, and shocked by the disgraceful conditions in the refugee camps. The school closings, beatings, shootings, gassings and killings are not necessary, wise, or civilized.

A two-state solution is the only solution, and must be worked out under pressure from the United States. There is no doubt that the PLO must be included in a peace process — making peace is not a matter of talking with your friends, but with your enemies.

Concerned people should lobby Congress to put conditions on U.S. aid to Israel to facilitate the peace process. In the absence of a determined effort, there is little hope of relief for, much less an end to, the enormous and unjust sufferings of the Palestinian people. TW



Pro-choice issue available

This issue on procreative freedom gives a comprehensive theological and social analysis of reproductive freedom. Features penetrating interviews with *Faye Wattleton, president of* Planned Parenthood, and Beverly Wildung Harrison, feminist theologian. Also, an African-American male viewpoint by Faith Evans, past president of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, and articles addressing *pastoral and legislative implications.*

Please send me your issue on procreative freedom. I have enclosed $2. (Prepaid orders only.)

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No taxes for Gulf war

by Patricia Washburn

Dear IRS,

It has become an important occasion in my life over the past few years to write on August 15, the Feast of the Assumption, and explain my position on nonpayment of the military portion of my income tax. I do this prayerfully and with some regret that the world situation which led us to muse about a "peace dividend" has once again deteriorated in large part due to U.S. military intervention. I am aware that military support of right-wing regimes continues in Central America, but this year I want to focus on the crisis in the Middle East.

I have just returned from a fact-finding trip to Israel/Palestine and Jordan as a member of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Peace. We left Amman, Jordan only days before the invasion of Kuwait. Thus my reflections are both current and very painful.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, August 15 is the day on which Mary was raised up to become the "Queen of Heaven." This event is one of those commemorated in the recitation of the rosary. In my own tradition we also note this day but with more emphasis on the life and ministry of Mary. Mary is seen as the healer, the reconciler, the peacemaker.

During my recent trip to the Middle East I was struck by the ways in which women, Christian, Muslim and Jewish, were attempting to live out this reconciling role, albeit at times understanding that resistance is the first step in liberation from oppression. Let me share a few of the images from my journey.

Beit Sahour is a town of 12,000 Palestinians, neighbor to Bethlehem where Mary gave birth to Jesus, upon another occasion of dealing with taxation. It is 80% Christian and many of its citizens have lived upon the land for several hundred years. The residents gained international attention when they refused to pay taxes levied by the Israeli government. A 42-day siege followed during which the women cried out,"We will not finance the bullets that kill our children, the growing number of prisons, the expenses of the occupying army. We want no more than what you have: freedom and the right to pay taxes to our own representatives." Subsequently they organized two Israeli-Palestinian gatherings of women to talk and pray. The first was held in Beit Sahour at the Greek Orthodox Church and the second on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem. The women were willing to gather together to overcome "enemy" stereotypes and work for peaceful resolution. Ironically their slogan, "No taxation without representation," was borrowed from our own period of revolution against oppression.

I also want to mention the on-going witness of the group called Women in Black, Jewish women opposed to their country's occupation of Palestine. As one of the women has written, "We felt drawn towards doing something that would express aversion to violence, our desire to end the mutual hostility . . . We started as a few women in Jerusalem, and today 100 turn out week after week. Our ranks are growing. We are young, old, middle-aged; some of us pregnant, some carrying children."

It is the plight of children that haunts me most.

A recent "Save the Children" report states that 50-60,000 children have been treated for intifada-related injuries during the first two years of the uprising. We are complicit in those injuries since we help finance the Israeli military. The United States provides more than $3.5 billion annually to Israel, much of which is directed to defense and security.

A recent report from the American Friends Service Committee states that any resolution of the conflict in the Middle East must begin with a reduction in the cycle of violence: "Israelis and Palestinians have suffered too long from terror, repression and war; both sides must act to end the cycle of violence. In addition nations supplying weapons to the region should take immediate steps to reverse the Middle East arms race."

We also provide $2.5 billion annually to Egypt. It is noteworthy that the United States will spend $10 million daily to maintain a force in Saudi Arabia. All of this arsenal of destruction is paid for at least in part by my income taxes.

This military buildup is too much for me to bear as a mother and a person of faith. I weep for the generation of children who will bear the burden of this war, and I weep for the mothers of these children. As writer Gila Svirsky says in her description of the Women in Black: "Maybe we look like witches, it occurs to me. Or like Cassandras. Seers or prophetesses with visions of doom and Armageddon . . . We are the women in black, the phantoms of your fear of death. I understand your fear. Come let us fear together. And then we will begin to reason. I shall shed my black, and you

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Patricia Washburn, a war tax resister and member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, lives in Denver, Col., and works for the American Friends Service Committee. She recently went to Israel, Jordan and the Occupied Territories with the Episcopal delegation. This piece, inspired by her trip, is excerpted from her most recent letter to the IRS.

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will shed your fear. And together we shall light a small candle. And cease to curse."

I am a mother and a grandmother. I stand in prayer and solidarity with my sisters in the Middle East. Therefore as an act of conscience and repentance for the policy of the United States, I respectfully choose to withhold 52% of my income tax. This amount is based on the latest estimate by the Friends Committee on National Legislation of the portion projected for military expenditures in President Bush's proposed budget.

I pray for all the mothers and children as I make this witness. I pray that God will be merciful and allow those children to grow to maturity. I know that Mary will weep with us if we do not repent of this madness and allow the vision of the Women in Black to become a reality. Mother Teresa wrote that "Goodness does not derive from our capacity to think but to love." I pray that my witness is done in love and that it will help build a bridge across a chasm of violence and fear. TW

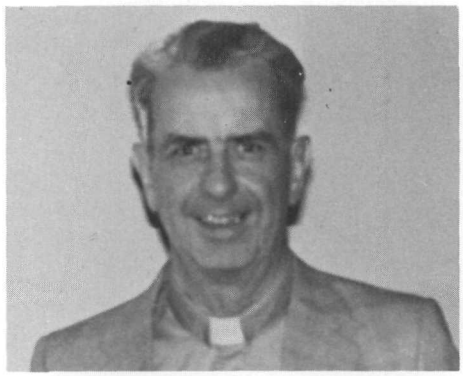
Sandy Cutler — *Presente*!

At a 1986 meeting of the Consultation, a coalition of Episcopal Church peace and justice groups, the Rev. F. Sanford Cutler read a "Litany of contemporary Episcopal saints," a list he had compiled of the names of activists such as the Rev. Pauli Murray and William Stringfellow. As he said each name, he asked those present to respond by saying "*Presente*," a Hispanic commitment to remember the dead by pledging to emulate their lives.

Sandy Cutler, who spent his life in the church following the path of those saints as a tireless fighter against oppression, joined their company Aug. 27 after suffering a heart attack at his home in New York City.

Born in Connecticut, Cutler graduated from Wesleyan and attended seminary at Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Much of his early career in the ordained ministry was spent in Central America and the Caribbean. Before coming in 1970 to serve as rector of the Church of the Redeemer in the Diocese of Newark, he was Dean of St. John's Cathedral in Puerto Rico. Deeply concerned about human rights struggles in Central America and the Caribbean, he returned to the region many times as an official church observer.

He was a passionate believer that the church should be involved in social justice struggles and his life bore witness to his convictions.



Sandy Cutler (1921-1990)

Though he retired from his parish post in 1986, his work continued unabated. He served on the boards of Planned Parenthood, the Religious Coaltion for Abortion Rights, and community housing and welfare rights groups.

There was hardly an advocacy group in the church to which he did not lend his time and talents, including the Episcopal Women's Caucus, the Oasis — a ministry to lesbians and gays — and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship.

He was EPF representative on the Consultation, and, as a deputy to General Convention, was instrumental at the church's last General Convention in engineering the passage of Consultation-backed legislation around social issues.

EPF executive director Mary Miller said, "When you say 'peace and justice,' you've got Sandy. I can't think of anything he wasn't involved in. He was singlehandedly an EPF organizer wherever he went."

The Rev. Canon Nancy Wittig, one of the Philadelphia 11, the first women ordained in 1974 despite an official ban against women priests, recalled how Cutler, an ardent feminist, invited the women to celebrate at his church not long after the ordinations. "He was told it would ruin his career," she said.

Richard Shimpfky, a longtime colleague from Newark and new Bishop of El Camino Real, dedicated his consecration Eucharist to Cutler.

At his funeral service, the Rev. Elizabeth Maxwell, assistant at Holy Apostles Church in New York City, said she was inspired by Cutler's life-long commitment to peace, which was a costly one. Hearing his stories about being a conscientious objector during WWII and going to prison for it, she said, "helped me to realize that we're in it for the long haul."

His appearance — that of a slightly disheveled, average-looking middle-aged priest — was deceiving, said Maxwell. He was the one "to invite to the parish to talk about controversial issues. Folks never expected what he would say," she noted.

Maxwell concluded, "We are impoverished by his loss, grateful for his witness, and challenged — no, prodded — by his example. We are able to say, 'Sandy — *presente*!' " **— Sue Pierce**

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All my shoes: Some reflections

Yesterday I came home with a new pair of shoes. Beautiful white Nike running shoes; nylon and leather with thick air cushion insoles and the newest anti-pronation devices. These completely high-tech shoes make my feet look like God's feet when I wear them. I love them like I loved my Red Ball Jets when I was a little girl. I believed then, as I believe now, that they could make me run faster and jump higher.

Each time I buy a new pair of running shoes it is a special occasion, marking a renewed commitment to my well-being. I buy running shoes with a sense of religious devotion, like a priest buying a new vestment.

A few years ago, after I had just been released from a week's stay in the hospital, I was walking down a busy street in New York, feeling vulnerable and small amidst the movement and noise. Then I saw a bright pair of Nike running shoes in the window of a sporting goods store. In a moment's time, they were mine — on my feet and carrying me in safety and health through the mean streets of the city.

When I go shopping for running shoes I take with me the little girl who believed in her Red Ball Jets. It is she who puts them on and strides confidently out of the store, and then can't help but show them to everyone she sees. "Look at my new Nikes!" she exclaims proudly to every passer-by, pointing her toe daintily and with pride.

I brought them home and threw them in the closet with the rest of my shoes, which were in a disorderly tangle on the floor. Then I looked at all of those shoes, and couldn't believe I owned that many. I took an inventory and found:

2 pairs Reebok tennis shoes, one leather, one nylon

2 pairs Nike running shoes, one new, one old

1 pair black patent leather high heels
1 pair low black pumps
1 pair low navy blue pumps
1 pair low tan pumps
1 pair tan wing tips

1 pair tan open toe sandals (Which I don't wear much because they cut me.)

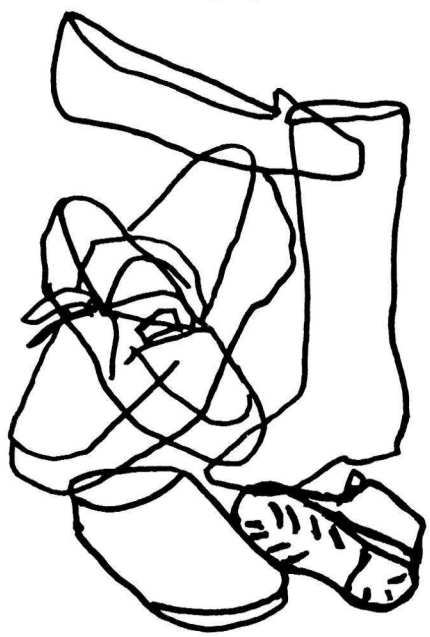
1 pair dark brown T-strap sandals
1 pair casual black flats
1 pair casual light brown flats
1 pair black Chinese slippers
1 pair soccer cleats

Fifteen pairs of shoes! And there were three more which I wear only in winter:

1 pair Bean gum boots
1 pair Blucher moccasins
1 pair brown tassle loafers

That brought the total to 18. I know people in Haiti who don't have a single pair. A woman I know in Louisville has over 60 pairs. She invited me over to her house when she was cleaning out her closet to offer me some hand-me-downs. In the closet I saw shelf upon shelf of shoes, neatly placed in plastic boxes, two rows of six pairs each to a shelf, five shelves high. Incredible. The hand-me-downs I took home were also incredible — probably $3,000 worth of silk blouses, fine blazers and a wool-mink blend suit.

The strange thing about all my shoes is that I know I have more than I need, but it seems like I do need them. The high heels are for dressy occasions (which are rare). The low black, blue and tan pumps I wear to work regularly, as well as the wing tips. The flat black



The Rev. Canon Whit Stodghill is canon of the Cathedral Church of St. Mark in Minneapolis, Minn. This past summer she rode her bike across the Rockies, in sensible shoes, no doubt.

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on the sole by Whit Stodghill

and brown casual shoes I wear with pants when I'm out with friends or on a date. The T-strap sandals and the light sandals I could give away, as I could the old Nikes and the leather Reeboks, which were given to me, and don't fit. So if I got rid of those, that would bring the total down to 14.

I am struck by how easy it is — when you are living in the upper middle class — to confuse need with want, and how difficult it is to keep one's life and possessions simple and uncluttered. There is always a sense that one could, and ought to, have more.

I went around the office asking people how many shoes they had, and looking for variations according to sex, age, income, etc. I was surprised to find that many of the men had quite a few pairs of shoes. I had figured men would own about six pairs, but most claimed 10 to 20. The people who made the least amount of money tended to have the least number of shoes. My 18 pairs was about average. The highest number was 40, owned by a man who has been heard to say that he doesn't have enough gas money to get outside the city. He's got plenty of shoes. Maybe instead of driving, he should walk.

Some were put off by being asked how many shoes they had and just gave a quick ballpark figure. Others rolled their eyes up into their heads and visually counted their pairs of shoes like an insomniac counting sheep. One woman jotted down her shoes on a piece of paper: brown, blue, tennis, sandals, boots, etc., totalled up nine, and handed me the slip.

One prominent church person said after some hesitation, "Well . . . I have about 20," (a low estimate, in my opinion) and then added hastily, "But they're all very expensive shoes!" He was circumspect about the number, but felt justified in buying the best, just as long as he didn't have too many. In his home it is the same way: He does not have many things, but what he has is the best.

I have always been a person who noticed what kind of shoes people are wearing. Shoes say a lot about a person, I think.

It was fun to add that special new pair of shoes to my collection. But the purchase also brought up the larger question of the proliferation occurring on the floor of my closet: shoes multiplying like rabbits, and not only in my closet, but in many closets of the affluent.

Think about your shoes . . . how many do you have? Can you give an exact figure, or do you have more than you can keep track of? What are they for? What do they tell you about what you value? How well do they represent who you are? Do you need them all? Could someone else get good use out of pairs you are keeping, but not using? And finally, what does your shoe survey say to you about how you are relating to material possessions in general? TW

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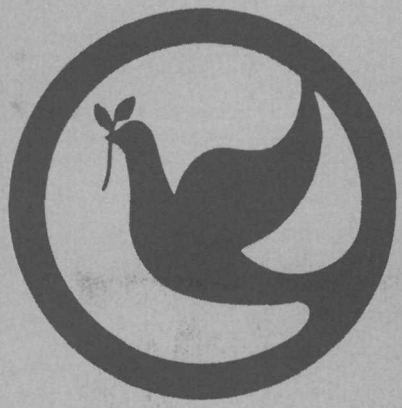

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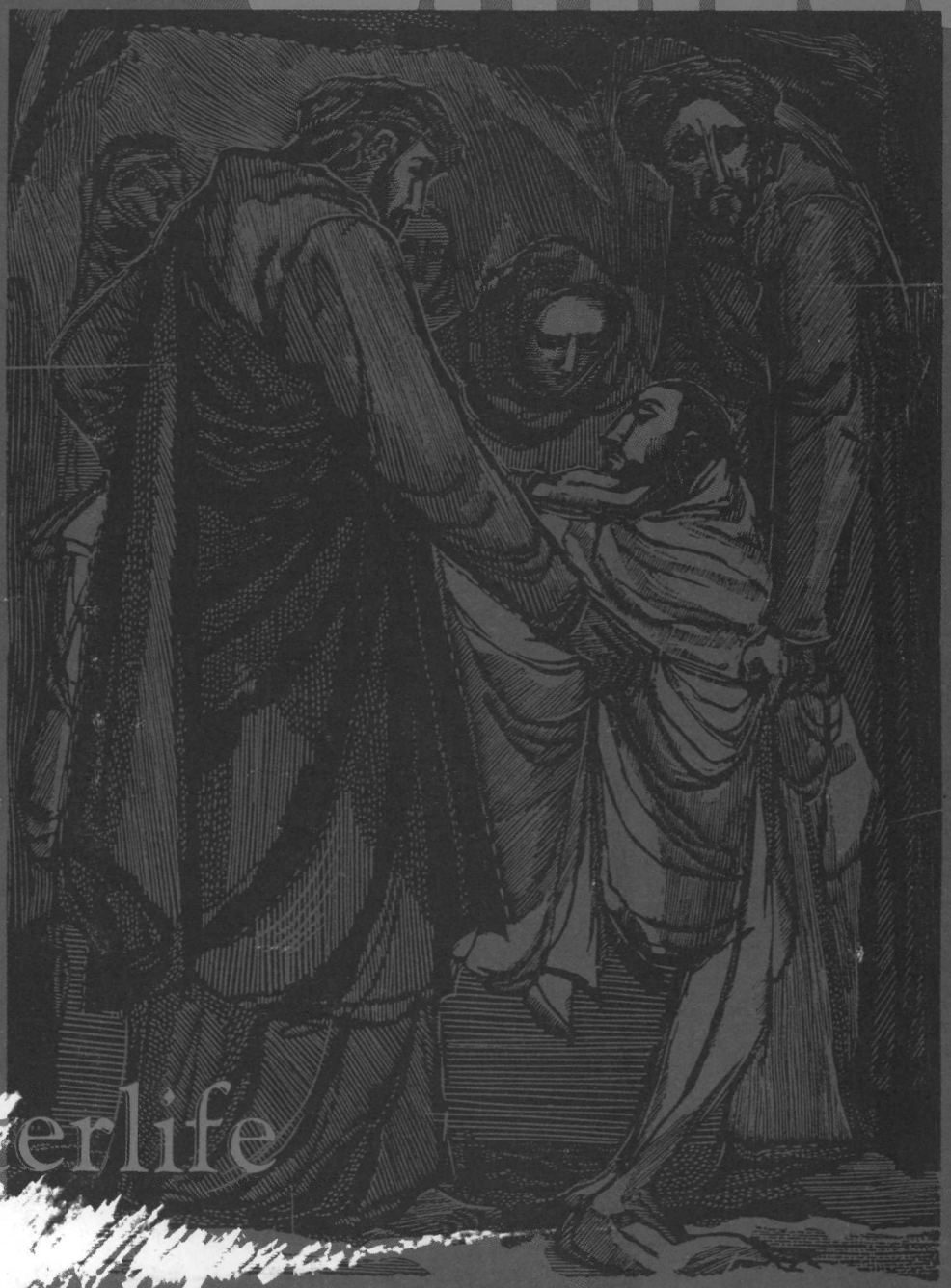

Afterlife

—Charles Meyer

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Letters

Remembering a friend

The Rev. Canon Paul Saunders, whose picture was included in our article "Environmental racism and the struggle for justice" (September WITNESS), passed away recently from an illness with which he had been struggling for several months. We would like your readers to know that we at the SouthWest Organizing Project in Albuquerque, along with many others around the country, have lost a great friend.

In the time we knew Paul, he accomplished much in helping to make the issue of eco-justice a priority for church institutions at many levels. Paul was instrumental in forming the Task Force on Eco-Justice of the New Mexico Conference of Churches in 1989. He provided much-needed guidance to local preparation for the Inter-Denominational Hearings on Toxics in Minority Communities, conducted by SWOP and the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Working Group in the fall of last year. Paul was clearly moved, as all of us were, by the testimony at the hearings.

Perhaps most importantly for us at SWOP, Paul considered himself not only a good friend, but in his words "a member" of our organization. We miss Paul, but find our continuing efforts greatly strengthened by his contributions, and by his example.

Louis Head, Michael Guerrero
SouthWest Organizing Project
Albuquerque, N.M.

(THE WITNESS joins SWOP in mourning Paul Saunders' death, and in celebrating his life. — Ed.)

Only 'green' counts

I had to look up the article by Manning Marable on "The myth of equality" because Robert Jordan's Letter to the Editor attacking it (July/August) was so vitriolic I thought I had missed the article's pronouncements.

If Jordan had attacked the requirement of a break from the tactics and ideas of the desegregation period of the 1960s I could have understood his objections. Anyone working for equality then knew we could not become part of the system. Martin Luther King, Jr. was teaching transformation. That is why he was killed.

The American system cannot claim equality in economics. A slave relegated to the auction block wrote off hundreds of lives to come, and minorities now consigned to holding cells will keep disrupting lives in our communities. Deterioration of decent conditions for life is the decline of freedom. We will not end this awful problem if we do not face what inequity does to people.

Marable is right, some blacks are moving up, but they are not racially equal, they are monetarily equal. When you run in the crowd who worships money, green is the only color that matters. That message is everywhere. The poor ghetto kid knows this, but the nasty approach to his life will remain, because to keep monetarily ahead the minority needs to use punitive methods to keep a majority from starting up that ladder.

We are building a society of inequality, and race will be an argument as long as the power elite can get us to argue among ourselves. And while we do that, we continue to accept their solutions. The promise of equality must be maintained so that it sounds as though leaders are following what is written. They are not, and as long as minds are twisted and resist creative solutions we will have to stand whatever the system dishes out.

Gray Anderson
Bloomington, Ind.

Activist sets example

I would be very distressed if I didn't have the opportunity to read articles about people like Mary Brent Wehrli (July/August issue). She probably represents many people who have lived somewhat sheltered lives until they've been confronted with the reality of how the have-nots are forced to live.

Affluence was not part of my early years growing up nor of my early years of marriage. Frugal, more like, but with a secure feeling of family bonds and good friends in abundance. But I did get radicalized when I worked with the Head Start program in the late '60s and early '70s. I was appalled at the poverty I found in my own hometown. My life has been dedicated to one cause of concern after another ever since. And, like Wehrli, one begins to realize how domestic and foreign policies here in the U.S. and throughout the world tramples most attempts to do something about the atrocities victims experience.

Sara-lu M. Morrison
Washington, Iowa

Anti-choice hurts women

Please send a copy of the feminist study guide, *My Story's On: Ordinary Women/ Extraordinary Lives*, as advertised on the September back cover. I don't want to cut up any issue of THE WITNESS. You are my strength for common sense in the Episcopal Church.

The patriarchy is worried that an egalitarian system would give it less power over women and minorities and is fighting with money and our legal system to erode the progress we've made since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

Episcopalians are expected to think for themselves but there is a conservative group called "Episcopalians United" trying to get us back under patriarchy, and one called "NOEL" (National Organization of Episcopalians for Life), who are determined to get women into submissive roles.

The Roman Catholic hierachy and fundamentalist leaders have backed anti-choice candidates, which is why we're hurting the young women and poor.

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Having abortion as a political football right now will only hurt more women.

Barbara Palmer
Utica, Mich.

Keep plugging away

I am so glad you printed Margaret E. Ferry's letter (September) taking on the class nature of the "Liberation philosophy for retirement" article. In fact, I'd like her letter to be a regular feature each month.

The entire September issue is good. I broke apart reading Susan Pierce's report ("Fighting the poison of despair") on the Great Louisiana Toxic March through Cancer Alley. We Americans bitch about the possibility of chemical weapons being used by Saddam Hussein in the Middle East while we use chemical "weapons" here at home or export them to Third World countries as pesticides, herbicides and, who knows, maybe donated medicines that are banned for U.S. use but can be distributed by pharmaceutical companies abroad.

And who am I to talk? Here I sit in my Snug Sack, conserving energy, using recycled paper and envelopes (congrats to THE WITNESS for going to recycled paper) bought and paid for with oil income, the greatest polluter of all. I try to cancel out the oil income's part in pollution by ecologically-sound consumerism, but I think pollution is winning with plastics, gasoline engine emissions, etc. Well, I'll keep plugging away.

Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska

Cuba issue to council

Your March issue on Cuba has been invaluable to me during a visit to Detroit by Clinton Adlum of the Cuba Interest Section in Washington, D.C. The Justice for Cuba Coalition, of which I am a member, arranged his visit during which, among other events, he was welcomed by the Hon. Maryann Mahaffey, president of the Detroit City Council.

The City Council presented him with a resolution promising to use its influence to petition the U.S. government to remove travel restrictions between our countries; to remove the trade embargo, and the hostile military stance toward Cuba. The Detroit City Council hopes to visit Cuba some time next year.

Therefore, I would like to present each member of the council with a copy of the Cuba issue. Check enclosed. Yours for a peaceful world.

Cheaber H. Farmer
Detroit, Mich.

Preachy and passive

I get the impression that, like the secular "mass" media, the religious media has a limit to what it is willing to print. For all the griping THE WITNESS does about our government it still doesn't call for the constitutional changes that might make meaningful reform possible. In consequence, the magazine comes across as a passive bystander merely observing atrocities, and kibbitizing about them with others in the audience. If one were impolite one might accuse you of a sophisticated form of gallows humor.

Your September editorial ends with a call for "the American people" to "put limits" on the Bush Administration. Why does THE WITNESS preach at some nebulous "American people"? Aren't you people? Aren't you Americans?

The article on "Environmental racism and the struggle for justice" seems absurdly naive to be surprised that hazardous wastes should be another way we "dump" on minorities. I was amused that someone has come up with a way to fancify feminism ("Ecofeminist vision must spur action") in order to avoid having to deal with the logical end-question of how much political power women should have. And the article "Make environment ministry a priority" ended with a list of busywork for the religious media that sounded an awful lot like Dr. Strangelove's "First we have to dig bomb shelters . . . " as the bombs were going off.

It is as if THE WITNESS would pee in its pants if it had to finish the logic of its purported fight against racism and sexism. The truth is that our government is white and male supremacist. When THE WITNESS refuses to testify to that fact, then it continues to bind us all to that white masculinist insanity simply by remaining aloof.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, Mich.

(We have always appreciated reader Kavanaugh's provocative letters, and this is no exception. As an advocacy journal, we try to take the side of the oppressed. Through our individual efforts to work at social and political change, we are quite aware that our government (and indeed, the church) is white and male supremacist. We have experienced that first hand. But forgive us if we don't share the view that a constitutional convention or constitutional change is ***the*** *answer to all our problems.*

As the Letters to the Editor on this page show, WITNESS readers across the country find the magazine useful in different ways.

We work at "conscientization" in our pages — which might be defined as education oriented toward action. The particular action is up to the reader, who will give according to his or her talents, addressing urgent needs in his or her community. The enterprise "is exploration into God," and with God be the increase. — Ed.)

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THE WITNESS



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Editorial

Beyond the politics of fear

This month's editorial is by WITNESS Contributing Editor Manning Marable, Professor of Political Science at the University of Colorado.

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There is an unsettled feeling across this land, a sense of alienation and fear. No politician or national leader has really tapped this potential unrest. Nevertheless, the politics of fear lurk just beyond the political horizon.

For two generations, the American people were told that sacrifices were essential to defeat Communism, to dismantle the tyranny of the Iron Curtain. We were assured that once the forces of the "Evil Empire" were crushed, our productive energies would be turned to more constructive enterprises. There would be a "peace dividend" from the economic conversion of conventional and nuclear weapons production to the building of hospitals, schools, houses and transportation facilities. After years of confrontations, the Soviets have withdrawn from Afghanistan, are packing up to depart from Eastern Europe, and have adopted the Shatalin economic program to build a market-oriented economy.

But now the American people are being told that their economic sacrifices must continue. Massive Pentagon expenditures and budget deficits are necessary to maintain a strong "defense" against Noriega, the Ayatollahs, Saddam Hussein, or whoever else becomes the next "international villain." The U.S. government has enough money to send thousands of young Americans to fight and die protecting oil corporation interests abroad, virtually without public debate, yet never has enough to house the homeless or feed the hungry here. We have the funds to finance Stealth bombers to protect the Saudi sheiks, but never enough to save an entire generation of inner-city young people from unemployment, crime and drugs. Where are our priorities?

In the glitzy '80s, we were assured by the gurus of Reaganomics that wealth would trickle down to working-class and poor people. Some conservative economists even predicted that the business cycle of expansion-recession was a relic of the past. Keeping government out of the affairs of corporations and cutting taxes for the wealthy was the recipe for prosperity.

Now we stand at the edge of a recession, precisely due to the greed and irresponsibility of the Reagan-Bush administrations. This summer, the U.S. Labor Department revealed that employment has fallen in 33 states during the past year. Construction spending and retail sales slumped, and household income increases have fallen behind the growing rate of inflation. Meanwhile the wealthiest 10% of all Americans are paying $93 billion less today than they would have under 1978 tax laws, according to the research group Citizens for Tax Justice.

In politics, growing numbers of Americans are becoming cynical about the viability of both parties. According to a recent study, more than one-third of all families with annual incomes under $30,000 agree with the statements, "Washington officials lose touch with the people pretty quickly," and "Hard work offers little guarantee of success." Not surprisingly, the greatest alienation was among African-Americans.

The great danger is that our sense of community and social responsibility is being destroyed by the politics of fear and narrow self-interest. If we simply leave the system to the politicians, corporate lobbyists and arms merchants, we abandon any hope for constructive change. If our model of acceptable public behavior is Donald Trump, we will inevitably become ethically and politically bankrupt. When politics becomes an expression of a single class or group's advancement over and above the well-being of the vast majority, in the long run all will suffer.

The power of the civil rights movement came from its expressed commitment to the democratic rights of all Americans, regardless of race, class and gender. The fear among blacks generated by racial segregation was overcome by our collective struggle to improve conditions.

Today, we will banish the specter of fear and alienation from the political process only when we find within ourselves the courage to reorder national priorities for the common good. WW

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Afterlife

by Charles Meyer

After a loved one dies, disturbing questions frequently linger to haunt the survivors. These questions are practical, logical and theological in nature, having to do with the afterlife. Issues that used to be topics of idle speculation now are of central importance. Survivors — sitting across the table from an empty chair, walking down the hall past a child's vacant bedroom, waking up in a now huge bed, sitting alone in a theater, driving home in an empty car to an empty house — find their minds wandering, and wondering.

Often people are embarrassed by the provocative ambiguities which remain with them. It is as though they think they should have learned the answers already — in church, or in the common culture, perhaps — and are ashamed that they obviously weren't listening the day these important matters were discussed. Sometimes survivors feel intimidated, fearful that if they asked the questions in their heads, God would surely punish them for their unbelief or theological stupidity. So they wonder in agonizing silence, forever unsettled by the nagging nonsequiturs called forth by trying to align their experience of loss with the scriptures they read and the sermons they hear.

In fact, the church is equally unsettled by the issues of afterlife. If it were not, there would be many more sermons and discussions about what happens after someone dies.

The purpose here is to ask the questions out in the open — so that survivors will not feel stupid or alone in their thoughts — and to offer some reasoned possibilities to replace uncertainty with comfort, if not with clarity.

As those who have lost loved ones have wandered into my office over the

The Rev. Charles Meyer is assistant vice president of patient services at St. David's Medical Center in Austin, Tex.

past 11 years, their afterlife questions seem to fall into five categories: purpose, place, safety, knowledge, and future.

• **Purpose.** Why did God make or let this happen? Was God trying to get my attention? Am I to blame for this death? Is God punishing me for something I did (or the person did) years ago? Did God know that something awful would happen to her in the future and therefore spare that agony by "taking" her now? Is this part of God's plan for him? For me? What is the meaning of this loss? What am I supposed to learn from it?

Most of these questions assume that God is in charge of everything and personally pulls strings that cause events (births, deaths, accidents, windfalls) which directly affect our personal lives for specific reasons, usually related to a "plan." If that is true, then God is not only capricious but also vindictive: the Divine Parent constantly chastising and recording mistakes for future retributive paybacks.

What makes more theological sense is that "Life is unfair" and "God is powerless." People are not rewarded for "good" behavior with protection from illness, accident, misfortune, and death. In fact, that is not God's promise (as Jeremiah and others were slow to learn). Because there are things far worse than death from which we need protection, God promises instead to "be with us" through these events, in the midst of what we experience as the unfairness of life, and as we "walk through the valley of the shadow of death." God's power is found in *presence*, not in prevention, in God's choosing to be powerless and to trust us with freedom rather than devising a scheme of marionette-like manipulation.

The *reason* for the death is to be found in the incident: physical or emotional illness, accident, carelessness. The disease took over, the mechanism malfunctioned, her attention was elsewhere, he was being mugged, she hated herself. Seldom is the reason related to or the fault of the survivor. When it is, the church offers confession, forgiveness, absolution, reconciliation.

The *meaning* of the loss is found in our reaction to it. The death itself has no purpose, but it may have great impact on and meaning for the lives of others, reminding us of the fragile nature of our existence, the futility of hatred or violence, the indomitability of the human spirit, and the eternal nature of healing love.

• **Place.** Where *is* she? Did my loved one go to a "place"? Do dead persons exist in a suspended state? Do they look like the spirit beings portrayed in such movies as *Cocoon* or *Close Encounters* or *The Abyss*? What does the essence of the person consist of? When exactly does it leave the body? Does a part of it stay here? What do people do in whatever place they are? Do they continue to grow, to mature as time passes? Is there any such thing as time in that place? Do babies who die grow up and become adults? What about fetuses?

Attempts to answer these questions have taken different forms at various historical times. While I will present my own views, it is important first to state some generalities.

First, beware of any one claiming to have the absolute truth about any of this. There are no right answers, only reasoned speculation based on belief, creed, or scripture of one brand or another. Second, take nothing literally. The importance of speculation about afterlife is its metaphorical impact, and the effect that speculation has on how we live our lives now. Third, remember that, whatever the concept we may have of that "place," it is probably not anywhere near the reality we will face when we get there. Having said that, let me venture forth, basing my images on hundreds of conversations with dying persons and the questions their families ask after their deaths.

It doesn't take a genius in physics to conclude that the soul (or spirit) of the loved one is "someplace." Assuming that it is some kind of essence, it has to *be* someplace. But the nature of that place (not to mention the nature of the essence) is, at least to me, specifically unknown.

It does seem that the place must either be in God's presence or outside God's presence, either in light or darkness — what others may describe as Heaven or Hell. If in God's presence, then the essence/spirit must exist in perpetual light, surrounded by what has already been described in the best metaphorical manner possible in various religious scriptures from the Bible to the Baghavad Gita, as music, joy, contentment, peace, angelic safety and worship of God. They may know God more fully than we do now — not because they are closer (no one can get closer to God, we are all equidistant), but because the plane of their understanding and experience may be unhindered by the distractions of this life.

If it is outside of God's presence, the essence/spirit must be in eternal darkness; not hellfire and brimstone, but eternal numbness with no interaction, much like being deaf and mute, unable to touch or know anyone or anything, wandering in infinite darkness without impediment or obstacle, never able to know or find the light.

It seems to me that where the person goes is always a choice. We choose light or darkness with each business, personal, professional or familial decision we make every day. Even at our death, I imagine that we are yet again offered an

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alternative. Perhaps even in the eternal darkness the voice of God calls to us, maybe the only sound able to penetrate it. Perhaps even then we still may choose to ignore the sound, continuing to prefer the all-enveloping anonymity of nothingness.

People who have lost a child often ask if their child will "grow up" in heaven. A man whose wife, 16 weeks pregnant, died in a car wreck, wanted to know what happened to the fetus and to his wife. I expressed my belief that the fetus, having not been born, and not yet a person or an entity, went nowhere. It would not grow and develop. Just as the rest of the body tissues died, so did the fetal tissue. Other people may believe that the fetus is "ensouled" from conception, in which case the soul would go into the place of light as described above.

But what of his wife? Would her spirit continue to age so that, assuming they were reunited at his death, they would be the same age?

These questions grow out of our need to make logical sense of things beyond our logic, to measure death in terms of life. While, of course, there are no known answers, it does seem to me that our spirit is eternal and ageless. While our bodies age and grow, our spirits, when they meet, are the same "age" whether the body stopped at three days or 90 years.

But it also makes sense that spirits continue to grow in their knowledge of God. If God is infinite wisdom, and our souls are with God, then it seems that the journey of the soul is one toward greater knowledge, feeling, and understanding of God, which, by definition, takes an eternity.

Other people will suggest that the spirit immediately obtains infinite knowledge upon its release from the body. But this is to discount and even denigrate bodily existence, to continue the Greek mind/body distinction, and pronounce the life of the spirit superior. In fact, the spirit and the body are one when alive and interacting with others here. Perhaps the body is even a necessity in the body/soul journey, experiencing and learning things about God that cannot be learned in any other way (no matter how long that body journey lasts). When the body dies, the soul/essence/spirit continues the journey; and it continues in eternal light/heaven/in God's presence, unless it has chosen eternal darkness.

"These questions grow out of our need to make logical sense of things beyond our logic, to measure death in terms of life."

Two final questions regarding place have to do with activity and well-being. Survivors frequently ask, What does he do there? Is she safe? Is he okay?

• **Safety.** I assume that, whether in light or darkness, the spirit/essence is under God's purview and therefore "safe." There is no such thing as eternal torment, sadness, or grief; those things are reserved for this earthly plane. Once death has occurred the spirit has a different perspective on that previous plane of life, limited now only by the infinity of God. Metaphorical images for that perspective are found in such words as peace, joy, rest, happiness, tranquility, and do not so much indicate inactivity as lack of worry or stress or interruption or demand.

Activity as well can only be described in metaphor. Many people imagine heaven as sort of a parallel universe, where activities go on much the same as they do here. But it seems to me that a spirit would spend eternity *being* rather than *doing*. Perhaps *being* in the presence of God, regardless of whether we are here now or in eternal light or darkness, is the ultimate activity we can know. So the answer to what souls *do* is that they *be*.

• **Knowledge.** Can my loved one contact me? Does he know what I'm doing now? Does she know what I'm thinking and feeling? Does he watch after the children and me? Can they intervene or protect us?

Questions abound regarding the connections between "here" and "there." While we do continue our lives here in the midst of a "cloud of witnesses," there can be no real contact with that arena of existence. To do so would indelibly affect the course of the person's life here, much as a "miraculous intervention" from God would do, and would seem to violate the freedom of choice with which both we and the universe are created.

Many people want continued interaction to finish unfinished business, work out emotional and personal issues with the dead loved one, or continue to converse through the healing period of bereavement. In all of these instances it is important to assume that the dead person now has a different perspective, a more inclusive understanding of the relationship, and that they wish for us benevolence and the equanimity, forgiveness, peace and healing they now know, even in the midst of their knowing our grief for them. Indeed, if there is any grieving, it is in their desire that we could experience as they do now.

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And it does seem that the spirit would know what we are doing and how we are feeling in a similar sense that God knows those things, but not in the intensely personal, and perhaps judgmental sense that we know and interact now. It is knowing in the sense of understanding, accepting without comment or response, and having such a broad view of existence that no response is required or even desirable.

The same is true for intervention and protection. We see and judge the events of our lives in categories of good/bad, right/wrong, fortunate/unfortunate, deserved/undeserved. We try to ward off "bad" things through many means: worry, vigilance, alertness, health habits, and prayer. Another means of warding off untoward happenings is through the hope that our loved ones can intervene and protect us from what we view from our perspective as "bad" events. But with the perspective of eternity, neither intervention nor protection are necessary, even if they were possible.

• **Future.** Will I see him again? Is he now with the rest of the family? Will all the generations of our family be together? Will I see her if she took her own life? What about resurrection? What about reincarnation?

Again, we deal in terms with which we are familiar. But rather than seeing the persons again, perhaps we are "with" them; perhaps we "know" them, "experience" them in a manner that is even clearer than seeing. I doubt that we will recognize the person by face or clothing or voice, but it does seem clear that, because each spirit/essence is unique, we will know the person in totality, even as we will be known and experienced by others.

Relationships, however, are for the plane of existence on which we now live. They are a way of defining who we are, designating territoriality, and setting societal limits to behavior. Once again, from the perspective of eternity, these relationships have no usefulness. Where we are all one in relationship to God, previous familial and societal designations are meaningless. Recognition of specific spirit/essences will be known, but not with the designation of relationships.

The manner of one's death is irrelevant. One can argue that we all participate in our own demise. If you have ever drunk alcohol, used drugs of any kind (including caffeine), smoked a cigarette, driven or ridden in a vehicle powered by an internal combustion or jet engine, eaten processed foods, or avoided exercise, then you have hastened your death. Active suicide is different only in its immediacy, and cannot warrant eternal condemnation in darkness any more than smoking or refusing to wear helmets, seat belts or condoms.

Thus it seems that persons who die by suicide, or by active or passive euthanasia, or by refusing medical treatment for fatal illnesses, or by accident will be there for us and with us.

Reincarnation does not make sense in this system, but that is because I live in a culture that generally does not believe in karmic laws. I would suggest that the spirit's journey as one with the body is necessary toward understanding God, but that the length of time or amount of accomplishment is irrelevant. One need not return to another body to accomplish tasks necessary to complete the earthly understanding of God. Perhaps one second of birth is equal to a lifetime from the perspective of eternity, as one molecule of water is equal to the experience of the whole ocean. If this is the case, then reincarnation is unnecessary.

Resurrection is usually described as occurring at the end time when a final judgment occurs and the living and the dead are reunited eternally in peace. There seems to be some discrepancy about whether the dead are somewhere in graves (or cremation urns) and then are resurrected or are in heaven with God (but not quite with God). Resurrection is the final passage to being with God.

This event is usually based in the belief of a plan or purpose that must be accomplished before it occurs. Some believe it will be when we finally destroy our planet and life dies out, or when the sun burns itself out and all life comes to an end here.

Perhaps a better image than resurrection is one of reuniting, where the embodied become spirit/essence and now have the same eternal understanding and being as those who have "gone before." It is a hope of eternal peace, of which we may have glimpses even now.

This discussion of the afterlife, while it focuses on speculation regarding what happens after we die, is actually about the certainty of how we live here and now. The questions we raise about our loved ones, and the answers to those questions are valuable and make sense only as we relate them to day-to-day living. For the truth is we will not know what happens after we die until we die, and no amount of speculation can prepare us for that experience. What matters is what we do in the meantime, together, now. It is only in this context that our wandering through the metaphors of afterlife makes sense, for now is — eternally — the only time we have. TW

Resources

Charles Meyer, *Surviving Death*, Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, Conn. $7.95 (The new edition to be printed next year will include this WITNESS article as a chapter.)

Leslie Weatherhead, *The Will of God*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1944.

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Garbage dump therapy

by Jeff Dietrich

It looks like a war zone, with sleeping bags and bed rolls strewn in disarray, and supine bodies asleep where they have fallen dead to the world. The acrid smoke of the campfires stings the eyes and the odors of garbage and human offal assault the nostrils like a Nazi *blitzkrieg*.

The sun has been up in the rest of Los Angeles for at least two hours. But here on Crocker Street, the two-story concrete wall of the Pacific American Fish Company turns its unblinking stare upon the cocaine and crack addicts of this skid row encampment, blocking the warmth of the sun and shuttering the area into a permanent twilight zone.

There is a bizarre, foreign-looking quality to these 200-or-so feet of sidewalk crammed to overflowing with filthy humanity, like a cattle car rushing to the slaughterhouse. Surely, these must be the streets of some Third World site, where people stoically live out their existence in public places, a full half-world away from the broad avenues and boulevards of American enterprise and opportunity.

It is easy to rekindle the feelings of revulsion and righteousness of the 19th century British imperialist encountering for the first time the opium dens and squalid humanity clinging precariously to the fringes of the Empire.

Not unlike these British officers, who did their best to maintain a façade of civilization in such wilderness outposts, the officers of the Los Angeles Police Department have opted to fight a holding pattern, rather than push for victory in their battle against drugs. There are regularly scheduled harassments and arrest actions in which a score or so of the inhabitants might be forced to kneel with hands behind their heads while officers swagger about, making a show of force and civilization. They knock over camp fires and throw possessions into the street, search suspects and occasionally make an arrest or two. But for the most part there is an unstated recognition that this is a battle of appearance only. On most days, you can drive by any time of the day or night and see the unmistakable glow of "crack pipes," the frenzied exchange of cash, and a gross of spent butane lighters which give testimony to the persistence of deviance.

Like a Good Humor truck driving into Dante's Inferno, the old Catholic Worker van rolls into these badlands a couple of mornings a week to serve coffee and fresh-baked raisin bread to the early risers. Of the various nomadic activities that we are experimenting with while our new soup kitchen is being built, this is the most challenging and the least favorite. The people are aggressive and rude and we have to keep our "street smarts" on constant alert, ready to pack up at the first sign of trouble. Last week, when a drug deal went sour, knives, screwdrivers, and lead pipes wrapped in electrical tape appeared (quick as secret handshakes at a Shriners convention.) It was over in a flash — they had the "culprit" up-ended and screaming, shaking him until the requisite amount of cash fell out from the inner sanctum of his pockets. Here on Crocker Street, we feel as though we have stepped into a morass of problems so deep and grave that they make our gifts of bread and coffee seem about as helpful and effective as a Popsicle in hell.

The ancient Hebrew name for hell is Gehenna. It meant, literally, garbage dump. It was a heap of decaying matter rotting in the sunlight at the outskirts of town. No civilized person ever went there even during the day except to quickly dump his refuse and perhaps pause to urinate. In the dark of night, however, it was a different matter. It became the grocery store and gathering place of the most disgusting "low-life" of Hebrew culture: the lepers. The lepers were literally the outcasts of this community.

Of course, the Hebrews were not nearly so advanced in their understanding of the human condition as contemporary folk and thus did not realize that leprosy is a physical disease. Rather, they believed it was a condition precipitated by the sinfulness of the individual. Thus, in Hebrew culture, victims of the physical disease of leprosy were heartlessly ejected to the margins of the community for their "sinfulness."

Today, we are under the impression that such superstitious behavior would never be tolerated in our more progressive society. But the city of Los Angeles is extremely adept at administering garbage dump therapy to the homeless addicts of skid row.

The city's drug therapy program is staffed by 15 unlicensed "drug counselors" on loan from the Street Maintenance Department. They are supervised by two senior "drug and substance abuse counselors" from the police department, who offer free "group therapy" at the County Jail. Their therapeutic equipment consists of two five-ton yellow dump trucks, a T-228 Caterpillar skip loader, a pick-up truck and a squad car. Together

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they operate as a kind of rapid deployment force. Twice a week, they rush about from one skid row encampment to the other, cleaning up the city's drug problem with the speed and efficiency of Patton's tank corps rushing to the Rhine in 1945.

If this seems to you like a ludicrous and inappropriate way of dealing with the city's problem, you are correct. You are equally correct in assuming that there are more serious responses taking place. But you are wrong if you think that their level of success or compassion or humanity is a great deal higher than the garbage dump approach.

Both the liberal social service programs and the Christian fundamentalist missions that earn their keep — some rather nicely, by the way — by salvaging the shipwrecked lives caught on the shoals of skid row share the same Calvinist theology that undergirds our larger social system. This theology places the burden of economic and spiritual sinfulness directly upon the shoulders of the individual. Repent and be saved, repent and be employed — it is the same message. As long as we can convince ourselves that the situation is the result of the individual person's sinfulness, or pride, or laziness, then the larger community is comfortably absolved of any responsibility.

The drug addicts of Crocker Street are in the same situation as the lepers of first century Palestine. They have been cast out of the community for a sin they did not commit.

The poor are the ones most affected by the rapid changes in technology, culture, and the economy. It is among the poor that we are able to observe the seamy underside of our most precious cultural idols: technological and economic progress. Futurologists Alvin Toffler and John Naisbitt describe with glowing effusiveness our future of constant technological change as a series of waves, and our critical survival skills as the ability to surf that so-called wave of the future.

But in places like Crocker Street the wave has already crashed, leaving the poor bereft not only of jobs but of dignity, family, community and a sense of purpose. Of course the poor take drugs. Their situation is hopeless. Drugs are not the problem. They are merely the symptom of a despair and lifelessness at the center of our culture. We are deluding ourselves if we think that it is possible to teach the poor how to surf when they have never learned to swim.

Over the last two-and-a-half decades, under the pressure of revolutionary changes in the fields of transportation, communication, and information processing, we have rapidly shifted from a national economy to a world economy. In this situation, the "surfers," who engage in what Harvard economist Robert Reich calls "symbolic-analytic work" — lawyers, bankers, executives, consultants, scientists, writers, editors, etc. — have increased their share of the GNP to 40%, while representing only 20% of the job force.

The "swimmers," on the other hand — those engaged in "routine production work" — have had their share of the GNP reduced from 30% to only 20%. Manufacturing-type jobs once represented a full 50% of the American work force. Today, they represent only 25%.



The people on Crocker Street know intuitively that this "wave of the future" will not reverse itself. It will only gather momentum, and the "surfers" will ride faster and faster while the "swimmers" will surely drown in a sea of despair and drugs. They also realize that neither the liberal social worker nor the conservative fundamentalist preacher, nor for that matter a Democratic presidential candidate, will offer them the true salvation that Jesus Christ demanded for the lepers of his time; that is, full participation in the economic and social, as well as spiritual, life of the community.

The faith of our nation presently lies not in Jesus Christ, the God of life, but rather in the worship of the gods of power: technological progress and unrestrained economic growth. This worship progressively relegates to the dung heap the large masses of simple folk who will never be ordained into the higher levels of a structure demanded by the arcane priesthood. As Hazel Motes, the demented preacher in Flannery O'Conner's *Wise Blood*, said, "No man who drives a good American car ever needs to be justified by Jesus Christ." Our faith in power is justified by its manifest effectiveness. Our faith in Christ is justified only by the simple spirit of life that flows through us.

Thus, in good conscience, we can offer the "lepers" of Crocker Street neither the "cheap grace" of mission salvation nor the tawdry hope of phony job training programs. While we know that what we do have to offer is manifestly meager, it comes without restrictions. We do not demand repentance or job readiness or clean streets. Along with the modest gifts of bread and coffee, we offer a few brief moments of an authentic human contact that neither judges nor condemns, but recognizes the improbable connectedness of our common human brokenness. TW

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Church silence on gay-bashing deadly

by Jan Nunley

In the gay and lesbian press, it's being called "the second epidemic." The first, of course, is AIDS. A wave of anti-gay and lesbian violence has broken over the United States in recent months, causing law enforcement officials and lesbian/gay leaders to turn at least some of their attention from the fight against disease to fighting in the streets.

Look at the statistics:

• In New York City, anti-gay bias crimes rose 122% in the first five months of 1990 compared to the same period in 1989.

• Gays and lesbians in Massachusetts suffered nearly three times as many crimes of violence in the first five months of 1990 as in 1989.

• In Philadelphia, gay men are 12 times more likely to be victimized by violent crime. Lesbians run nine times the average woman's risk of assault.

• Nationwide, a survey reports 7,031 incidents of violence against lesbians and gays ranging from harassment to homicide occurred in 1989.

• A 1987 report by the U.S. Department of Justice notes that "homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims" of hate violence in America.

Now look at the faces behind the figures:

— Early in the morning of May 6, a group of almost 40 gay men were waiting to enter an after-hours party in Boston's South End following a dance sponsored by the Grass Roots Gay Rights Fund. Suddenly a group of black and Latino men, some carrying broken bottles, approached, yelling anti-gay epithets and threatening gunfire. Over a dozen gay men were injured. One witness reported, "It was like a 'wilding.' "

— Three Idaho white supremacists associated with the group Aryan Nations were arrested on federal bombing and conspiracy charges May 12 in an alleged plot to bomb a gay disco in Seattle.

— On June 16, 2,000 lesbians and gays walked through New York's Greenwich Village behind a banner reading "Queers Take Back the Night" to protest violence against gays. Along the way, marchers were assaulted with taunts, bottles, fists and knives from onlookers. Some protestors fought back, chasing hecklers into a building. A lesbian going home long after the march was attacked by a man with a stick.

Those are just three stories. There are many, many more, in the files of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Anti-Violence Project and those of anti-violence groups around the country.

As with most such crimes of violence against women and minorities — including rape, incest and racially-motivated assaults — there are questions as to whether the statistics reflect an actual rise in the incidence of the crime, an increase in reporting, or some combination of the two. Joyce Collier, of Boston's Fenway Community Health Center, feels that, after years of trying, they finally have a "baseline" from which to say that gay-bashing is definitely on the upswing.

"For a long time, hate crimes against lesbians and gays weren't reported because the police were the only ones to whom you could report them," she says. "But with some form of anti-violence project in virtually every major city and most states, there are now enough programs to say definitively that there is an increase."

Kevin Berrill of the NGLTF says the number of anti-lesbian and gay violent crimes is "sharply under-represented" in official statistics. Berrill compares it to the situation with rape or domestic violence 20 years ago.

What's prompting the increase?

There is no one reason, say those who've studied bigotry and violence against lesbians and gays. Researchers, law enforcement officials and civil rights activists have taken worried note of an increase in the general level of bigotry and violence against minorities in the last decade and they're not sure why it's happening. Reports of hate crimes in general in the last two years were up 41% in Los Angeles, 33% in Boston, 28% in Pennsylvania.

Blame for some of the increase is being laid by many civil rights workers at the door of the Reagan Administration, as civil rights laws and policies were systematically weakened during Reagan's years in the Oval Office. Joan Weiss of the National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence has been quoted in the *Boston Globe* as saying that Reagan and his appointees undermined civil rights and "legitimized anti-minority sentiments." It is interesting to note that 19% of the gay-bashing reported to NGLTF occurred on college and university campuses — largely among people who spent their formative teenage years under Reagan's presidency.

Only 15% of the attacks reported in the NGLTF were classified as AIDS-related. A study cited by Kevin Berrill theorizes that "AIDS is less a cause of anti-gay sentiment than it is a new focus and justification for expressions of

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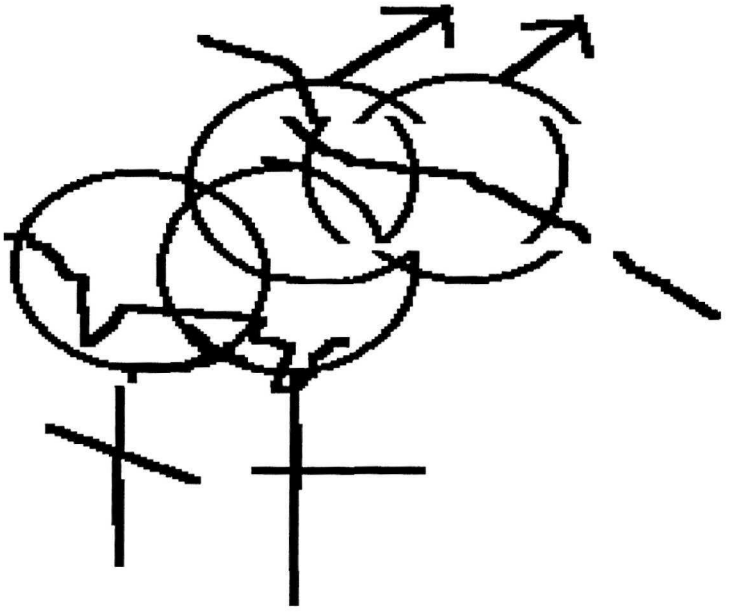
preexisting anti-gay prejudice." Berrill and others think that, while the movement for lesbian and gay civil rights increased the visibility of lesbian and gay people somewhat, it took the AIDS epidemic — and its potential for spreading among heterosexuals — to put lesbians and gays in daily headlines.

For a long time, gay-bashers haven't been strongly given the idea that what they're doing is illegal.

"Homosexuality is a tough issue with cops," says Detective Sergeant Bill Johnston of Boston's Community Disorders Unit. "Boston's police academy requires eight hours of training in civil rights law; four hours of that is spent on gay and lesbian issues alone. I really think the department is trying to break down the barriers between gays and the police. Still, the worst bigots in the world often hide behind a badge — you have the right to enforce your prejudices with arrest. It's not a popular cause with some of the officers; they've been known to call gay-bashing 'Mickey Mouse crimes,' and sometimes at a crime scene I've heard officers say, 'He's only a fag.' A victim of crime is a victim of crime — period."

In Niagara County, N.Y., a district attorney interviewed on radio expressed opposition to protecting victims of anti-gay crimes, calling them "queers" and "sick people." Dallas District Judge Jack Hampton told a newspaper reporter in December 1988 that he had refused a life sentence for a killer because the victims were "queers" and "I put prostitutes and gays at about the same level . . . I'd be hard put to give somebody life for killing a prostitute." (Hampton was later censured by the Texas State Commission on Judicial Conduct.)

Not all judges share those attitudes. Following the passage of a Massachusetts law extending civil rights protection to lesbians and gays, a Suffolk County judge ordered an injunction against four young men accused in the May beatings in Boston's South End. They're prohibited from assaulting anyone based on sexual orientation and from approaching the May 6 beating victims. A Maine judge ordered convicted gay-bashers to help set up a display of the Names Project quilt as part of a program of unpaid public service to the lesbian/gay community included in their sentence.



The passage of the National Hate Crimes Statistics Act last April is seen as a milestone in the fight against anti-lesbian/gay violence. the Act had been delayed for several years while Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) pressed to include an amendment stating that "the homosexual movement threatens the strength and survival of the American family as the basic unit of society."

Helms' amendment was finally defeated, but similar prejudices have stalled hate crime bills in Georgia, Illinois, New York and New Jersey, and sexual orientation was written out of hate crimes bills in Texas and Washington. (In Texas, legislators also had their names removed from a bill commemorating the deaths of people with AIDS for fear it would be interpreted as an endorsement of homosexuality.) Nine states have hate crimes laws that do include sexual orientation; eight states have bills under consideration.

The violence has prompted lesbian and gay groups in many cities to offer courses in self-defense, to demand better police protection, and in some cases to threaten action against gay-bashers. Queer Nation, which got its start as an affinity group of the New York AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), now has chapters in other major cities, and is focusing on anti-gay violence in its protest, called "zaps." The anger is palpable, from the T-shirts bearing an upraised fist and the slogan "Queers Bash Back" to the chanting of "We're here, we're queer, don't mess with us."

Religion and the church have not generally weighed in on the side of promoting tolerance. From the days of singer Anita Bryant's campaign invoking God's wrath against gays rights in Dade County, Fla. in the mid-70s, public fulminations against homosexuality have usually involved some appeal to "Christian morality."

A 1978 book by Dr. Tim LaHaye, a popular author found on many Christian bookstore shelves, concludes with a series of predictions that a "rise" in homosexuality will accompany the "last days"

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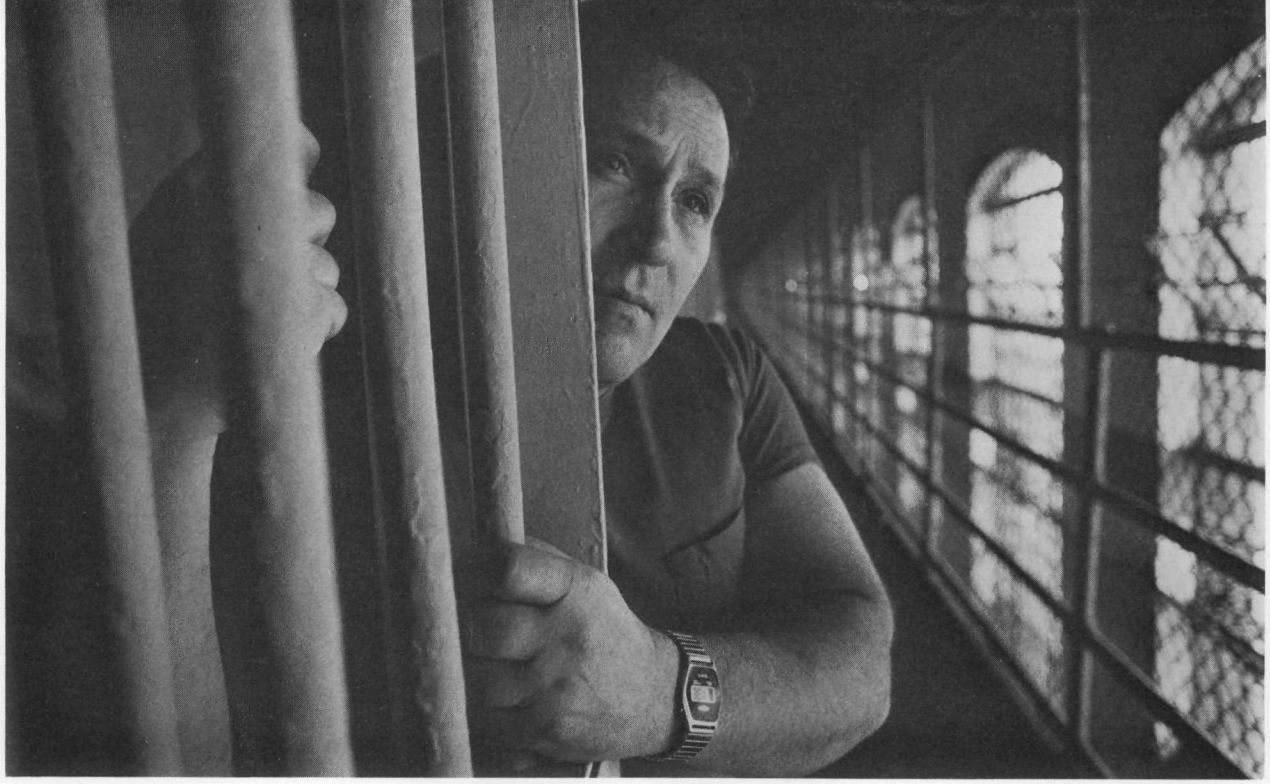

Mario Diblasio: It is possible to be happy in prison.

Seminary sparks life in Sing Sing

by Norman S. Green

This is not a story of men stabbed through the heart with sharpened teaspoon handles, suicides, prison riots, or men machine-gunned trying to escape. They shot those kinds of movies here at Sing Sing, but they never shot this one: Convicted murderers and drug dealers graduate from theological seminary in prison and talk about their lives and how they've changed.

I approach Sing Sing from the river side. Some cells have fabulous views: Sailboats slicing the Hudson, green cliff-faces across the water, ball fields wrapped in razor wire. The battlement guns along the huge walls aim inside. Using the chaplain's name gets me in.

Norman Green is a free-lance writer living in New York City.

How does a seminary program change a prisoner's life?

"God or Jesus or Allah has *already* said to them, 'Listen, you son of a bitch, shape up or else.' " This is what the Rev. George (Bill) Webber says. He put the program together at New York Theological Seminary, where he is Professor of Urban Theology and Director of the Master of Professional Services Program at the prison.

"They've *already* changed," Webber says. "They've learned to survive and gotten their undergraduate degrees."

New York Theological Seminary, at its own expense, gives the men 10 months of seminary training in a bare office below the prison chapel: Old Testament and New Testament theology, ethics, church history, homiletics (preaching), and a full year of pastoral

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counseling which they agree to immediately put into practice. All these men become inmate counselors. Over the eight years that the program has been in existence, 90 prisoners have been graduated, Webber said. Twenty are now outside the walls.

The Book of Exodus is popular here. "Prisoners tend to think of the street as the Promised Land, when in fact release is more like moving from Egypt into the wilderness," Webber says. "How will they survive the wilderness?"

Webber shares some more biblical wisdom he and his students enjoy in Sing Sing: the letter from Jeremiah to the prisoners of Babylon.

"See, the prison is Babylon. The letter says, 'Seek the shalom of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in seeking its peace you will find your own peace.'

"That passage ignites terrific debate," Webber says. "They go, 'You mean I'm supposed to pray for the guards around here?' "

The program creates harmony, because, says Webber, "In the seminary group the men study together, they help each other, they become brothers to each other in a way they're unfamiliar with, especially in prison. Maybe they learn some trust, though everything in prison mitigates against it.

"They are committed to seek opportunities to be helpful. To be involved in making the prison a better place. To seek the peace of the city where they are prisoners," he adds.

I am thoroughly searched by uniformed guards. My bag is taken. My shoes are examined. My pockets are emptied. The pages of my date book are individually leafed through. My belt and eyeglasses are scrutinized. I walk through a metal detector. Then the first of half-a-dozen barred gates, opened by a guard using a huge ring of keys, loudly closes behind me and locks me into Sing Sing.

Chaplain Edward Hunt is my escort to the seminarians. He strides through the bleak tunnel leading us into the bowels of Sing Sing, banging his cane, speaking fiercely and limping with military pride.

"What about the good going on behind these walls? You'd be crazy not to see the bad. But what about the good?" he asks.

Prison is tough for a chaplain. In the war between the prisoners and the system, he serves both sides. The system trusts Hunt, or I wouldn't be in the prison today. As prisoners dressed in green fatigues pass by, running errands with clipboards, doing prison jobs, they greet him, "Hey, Rev!" and shake his hand, say "What's up?" and ask favors. Each one seems to want a little contact with him.

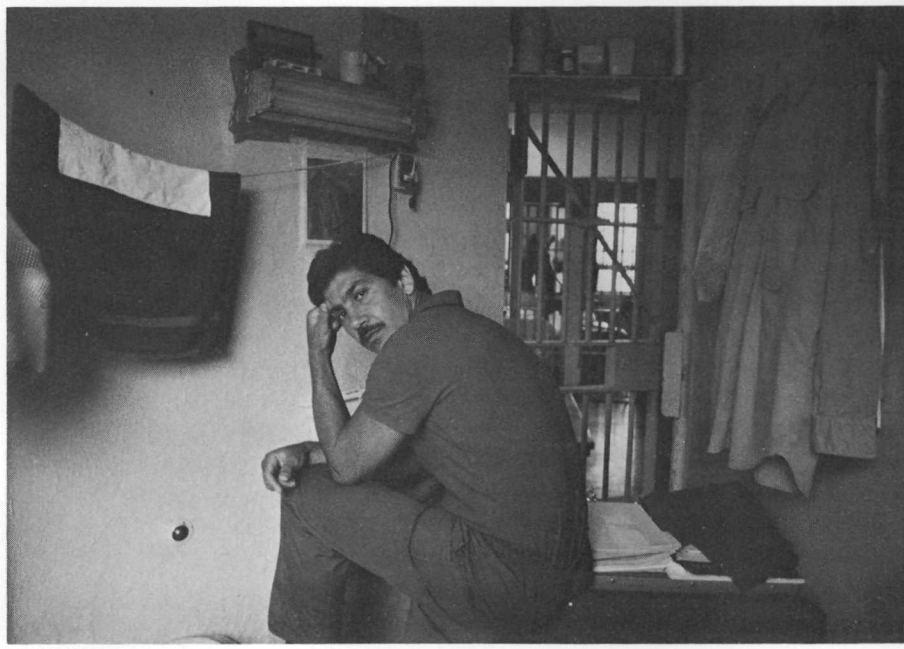
"How do you do it?" I ask Hunt.

"I love the work," he says. "These men need me and I love serving them. *Nobody* wants to help these men. *Nobody* wants to work in here. I've been on the job 19 years."

The first prisoner I meet is the Imam Mika'il Abdullah Mohammed, a.k.a. Michael DeVeaux, #79-A-2747. (The first two digits of the prisoners' number tell you the year they entered the system.) *Imam* indicates that he has been chosen by the Muslim community here as their leader. I meet him in a bare room off the Protestant chapel. There is a barred window and the sound of men yelling and playing outside.

The Imam's body is startlingly muscular, his torso triangular, his waist impossibly tiny; there is no fat (he fasts one day a week to kill desire). He works out with weights an hour a day. Bearded, young, beautifully handsome with full lips, his deep eyes grab you, pierce you and insist that they have absolutely nothing to hide. He was born 32 years ago in Harlem's parallel universe of blackness and coolness and hustler heroes. A child math whiz and prep school veteran, he is now doing 25 to life for a cold-blooded execution. Incarcerated for the last 10 years for a crime he says they never proved, he has nothing to hide, he says.

He explains how he has changed. "One of things that makes a person grow is because he wants to. To be able to survive when I am released, I had to change in here. I couldn't stay the same.



© Shonna Valeska

Ralph Puig: I have been trained to be both a gladiator and a monk.

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"I turned my thoughts away from the dope game, crack, assaulting people, illegal ventures," he says. "The New York Theological Seminary helped crystallize my thinking."

A turning point came for the Imam in the Box. "I was in solitary for 15 months, locked in 23 hours a day. You don't see anybody. You *better* come to grips with yourself," he laughs. "Mostly what I did was think and pray and read and write poetry.

"You begin to make decisions. You begin to make choices. What is responsible behavior? What has value? You have to sacrifice superficial things, and artificial things — it's hard because you want to enjoy life. But you want something better.

"Are you going to say that everybody else is wrong? Or are you going to realize that you are part of your situation?"

The Imam, like other seminary graduates, serves the population as a counselor. His Muslim friends are his flock. He introduces me to two roomfuls of inmates, one of men who were Rastafarians, one of Muslims in a makeshift mosque with Arabic script on the wall. He calls me "Brother."

The Imam concludes, "I'm not a finished product. I'm learning humility. I'm learning how to communicate. I have to humble myself to you. That's the only way I can serve you. That's a kind of, I guess you can say, enlightenment."

Mario Diblasio, prisoner #86-A-9635, tells his story expansively, throwing his hands, clutching his chest, crying and shrugging. He is 43 years old. As chaplain's clerk he goes to an office in the afternoon. We meet there, in deadly heat uncooled by an ineffectual fan. Outside in the chapel, men in their greens were sitting in pews discussing the Bible, the light from the Hudson filtering in colors through the stained glass windows.

"I came to this country in my teens," says Diblasio. "When I learned English, I went back to school and became a doctor. I was one of the best — not my words — in Brooklyn."

He explains that his journey towards prison began after "adverse life events — the death of my daughter, then a divorce. I started to do drugs. First, prescription drugs. Then, when they threatened to take away my license, I switched to cocaine.

ECPC involved with texts

Seminarians at Sing Sing used as two of their texts, *Must We Choose Sides?* and *Which Side Are We On?*, Volumes I and II of Christian Commitment for the '80s, until the books were finally out of print, according to the Rev. Bill Webber, program director. The books were published by the Interreligious Task Force for Social Action, assisted by a grant and a loan from the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publisher of THE WITNESS. The books were made available to the seminary program free of charge.

The prisoners were most impressed with the texts, which explored myths about the capitalist system and how anyone can achieve the "American dream" if he or she only works hard enough, Webber said.

"They knew the system didn't work for the poor and those who suffer discrimination, but they were surprised that other folks had caught on, and even published books about it," he added.

"In mid-1984 I started freebasing cocaine in ever-increasing quantities, $4,000-$5,000 worth a week. In October 1984 I lost my job at the hospital. I could no longer work.

"In April 1985, I sold my house to continue to buy cocaine. I deposited about $30,000 in cash in the bank, and withdrew $2,000-$3,000 every two to three days. In June, I was in jail for sale of cocaine. In November, I was free on bail," he says.

"I realized I had to change. I got down on my knees in the bathroom. I crossed myself. I said, 'Somebody help me. If there is anyone out there, please help me.' And I stopped doing cocaine. I don't know how. I was freed."

He went to trial in October 1986. As he relates this, he grows quiet and then starts to cry. He adds, "I lost the trial. And I am in here doing 21 years to life."

As we talk, prisoners come into the office, apparently needing to speak to Diblasio. He lets them stay.

"I thought it was the end but it was not," he continues. "All my licenses were taken away, but here comes an opportunity to get a Master of Professional Services. So I lose an M.D. but I gain an M.P.S. I enjoyed it immensely. It made the time pass like this," he says as he snaps his fingers.

"Now I have the training to help others with their problems, to make them understand that the reason they are here is not because the system is imperfect, oppressive, against the poor and on the side of the rich — which it is," he says.

"No, the reason we are here is because we have pursued a value system which is distorted, wrong, twisted. All I cared for was cocaine. I abandoned my family to go after cocaine. I became a scumbag.

"The new Mario is a Master of Professional Services. The new Mario has learned compassion," he notes.

"It is possible to be happy in here," he says, "where nobody thinks it is possible to be happy."

Dr. Charles Friedgood, #77-A-0455, sits in a chapel pew with me. He is 73 years old and called "Doc." The guys like him because he is a first-rate doctor and helps his fellow inmates. He looks a little like a mad professor: white hair, thick glasses, kindly mouth.

Doc's case was internationally famous 15 years ago. Newspapers reported that Doc was captured on the runway at Kennedy Airport with three-quarters of a million dollars worth of his wife's bonds and jewelry in his pockets. His mistress/

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nurse was waiting for him in Denmark.

Doc had signed his wife's death certificate listing the cause of death as a stroke, and his children had grown suspicious about the bonds. They dug up the body, and found a little wound inside her elbow where Doc had administered the lethal shot of Demerol.

"I practiced medicine for 30 years in Brooklyn," says Doc. "I was convicted of second degree murder and given 25 years to life. Here in prison, I became an observant Orthodox Jew. I am the only Jew to go to the seminary in Sing Sing."

Asked what prison is like, he replies, "Prison is like concentration camp. In here I keep very busy in order to survive. I keep working, teaching, tutoring, talking with inmates about their problems at home. I coordinate Jewish religious services for the rabbi, I hold High Holiday services, Passover Seders, and I supervise the kosher meals."

Being in prison, he says, "you begin to realize that the material world isn't what's important in life. You begin to realize there is more to life than working and trying to make as much money as you can.

"Out there I missed all the things that I now realize are important in life. The Ten Commandments — love thy neighbor. Do good. That is the basis of our religion," he says.

I ask him, if he could address the Dr. Charles Friedgood of 20 or 30 years ago, what would he say?

"Start looking at your life. See how foolish you are. Practice your religion. Work with youth to prevent them from living a life of crime. Be more involved with your community," he answers.

"I'm not greedy like I was in those days," he says. "I have time to talk to people, to help them if they are in need. I had no time for family in those days. I threw my life away."

Asked about his wife, he says, "I would have avoided the problem that led to my crime by changing my lifestyle. I

'Going down to reach the stars'

The Rev. Minka Shura Sprague, who describes herself as "the petticoat-in-collar" at Sing Sing, sees her teaching role there as part of the ministry described by Isaiah: "God has sent me to preach good news to the poor, heal the broken-hearted, and proclaim release to the captives . . . "

A member of the faculty of New York Theological Seminary, she has taught, at various times, ethics, systematics, and New Testament in the seminary's prison program over the past four years. She thinks of it as a privilege.

"Many of us are able to fulfill the biblical mandate to feed the hungry or clothe the naked, but relatively few are invited to 'free the prisoner.' That is what our Sing Sing classes are about," she said.

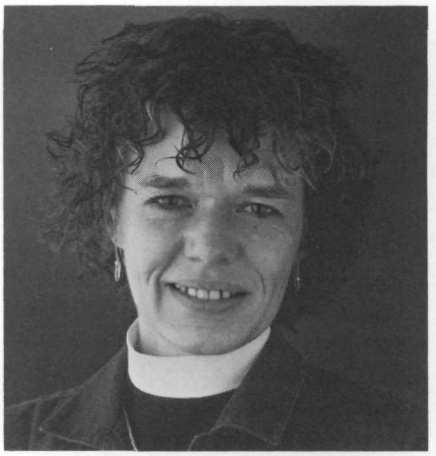
The petite Episcopal priest is often asked if she ever experienced fear in her classes, encountering murderers, drug abusers, and others considered a threat to society.

But Sprague began teaching at Sing Sing after her best friend had been killed — run over by a garbage truck — on Third Avenue in Manhattan.

"That changed my whole life," she said. "I came to believe, when it's the end, it's the end. I'm no more in danger in prison than on Third Avenue. Actually, it's the most highly motivational learning experience I encounter."

Her ministry has another aspect, she admits. "The other side of fear is the thrill of doing it, like riding a roller coaster. I was raised by a professional athlete, and there is that part of me that still responds to 'blow the whistle and I'll do it.' "

Besides, it's not her most difficult task, she laughed, recalling her assignment to 7-to-12th grade students in church camp this summer in the Diocese of New York. "As I saw 100 kids walk up the hill with their hormones in



The Rev. Minka Shura Sprague

hand, I wondered, I'm supposed to teach this group?" Sprague also serves as deacon at St. John the Divine Cathedral.

What has she learned from her prison classes?

"The power of freedom and love. I see the New Testament at work in Sing Sing. I see love made and freedom known. I also learn about poverty, and bleakness. The most wonderful Christmas dinner I ever had was in the prison classroom. I watched the seminarian-inmates chop onions with a knife borrowed from a guard, under the guard's supervision; and I saw them serve tuna fish out of cans, and offer diet sodas. It was glorious."

Sprague likens the prisoner's experience of discovery and awakening to that of those outside the walls who have tried to live the prayer of St. Francis: "Where there is hatred, let me sow love; injury, pardon; let me seek not so much to be consoled as to console . . . for it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

"When our students learn this, and decide 'I'll take responsibility' — the universe breaks in behind the prison walls. Then they know that by going down, you reach the stars," she said.

— Mary Lou Suhor

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would have spent more time with her, I would have been more appreciative of having a good wife."

His parting words to me were: Stay out of prison. Get married."

Graduation night. It is very hot in Sing Sing. We have entered through a huge armored rolling door controlled by a guard in a tower. Dozens of seminary guests are here, professors, trustees, patrons, benefactors, clergy, family and friends of the graduates. We are being painstakingly searched. There are 200 of us and it takes hours.

We are bussed through the prison grounds, past handball and basketball courts where men under bright white stadium lights play in the heat, stripped to the waist. We drive by the blocks of cells. The prisoners try to look into our bus, staring at the women.

Seminary graduation ceremonies proceed at one end of the old gymnasium, enormous, oblong and domed, built as a gift to the prison by Warner Brothers. A handful of guards stands at each of several exits. The prisoner graduates cheerfully march down the aisle in their mortar boards, past the rows of families and friends, swinging their arms in graduation robes worn over prison greens, waving and smiling at the spectators.

A prisoner in for murder gives the opening prayer: "Dear God, we ask that you be present here tonight like a divine wind. Oh, God, we ask that you help us heal each other and love each other. Oh, God we ask that you open our minds and let us help each other . . ."

A hymn is being sung in a rivetingly clear and high soprano. There is an air here, for a little while, of reverence for powers greater than ourselves and powers within us. The silence in which the hymn is sung is cracked by the static squawk of the P.A. system calling on guards and prisoners to do something unintelligible.

During the speeches, songs, prayers and homilies, I sit in the bleachers and talk to past graduates. Ralph Puig, #82-A-2819, sits next to me.

"My crime is drug sales," says Puig. "I'm serving 15 years to life under the Rockefeller Drug Laws, which made substantial sales of narcotics an A-1 felony, same as murder.

"The New York Theological Seminary experience has totally empowered me to teach and to do certain things. I am a Roman Catholic. I teach two classes — Bible study and catechism. I am an altar person and lector at Mass on Sunday. I try to orient the men to find a fulfilling life in the community outside.

"I realize that the drug thing was bad. All those years I was involved in the fast life — greed, violence and fast money.

"Now my faith commitment calls on me to give back. I would love to teach in troubled school districts and do counseling in the area of narcotics," he says.

"How did you accomplish such a change in your character in this environment?" I ask.

"I have been trained to be both a gladiator and a monk," he says. "There are rapes and drugs and harassments here. I am a survivor in a hostile environment, surrounded by cement and cold steel, and also a monk cloistered away who has many hours for contemplation."

He adds that this experience has strengthened his resolve to change: "I'll never come back to prison. And most of the guys here will."

And what is the toughest thing about prison?

"Loneliness. Being separated from those you love. Feeling left out. Seeing lovers and friends get married, have children and drift away."

The seminary program helps combat this loneliness, says Puig. "There is a spiritual love among the men of this program. And the men in the population see this and go get their high school and bachelor degrees. The men of the seminary are like lighthouses in the vast emptiness."

Morris Howard, #75-A-2675, starts off nervously, smoking a precious cigarette.

"I was caught up in the drug craze," he says. "I got busted selling weight and they painted me like somebody bigger than I was. I got 25 years to life for cocaine. I've been in the system for 15 and a half years, in Sing Sing for six.

"I came into my incarceration without a high school diploma. Street-wise — an education I didn't need. I was qualified to make $5,000 to $10,000 a week."

He eventually decided to complete his education. "My first semester, I was like anyone else from the street. You cheat. But I found myself lost when everyone else was discussing school topics. I made up my mind I was going to know what the hell they were saying.

"And that's what I did. I made the Dean's List. I got hooked on my ability. For the first time in my life, I saw that I could accomplish something with my mind. I ended up being valedictorian."

He entered the seminary program, which "taught me about discipline and how to study," he says. "By staying up until 2 or 3 in the morning writing papers, I got an *inner*, you know, a *deeper* sense of pride and accomplishment. It helped me grow into manhood."

Asked what gives him the strength to go on, he answers "Life. Life. Life."

The guards have announced that graduation is over. Families are smiling for final snapshots as flashes go off. The guards kill the lights to make their point. The graduates and other prisoners here tonight will be searched with humiliating thoroughness before returning to their cells. It is dark out. The blackness is consuming. We visitors will be bussed from the gym to the guard post where we will be processed out of here. They will make sure we are not prisoners dressed in visitors' clothes. Then we will be released through the huge armored door to the other side of the wall, into a quiet country night near the Hudson River, and to freedom. TW

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Short Takes

Fast for gay/lesbian rights

In a letter to the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Dr. Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, advised that he will no longer receive communion "until the Episcopal Church makes all sacraments available to lesbian and gay persons." Crew said that fewer than one-tenth of all Episcopal Church congregations have listened to the issues facing gays and lesbians, and that he looked forward to the time when the governing body of the church, the General Convention, no longer stages exclusion. He invited heterosexual Christians to join his fast.

"Experiencing the denial of sacrament, heterosexuals will sample the hunger and spiritual malnutrition which the church now systematically imposes on all lesbian and gay people," Crew said.

***The Second Stone* 9-10/90**

Quote of note

Probably every generation sees itself as charged with remaking the world. Mine, however, knows that it will not remake the world. Its task is even greater: to keep the world from destroying itself.

Albert Camus

Next General Convention host?

When Arizona's senate impeached its scary governor two years ago on charges of misappropriation of funds and obstruction of justice, it picked a fitting date to do so: the 20th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. After all, while in power, Evan Mecham had rescinded the order to create a Martin Luther King, Jr., state holiday, defended the word "pickaninny," and asked to see a list of gays on the state payroll. But because his impeachers failed to pass a "Dracula clause" prohibiting his return to politics, Mecham has returned from the politically dead and is stalking his old office. Mecham had 11,158 Arizona lawyers to choose from when he went looking for his 1990 campaign attorney. He chose Donald MacPherson, lawyer for James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of King.

David Beers

***Mother Jones* 9-10/90**



Harvesting the legacy

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the deaths of Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, Maura Clarke, and Jean Donovan, four U.S. church women killed in El Salvador. In commemoration, the Religious Task Force for Central America is sponsoring "Harvesting the Legacy," a theological reflection weekend Nov. 30 to Dec. 2 in Chevy Chase, Md. Weekend leaders will include Ray and Patricia Donavan, the parents of Jean Donovan, and Melinda Roper, former president of the Maryknoll Sisters, who was on site when the bodies were discovered. Also on the program is Jon Sobrino, S.J., colleague of the six Jesuits killed in El Salvador last year. For information contact: Religious Task Force on Central America, 1747 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009. Tel. (202) 387-7652.

That which gives life meaning

I hope you come to find that which gives life a deep meaning for you. Something worth living for — maybe even worth dying for — something that energizes you, enthuses you, enables you to keep moving ahead.

I can't tell you what it might be — that's for you to find, to choose, to love. I can just encourage you to start looking and support you in the search.

Written by Ita Ford to her niece shortly before Ford's death

A woman's work . . .

Sweeping historical changes in Eastern Europe find most women still sweeping the floor.

Mary E. Hunt

Churches join civil rights defense

The National Council of Churches and the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice recently filed a friend of the court brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, asking that the court set aside $92,000 worth of fines levied against three civil rights lawyers — Louis Pitts, director of Christic Institute South, a public interest legal assistance group; noted human rights attorney William Kunstler,and Barry Nakell, a University of North Carolina law professor.

The fines involve a suit the lawyers filed in 1989 charging state and local officials in Robeson County, N.C., with conducting a campaign of "harassment and intimidation" designed to deprive African American and Native American citizens of their constitutional rights. The lawyers later dropped the suit because, they stated, it had become moot.

U.S. District Judge Malcolm Howard of Fayetteville, N.C., then fined the lawyers under Rule 11, a controversial federal court procedure. Designed to prohibit "frivolous" lawsuits, this rule has been criticized by those who say it is being used disproportionately against lawyers who file suits seeking to protect the civil rights of minorities.

***NCC News* 10/4/90**

People in hell — where do they tell people to go?

Red Skelton

Young victims of Lebanese war

The death of a parent or other family members has been the source of symptoms of grief, depression, guilt and self-doubt among children in Lebanon. Interviewers have found considerable pessimism among their subjects, with some children talking about the inescapability of death and injury at a young age. Data from various surveys show that 15 to 20% of children in the country had lost at least one member of their family.

Dr. Amal Shamma

***Our Hope for Lebanon* newsletter 9/90**

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A motley collection of saints

by Sue Hiatt

"Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers in their generations." So begins the author of Ecclesiasticus in his poem of praise for those who have gone before who deserve remembrance: those who ruled in their kingdoms, were renowned for their power, leaders of the people, composers of musical tunes, those who set forth verses — rich men furnished with resources.

Those are the people the author considers praiseworthy — though he does add that there are some who have perished as though they had not lived, have become as though they had not been born, but they too will be remembered by their posterity.

This passage strikes me as a cri de coeur against death — an ancient whistling as we pass the cemetery. We all die and our bodies are buried, but, we cry against all reason, surely we will not be forgotten. Surely the riches and the fame and the talent and the creativity can't just be gone as if they never were. Let us now praise famous men, not just because it gives us joy to do so, but because they need our praises to continue to exist. If we don't remember, death does indeed have the final word.

This impulse to remember and rejoice in those who have died is very deep in all of us. All Saints Day is the occasion when catholic Christians remember our dead — other religious groups do it in other ways and on other occasions but we all do it. We, being human, remember our dead as we would have liked them to be.

The Rev. Suzanne R. Hiatt is Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass.

Years ago I preached at a chapel that had in the sacristy an old sepia print entitled "the communion of saints." It showed the sanctuary of a church with a priest distributing communion to a group of people kneeling at the rail. Over their heads, in a chancel very high and ornate were the communion of saints. Almost all the figures were male — young men in dress military uniforms of the First World War. The only female figure I recall was a nurse. All the figures were young and perfectly dressed — no doubt as the artist remembered them from life.

The picture struck me as poignant — for it was so much the communion of saints in our own image. We are so prone to think of the communion of saints as people we admire and miss.

But comforting and encouraging as such images may be, the communion of saints of which we are a part is much more diverse — a crowd we might not always feel so at home with.

Jesus gives us a glimpse of some other saints in the beatitudes. Not the "famous men" that Ecclesiasticus bids us remember, but the meek, the poor, the bereaved, the merciful, the peacemakers, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, those who are persecuted. This considerably more motley collection of people are those Jesus calls "blessed."

And then, in Matthew's version where Jesus pronounces these people "blessed" apart from the crowd, in the presence of his disciples and as part of his teaching, he does a very strange and compelling thing. He suddenly changes the formula of his speech from "blessed are they" to "blessed are you" and addresses the disciples directly: "Blessed are you who are reviled and persecuted on my account, for so were the prophets persecuted who went before you."

Jesus is calling his disciples, as always, to follow him. Not to be good, or obey the law, get rich, or be famous — but to follow him. And he promises not remembrance, but persecution. From now on saints will not be people of accomplishment or even of character, but people of faith and commitment.

And that is a very diverse group indeed. When we consider such historical saints as Paul or Peter or Simon Stylites, we realize they might not be people we'd like or even to be able to communicate with in any way. The mark of a saint is one who gives up everything for Christ, whose faith is the distinguishing mark of her or his life. These are people who have lived and died and people who are yet to be born, for the communion of saints stretches into the future as well as the past.

We are part of this cloud of witnesses. We share with them a faith that can overcome all obstacles and a commitment to say "yes" to Jesus, who asks us to follow and do God's will in the world.

The world in which we find ourselves is fearsome — the ground shakes, the wind blows, winter appears to have triumphed over summer and the earth is cold and grey. But we are called to be saints, to face the demons we fear and to preach the good news to all the earth. The world hovers between endings and beginnings; our society and our church seem similarly between eras.

So let us whistle our way past the graveyard and take courage from the strange and glorious communion of saints which, for reasons beyond imagining, God has called us to be a part. TW

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Bashing . . . *Continued from page 13*

and the suggestion that "the anti-Christ *may* be a homosexual."

In March 1981, Moral Majority leader Dean Wycoff told an interviewer on a Santa Clara, Calif. TV broadcast that "Homosexuality should be coupled with murder . . . it would be the government that sits on this land that would be executing homosexuals. We are interested in re-establishing biblical morality here." Shortly after that, a member of a local fundamentalist church attempted to run down members of Community United Against Violence, a project staffed largely by lesbians and gay men.

The Rev. Louis Sheldon of the California-based Traditional Values Coalition has been quoted as saying that "if two adults can't resist their erotic sexual appetites enough to know that one of them is going to end up killing the other with anal intercourse, then actually they ought to pay the penalty of death . . . I believe homosexuals have a longing for death because they eat feces in which there is, of course, no nourishment." Sheldon claims support from 6,500 churches in California, and ties to Republican congressmen William Dannemeyer and Robert Dornan.

"The churches — particularly the Roman Catholic church and fundamentalist groups — have joined with legislators in taking a very anti-gay stand," says Joyce Collier. "That sends messages to people that it's okay to hate gay people."

Kevin Berrill concurs. "The church has failed miserably to meet the challenges of AIDS and anti-gay violence," he says. "The silence has been resounding, and here I have to quote Elie Wiesel, who said that silence in the face of injustice is not benign. The silence of the church in the face of this violence is killing us. I've heard the argument that 'we hate the sin [of homosexuality] but love the sinner.' All I can say is that their 'love' could freeze beer. What people pick up on is the condemnation — they're not getting the message from the clergy that anti-gay violence is immoral."

"The Episcopal Church passed a resolution declaring its abhorrence of anti-gay violence at the 1988 General Convention in Detroit — at our insistence," says Kim Byham, past national president of Integrity, the group for lesbian and gay Episcopalians. "But as for the actual position of the church on gay-bashing? In a nutshell: firmly with its head in the ground.

"Consider that New York's new bishop (Richard Grein) had no problem issuing a statement deploring racism after the Bensonhurst incident — in the Diocese of Long Island. But when a gay man was stabbed to death on Staten Island, in the Diocese of New York, I heard the bishop say he was advised not to get mixed up in that mess. Later he acknowledged it was a mistake, but that it was too late to do anything about it. And he's one of the better bishops. The only Episcopal bishop who's given even lip service, in terms of raising hate crimes against lesbians and gays as a moral issue, is William Swing of California."

Part of the problem, says Byham, is that "Episcopalians tend to assume that gay-bashing is done by 'people who are not our class, dear' — they have gun racks in the back windows of their pickup trucks — that kind of thing."

One church that isn't making that assumption is St. Stephen's in Boston's South End, near the site of the May 6 assaults, in State Representative Byron Rushing's district.

"When that happened," says Rushing, "Butch (the Rev. Floyd Naters-Gamarra) was one of those who met to talk about how to deal with it. We don't have a lot of churches in the South End that perceive themselves as neighborhood churches, but St. Stephen's does. We decided to get the communities together — lesbian and gay, Hispanic, African-American — and get them to *know* one another, to trust one another. So we organized a softball game! And a week before the game, two gay men were stabbed in the South End. We went ahead with the game, and it was good — there was something in place, something for the community to connect with and unify around. That had to come before the anti-violence work."

Rushing says the church's lack of response to hate crimes against lesbians and gays comes from an inconsistent theology. "It's especially true in churches whose theology says lesbians and gays are sinners, because the reality is in this society we punish sinners, and yet we're not supposed to punish *these* sinners, at least not that way. The church must get in the middle of constructive work in the community against hate crimes; the theology will clean up in the process of getting to know the people who are being victimized as *people*." TW



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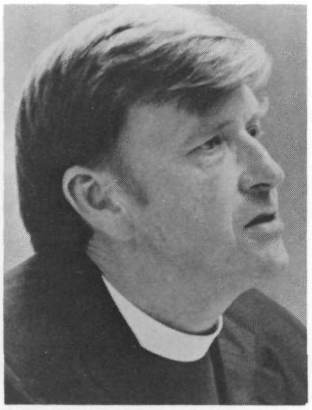
A call to confront homophobia



In December of last year, Diocese of Newark Bishop John S. Spong became the focus of national publicity when he ordained the Rev. Robert Williams, an openly gay man living in a committed relationship.

Williams later spoke at a January public symposium in Detroit on human sexuality, making remarks about celibacy and monogamy that many considered scandalous. At the time, he was executive director of The Oasis, Newark's gay and lesbian ministry. During the storm of controversy that followed, Spong asked Williams to resign. Many conservatives in the church called for Spong's resignation as well.

In February, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and the group of bishops constituting his Council of Advice, issued a statement affirming the church's position that it is "inappropriate" to ordain practicing gay and lesbian persons and disassociating themselves from Williams' ordination. At the recent September House of Bishops meeting, after intense emotional debate, the bishops voted by a slim margin to adopt the statement as their own. In reaction to the vote, Spong made a stinging response, calling upon his colleagues to confront the homophobia within their ranks. Excerpts from the Episcopal News Service transcript of Spong's remarks follow:

I speak to you today primarily to share with you information and concerns of which I do not believe you are all aware. I shall endeavor not to speak defensively, for the cause I have tried to represent does not, in my opinion, need defense. Indeed it presents us with an incredible opportunity to bear witness to Christ by standing at the side of members of this (gay and lesbian) population who are marginalized by prejudice, abused by their rejection in both church and society and frequently condemned by those of us who say we represent the love of God.

I speak to you as one who, 11 years ago in this House, was too much the victim of my own homophobia to allow me to sign the 1979 statement of dissent from the majority recommendation of the General Convention. I salute the courage of Ed Browning, Jim Montgomery, John Krumm, Paul Moore and Bob Anderson, among many others, who gave that statement of dissent its form and its life.

My comments focus on what our fears in regard to homosexual persons are doing to the structures of our church. My warning is that if this House acts inappropriately — as in my opinion, it has just done — it will become quite easy for this House to act inappropriately on many other issues. There is not a member of this House who is not a minority person on some issue. I want to make brief comments on four areas.

First, pastoral sensitivity.

I want to heed the warning of Bob Johnson that we not use the word homophobia loosely. Homophobia, to me, is present when irrationality distorts our response.

It is present in our pejorative phrases. "Practicing homosexual" to the gay population has the same connotation as "nigger" has to the black community. And we use that phrase over and over again. Think how strange it would sound if we referred to "practicing heterosexuals," and you get some sense of their discomfort. We talk about homosexual lifestyles in a pejorative way, as if the only lifestyle known is that of the bath houses of San Francisco or the promiscuous behavior that we read about in the press. There are homosexual lifestyles that are beautiful, that are holy, and that need to be recognized by this church. So I urge us to be careful of our language, and to learn that prejudice is quite unconscious in many of us.

I view with alarm the contrast in the way I was treated by the members of this House, when compared to the treatment that has been accorded to members of the Episcopal Synod of America.

To accommodate those who have stated and acted out their refusal to obey the canons we passed in 1976, opening the ordination process to every member of this church, this House responded to

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those who could not bear that in their consciences, by passing a conscience clause — then, later, an Episcopal Visitors Resolution — and committing vast amounts of the time of this House to listening to their pain and their distress.

I wonder if this House can embrace the fact that other bishops besides those in the Synod of America have a conscience that cannot and will not be compromised? The way the church treats its gay and lesbian members so deeply violates my conscience that it strains my life by tearing it between my loyalty to Jesus Christ, who made a habit of embracing the outcast, and my loyalty to this church which I dearly love. But it is nonetheless a church that has historically rejected blacks, women, and gays, in succession.

It is not the Bishop of Newark who is violated by this process. It is the gay and lesbian members of this church for whom I am an ever-so-inadequate spokesperson. I do not believe conflict over issues of great significance should be dealt with in this manner. And I do resent it.

I will skip over my comments on the 1979 resolution because the points have already been made. But I do recommend that a more objective part of our church might read them — perhaps the press. And the way you spell recommend is R-E-C-O-M-M-E-N-D. Recommend. It is used both in the resolution and the minority statement that says, "taking notice of the recommendatory and not proscriptive nature of this resolution . . . "

Among the 21 signatories were Ed Browning, the man elected Presiding Bishop, and John Walker, the runner-up for that office and later the vice-president of this House. That would hardly indicate to me the marginalization of the point of view expressed in the minority statement.

In the light of these facts, can you feel my sense of wonder when this recommendation was interpreted by so many of you to have the force of canon law? This church refused in 1979 to write its prejudice against homosexual persons into the priesthood into canon law. We refused in 1982; we refused in 1985, we refused in 1988. Indeed, in 1988, we came within one vote of amending the canons to guarantee they would be applied without discrimination, including to homosexual persons.

"Integrity, the national organization of gay and lesbian Episcopalians, has given me the names of 50 priests who have been ordained since 1979 (and) are willing to state publicly that the ordaining bishop knew they were homosexual and not celibate. We have had in the past, and we have now, members of this House of Bishops who are homosexual persons."

Also in 1988, this church in a resolution affirmed "chastity and fidelity in personal relationships." I support that with all my heart. My action in the Diocese of Newark was to affirm that resolution.

I also hope that they will look at the fact that an attempt was made to amend that resolution in the House of Deputies to change the words "personal relationships" to "holy matrimony." That resolution was defeated.

I think that the day will come when every member of this House will regret any attempt we might make to give canonical weight to General Convention resolutions, even to those resolutions that specifically state that they are recommendatory.

The position of this church on birth control, expressed in General Convention, on abortion, on many other issues is debated. If a bishop disagrees with our moderate pro-choice position on abortion and works to achieve a constitutional amendment to ban abortion, is that bishop subject to presentment, censure, disassociation? Our church has opened the Eucharist to baptized children. Some bishops disapprove and do not allow this in their dioceses. Are they candidates for presentment or censure or disassociation? Is it surprising that objective observers see homophobia as rampant in the responses of many?

The Episcopal Synod members say the canons opening the ordination process to women are permissive, not binding. But many of the bishops of the Synod have argued that the 1979 resolution on human sexuality, which *was* recommendatory and not proscriptive, was, in fact, binding. Permissive canons and binding recommendations — my sister and brothers, only great fear and prejudice would enable one to talk this way without being amused.

The Synod members argue that no bishop is required to ordain anyone. I agree with that. But the canons do require that the process be open to all. The Synod members respond that women can go to another diocese to be ordained. To that, I respond, "That is correct," but in that very process the equal application of the canons of the national church to every member of this part of Christ's body is, in fact, denied.

Was my ordination last December the first ordination of a practicing — to use your words — homosexual person? Of course not. Integrity, the national organi-

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zation of gay and lesbian Episcopalians, has given me the names of 50 priests who have been ordained since 1979, who are, I am told, willing to state publicly that when they were ordained the ordaining bishop knew that they were homosexual and that they were not celibate. We have had in the past, and we have now, members of this House who are homosexual persons.

We have had homosexual seminary professors. Many of the bishops of this church studied theology under a brilliant professor at one of our major seminaries who is known and loved across this church, who was and is gay and non-celibate. He is not the only one. We have had deans of our seminaries who were non-celibate homosexuals. We have seminary students at many of our seminaries who are openly gay and lesbian, living in committed relationships, and they are getting ordained every year.

A study in the Church of England reported recently in *The Church Times* revealed that the conservative estimate is that one in seven Church of England priests is homosexual. Only a very small percentage are celibate, according to this study.

I honor celibacy. There must always be a place in the church for those, like Mother Teresa or Francis of Assisi, who feel that their call to priesthood or to service makes any other commitment impossible. But celibacy is a vocation — a vocation to which very few are called. It takes a special grace. It is not the practice of the masses. For us to assume that we can make the distinction between orientation and practice and hide behind the myth that our gay and lesbian clergy are only homosexually oriented and not sexually active is naive.

I think that both the church and individual bishops should be in the position to say that predatory, promiscuous or casual sex is wrong. But the only way that this can be done with integrity in the gay community is for this church also to be able to say that responsible, faithful, monogamous relationships can be holy, can be life-giving, and can be recognized. To offer celibacy as the only alternative to immorality is a strange stance. And in my opinion, it is not a stance that does anything except encourage covert promiscuous activity.

In one city of my Diocese of Newark, 30% of the population is estimated to be gay and lesbian — 30%! I want us to have life-giving words of the Lord to speak to this community. "Thou shalt not" cannot be that word.

Let me say a word about collegiality, which I also honor.

The charge of violating the collegiality of this House is a disturbing charge. It has, to my knowledge, never been leveled against the members of the Episcopal Synod, or against those who hold a pro-life position on abortion, or against those who refused to boycott Texas oil interests. But it has been leveled against me. I think that is a sign of fear, even of homophobia.

Collegiality means acting with sensitivity. It means notifying those who should be aware of your actions of what you're doing; indeed, giving them a chance to suggest a different course.

The Presiding Bishop and John Howe, Bishop of Central Florida, knew about the forthcoming Williams ordination in July (1989). The House of Bishops met in Philadelphia in September. Either were free to bring the issue up, if it was of such terrible import. But neither did. I felt I had acted appropriately when I notified the Presiding Bishop six months prior to this action. (Later) I decided that courtesy required that I notify every one of you as to what was happening in the Diocese of Newark and the canonical procedures through which we had gone.

At that time, the *New York Times* had already informed me that they were not even going to cover the story of this ordination. However, when bishops around the country, most especially the bishops of the Episcopal Synod, having received my courtesy notification, called a press conference to condemn the Diocese of Newark and its bishop, that action guaranteed the media circus that surrounded the ordination. My first knowledge of Clarence Pope's condemnation came from the BBC. They called to ask me to comment on Bishop Pope's press conference. At that moment I did not know of his press conference.

I have supported, at great cost to my conscience, both the conscience clause and the Episcopal Visitors resolution. I did it as an act of collegiality. The Episcopal Synod has responded by calling for my resignation. They will not get it.

I have been honest. I have been bothered by the lack of honesty among some of my critics.

Integrity members tell me that three of the ten signatories on the Presiding Bishop's letter of disassociation have themselves knowingly ordained non-celibate homosexual persons. I know this to be a fact about only one of those bishops, for I know the candidate that was ordained. I hope you feel with me the sense of hypocrisy that the bishop's signature created for me.

This past June, I deferred to the request of the Presiding Bishop and postponed an ordination of a gay male who had the unanimous support of the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee and the vestry of the church that called him to be their associate. That was an act of collegiality. But I now know that four non-celibate homosexual persons were ordained by other bishops in that same period of time.

I cannot tell you the pain my diocese has experienced because of that postponement. The gay and lesbian community, with which we were building trust, and the top decision makers of our diocese who had stood with me in this wonderful year — all felt betrayed by my postponing action.

In 1988 at every national church gath-

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ering in the United States, the issue of homosexuality was debated. Twenty-five years ago it was on no one's agenda. There was consensus 25 years ago, generally unchallenged, that homosexuality was a matter of choice, that it was self-evidently wrong and that it reflected moral depravity. That consensus was not debated, for no one challenged that position. But that point of view has been challenged significantly by authoritative sources.

• In 1988, the Southern Baptist Convention, hardly a liberal organization, debated homosexuality for the first time. Now, they wound up condemning it as sin. But the fact is that they debated it and that indicates that the consensus has broken down — even in the Southern Baptist tradition.

• In 1988, the United Methodist Church, meeting in a national assembly in St. Louis, condemned homosexual acts, and then immediately appointed a task force to study the issue.

• In 1988, both the Presbyterian and the Lutherans put out serious study documents that put to shame anything our Health and Human Affairs Committee has produced — and I speak as a member of (that) committee. Those two studies brought together the best scientific data available that challenge the attitudes of the past.

• In 1988, our church affirmed "chastity and fidelity in personal relationships," a big step forward, and called for conversations of mutuality with gay and lesbian Christians.

• In 1988, the United Church of Canada removed any restriction from the ordination of responsible gay and lesbian pastors.

• In 1988, the Anglican bishops of the Church of England authorized a special committee, called the Osborne Committee, to make a report to them. It is an enormous step forward.

• And in 1990, Reform Judaism admitted gay rabbis to their ministry.

My brothers and sister, this issue is not an off-the-wall subject. It is on the agenda of every religious body in the world. It will not be addressed by shooting the messenger.

Neither I, nor any member of the Diocese of Newark have a sense of having acted inappropriately. We have been shocked. We have been amazed at the response of hatred and condemnation that has marked some parts of the church — some of it literally encouraged by the bishops. And we resent being the victims of hypocrisy.

If the standards of this church are to apply to all equally, then I will abide by those standards. If recommendations of General Convention are to be mandatory and binding on all, then let them be mandatory and binding.

Please do note in this regard that in a very recent letter to the Presiding Bishop from the Episcopalians United, which came just before we gathered, calling once again for the action on the part of this House against me for violating the 1979 resolution, they inform him at the end of that letter: "Please do not infer from our commitment to dialogue in fellowship that we could or would comply with every decision made by General Convention." That is the hypocrisy.

I would not take anything for the experience I have had in this past year. It has been the most exhilarating, growing, eventful year of my life. And the primary reason for that is that I have experienced first-hand the prejudice and the negativity and the pain and the fear that is the daily bread of gay and lesbian people.

Their ability to forge relationships of durability, commitment and faithfulness — living under that kind of hostile, negative rejection and prejudice — is in my opinion, almost a miracle. I salute my fellow gay and lesbians as fellow Christians whose capacity for love I admire far beyond what I see in the ordinary parlance of our church. TW

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Encyclopedia of the American Left in debut

The article below is reprinted with permission from the editors of the prodigious ***Encyclopedia of the American Left,*** *just out from Garland Publishers, New York ($95) and described as the "first comprehensive reference work on the history of the Left" in the United States.*

Among Episcopalians mentioned in the volume, in addition to Anne and Carl Braden, herewith, are Vida Scudder (in an entry contributed by Mary Lou Suhor, editor of THE WITNESS); the Rev. William Howard Melish, one of the founders of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship; and the Rev. William B. Spofford, former editor of THE WITNESS.

Dr. Manning Marable, of the University of Colorado, who is a contributing editor to THE WITNESS, served on the publication's Advisory Board. The volume was edited by Mari Jo and Paul Buhle and Dan Georgakas. In addition to personalities, the book covers pre-Marxist socialism, Christian socialism, pacifism, various forms of anarchism, Black Power, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Trotskyists, etc. Radical movements not always considered part of the traditional Left such as Gay rights, Native American rights, and ecology are also in its 976 pages. For toll-free orders: 1-800-627-6273.

Anne and Carl Braden:

Anti-racists in a hostile Southland

Anne and Carl Braden, two prominent journalists, joined forces in Louisville, Ky., where they met as education and labor editors, respectively, for the *Louisville Times*. Anne Gamrell McCarty, the daughter of a relatively privileged family, was raised in Mississippi and Alabama. As the result of her upbringing and the Episcopal Church, her education at Stratford and Randolf-Macon colleges, contact with a young black woman in New York, and her experiences as a reporter in Alabama, she came to abhor the ugly effects of the South's segregation system on whites and its humiliating impact on blacks.

She returned to Louisville, her birthplace, at age 23. There she met 33-year-old Carl Braden, who had already been married and divorced, had organized unions, and worked his way up through a variety of newspapers in Harlan County, Knoxville, and Cincinnati. Carl came from Portland, a poor white section of Louisville. His father, a railroad shop worker and factory hand, imbued him with the socialist teachings of Eugene Debs, while his Catholic mother taught him the social gospel. Carl attended Catholic schools and seminary, but abandoned plans to join the priesthood and instead went to work in 1931 as a newspaper reporter. He and Anne married in 1948, and the couple became public relations directors for Left-led Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions and worked in the Progressive Party campaign. During the rest of their lives, the Bradens remained at the center of battles to transform the South, and were repeatedly attacked as subversives for their work supporting black freedom.

Mississippi authorities jailed Anne in 1951 for leading a delegation of Southern white women to the governor's office to protest the scheduled execution of Willie McGee, a black man charged with raping a white woman. Following the Supreme Court's *Brown* school desegregation decision in 1954, Kentucky state prosecutors arrested the Bradens and charged them with plotting to incite insurrection when they bought a home in a white neighborhood and sold it to a black family.

Local newspapers blacklisted them from employment, prosecutors confiscated their books as "evidence," and racists bombed the home they had purchased for Andrew Wade. Held on $40,000 bail, Carl served eight months of a 15-year prison sentence before a higher court overturned his conviction. Anne popularized the case in a book about segregation titled *The Wall Between* (1958).

Unable to secure employment as journalists, the Bradens became field organizers and writers for the integrationist Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), which James Eastland's Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) had called a Communist front. In 1958 HUAC called the Bradens

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to Atlanta to testify about the integration movement in the South. In the hearing, Carl stated, "My beliefs and my associations are none of the business of this committee," and refused to testify based on his right to freedom of speech and association contained in the First Amendment. He and anti-HUAC organizer Frank Wilkinson nearly succeeded in winning their First Amendment test case against HUAC but lost it in a celebrated 5-4 decision before the Supreme Court in 1961.

As in the Louisville case, authorities put off questioning or prosecuting Anne. She meanwhile wrote and circulated 200,000 copies of a pamphlet —*HUAC: Bulwark of Segregation* — and traveled across the country in a clemency campaign. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other black leaders held a dinner honoring Braden and Wilkinson before they entered prison to begin serving eight months of a year's prison sentence for contempt of Congress.

From that time forward, the Bradens continually upheld the position that protection of the First Amendment guarantee for freedom of belief and association, like the struggle for black rights, was integral to all other struggles. They helped launch the National Committee to Abolish HUAC, and throughout the 1960s organized support for most of the major civil rights campaigns.

State and federal authorities continually attacked the Bradens and attempted to isolate them from the civil rights movement (Alabama even enjoined Carl from working in the state) and from Southern whites. However, the Bradens used every attack against them and the movement as a platform to raise issues. More than others on the Left, they perfected the use of media and the written word to fight back against repression. In 1967, during a period of increased radicalization in the Southern movement, the Bradens became executive directors of SCEF. In the same year, Kentucky authorities again arrested them on sedition, this time for setting up a community organizing project among poor whites in Appalachia. The courts ultimately overturned the law as unconstitutional.

In 1972 the Bradens retired as SCEF directors, Carl setting up a training institute for activists and Anne returning to full-time editing of SCEF's paper, the *Southern Patriot*. By this time factional and ideological splits of the New Left had torn SCEF apart. Carl resigned to protest what he considered Red-baiting within the organization, and Anne left shortly thereafter when the SCEF board voted down a proposal to renew the organization's formal commitment to interracialism.

Carl directed the Training Institute for Propaganda and Organizing, initiated the fight to free North Carolina's Wilmington Ten, and became one of the leaders of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. He died suddenly of a heart attack in 1975 at age 60, embittered with much of the New Left but never backing down from his participation in the movement. Anne, along with others who had been in SCEF, formed a new group, the Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice (SOC). She continued to build interracial coalitions, to work against racist violence, and to support the Rev. Jesse Jackson and other black leaders.

For many on the Left, the Bradens became the symbol of radical challenge to the segregation system from within the white South. Although the FBI and other authorities warned black civil rights leaders not to work with them, the Bradens developed close working relations with black activists throughout the region, and supported the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Power movement when many liberals turned away. They were widely respected for their unwavering commitment to the struggle against racism, and despite the inquisitions and arrests directed against them, the Bradens never rejected Marxist politics.

As principal victims of anti-communism in the South, the Bradens never affirmed or denied whether they ever held membership in any Left party. At the same time, they steadfastly worked with and supported Communists and others on the Left, and stated their own socialist beliefs when they thought them relevant to the struggle at hand.

However, their main focus remained on the struggle for racial justice as the key to changing the South and the nation. As Anne Braden explained her commitment in the *Louisville Defender* in 1978, "Our future and that of our children rides with the fate of the black struggle for progress, and [we must] join in that struggle as if our very lives depend on it. For, in truth, they do."

(Contributed to Enclyclopedia of the American Left by Michael Honey, former SCEF worker and author of "Labor and Civil Rights in the South: The Industrial Union Movement and Black Workers in Memphis.") IW



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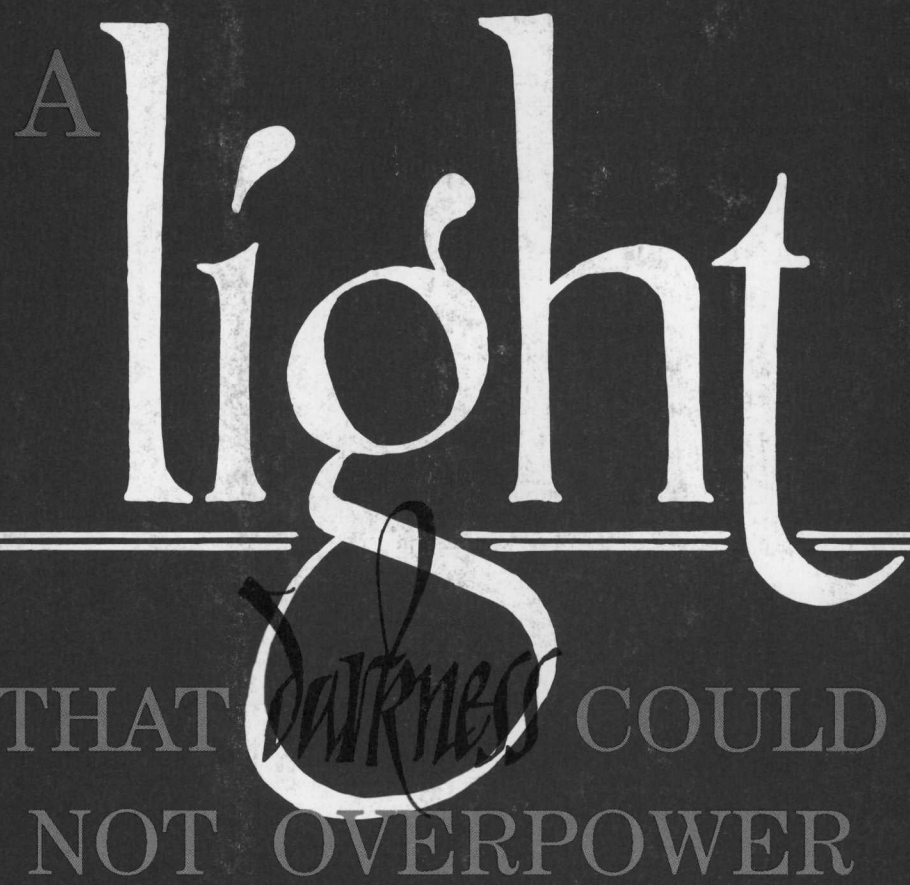

JOHN 1:5

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Letters

How about underpants?

The Rev. Canon Whit Stodghill's "All my shoes" in the October issue was a perfect end piece to the discussions of U.S. presence around the world. Fewer shoes in our closets could translate into so many necessities for the have-nots!

I think there is also a less obvious side to the question of how many shoes we have; that is, we frequently assume the way we live and what we have is everyone's portion. After all, we see what we have all around us because, like the proverbial birds, when we have similar feathers, we flock together. That dulls and dilutes any perceptions of reality we may have about people who may be different.

To illustrate: One summer the non-traditional agency with which I was involved wangled, contrived, and managed to get camp scholarships for two (of seven) children in a single-parent family on welfare. Staff worked the system to get the required physicals at no charge and begged money to eke out what the kids earned toward the suggested allowance. All the bases seemed covered, but two days before camp began, the mother got a letter.

Now this was a proud and caring, poor mother. She opened the envelope to find a neatly typed list of items *required* for two weeks of camping.

The mother got through 2 blankets each. She began to panic at 2 pair of sneakers, 1 pair of shoes, and 1 pair of boots each, but the ultimate blow was *12 pairs of underpants each.* She reacted in the only way which seemed appropriate to her; she called to say her boys would not be attending the two-week camp session.

When one ignores the absurdity of expecting 10-year old boys to be so squeaky clean (which was what we found the average middle-class parent did in packing), how can "charitable organizations" be so insensitive to their clients? I don't know the answer, except it does cut down on the number of scholarships that the charitable organization pays for, and insures that the flock has not too different feathers.

How many pairs of underpants do you have?

Margaret E. Ferry
Palm Harbor, Fla.

About WITNESS guts

I was on the verge of not renewing my subscription when you came out with that marvelous call to the President to bring our warriors home. Congratulations! Everybody else lacked the guts!

The Rev. William B. Faherty, S.J.
St. Louis, Mo.

Issue breaks silence

Many thanks for your wonderful July-August issue, "Breaking Silence." I ordered extra copies to use with a Clinical Pastoral Education group exploring issues of human sexuality among clergy. It was extremely well-received. I was later told that this was evaluated by the group as the most useful of the didactic presentations they had.

Of the various issues of human sexuality which surface in my pastoral ministry, sexual misconduct by clergy heads the list. Thank you for helping to break the silence which perpetuates it.

The Rev. Carol Cole Flanagan
Baltimore, Md.

(To order this issue send $2.50 to THE WITNESS, Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002.)

Lauds Wehrli vs. Bush

I get my magazine two months late (by surface mail), so have recently received the July-August issue of THE WITNESS with the article that features Mary Brent Wehrli. I am delighted that she had the courage to confront El Presidente regarding El Salvador, as reported. God bless her!

Three years ago I was in El Salvador and Nicaragua, and what I learned there made me ashamed to be an American. Thank God there are at least a few people like Wehrli in the Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Howard R. Kunkle
Curacao, Netherland Antilles

Cuba clarifications

I was delighted to receive the March issue of THE WITNESS on Cuba, which we consider extremely interesting.

While indicating my appreciation on the approach not only of the issue as a whole, but of all the articles it contains, I would like to clarify certain elements.

In "Cuba studies role in abandoned Third World," Sam Day says that "Communist Cuba, like any government under virtual siege by a powerful foe, has repressive features such as occasional summary trials and executions, political prisoners, sanctions regarding religion . . ."

First, despite the fact that Cuba, as correctly stated, is under virtual siege by a nearby powerful foe, we have never resorted to summary trials and executions. In all cases, since 1959 onwards those who have violated Cuban legislation, irrespective of the gravity of the crime, have been given the right to due trial, with all guarantees the law provides. Moreover, executions in Cuba are extremely rare; our legislation provides for the extreme penalty only in the most heinous of crimes, and generally opts for alternative sentences. The death penalty is only passed by our courts in the most extreme circumstances. I wouldn't doubt our courts were much more lenient regarding the use of the death penalty than most judicial systems in the world, including the U.S. judiciary.

Second, regarding the term "political prisoners." Generally, political prisoners are those conceived as being in prison for their political beliefs and are gener-

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ally termed as "prisoners of conscience." People are not imprisoned in Cuba for their beliefs, but only in those cases in which, by their actions, they violate Cuban legislation. Those, for example, duly tried and convicted for terrorist activities, or for espionage in favor of a foreign power, or for attempting actions gerared at destabilizing the country cannot be termed "political prisoners" in the most common and generally used meaning of the words in the United States.

Third, nobody in Cuba is sanctioned for professing a religious belief. To be sanctioned might be construed as the equivalent of being punished, or even jailed. That is not the Cuban case. It is true that prejudices still exist against those professing a religion for understandable reasons explained elsewhere in your March issue, but, as I am certain you are aware, we are doing everything possible to correct that situation.

I hope these comments will be useful to correct some misconceptions still existing about our process.

Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada
Permanent Representative of Cuba
to the United Nations

For shame

Shame that you defend such a cruel government as that of Mr. Castro's in Cuba. Havana is not Berlin, true; Berlin is already free!

F. Fernandez
Miami, Fla.

Kudos from FMC

We would like to thank you for sending the Federacion de Mujeres Cubanas your March issue which contains Cathy Ribas' interview by Susan Pierce. In her opinion the inverview covers quite objectively all that was said and reflects the essential elements of our work.

Esther Velis
FMC Secretary, Foreign Relations

Re condoms and culture

I have two reactions to your April issue: In "Short Takes" you report the outrage of the Sisters of Loretto over the Roman Catholics bishops' refusal to alter their teaching on condoms when Hispanic women face having sexual relation with husbands who carry infectious diseases as a result of drug use. I admire the sisters' courage but doubt they understand the total picture. While drug use is undoubtedly a factor in the spread of such disease amongst Hispanic populations in the United States, cultural attitudes are likely to be just as dominant a factor, if viewing it from from a South American perspective.

Extra-marital relations are a measure of masculinity, and are often ignored for the sake of the traditional role of the family. One's identity is strongly familial, and traditional views of reality are based on family as the key element in social organization and structure. The tendency for women to draw their identity from men is further complicated by their finding self-worth in having children. Under such conditions, "reasonable" promiscuity by married or "attached" men is tolerated.

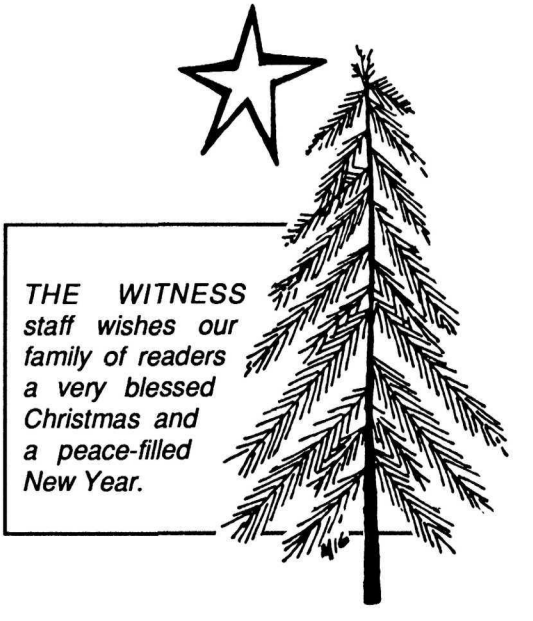
Insistence on the use of a condom is a threat to a male's self-confidence and an unwelcome invasion into his sense of freedom and superiority. Asking a male to use a condom is difficult enough, but expecting the extra-marital partner to insist on it is wholly unreasonable. So the wife's insistence on the use of condoms will not be welcome, but she is in a stronger position than anyone to protect herself and future children.

Homosexuality in the Hispanic context results in many homosexual men feeling forced to marry for their protection and social participation, and to demonstrate their own worthiness. They too have extra-marital affairs, often of a high-risk nature. Still, to maintain the structure, physical intimacy with their wives, even if only occasional, is necessary.

Hispanic cultures are not unique in extra-marital affairs. The discipline of the family, the burden of which is mostly borne by women, is a little different than the Anglo North American experience. The roots are in the history of colonization, which brought few women to the Americas, and was characterized by generally uncommitted and often dehumanizing relations between European men and native women, with the cooperation of a state-controlled church. The tradition continues with little challenge. The church continues to be a partner in the scheme.

Your article on news coverage of the Panama invasion was welcome. While in no way an expert, my experience in Central and South America has seldom led me to many of the conclusions I read and hear from U.S. sources. I believe very little of what is distributed by the U.S. press establishment when it concerns Hispanic America.

Peter L. DeGroote
Miami, Fla.



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THE WITNESS

A light that darkness could not overpower

John 1:5



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Editorial

No to Phoenix in 1991

The Episcopal Church should change the venue of its 1991 General Convention from Phoenix, Arizona to a state less racist in the public eye.

A widely reported referendum to create a Martin Luther King Civil Rights holiday was defeated in Arizona in November, overriding the State Legislature's passage of a King Day holiday last May. Commendably, Edmond L. Browning, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, had actively lobbied for the latter holiday.

But former Governor Evan Mecham, (who was impeached from office last year), led opponents of the holiday and obtained enough signatures to reintroduce the issue on the November general election ballot. The effort prevailed by 12,000 votes.

As a result, four groups have cancelled reservations for conventions or stays at hotels, and the National Football League has recommended moving the 1993 Super Bowl to another state.

However, Bishop Browning has announced that "the Episcopal Church will go to Phoenix. While we cannot ignore or condone the results of the referendum, I believe that by working with people of good faith who are in Arizona, we can come and together make a vigorous witness for the dignity of all God's people — and against the evils of racism."

Nonsense. When Browning went to Phoenix to lobby legislators and community leaders to establish the holiday, he said that here was "an international issue and a deeply moral one. What Arizona does with it reflects on America."

That still holds true.

A noble precedent exists for moving the Convention site. In 1955, Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, citing a constitutional provision which gave him the authority to do so, transferred the General Convention from Houston, which at the time offered segregated hotels and eating facilities, to Hawaii.

To underline the irony of holding the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, a resolution will be introduced next year to recognize the life and martyrdom of Episcopal seminarian Jonathan Daniels, gunned down in the Civil Rights struggle in 1965. Daniels had participated in the Selma march, and returned to work on voter registration. He was subsequently illegally arrested with a group of Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee workers. Just after release from jail, they were fired upon while entering a grocery store in Hayneyville, Ala. Jon's last act was to thrust a young woman out of the path of the gunfire. The gunman, Thomas Coleman, claimed he acted in self-defense and was acquitted by an all-white jury.

The late, noted Episcopal attorney William Stringfellow wrote at the time:

"Though justice was perverted radically in the trial, a more appalling circumstance has been the superficiality of church hesitancy, mildness and failure of outrage within Daniels' own church to his murder. The trauma of this incident for the Episcopal Church and for the church at large was minimal. In other words, we have, as a Christian people, become hard of heart. We never actually protested all those other murders (the children of Birmingham, Medgar Evers, and countless, nameless others). We did not even mourn them very long and so when mayhem struck close to home, we were, as a church, prepared to take it pretty much in our stride."

Twenty five years later, Martin Luther King, Jonathan Daniels and all those who suffered or died in the Civil Rights struggle deserve better than the church taking events such as the Arizona vote "in its stride." If you agree, a letter to that effect would be in order (Office of the Presiding Bishop, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017).

The Episcopal Church should have been the first to announce the changing of its Convention site. To paraphrase Matthew, "except your righteousness exceed that of the NFL and the Super Bowl, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven." ■

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Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

Jim Lewis, left, with FOR delegation leader Doug Hostetter at Baghdad airport.

Crossing the line in Iraq for peace

by Jim Lewis

Rushing through a checklist of things to be done before departing for Iraq, I charged into the bank and had my newly-composed will notarized.

Watching the woman behind the desk apply the seal to the document, it occurred to me that the last time I had drawn up a will was back in 1959 prior to departing for Marine Corps duty in the Far East.

Irony of ironies — signing my name to a legal document, once in preparation for possible combat in Southeast Asia, and now before embarking on a peace mission to Iraq.

On Oct. 17 I flew to New York to join a 21-member delegation under the leadership of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a 75-year-old peace and justice organization. We were headed to Jordan and Iraq, attempting to offer a peace presence in a potential war zone.

The delegation had been put together hastily. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2, followed by the rapid deployment of U.S. troops into Saudi Arabia, caught everyone off guard. Organizing a response to this rush of military action proved anything but easy for a peace and justice network.

Under the guidance of FOR, a plan finally emerged to address the crisis, baptized as the "Crossing the Line Campaign."

Its purpose was to recruit people in the United States willing to cross the lines drawn in the sand, around which land and resources were disputed and over which a catastrophic war seemed imminent. The campaign's goal was to draw new lines connecting the people of Iraq with the people of the United States.

Those willing to enlist in the campaign had to be committed to the belief that a nonviolent, negotiated settlement was the way to a just peace. They had to be willing to travel to Iraq to be a peace presence, to meet with and listen to the Iraqi people — who had been declared our "enemy" by President Bush — and spread the word that vast numbers (one poll says 90%) of U.S. citizens do not want war.

The members of the delegation had been chosen from dozens and dozens of people who came forward, on short notice, to volunteer to make the trip. Meeting one another across the table we discovered ourselves to be Christian, Jewish, and Muslim, spread out from Alaska to North Carolina.

One introductory task was to share what we'd brought with us. In the sharing, we began to discover our own expectations for this 10-day trek. After all, human beings are known by what they carry. If you want to know the heart of a man or woman, look for clues in his or her purse or suitcase.

One man carried candy and balloons to give to the children he hoped to meet in Iraq. A Vietnam vet carried an artificial leg he'd received in battle. The delegation leader carried painted peace messages to the school children of Iraq from his children's school. One woman carried a book of peace activist A.J.

The Rev. James Lewis, Director of Social Ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, is a contributing editor to THE WITNESS.

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Muste's meditations. A man carried a camera to capture faces and stories for the folks at home. I carried a prayer card from folks at home as well as a picture of my two grandchildren accompanied by a note from my daughter, the mother of nine-month-old Katherine.

In that note, my daughter gave me her blessing and commissioned me: "I appreciate what you are doing now, as always. In fact, the trip to Iraq seems so profound, particularly now that my daughter is here and I am entrusted with her new world. The impotence many of us new mothers feel is yet another reason for you to go in our place. I know that Deb (her sister, the mother of one-year-old Alex) feels the same. Making children, and making peace too, requires much help. My farewell message to you then is the request that while you're away, you will seek out the mothers and children of that foreign place and remember your own grandchildren at home. Maybe you will say a word to them about us and what we are doing here with our children so that they'll understand that we wish for peace. I hope you come back with stories about women for us, too."

From the very start, it was clear to us that we carried more than our luggage. We carried the hope that U.S. citizens could do something to rise above the sweeping tide of doom that seemed to be carrying our nation to an inevitable war. We felt small in comparison to the half a million troops massed along the border between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, but justified in our conviction that a life committed to what Dan Berrigan calls "humble possibilities" is a life worth living, a risk worth taking, a grace worth trusting. Basic to each one of us was the belief that human beings not only have the power to make war but have, as well, the capacity and power of our own witness, with God's grace, to stop a war.

We also carried $67,000 worth of medicines to be distributed to evacuees in Jordan fleeing Kuwait, and to the children of Iraq.

O God, you fill the universe with light and love.
In you we live and move and have our being.
We pray for Saddam Hussein and George Bush.
Enlighten their minds, and fill their hearts with the power of your creative love.
Guide their actions so that all civilians and soldiers in the Gulf area are protected from the sufferings of war.
Inspire their decisions so that the crisis in the Middle East is resolved peacefully, and all peoples of the world learn to walk in the ways of justice, love and peace. Amen.

Fellowship of Reconciliation Box 271, Nyack, N.Y. 10960

Prayer carried by the FOR delegation to Iraq in English and Arabic versions.

اللهم يا من ملأ الكون بالنور والمحبة والحياة
آمنا بك وتوكلنا عليك
ندعوك ونبتوسل اليك ان تنير بصيرتي الرئيسين
صدام حسين وجورج بوش
وتملأ قلبيهما باليقين .
اللهم ندعوك ان ترشدهما لدفع غيوم الحرب والدمار
عن كل الناس في منطقة الشرق الاوسط
اللهم اهديهما من اجل السلام الدائم والعدل في هذه البقعة
واهدي الناس جميعا سبيل العدل والاخوة والحنان
آميـــن

The following are stories and observations regarding the scene in the Persian Gulf.

Jordan

A day and a half in Jordan gave us a chance to get first-hand reports from American Friends Service Committee field workers, members of the Episcopal Church, and a former newspaper editor and now writer in the area. Time was provided to visit one of the evacuee camps, Al Andalus, and talk with Sri Lankans, Bangladeshi and Palestinians who had fled Kuwait. An evening was set aside to meet with Crown Prince Hassan and Rajai Mouasher, the former director of the Jordanian Ministry of Trade, in the home of Major General Ihsan Shurdom, the commander of the Jordanian air force.

As I left Jordan for Baghdad, my notebook was full of scribblings. Under close scrutiny, all the rhetoric could be reduced to a few simple observations: Jordan is going broke. Jordan is angry.

The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq has caused enormous social and economic strain on Jordan's economy. Over 700,000 evacuees have flooded into tent villages set up under Jordanian guidance. With great compassion and efficient care, the Jordanians have been able to move these people on to their home destinations. The cost — over $70 million — is a result of the disruption caused by this influx. And the massive social unrest created by the crisis, coupled with the U.N. and Saudi embargo on Jordan, has caused a near-collapse of the Jordanian economy.

Jordan is angry over U. S. inability to understand the Middle East situation. Jordan has condemned the Iraqi invasion but has pleaded for the world to understand that Saddam Hussein embodies, for the Arab people of the region, centuries of frustration over colonial exploitation. Saddam is standing up to the powers that have dictated borders in the region, set in place political regimes, controlled natural resources (oil and water), and supplied an arsenal of weapons to the region, being careful always to see that Israel has the larger force. All of the activity has been designed to serve only U.S.

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interests. Saddam is saying that enough is enough. Come and kill us by the thousands, but we are going to stand up to you, spoiled child of the Western world.

Jordan, long a friend to the United States, cares enough to tell us that our Marines will not solve the regional problem and that U.S. double standards on U.N. resolutions will no longer be tolerated. In short, Iraqi occupation of Kuwait *is* linked to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Iraq

Baghdad is a city in motion. Traffic moves briskly and business goes on. Only the sight of anti-aircraft guns on downtown rooftops gives hint of possible war. Outside of Baghdad, one discovers the raw feeling of the people.

Fifty-year-old Kadem Abdullah Hassoum, the owner of a rice farm in the fertile land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, waves his hands in the air and becomes poetry in motion. He is angry at George Bush and vows to triple his rice production to show the United States that an embargo will not work. He and two other farmers break into a dance and chant, "Saddam, you are our leader and we are ready." It is a battle cry offered to energize the troops about to go into warfare.

Iraq has put the bulk of its economic energy into oil and a military force that has fought Iran for eight years. That effort has cost Iraq over 100,000 dead and 600,000 wounded, as well as an inefficient agricultural system. Even with that, however, it seems obvious that Iraq has both the capability to fight a major war and the potential to produce the food necessary to defeat the embargo.

We have many meetings with the officials of Iraq, including the Speaker of the Iraqi Assembly; the director of the Red Crescent Society (where we deposit our medicine); Taha Yassin Ramadan, First Deputy Prime Minister, second in command under Saddam; and the Minister of Endowment, Minister of Health, and Minister of Finance and Commerce. The significant moment for all of us comes, however, not in any minister's office but in our encounter with students on the campus at Al-Mustansiriya University and with mothers and children at the Saddam Hussein Teaching Hospital for Children.

On the campus I show the picture of my grandchildren to a student, saying we are here in peace to tell the Iraqi people that U.S. citizens do not want war. He begins to cry and then embraces me. I cry with him as we walk, he holding my hand in true Arab fashion. He tells me he does not want war. In a year he will be required to serve in the military. He has no interest in killing Marines. At that point I introduce him to Ric, the Vietnam vet who carries his own story about the tragic effects of war on young men. Before we depart, this young man gives me his name so I can pray for him.

At the hospital, again I share my photo with mothers hovering over babies in need of medical care. The embargo on food has begun to cause shortages in infant formula and pre-natal medicine. One child has a hydrocephalic head and a damaged heart. Her mother and I pray and cry over the child.

The trip into Iraqi reality would not be complete without visiting some of our men being held against their will. Lutheran pastor Mary Jensen from California, Roman Catholic bishop Michael Kenny of Juneau, Alaska and I spend two evenings with these men.

During our time with them, we listen to their fear, their anger and their concern for loved ones at home. One man stands out vividly in my mind. An ex-Marine who had been working in construction in Iraq, he is being held in Iraq, while his son, a Marine pilot, is stationed in Saudi Arabia. Two men, father and son, on either side of the line drawn in the sand by President Bush, share a common plight — the need to be released from a conflict that could end in death.

Back home

We are home now with dozens of stories to tell and work to do to prevent armed conflict in the Middle East. It's not an easy job given the news that the United States is committing 100,000 more troops to the region.

FOR has hired staff to continue the Crossing the Line Campaign. By the time this article reaches readers, another team of U.S. citizens will be off to Iraq to carry not only medicine but milk for the children of that hospital we had visited. Monthly delegations are planned.

Since we've come back, delegates have been speaking in their regions and working politically to get a negotiated settlement. I have been working as a liason between FOR and Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning to gather a team of religious leaders to call on President Bush. Browning and his staff are taking the lead in that effort.

As the clock ticks, there is a moment of celebration as two of our delegates, who remained in Baghdad, return with four sick U.S. citizens who have been released from captivity. The headlines say that these "hostages" are free.

I am willing to call the people, and all people being held in Iraq and Kuwait against their will, hostages. I am willing, that is, if I can include under the definition of hostages all the Iraqi women and children, all the U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, the people of Jordan, Palestinians and Israelis in the Occupied Territories and Israel, and all U.S. citizens who will suffer if a war breaks out. The cry "Let my people go" is applicable to that full cast of characters and not merely to those we've designated as hostages.

Any other understanding of the situation in the Middle East misses the mark and fails to recognize the full power of violence present in the region, and the necessity for an even fuller grace found in nonviolent witness.

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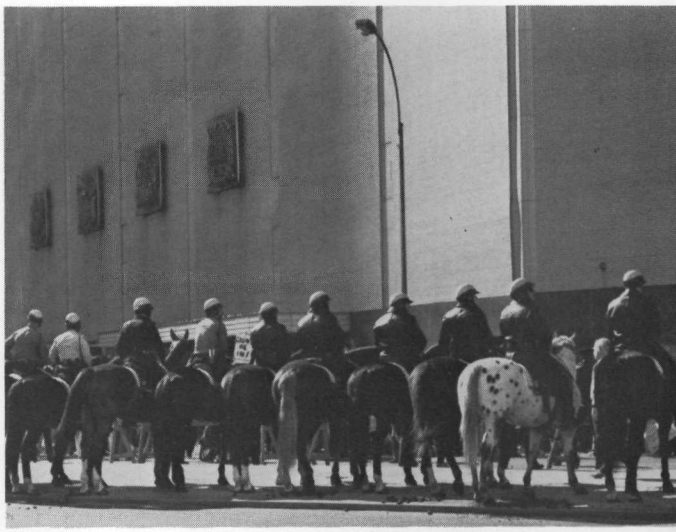
Thousands protest U.S military buildup

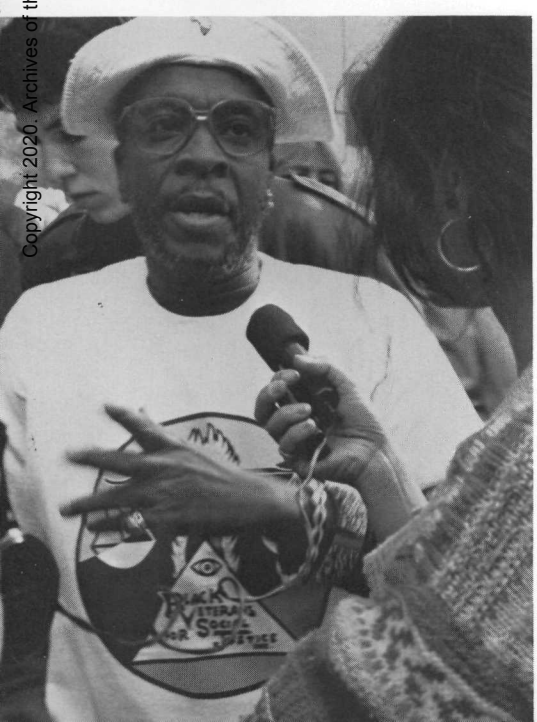
Thousands of demonstrators marched in 16 cities across the nation Oct. 20 to protest the U.S. military buildup in the Middle East. New York staged the largest protest, with more than 14,000 in the streets. They represented a cross section of society including youth, minorities, women, and senior citizens as well as groups representing labor, healthcare, Vietnam vets, churches, and lesbians and gays.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who formed the coalition, and documentary filmmaker Michael Moore marched at the head of the demonstration.

Rallies also took place in Australia, Canada, England, Italy and Panama, according to the Coalition Against U.S. intervention in the Middle East, sponsor of the Manhattan rally.

New York photos, left to right, clockwise, from above: Labor delegation carried banner, "Jobs not war, Labor's fight is here"; Korean youth danced and drummed to lead Asians Against the War; mounted police lined demonstration's origin and officers on foot, the parade route; student protestors included Union Seminary delegation; Robert Glover, of Black Veterans for Social Justice, interviewed along the march; an ACTUP delegation chanting disapproval of U.S. intervention.







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Gulf crisis obscures lethal legacy of

Despite being displaced from the news media by the Persian Gulf confrontation, violent conflict still rages in Central America. Recent events reveal that the wounds of war refuse to heal in Nicaragua, and attacks by the military against civilians continue unabated in El Salvador.

Nicaragua

Since the surprise defeat of the Sandinista party in the February elections, Sandinista supporters and the ruling UNO party have been caught up in conflict.

Runaway inflation, strikes and factional violence have dominated the scene as the U.S.-backed government of Violeta Chamorro has tried to dismantle the Sandinistas' socialist structure and replace it with a free-market economy. Unions, the military, civil servants and teachers, for the most part pro-Sandinista, have protested or reluctantly participated in the changes.

But the economy, severely damaged by 10 years of war and the U.S. economic embargo, desperately needs promised U.S. aid, a large factor in the UNO election victory. However, that aid has been slow in coming. U.S. attention and money has been drawn away by events in Eastern Europe and now the Persian Gulf. The resulting desperation and frustration is pushing the country once again towards violence.

A particularly difficult point has been the resettlement of demobilized contras. Lack of economic support from the United States, and lack of land available for distribution, have resulted in bloody battles in rural areas as frustrated contras have taken over cooperative farms, most of which had been organized when the former Sandinista government gave land to poor rural farmers. These takeovers are seen as attempts to force the Chamorro government to meet the contras' demands.

One particularly tense region is the mountainous northeast, along the former "contra corridor" from Honduras, an area that experienced frequent attacks during the war. In mid-September some contras began seizing cooperatives near the town of Waslala. According to reporters and church workers who visited the seized cooperatives, the contras were heavily armed. Though ordered to surrender their weapons this summer, many still carry guns and reportedly arms caches are hidden throughout the countryside.

Guatemala

Elections took place in Guatemala on Nov. 11. A future issue of THE WITNESS will carry an analysis of the effect of U.S. intervention in that troubled country.

Blaming the Chamorro government for the takeovers, a group of cooperative members occupied the Waslala city hall. The following day, contras and their supporters seized La Inmaculada Catholic Church, and looted the church-run clinic. Apparently the contras and their supporters believed that the parish priest, the Rev. Enrique Blandon, and other church workers had encouraged the cooperative members to take over the city hall.

Blandon had come under attack before because of the parish's program for training cooperative members in improved agricultural techniques. The parish also maintains 500 lay pastors, known as delegates of the word, in 65 villages in the region. During the war, he was threatened repeatedly by the contras and was kidnapped along with an evangelical pastor for 11 days in 1987.

In the violence at the church, two U.S. church workers were beaten and stoned by the mob of contras. Blandon said some 200 contras, armed with pistols, machetes and assault rifles, then ordered church personnel to leave town. Government officials reportedly accompanied the contras.

Blandon blamed the Chamorro government for the violence in Waslala, saying the contras are tired of waiting for a response to their demand for land to farm. "The families of the demobilized contras are hungry and that hunger can't wait for a year or two."

The priest also declared that the contras are being manipulated by pro-government politicians who want to exploit the suffering of the former combatants in order to "take apart the Sandinista cooperatives."

El Salvador

Though the U.S. Congress recently voted to cut military aid to El Salvador in half to show displeasure at the Salvadoran government's reluctance to investigate last year's murder of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter, the Salvadoran military remains well-armed and unrepentant.

In a recent report from the offices of CRIPDES (Christian Committee for the Displaced of El Salvador), a Lutheran agency in San Salvador, staff member Josie Beecher describes the unceasing war against the poor that has claimed



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U.S. Central America policy by Susan E. Pierce

75,000 deaths in the last decade.

Beecher, an Episcopalian who was expelled from El Salvador last fall during the rebel FMLN urban offensive, has returned there to help document the military's campaign of terror in isolated rural communities. In a recent alert, she describes the conflict that is being waged out of the sight of the world:

"Every day people from the displaced and repopulated communities come into our office to tell us about the attacks which their *civilian* communities suffer. While things may appear calm in the city and the government carries out a radio and television campaign about peace and human rights, in the rural communities the air force and army are carrying out bombings and strafings either in the fields where the people grow their crops or directly in the areas where they have their houses.

"Certainly these villages are located in areas of conflict but this does not justify disregard of their civilian status, particularly on the part of the air force. Nor can the part of the United States in providing the rockets and bombs which are tearing these communities apart be justified.

"While everyone focuses on the case of the killing of the Jesuits, the Salvadoran army continues a concerted campaign against the poor, civilian population. But because these people live in isolated communities far from the capital, and because the military restricts access, very little attention is paid to these incidents."

A typical case is that of Fabian Lopez Rivera, who told how after a skirmish with the FMLN in the area, the Salvadoran army and air force launched a heavy assault against his rural village, even though rebels were no longer in the vicinity. After battles on the ground with machine guns, rifles and grenades, helicopter gunships and planes arrived and began to strafe and bomb around the houses.

Lopez described how he and his family tried to hide from the fighting: "We were lying on the floor (of the house) because if we stood, we could be killed. The helicopters launched rockets at the houses, two of which fell on my house. There were screams from everyone and when we looked around I saw my little son, Jose Luis, aged 23 months, and my little grandson, Miguel Angel, age two, covered in blood. They didn't move because they had died right away. My wife Virginia was wounded in the right arm and the left leg by shrapnel.

"I went to the side of the children. Shrapnel had fallen on the legs of Jose Luis, leaving them thoroughly ruined with only little pieces of bone sticking out. Shrapnel had passed through the stomach of Miguel, dividing him in two pieces.

"When we were still lying on the floor, we heard the voices of some soldiers saying, 'Abel, fire a grenade in this house, because if you don't do it now, I'm going to fire at you, you son of a bitch.' After he said this, the grenade exploded at our door and it was destroyed.

"My wife grabbed the body of Jose Luis in her arms and we ran out in the middle of the fighting to the house of my brother-in-law. When we ran out of the house, a soldier said, 'Aim another one at them,' and we ran faster. The body of my little grandson was left behind. A few minutes later Albertina Lopez came out with the two pieces of Miguel in the midst of flying bullets and brought them to us."

Lopez went on to tell how the villagers lay on the floors of their houses during the day-long attack, weeping in fear, the children "crying from hunger and thirst." When the fighting stopped, Lopez and others approached the soldiers to ask for medical care for villagers wounded in the fighting. Lopez's injured wife and son Ignacio, whose face was burned when the grenade exploded in their house, were taken to a military hospital, only to be refused treatment because they were not from a military family.

The plight of poor families like the Lopezes are ignored. "Attention is paid here and in the international community when an archbishop or a priest or maybe a union leader is killed," notes Beecher. "But when will the world pay attention to the killings of the José Luis Lopezes or the Miguel Angel Lopezes, and so many more who are killed and maimed here every day?"

The isolation works both ways, reports Beecher: "Here we get very little information about what is happening in the United States." She adds that Salvadorans continue to count on the U.S. faith community to work to bring an end to all U.S. military aid and support for this war against the poor.

Beecher concludes, "As church workers our role is to console the bereaved and to accompany them in their pain and suffering, but our role also has to be to denounce this sin, and to work actively to bring about the conditions of justice in which God reminds us to live." TW

Resource

Carta de La Gracia, a newsletter by Josie Beecher about the situation in El Salvador, is available for a contribution of $10. Make out checks to Grace Church Mission Fund, c/o E.T. Hall, Rt. 2, Box 3217A, Lopez, WA 98261.

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Abused children: Harming our most

What is our most precious natural resource? Is it fossil fuels, produce, timber, stone, grain, water? All are necessary for life. All are resources.

I believe, however, that life itself is our most important natural resource — more specifically, young life. And we must call ourselves to account for our disgraceful disregard and abuse of young human life.

The gap between the rich and the poor in the United States is the largest it has ever been since 1947 when we started keeping this statistic. Of the poor, over one-third (13 million) are children. And 500,000 of these poor children are homeless — a population larger than that of Atlanta. The waiting list for public housing (funding for which was cut 80% in the past eight years) is 18 years long in New York City and 20 in Miami. We have the highest infant mortality rate, and the highest teen pregnancy rate, of so-called "developed" countries. Yet we do not question *if* we should develop a Stealth bomber — just how many to develop. Like the neutron bomb, we will protect our country, even if it kills us.

I argue that we should nurture and protect our children for children's sake. Life in and of itself should be what we most revere and most value. The Holy is never so present to us as in a newborn's face or a kindergartner's wonder or a teenager's love.

This argument, however, is not highly regarded today. In the children's shelter I direct in Mount Holly, N.J., I see over and over again the result of denying just such a policy.

The Crisis Intervention Center is a temporary residence and a counseling program for runaway, homeless, and abused youth. Recently, we professionals have added another sad category to this list: throwaways. These children did not run from home; they were kicked out. For varied and painful reasons, their homes are not working out. Their families are angry and hurting.

These children come to the shelter from all over New Jersey and the country. They run away from violent homes. Having served over 700 youth in my two-year tenure with the program, I have not met one young man or woman who claimed to run for the "adventure" of it. Like Tom Sawyer who was tired of beatings with the strap, these youth are fleeing dysfunctional or dangerous families.

Some youth come whose parents simply need a break. The stress of trying to cope with their child's or stepchild's behavior has gotten too intense. Rather than become abusive, they seek intervention and guidance in parenting. I commend their bravery in admitting they want help, in a culture that so greatly stigmatizes asking for such services.

Other parents, however, are beyond needing a simple time out. They are too troubled to meet their children's needs, as their own are so intense. These parents are addicts or active alcoholics. They are men and women who beat their partners and their children. Often, though not always, they have learned these behaviors from their own parents.

New Jersey's agency — The Division of Youth and Family Services — is an active partner in counseling and housing these youth. I wish I could report that funding and servicers abound. They are woefully inadequate, a blatant reminder of which "resources" we value. But Anna, Paul, Jamal, and Tina need a voice:

- Anna is a 17-year-old from Newark. She has a history of drug-running and prostitution and last year had an abortion. Her mother has abandoned her; Anna does not know where she is and has not spoken with her in eight months. Anna will turn 18 and "age out" of the child welfare system in just two months. This will make her ineligible for youth services, and she will be homeless. Welfare will pay her less than $200 a month.
- Paul is 15. He has lived in 14 places in the past 18 months: foster homes, group homes in the community, temporary shelters. He is an extremely bright youth, friendly, helpful, likes to collect baseball cards. His father is missing and his mother has been incarcerated for two years. Paul will not deal with anything deeper than pleasant conversation. "I meet too many people to get involved," he says.
- Jamal is 13. His parents have been charged with 26 counts of physical and sexual abuse against him and his siblings. They admitted to terrorizing Jamal in an attempt to discipline him. Jamal is so out of control that none of his aunts and uncles can manage him. He himself has been charged with two counts of sexual assault and has been assigned a lawyer by the court. Jamal's therapist feels that Jamal never developed a conscience.
- Tina is 10 years old. She wrote a letter to her neighbor that, in 10-year-old language, described being raped by her 12-year-old brother. Tina's brother, in turn, is so scared of his father that he runs away constantly. He has been too terrified yet to talk about what's going on there. Because he cannot describe any abuse, child protective services take him back home to his sister and father each time.

These youth are not from New York City or Los Angeles. They are from city and suburb in New Jersey. They do not

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precious natural resource

by Mary Lou Killian

represent the "worst case scenarios" of our small, private program. They represent the norm.

Perhaps I should not call children like Anna, Paul, Jamal or Tina "resources." People, regardless of age, are not commodities. They cannot be researched, developed, marketed, sold. They cannot be traded on the stock exchange. Or can they? We have sold children, in the earlier years of our country, or have forced them into abusive apprenticeships. We have allocated funds to market children, to make our cause glossy and media-appropriate. These funds must be spent convincing ourselves that children are a worthy cause, instead of being allocated for education, housing, health services for the children directly.

Today we are raising a lost generation. They are the 500,000 homeless youth in our cities' welfare motels. They are the 350 youth that our Crisis Intervention Center serves each year, the 350 served by the shelter in northern New Jersey, and the 425 served by the shelter across the river in Bucks County, Pa. Half of these children move so often that they never attend school. If they do attend school, they are shunned by their classmates and peers. All of them are hungry.

How much does it cost to house one inmate for one year in federal or state prison? Anna and Tina's brother and Jamal have already committed crimes that, if they were 18, would send them there. How far would the money spent on their prison cells stretch if used to house and school and counsel them instead, before their youthful pain becomes adult crime?

The connection is undeniably clear. At three, four, or five years old children can hardly be culpable for many of their actions. It is not their fault that they live in one room 12 square feet in a squalid hotel. They did not choose to be brought up there.

Neither, at ages seven or eight do they choose their primary feelings — rejection, despair, frustration, and rage simply exist.

At 10 and 12 years old they turn these feelings into prostitution, drug running, breaking and entering, Satanic cults. They never learned to value themselves so they don't know what else to do. The money sure helps buy dinner when mom's welfare check only stretches through half the month. They haven't been to school, and have no other skills. They're still too young for minimum wage jobs.

As their teenage years go by — if they live to see them, for their health care and lifestyle are poor and risky — they feel increasing despair. Young black men are more likely, statistically speaking, to end up in prison than in college. As for young women, the odds are 1 in 4 that they will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.

Today's adult caregiving generations are responsible for crimes against children. We are responsible for neglecting our children and leading them to crime.

Is this another article by a bleeding heart liberal? I hope so. The label comes from the image of Jesus' bleeding on the cross. No less powerful an image is needed to portray the dire consequences of inaction on behalf of our children. As we rape the earth of her resources, so we literally and figuratively rape our children. Many of these victims will end up blamed, incarcerated, or hospitalized. They will pay a dear price for their broken childhoods. What price will we pay for this lost generation?



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Homeless teens tell their story

The tragedy of homelessness is revealed in the lives of young people who tell their grim stories of drugs, violence and despair in the recently published book, ***The Place I Call Home: Faces and Voices of Homeless Teens****, Shapolsky Publishers, 136 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10011 ($14.95). Lois Stavsky, a New York City public school teacher, had her students collect autobiographical essays as part of a class project on teenage homelessness. Stavsky and I. E. Mozeson developed the interviews into a book, with photos by Robert Hirschfield. The following three stories are excerpted from the book. Due to the sensitive information revealed by the subjects of these monologues, the actual names and photographs of the teenagers speaking here are not used.*

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Family destroyed by drugs

Lisa Cabrera, 15

My earliest memory of my mother is of her drinking a bottle of Clorox in front of me. I was four years old. I remember her telling me that she was drinking that poison because she wanted to die. I remember crying, "Please, Mommy, don't." The next thing I remember is my father calling an ambulance and my mother being rushed to the emergency room.

When I was five years old, my father was sent to Rikers for dealing drugs. My mother felt that she couldn't go on without him. She was only 15 years old when I was born and she was very dependent upon him. She tried to slit her wrists. I still remember all the blood.

Then my mother was sent to some rest home upstate. She stayed there for a year and a half while I lived with my grandmother. My aunt had tried to get custody of me, but it was decided that I'd stay with my grandma until my mother was well again.

When I was seven years old my mother came back home and moved in with me and my grandmother. Within a few months, she hooked up with my stepfather. He was a young handsome Italian guy who owned his own hardware store. We moved in with him, and for a while things were okay. My mother was even working. She was helping sell appliances in the store.

When I was nine years old, my mother became pregnant, but the baby died when she was two days old. I can't believe that I once had a sister. I wish I did now. Anyway, after the baby died, my mother got real depressed again. That's when she started messing around with drugs.

I blame my stepfather. He used to snort cocaine occasionally, but soon he and my mother were shooting up all the time. They were mixing all kinds of drugs: heroin, cocaine, speed. And they were sharing needles. Then about five years ago, my stepfather was diagnosed as having the AIDS virus. He died a year later when my mother was pregnant with my brother. My mother did not know that she had AIDS nor that my brother would be born with AIDS.

My mother was okay until about two years ago. She started feeling sick a lot, and started spending a lot of time in the hospital. At that point, my baby brother went to live with my grandmother and I went to live with my aunt.

My mother just died two months ago. Her last year was terrible. She could hardly breathe, could barely walk and spent most of the time in the intensive care unit at Bellevue Hospital. She had completely lost her will to live. I was afraid she'd kill herself before she died a natural death. But on the last day of her life, she was joking around. She told me that she knew her time was up. She had just seen her entire life flash before her eyes. I miss my mother so much. I still can't believe she's gone.

I feel so alone. I worry all the time about my brother. He's four years old and a real playful, healthy kid. But he's carrying the AIDS virus, and I know that at any time, he could get sick and die. Every time I see him, I get depressed. I keep on imagining him in his coffin. Now that's no way to see your brother. I also feel guilty that I can't help him or my grandmother. But there's really nothing I can do, but keep on living for me. It's a constant struggle for survival, even when you're not dying of AIDS.

Cocaine love affair

Bobby Ramirez, 17

When I was 13, I fell in love with cocaine. My best friend at the time was Domingo. Domingo's mother, Anna, was a big-time coke dealer. She had become a dealer to support her own habit, and she made loads of money. Whenever Domingo wanted any cocaine, all he had to do was ask his mom. I had started smoking marijuana when I was 11, but I'd never done any coke. One day, though, I got curious. I told Anna that I wanted to try some coke. "No problem," she said. "Anything for Domingo's best friend."

Soon Anna was supplying me with one gram a day, and two grams on Saturdays and Sundays. She never took any money from me. The street value of the cocaine that I was snorting was about $1,000 a week. But for me it was free.

Anyway, after about a year and a half of this, my mom got suspicious. I hadn't been spending much time in school. I was in Wagner Jr. High School at the time. Instead of going to school all I did was hang out with Domingo, snort coke, and go to rock concerts. One morning when my mom was doing my laundry, she discovered some cocaine in my pants pocket. She freaked out. To this day she does not know that Anna was supplying me. Anna was doing me a favor, and I would never turn her in. Well, my mom called up some drug abuse hot line and, after dozens of phone calls, she and my dad drove me upstate to Middletown Hospital.

They took me up to the second floor. I spent one week there being detoxified. That was the worst week of my life. When I wasn't unconscious, I was in terrible pain. My nose wouldn't stop bleeding. I still have a hole in my nose from all the cocaine that I snorted.

I thought I would be going home after spending a week at Middletown. But my parents had other plans for me. My older brother told me that they were planning to put me in a drug rehab center in Port Jarvis, N.Y. I was real pissed and made plans to run away. All I could think about were the great tickets Domingo and I had for the Iron Maiden concert coming up that Sunday at Madison Square Garden. There was no way in the world I was going to miss that. Running away, though, was not possible. I had no money. I couldn't even afford a bus ticket out of there.

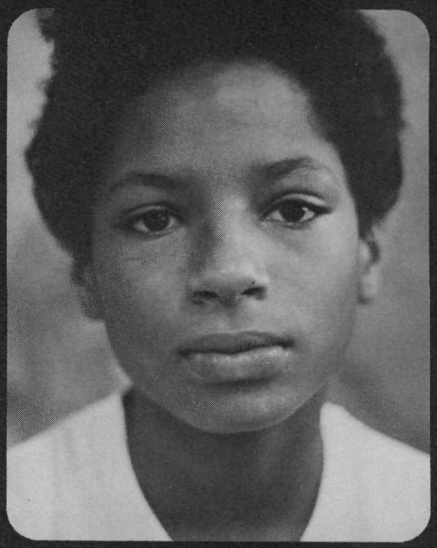
So I ended up going straight from the hospital to a huge home in the country. Riverside House was a private rehab center for drug addicts. Most of the guys there were older than me, and almost everyone there was Italian. My mom is Jewish and my dad is Puerto Rican, and I hardly ever hung out with Italians. Almost all my friends are Spanish. I hated the place at first. I was scared, and being out of the city freaked me out. My roommate, Pat, came off as a rich spoiled white boy. All that I knew about him was that his dad was a lawyer. For the first few days, I kept on plotting schemes to escape.

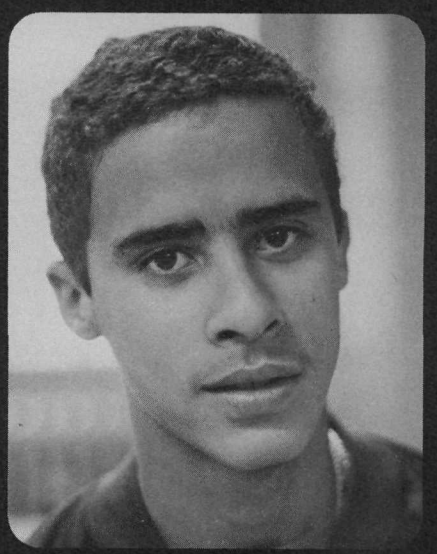
But the people at Riverside were too hip. They could read us junkies through and through. You see, everyone there, including the cook, had been a drug addict. There was no way to "get over."

As the weeks became months, I began to love Riverside. It was home to me. In fact, it was better than home. At home my parents were always fighting. They were even legally divorced 10 years ago, but continued to live together "for the sake of the kids." My mother has a boyfriend, a rich black cowboy, who spends a lot of time in our house, even with my father around. And I never felt right about that. Also, my mom was always on my back about something or another. So now, for the first time in my life, I lived in a home where people treated each other with love and respect.

Also, I felt that I was needed. We were all given different jobs to help out around the house. We worked in the fields, chopped wood and took responsibility for one another's tasks. In fact, I personally became responsible for this guy Mike, who was crippled from the neck down. Mike had been in a car accident when he was high. He had survived the accident, but he was now stuck in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He was a few years older than me and had been living at Riverside for four years. I helped Mike get dressed and undressed every day.

Back home on 28th Street, I had no way to release my anger. Here at Riverside there were boxing bags and basketball courts and constant ways to work







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out my frustration.

We met in groups three times a day. Each meeting went on for about two hours. We talked about our problems and what got us into drugs in the first place. When I first came to Riverside, I thought that I'd gotten into drugs just for the fun of it. But at Riverside I came to understand that drugs were an escape. I wasn't dealing with my parents' screwed up relationship and my mom's nasty habit of always dumping on me.

Neither of my parents is religious. But at Riverside, we prayed to God every day. We asked God to give us the strength to overcome our weaknesses and the wisdom to know right from wrong. I felt good knowing there is a higher power in my life. I also learned that there is a purpose to my life. This is something that I was not taught at home.

I spent almost a year at Riverside. When I came home last spring, I felt that I wasn't ready to return to school. But now I'm at Seward Academy trying to make up as many credits as possible. Living at home is okay, mainly because my parents now pamper me a lot and try not to argue too much in front of me. Also, I have a wonderful girlfriend who's 20 years old and a dancer. Next year, as soon as I become 18, we plan to get our own apartment. I will finally have a home of my own.

Homeless teen mother

Shanita Dixon, 17

Things were never really cool with my mother. She didn't take drugs or drink or anything like that, but she had her highs and lows. She was completely unpredictable. When she got into her bad moods, she would leave it out on me. If she was feeling lousy for whatever reason, I was the one who suffered. When I was younger, she used to beat me all the time with a wet ironing cord. Sometimes she just used the iron. I still have scars all over my legs.

When I was 14 years old, I became pregnant with Mikie. My boyfriend Richie offered to help me out at the time. After Mikie was born, Richie moved in with me and my mom and took care of Mikie while I worked. I worked as a cashier and made just about enough money to cover my expenses. Shortly after Mikie was born, I became pregnant again. Richie did not want to have the baby. I didn't want to abort it. Richie and I started arguing a lot, and eventually I found out that he had another girlfriend who was also pregnant. Richie moved out.

After my second son, David, was born, I saw Richie only occasionally. Things were not good between us. Almost every time we were together, we fought. Sometimes, though, he babysat while I went to work. One day I came home from work to find Richie, Mikie and David gone. At first I thought they'd just stepped out for awhile. But soon it was midnight, and they hadn't returned. I panicked. I called Richie's mother. It seems that Richie had run off with the kids to some relatives in Baltimore. His mother wouldn't tell me much more. I contacted the police and within two weeks, the kids were found in Richie's aunt's house in Baltimore. I went down to Baltimore to get my kids back, and that's when I met Robert.

We were both 16 at the time. Robert was cute and kind. We fell in love, and Robert offered to come back with me to New York to help me out with the boys. I guess he kinda felt sorry for me. My mother, at first, liked Robert a lot. She was glad to have him living with us. When he first came up to New York, he got a job doing construction work and helped us all out. He paid for just about all our food. But the construction company folded, and Robert was out of work. He had a few odd jobs here and there, but the money wasn't good. Robert was real honest, and he never tried to make easy money. Robert started feeling depressed and hung around the house a lot.

At about the same time, my mother hooked up with another woman. She'd had a number of gay relationships throughout the years, but this time she was in love. She invited her new lover to live with her and threw me, Robert, and my two kids out of the house.

That's when I started living in a shelter. Me and the two kids were placed in a shelter downtown. I had to sneak Robert in all the time. It was real hard on all of us. There were shoot-outs in the halls and drug dealers roaming around as though they owned the place. Everything we had was stolen from us. The halls stank from piss and worse. This was no place to raise children. But it was the children that kept me alive. People felt protective towards me because they knew that I had two young kids to take care of. Also, they looked out for my kids. Mikie is kinda hyper, but David is slow. He is 14 months, but he doesn't walk yet. He is just now wearing the cloths that Mikie wore when Mikie was five months old. David was born prematurely when I was in my seventh month, and the doctor keeps telling me that he will catch up. Sometimes I worry about him.

Anyway, living in a shelter put a strain on my relationship with Robert. He felt terrible that he couldn't support me and that we couldn't afford our own apartment. About two months ago, Robert started acting real depressed

We went for a walk in Central Park, and Robert started playing with a rope. I thought he was just playing, but before I knew with was happening, he was dead. He died in my arms.

I just wanted to die, too. I called up my mother whom I hadn't spoken to in a while. I told her what had happened. I told her that I wanted to kill myself. Her only response was, "If you kill yourself, you better take your kids with you, 'cause I'm sure as hell not gonna take care of them."

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Short Takes

Too many rich people

The most common misconception of the population problem is that it's a problem of poor Indians who don't know how to use condoms. Actually, the problem in the world is that there are too many rich people.

— Paul Ehrlich, professor of population studies, Stanford University, explaining that one American is likely to do 20 to 100 times more damage to the earth than an inhabitant of, say, Bangladesh or Venezuela.

***Harrowsmith* 7-8/90**

Squeezed at the pump

The oil giants are again profiting from the world's trouble. During the 1973-74 oil crisis, the profits of the 19 leading U.S. oil companies rose from $5.5 billion in 1972 to $12.5 billion in 1974, shocking consumers who had been led to believe that OPEC was to blame for high oil prices, not Exxon or Gulf. The sharp rise in profits repeated itself in 1979 and 1980.

In the current crisis, once again the desire for profits, not a shortage of oil, is driving up the price of oil . . . As the *Economist* commented, "Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was not unadulterated good news for oil companies, but it was the best they have had in a long time."

Patricia Horn
***Dollars & Sense* 11/90**

There is no reason to repeat bad history.

— Eleanor Holmes Norton

Christians and AIDS

It is a source of constant amazement and discouragement to me that Christians have such an impoverished view of what they have to offer in the face of something like AIDS. Just as it is a source of constant amazement and much joy to me that every once in a while, somebody will come forward and dare to demand our ministry anyway. Companions in dying, ministers of reconciliation, purveyors of hope, prophets of meaning: This what we are called to be.

***Integrator* Michaelmas 1990**



Too busy for real Christmas

"The busyness of preparing the nursery" for Mary and Joseph was no "hanging the greens, the wreaths, the poinsettias." It was the mucking out of a cruddy stable so it would be as clean as possible for the birthing — and that would require some shoveling of manure out of the way, I would imagine. Could it be that modern preparations in churches as well as homes, the getting ready for Christmas, are "busyness for busyness sake," to keep you too busy to sit down and think about what "born in a stable and laid in a manger" *really* involved for Mary and Joseph?

We "deck the halls with boughs of holly" and anything else we can think of — and never, or hardly ever, think of the realities of the birth in a stable. We gussy up our churches with riches galore and so distance ourselves from the home for the Christ Child — that was the best that Joseph could provide and very poor it was — to show how much fancier and richer a "home" *we* can provide — as if we were trying to shame Joseph — so fancy that street people wouldn't dare to wander in to a Christmas Eve service. Nor would poor Mary and Joseph and Jesus either!

Abbie Jane Wells
The Gospel According to Abbie Jane Wells

Health care a luxury

Some 31.8 million Americans have no health care and millions more have inadequate coverage. Of these, two-thirds live in families where at least one member works full-time.

NCC Mark-Up 8/90

Surprise from the poor

When John XXIII convoked the Second Vatican Council in 1962, he said that he prayed the bishops would be able to make the church "once again what Christ intended it to be, namely a church of the poor." Responding, the Jesuits announced that the promotion of human justice would be an integral element in the worldwide work of their order. Other Catholic groups moved whole schools, hospitals and parish services from handsome suburbs to forgotten shantytowns. It was to be a costly change.

But as they made this jarring transition, church leaders discovered something they had not expected. Instead of bringing the Gospel to the castoffs and losers, they were meeting Christ in a fresh way, among the same kinds of people with whom he had lived and worked during his earthly years.

They also discovered that the wounded people among whom they were working nourished a persistent faith in God's ultimate justice, and even though the church had sometimes ignored or betrayed them, they retained a stubborn confidence in its mission.

As Ignacio Martin-Baro (one of the Jesuits killed in El Salvador) himself once told me, "Instead of the church making an option for the poor, we found that the poor had already made an option for the church, or more accurately, for the gospel the church is supposed to teach and represent."

Harvey Cox writing in *Interamerican Public Opinion Report* 1/90

Gay/lesbian conference

"Gay and Christian Yes! Accepted As Living Members," a conference for gay, lesbian and bisexual Christians, will be held in Browns Summit, N.C., December 14-16. The Rev. Malcolm Boyd, noted author and gay/lesbian activist, will lead the conference, sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina The $135-165 per person fee includes registration, rooms and meals. Scholarships are available. Mail reservations to: Registrar, St. Phillip's Episcopal Church, PO Box 218, Durham, NC 27707.

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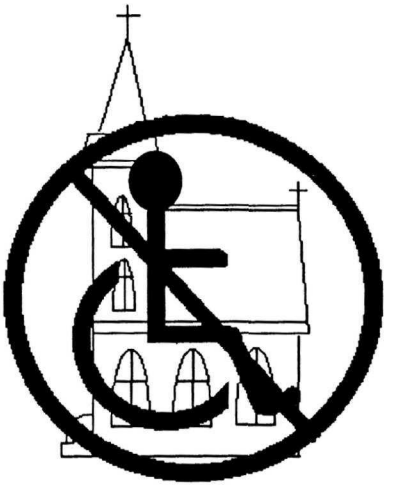
No inclusivity without accessibility

by Sara Fischer

The Americans with Disabilities Act, which President Bush signed into law this year, will guarantee new freedom and new opportunities for 43 million Americans in every area of society except the church. Described as the most sweeping civil rights legislation to come through Congress in 25 years, the ADA affirms the rights of people with disabilities by mandating equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications for anyone whose "mental or physical impairment substantially limits everyday living." The ADA extends the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to people with disabilities, and extends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 beyond facilities operated or funded by the federal government to private employers and to the transportation and telecommunications industries. Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), one of the bill's sponsors, has called it "an emancipation proclamation for people with handicaps." It seeks to end discrimination against people with disabilities in all aspects of daily life.

Every day but Sunday, that is. While the rest of the country will be obligated under the new law to uphold the rights of people with disabilities, each church must choose whether, and to what extent, to open its doors to those 43 million Americans.

The section of the Act which guarantees "the full and equal enjoyment" of services and facilities offered by public accommodations, including those operated by private entities, explicitly exempts "entities controlled by religious organizations, including places of worship." The original version of the bill contained no such exemption; the exclusion was introduced in the summer of 1989 only after representatives from the U. S. Catholic Conference, the Synagogue Council of America, and several major Protestant denominations lobbied strenuously on the grounds that inclusion threatened to breach the line between church and state.



Religious organizations wrestled at some length with how to approach the ADA. In this particular instance, it is difficult to argue that sound government policy is not also sound theology. On the other hand, from the perspective of a rigid, "hands-off" interpretation of the free-exercise clause of the First Amendment, the church-state concern is a convincing one. The Act would set a potentially dangerous precedent by listing churches and synagogues as public accommodations; it might then be possible for future, less "theologically sound" laws to extend to churches. In addition, by requiring religious institutions to become accessible to people with physical handicaps, the state would be in a position to influence a particular church or synagogue's budget process. For example, a church could no longer choose whether to allocate resources toward building a wheelchair ramp or feeding the homeless; the state would mandate the former as a priority.

And yet, the churches' response to the prospect of being included in this civil rights legislation smacks sadly of the not-in-my-backyard syndrome, treatment which people with disabilities experience in so many other aspects of their lives as they try to live, work, shop, and recreate alongside their peers without disabilities.

Legal exemption does not imply moral exemption. The church's freedom from the sweeping effects of the ADA ought not to mean freedom from responsibility to those millions of Americans who will otherwise benefit from the new law.

The very existence of this legislation asks all of us to look at a call from an authority higher than the federal government, and examine our attitudes as well as our buildings, with a view toward opening our hearts, our facilities, and our liturgical, educational, and outreach programs to the full participation of all people, especially those with other abilities.

Our culture has historically segregated people with mental or physical handicaps. In biblical times, segregation was most commonly manifested in social ostracism and exclusion from worship. In our own time, segregation has taken many forms, from architectural barriers to warehousing people in huge institutions to placing children with disabilities in "special" classrooms away from "normal" children.

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Segregation of people with physical handicaps is also fueled by our culture's focus on physical appearance and the myth of the perfectibility of our bodies. The media teaches us that certain attributes are critical for success: good looks, well-proportioned, athletic bodies, physical strength, "personal style"... the list is endless and, for many of us, painfully ingrained. The ADA will facilitate fuller integration in the work place and other aspects of community for many people, but our preoccupation with earthly treasures such as physical beauty and stamina serves to widen the gap between people with disabilities and people without disabilities, perpetuating a sense of "us" and "them" as old as Leviticus.

In the culture of the Old Testament, as in ours, disease set people apart, and was most often an experience of alienation and brokenness. As many people with disabilities are painfully aware, the Hebrew Bible contains a varied spectrum of messages about the causes and treatment of disease and disability, and the community's relationship to those who suffer. On one hand, the people are instilled with the belief that any form of disease or "affliction" is a punishment from God. On the other hand, God's primary purpose is always to preserve community, and God is the source of healing and restoration. All that comes from God is of God, including all sorts and conditions of abilities, perhaps most beautifully illustrated in God's commissioning of Moses. Moses protests that he is "slow of speech and of tongue. Then the Lord said to him, 'Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.' " *(Ex. 4:10-12)*

Not one of the church leaders who took a position on the ADA denied that opening church and synagogue facilities to all people, with and without disabilities, is the right thing to do, and a proper expression of their faith. But *are* churches expressing their faith in this way? *Will* churches do the right thing without the law to push them?

Many of us resist sharing our faith community with people with handicaps because they are unfamiliar: Perhaps they do not "fit," either physically or mentally, into "our" pews, parish suppers, or Sunday school classes. But as a community striving to live as God's people, we are called to welcome people who are different from us, and open ourselves to them. The book of Exodus reminds us: "You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in Egypt." *(Ex. 23:9)* We have all been strangers at one time, and we often "oppress" through our fear of that which is unfamiliar.

Jesus' life and ministry teach us that God, the giver of abundant life, calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and to treat all people like neighbors. In word and deed, Jesus embodies the radical inclusivity of all people. He comes to restore the community of God's people to the fullness born of including all people in its midst.

Jesus' work of restoration is most evident in the healing stories which fill the Gospel accounts of Jesus' life on earth.

In Matthew's Gospel, "a leper came to Jesus and knelt, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' And Jesus touched him, saying 'I will; be clean.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." *(Matt. 8:2-3)*

Jesus then directs the leper to show himself to the priest; the leper's primary experience of healing is that of being restored to his community.

The crowd scenes depicted throughout the New Testament show that healing is available to all people. In *Mark 6*, at Gennesaret, "the whole neighborhood" knows of Jesus' power and looks to him for healing. They "besought Jesus that they might touch even the fringe of His garment; *and as many as touched it were made well.*" (italics mine, *Mk. 6:56*) Jesus' healing does not discriminate or segregate.

The Synoptic Gospels all contain versions of the story of a paralytic brought to Jesus by his friends for healing. This is a story of many things: access, the power of a community of faith, and Jesus' power to heal and to forgive sins. Luke's version of the story also contains another important detail; when the paralytic takes up his bed and goes home, he does so "glorifying God." *(Luke 5:25)* The one who has been healed joins the community through active worship.

In the world of today, few of us witness the kind of healing described in the Gospels. We seldom see a paralytic walk, or a blind person see. However, we must remember that *healing is not so much the absence of symptoms as the absence of suffering*, and as followers of Jesus we can do much in our faith communities to remove suffering. We can look honestly at our buildings, our educational programs, our worship services, our personnel, and most of all, our attitudes.

If we make entry into our places of worship difficult, either physically, through the lack of ramps or accessible restrooms, or emotionally, through lack of acceptance, we shut out the people of God. Most people agree that churches do not have a great track record in the area of accessibility. Church entrances, such an important evangelical statement for most denominations, are notoriously difficult for many people to negotiate. Restrooms are another bastion of inaccessibility. As one advocate put it: "They're not going to come if they can't go."

However, access is not only the presence of architectural or technical adaptations for people with disabilities, but

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Lyman Ogilby: Ambassador of Christ

The Rt. Rev. Lyman C. Ogilby, former Bishop of Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and the Philippines, collapsed at the October consecration of his old friend Jeffery Terry as Bishop of Spokane, suffering from the effects of a chronic and serious respiratory illness. Typically, he asked for oxygen so that he could make it through the ceremony. Ogilby, 68, was never to return to his home in Philadelphia; on Nov. 3 he died of pulmonary failure in Spokane.

Such faithfulness had often cost him dearly during his career as a bishop.

Friends and family filled the cathedral-sized Church of the Saviour in Philadelphia on a wet November morning to celebrate Ogilby's life and ministry. The Rt. Rev. Robert DeWitt, Ogilby's predecessor in Pennsylvania, reminded the congregation that Ogilby had spent 37 years — over half his life — as a bishop. His ministry covered some of the most significant and controversial events in the history of the Episcopal Church.

He was born an Anglican. His father was the Rev. Dr. Remsen B. Ogilby, president of Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. After college, Lyman Ogilby served on a PT boat in the Pacific during World War II. He attended the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Cambridge, Mass., graduated in 1949, and was ordained a priest a year later.

In 1950, Ogilby began his ministry in the Philippines. His love and respect for the Filipino people made the struggle to liberate the Episcopal Church and Philippine society from the yoke of colonialism one of the passions of his life.

He was elected suffragan bishop of the Philippines in 1952, and became bishop in 1957. In 1967 he resigned as bishop so the Philippine Episcopal Church could elect their first indigenous bishop. He worked tirelessly to help the Philippine Church achieve independence. Ogilby served on the Joint Committee on the Philippine Convenant and saw his dream realized when the Philippine Church attained autonomy in May 1990.

The Most Rev. Richard A. Abellon, Prime Bishop of the Philippine Episcopal Church, wrote of Ogilby's death: "It is very unfortunate that the 'Apo Lakay' passed away at a time when the Philippine Episcopal Church is just beginning to live out the blessings and challenges of autonomy — the realization of which he was one of the great architects. His ministry has been deeply etched into our hearts — a gift that will always serve as an inspiration to those who vow to follow the path of Christ."

From the Philippines he went on to be elected bishop coadjutor of the then-Missionary District of South Dakota, and became bishop three years later. While serving there, his lifelong oppostion to the death penalty and support for Native American rights brought him into the center of controversy, according to the Rev. Suzanne Hiatt, a long-time friend.

Hiatt, now a professor at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, said that Ogilby became involved in a notorious case in South Dakota. Thomas Whitehawk, a young Native American, accused of a brutal murder, was "being railroaded to the chair," said Hiatt, when Ogilby intervened and got expert legal counsel that managed to get Whitehawk's sentence reduced.

"The whites never forgave him," said Hiatt. "When he resigned as bishop (in 1970), he hoped the diocese would elect a Native American, but they were so mad at him that they elected another white bishop."

"He took risks out of principle," said Hiatt. "It must have cost him more than we'll ever know."

Controversy and change seemed to follow him throughout his career. Not long after he became bishop of Pennsylvania in 1974, succeding the often-stormy tenure of resigned Bishop Robert DeWitt, plans were afoot in the diocese to host the ordinations of the first women priests, in defiance of the official church ban.

Ogilby, a strong believer in women's ordination, did not feel that the unsanctioned ordinations would best serve the cause. Hiatt, who was one of the ordinands and at the time was also on Ogilby's staff, said that he felt General Convention was the proper forum for deciding the issue and that his job was to hold the diocese together.

After the ordinations, said Hiatt, "He tried to keep the peace by keeping off those who wanted to kill us, and holding off the 'radicals' as well. He got us all through this thing."

The Rev. Paul Washington, host of the July 29 ordinations at his inner-city Church of the Advocate despite fears he could be suspended, recalled how gently Ogilby dealt with disagreement.

"Some months after the ordinations, I went to visit him. I had no idea what I had to say; he had already admonished me. But we talked both in a loving and respecting way," said Washington.

As they discussed the official reaction to the ordinations, "I said to Lyman, 'The church is not willing to be prophetic.' And he answered, 'Institutions are not prophetic. The church can raise up prophets, and support them, but it can't be expected to be prophetic.' "

Washington said, "He felt that the church had to have its arms open to the left and the right, to embrace all." He noted that despite the "awkwardness of July 29," Ogilby later made him a member of his staff and valued his input as the pastor to a community struggling with the effects of racism and poverty.

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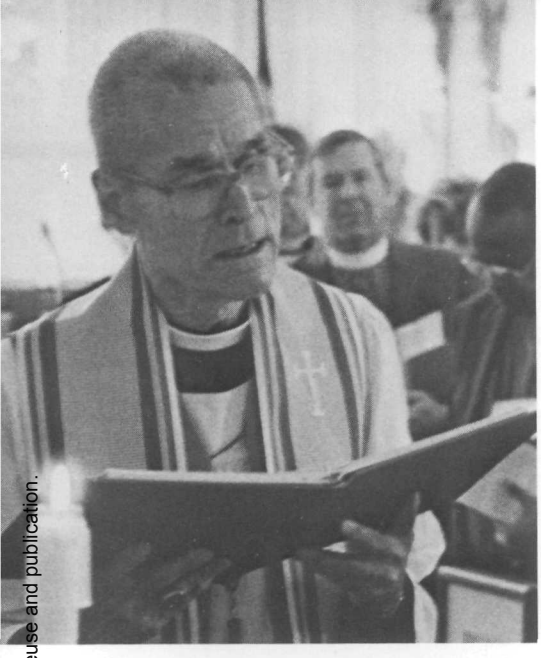

The Rt. Rev. Lyman C. Ogilby (1922-1990), reading the Gospel at Christ Church, Philadelphia, during the 1989 House of Bishops worship service.

The Rev. David Gracie, one of Ogilby's urban mission staff and a veteran of civil rights battles, sharply disagreed with Ogilby's handling of the July 29 ordinations.

Gracie recalled asking to speak to Ogilby before the regular Thursday Eucharist for the staff. "I was upset. I said, 'I don't feel in communion with you.' And Lyman said, 'David, why don't you be the celebrant?' He literally brought me to the table."

Ogilby's committment to keeping the peace was difficult, said Gracie. "He was under tremendous strain; he didn't want to harm the ordination cause, but he didn't want to split the diocese. I knew he sensed the pain."

When Ogilby retired as diocesan in 1987, said Gracie, "it was a great load off his shoulders. He could be 100% for what he believed."

Despite failing health, after his retirement Ogilby remained active, assisting with episcopal visitations in the dioceses of Western Michigan, Bethlehem, Maryland, Washington, D.C., as well as Pennsylvania. He also served the church's peace and justice community. He was vice-president of the Episcopal Urban Caucus and a major force in the Urban Bishops Coalition.

Diane Pollard, president of the Urban Caucus and a member of the Church Pension Fund Board, said of Ogilby, "He did so much for the church in a quiet, unassuming way. I could call him up anytime and get a straight, compassionate answer."

Dr. Louie Crew, educator and founder of Integrity, the group for gay and lesbian Episcopalians, said Ogilby's committment to justice extended to the gay and lesbian community. "When we had our third convention in Philadelphia," said Crew, "he came and preached a wonderful, supportive sermon."

Crew said Ogilby mourned the church's lack of support for gay and lesbian rights. "He was so clearly on the side of social justice. He was always ready to listen, and it's not easy to get access with the issues I represent.

"He felt grieved that the heart of the church was not near the heart of Christ. He didn't eat freeze-dried manna," noted Crew.

Marge Christie of the Episcopal Women's Caucus said that though Ogibly had had doubts about the manner of the July 29 ordinations, his basic committment to women's rights was unwavering. "He was such a dynamic man," she said. "He had no reservations about standing tall for justice for everybody. He was a member and supporter of the caucus."

The Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, suffragan bishop of Massachusetts and the first woman bishop in the worldwide Anglican Communion, recalled how she felt Ogilby's affirmation and warm friendship throughout her church career.

"He made me a deacon, priested me and was a co-consecrator when I was made bishop," said Harris.

Because he was both an ally for justice and had a voice that pentrated to the farthest reaches of any room without a microphone, Harris noted, "I hate to lose that strong voice in the House of Bishops. The House will be diminished by the loss of his perspective and wisdom from 37 years in the episcopate."

It was Ogilby's dedication to the episcopacy that his colleague DeWitt emphasized as he preached at Ogilby's memorial service. "The apostolic role of bishop was the identifying and dominant mark of his ministry. He wore the mitre easily and naturally.

"It is helpful to remember that the word 'apostle' refers to one who is sent, as an ambassador is sent to represent his native realm to a far land. Just so, a bishop is an ambassador of Christ, sent to represent God to the kingdoms of this world," said DeWitt.

Ogilby's successor, the Rt. Rev. Allan L. Bartlett, Jr., told the congregation that "in his last days, Lyman kept saying 'No fancy speeches.' "

A statement by Ogilby's family outlined how best to honor his memory: "We would like to say a few words to those who loved and lived with Lyman C. Ogilby. Just before his death, he reminded us that God needs helpers to carry out God's mission and that we are the feet and hands of the cosmic Christ. We are needed to work for peace and justice. We ask that you remember this as you celebrate his life. This living memorial will be as diverse as the people who have been touched by Lyman C. Ogilby. Let your contributions to this mission reflect your abilities and talents."

In closing, Bartlett recalled how Ogilby, while attending a funeral at Philadelphia's historic Christ Church, pointed to a dogwood tree in the church yard and said, "When I die, that's where I'd like to be."

"He asked for a simple service, a small service," said Bartlett. Smiling as he surveyed the capacity crowd, he added, "We could do simple; small was not so easy."

— Susan E. Pierce

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America in search of itself

by Malcolm Boyd

Thirty-five years ago, on a sunny day in December I was ordained an Episcopal priest. The years have sped past. In the 1960s, the civil rights movement exploded into reality and became the major focus of my life. In the '70s I "came out" as a gay man and priest. In the '80s, as a parish priest, I came face-to-face with, and often preached about, fast changing problems.

Today, bridges of my own intellect are under fire. Lines in the sand disappear. The Middle East: Can it be defined in a dialogue instead of being blown to pieces? El Salvador's charred bodies and houses: Aren't they just over that ridge? Images of pain and violence intercut in my consciousness: A government building that stands mere blocks away from torture chambers; refugees; starving children; urban crime; political prisoners; the emergence of ever new demagogues to inflame racial hatred and perpetuate separation.

A deadly opponent of the human spirit threatens to seize possession of a strategic hill that lies directly behind my eyes.

How can one survive as a whole human being with hope and courage? How can one serve the cause of loving when the force of hate literally overpowers so much of life? One has been told that religion is dead, its trunkful of truths mere shopworn platitudes that have been buried by a bitter and scarred generation.

Yet the Talmud speaks about the quality of life many earnestly seek: One who destroys a single life destroys the entire world; one who saves a single life saves the entire world. And Jesus responds directly to my questions:

For I was hungry and you gave me no food.
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink.
I was a stranger and you did not welcome me.
Naked and you did not clothe me.
Sick and in prison and you did not visit me.

Two brands of Christianity

I *can* do something. I can contribute to changing the very quality of life. Christianity is an unflinching force of overpowering truth that lifts us up and reminds us eternally that we have been created in the image of God and have the salvific work of love to carry on in solidarity with others.

Still, there is a brand of Christianity that awaits the Second Coming of Christ to solve pressing "social problems" such as hunger, poverty, war, racism, sexism, homophobia, colonialism and loveless exploitation. This type of Christianity explains that it renders unto God what belongs to God, unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and remains uninvolved in social issues.

But in fact, this brand of Christianity *is* involved in social issues by its support of the status quo. It is rewarded by privilege, tax exemptions, and the prestige bestowed traditionally upon docile religion. The state uses such religion for its own purposes as do corporate empires, or powerful people who don't want anything changed.

Religion-with-a-price-tag provides well-trained clergy who publicly mouth lukewarm yet politically supportive caricatures of prayers at government ceremonies or ritualistic assemblies of the powerful and mighty; who plead with a partisan god to let "our" side win its wars and distort the Gospel of Christ in accommodation to the status quo.

All this would not be so dangerous were it not for today's sophisticated technology. Technology brings the McLuhan prophecy full circle so that the medium is the message. Take, for example, a crowd flaunting religious symbols and in the distance an evangelist superstar performing under bright lights. The giant revivalist rally has given way to creating an impeccable image for the TV screen. Every technological, promotional, and publicity device has been put to work.

The contemporary disciples of P.T. Barnum — the patron saint whom American religion is too snobbishly dishonest to canonize — use every gimmick to manipulate people. The gospel preached is a message of power, authority, public relations and packaging.

It is a truly Orwellian scene. We are into the numbers game. Even otherwise sane people have come to gauge the significance of U.S. denominations in terms of numbers. American Christianity decided that it must grow and grow and grow and grow. It is a friendly green giant in a clerical collar. But where did JEEE-sus go? Where is the hard Gospel moral/prophetic content? The scandal of the Gospel is banished by a focus on worldly success. The betrayal of Jesus Christ is perpetrated in His own name, even as His own words are read aloud.

The environmental crisis has shown that sheer growth can be negative and self-defeating, and even lead to extinction. It is a warning to revise our criteria for measuring the quality of life. We

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The Rev. Malcolm Boyd, author of 22 books, is chaplain of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles' Commission on AIDS Ministry, and serves on the staff of St. Augustine-by-the-Sea, Santa Monica, Calif.

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stand in dire need of *perestroika,* which means restructuring not only our institutions, but attitudes and values. We also need *glasnost*: a new honesty that is public as well as private. *The church needs glasnost and perestroika.* Parts of Christianity seem to be avoiding involvement in the social-cultural issues that represent the spiritual context of most people's lives.

German theologian Dorothee Sölle catches the meaning of this connection when she notes in her book *Revolutionary Patience* that there is a relationship between "study of the sufferings of Christ," and "study of a world map pinpointing illiteracy and manufacturing of arms." Daniel Berrigan, in jail for civil disobedience writes: "Holy, Holy? Bend your ear to the chorus, a scratchy record in a groove; the minds of prisoners shuffle about, wall-to-wall on run-down heels." Berrigan affirms a radical worship that involves the sacrifice of one's body and well-being, a type of prayer that has inevitable and ominous public consequences.

Prayer is largely misunderstood. It is not "proper" words. It is frequently action without words. Or it is "improper" words. Here's a prayer from John Shea's *Hour of the Unexpected*:

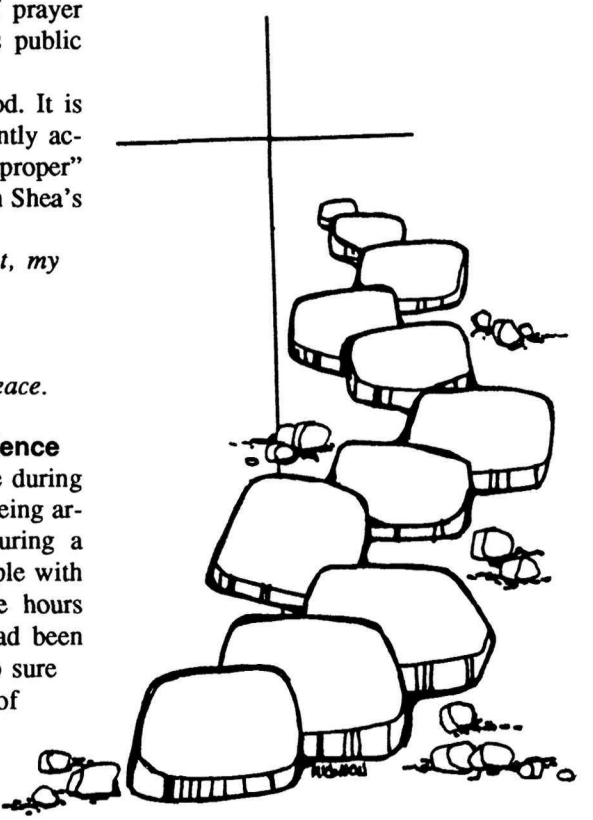
So where were you last night, my good time deity,
drinking buddy, frat brother
when failure was in my throat
and every word a scream for peace.

Communion with god of violence

Prayer became central in my life during time spent in jail recently after being arrested for civil disobedience during a demonstration in support of people with AIDS. Chained to a bench, the hours grew long. My 67th birthday had been just four day before; I wasn't so sure of my inner strength and level of resistance. The situation became painful and discouraging. Acknowledging my own total absence of control, I asked for help. I prayed, I meditated, and tremendous peace, a centering, a trust came over me. However, many people have difficulty finding this trust right now, as troubles seem to hold center stage and difficulties mount.

An encroaching, universal doom sticks like a thorn in the national consciousness. This sense may come from problems or forces in one's own environment rather than from any outside attack. A number of people feel this dread may be linked to increasing violence. Stanley Kubrick's film *A Clockwork Orange* went so far as to depict worship of a god of brutality. Young men filled with verve stomp a helpless old man, and gang-rape a woman while kicking her husband's face to a pulp, in the liturgies and rites of violence.

It troubles me that such adherence to a creed may represent far more profound communion than the lifeless travesty of worship in a piously conventional ritual of churchianity. Writing in *The Day of the Locust,* Nathanael West warned that people consumed by the fury of an "awful, anarchic power . . . had it in them to destroy civilization."



Examining America's soul

As we embark upon the final decade of one century and prepare to greet another, we need to examine America's soul.

A nun in California who teaches in a parochial school told me: "This soul has to express itself. All the anger, dirt, and frustrations need to come out. After that, there can be a new beginning. In order to love, one must hold oneself wide open to other people. Yet people merely pretend to communicate. They are insensitive, deeply troubled, searching for their real self. It's difficult to hold standards and maintain an ideal when ideals are considered obsolete. Patterns for the future cannot use an old map. Instead we need to break down old forms and restructure. We need a new set of pioneers."

A graduate student in social work said: "Am I hustling for nothing? Confronting the situation as it is, and where it seems to be going, I try not to look closely at it. The system is so rotten. Who is honest? Who is telling the truth about anything? I can't see how there will be any way to be successful without selling my soul."

A teacher of first-grade children saw society's moral resources as hollow. "The school system doesn't really want to deal with the child," she said. "The child is supposed to accommodate to the school. And so many older kids think they're protesting, but they have no values. The kids themselves have no control over the forces that are shaping them."

An African-American college administrator told me: "There is no moral leadership. There is no sense of anyone's caring strongly, loving deeply, or trying to turn around a near-hopeless racial situation. The inner cities are black, the

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suburbs white. There are few bridges or lines of communication between them. A match could ignite an inferno that would make Washington, D.C. after Martin Luther King's death look like child's play. And nobody is doing a damned thing to stop it. America's soul is in deep trouble."

Unquestionably it is. We want comfort. Does God give us comfort? We want peace. Does God give us peace? No, not in any self-serving way in an agonized world. Organized religion is largely to blame for our misconceptions. We have been misinformed, promised a rose garden, and led down a primrose path.

Engaged in pilgrimage

Each of us, in one way or another, is engaged in a small pilgrimage toward truth, fulfillment, meaning, responsibility and joy. Now we must get these small pilgrimages together and share the big one. The long pilgrimage must include an involved, pragmatic concern about meeting the planet's problems and one's personal issues. Christianity, when correctly practiced, gives us the answer to both. It does not offer a personal gospel *here*, a social gospel *there*.

Clearly, we haven't accepted Christ either personally or socially, and the result can be found in the wreckage that surrounds us. But this is our failure, and Christ points the way for us to overcome it. Christ offers us communion with God and each other. Christ respects our God-given free wills, never wishing to manipulate us.

Because America's soul is troubled, people feel guilty, frustrated, and restless. The gap between people's unfilled spiritual needs and organized religion's failure of nerve is fertile ground for the growth of a demagogic, chauvinistic religious movement. This, I believe, is one of the most frightening prospects Americans will face if precautions are not taken now.

An alive church

Many people in the church know that the church is always healthiest when it is responding to tensions in the world. I recall a bishop saying, "I have two types of clergy in my diocese, the disturbed and the dead. I hope I will remain always one of the disturbed."

A number of "disturbed" clergy and laity are moving close together in a new life style that disrupts the old caste system separating them. Thank God there are women priests. Hopefully, openly lesbian and gay priests will also feel free in the near future to share and interact more naturally with others in the Body of Christ. An alive church will increasingly find its altar on Main Street, its holiest people ordinary women and men who care about other people and therefore, about God. Its "social action" will place its own body on the line, inseparable from the love always talked about from pulpits.

A public demonstration is good for jarring a pickled conscience. But really effective social action — obedience to the Gospel — is ongoing work rooted in education, housing, jobs, peace, politics and breaking down ghetto walls. The essential church remains the movement that shattered the peace of Peter, Mary Magdalene, St. Francis, Joan of Arc, St. Teresa of Avila, Luther, Kierkegaard, Simone Weil, Dag Hammarskjold, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, James Baldwin and Eleanor Roosevelt.

What Jesus really said

Not much
I am
here
now
with you.
I see you,
God-in-you.
I need to touch you.
I need you to touch me.
I need to be alone.
I will not leave you alone.

Respect all beings.
Be compassionate.
Take risks to help others
and to become your whole self.
Be present in every moment.
Love as fully as life allows.
Live as fully as love allows.
I love you.

Let youself be loved.
Accept acceptance.

Remember me.

— Alla Renee Bozarth

Success in the church will not come from public-relations events, real-estate construction, or power-structure prelates.

All in all, despite bloodstains, wasteland rhetoric and strains that shatter lives, the essential church is passionately alive, embarrassingly well, and living in a moon-drenched world of sensitive, sometimes crazy, changing and growing people. These people do not hear the majestic, martial strains celebrating the divine Hero in imperial glory and establishment power.

Instead there is a quiet celebration of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, the anti-hero of his own time, the brother and servant who died on the cross in God's identification with human pain, failure and hope, and the search for joy and love. TW

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Inclusivity . . . *Continued from page 19*

also a fuller understanding of their needs, *and gifts*. Many churches today have wheelchair ramps and accessible restrooms; some have large-print bulletins, interpreters for the deaf, and Sunday school classes for children with mental retardation. Such things are very important, and congregations are to be commended for the services they offer people with handicaps.

But meeting Christ in our sisters and brothers means more than special services or adaptations. It means being in communion with the whole person, not just his or her deafness or learning disability or chronic illness. And this communion means full access to all aspects of parish life. We must ask ourselves: how many people with handicapping conditions are in the choir? On the vestry? In the pulpit? When we plan our annual stewardship drive, or recruit new Sunday school teachers, or search for a new rector, how many of us think of people with disabilities?

At a recent gathering of people with disabilities and their advocates someone said, "Freedom is not just the absence of barriers, but the presence of possibilities." The Americans with Disabilities Act represents new possibilities for million of people in this country. It also presents the church with a special challenge to maintain the balance between protecting the church-state separation on one hand, and discerning the moral mandate to welcome people with disabilities into faith communities on the other. Like a drawing of two silhouettes which form a chalice between them, both halves of the balance compel our attention and affirmation. At this point, the church is in a position to maintain the separation between church and state *and* strengthen its integrity, by voluntarily meeting — perhaps exceeding — the standards set by the new law. A starting point might be to communicate a strong proactive position to its members with disabilities, letting them know that we *will* make our building and programs accessible, not because the state tells us so, but because it is the only true response to God's call to community. TW

Stroke!

She had no time
for sunsets once but
now she drinks them in
her stiffened frame; soft
rounded eyes, alone which move,
wonder as they turn about
the glory of the scene. No time
before, she hurried through the
evening with supper smells and
table placements uppermost — but
that
was then.

Now there is not much but
Time for the settings and the risings
of the sun. Though slight the joy,
it's no small thing: this meeting of
two brightnesses that, despite the
odds,
shine on.

— Ann Maureen Gallagher, IHM



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