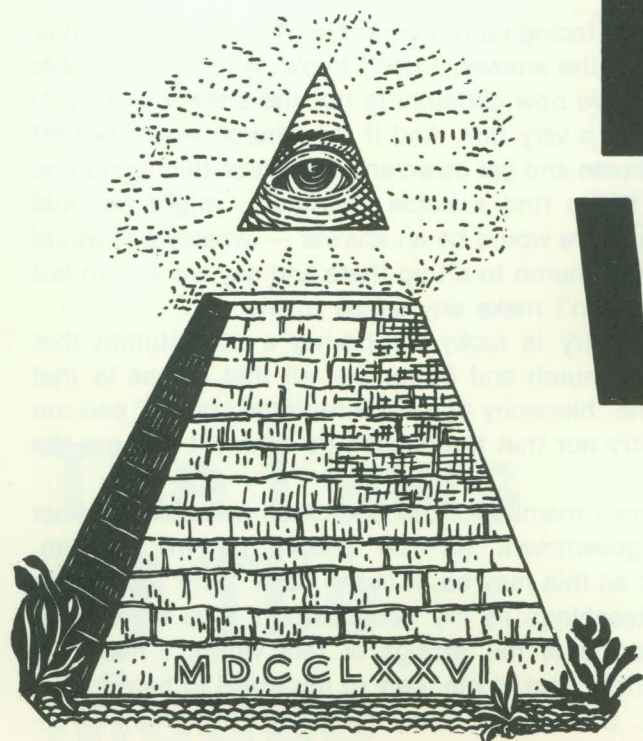


THE WITNESS

June 1, 1975
Volume 58, No. 13



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What's Going On Here?

- Thomas Dean
- Paul van Buren
- Edward Welles
- Sherman Johnson

. . . and others

The Great Debate

Letters to the Editor

The Witness reserves the right to condense all letters.

The Witness continues to hold a high standard. I do not necessarily agree with all points of view, but I certainly think it is worth a year's subscription.

Enclosed is my check. Good luck to you!—*Rt. Rev. Thomas Fraser, Raleigh, North Carolina*

As a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Program Budget and Finance, and a member of its predecessor committees since 1955, I wish to support our Chairman Dupuy Bateman and members whose comments you published in the Mar. 23 issue. (Mrs. Sibernagel of Southern Ohio, Mr. Lamb of Connecticut and Mr. Ritchie of Pennsylvania).

The committee proposed and the convention at Louisville adopted *priorities* for the Triennium 1974-76.

The decision of the Executive Council to *disregard* the priorities set by convention is mismanagement and should be corrected at their next meeting. The cuts in the ongoing work of the church as expressed by the priorities should be restored and the administration increases deleted.—*George Gibbs, Claremont CA*

Perhaps I am a little like Joe Hlinka in Hank Williams' article in that I don't understand and don't hide behind fine nuances and word manipulations of the English language. I was troubled by the cliché "the Church must be in this world but not *of* it." I have heard it so often but must not really understand it. Perhaps my understanding of "in not of" is not quite correct. To me it sounds as if the Church is isolating itself from the world. A splinter is *in* my finger, not part *of* me. What good does a church do me *in* this world if it is not *of* this world — part of my world from which I come and to which I am relating. I want the Church to be part of my world and I want to be part of the Church's world. But that sentence seems to put a barrier there I cannot and should not overstep.

It seems to me that if the Church was more "of this world" it would be more effective in finding answers to our problems or at least face up to them. David Garcia's answer is Marxism. He has to do it alone since the

church isn't facing up to the problem in his area. Whether Marxism is the answer, I don't know. All I know is that what we have now certainly is not the answer — except perhaps for a very few. And if the Church would get off its high horse and get down and be part of this world and at least try to find a viable alternative, might be, just might be, there would be an answer — whatever it would be. For the Church to sit up there and say we are "in but not of" doesn't make any sense to me.

This country is lucky for having a constitution that separates Church and State. But all that means is that neither the "hierarchy of the institutional church" can run the country nor that the elected government can run the Church.

But I am a member of the Church as well as a member of the government (of the people by the people). Idealistic as this may be, it is the case. With the church and its teachings as my conscience I have to work to change some of the wrongs of this world. I need the Church, right next to me, part of my world to help me do just that. Church and State shouldn't mix? They do — within me.—*Barbara Elden, Cambridge MA*

"Not at Minneapolis" is an excellent article, particularly in view of what was on NBC nightly news last night about the Episcopal clerical trial in the Diocese of Washington.

The rest of the issue is much better than the last — more down to earth.

But why do you have to put in that article of "Joe, Beer, Bologna and Me" . . . ? I know that it is "fiction." I know what Williams is trying to say. They say that it isn't *what* you say, but *how* you say it.

For example, does the new *Witness* have to use such four-letter-words as in this article . . . ?

Does the new *Witness* have to suggest as this article does that you can only be close to such as Jos. Hlinka in a secular frame of life . . . ?

I've been in the ministry 49 years the 30th of this month. I've been close to many Jos. Hlinkas all along, but just in and thru the love of Christ for the poor, the outcast, the downtrodden. I'm not ashamed of my clerical collar and calling. It has been a glorious life . . . mostly in small town, American life, from the bottom up. I wouldn't have missed it for the world. That's where I have found Christ so much of the time in the simple, real, loving common people — and all the rest besides, as well.—*Louis L. Perkins, Cove, Oregon*

THE WITNESS

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The Laws Of The Medes And The Persians

by Robert L. DeWitt

John E. Skinner makes sane and helpful observations in his article, "The Meaning of Authority," in the January 1975 issue of *Anglican Theological Review*.

He refers to the "hopelessly misguided utopianism" characterizing those who think the time will come when there will no longer be a need for authority. The need for some form of authority is uncontested. Authority is the cultural frame of reference in which we are nurtured. It is the gathered form of our personal/social history. What we are is a result of what we have been. Rebelling for the sake of rebelling is pointless and self-defeating. Those who cry "don't fence me in," are wistful longers for a dangerously artificial independence which, if it were attainable, would lead to pandemonium, to death by confusion.

At the same time, however, it is idolatrous to worship the past. To equate what has been with what shall be and with what should be is to transform necessary authority into intolerable authoritarianism. Authority can maintain itself only by constantly being what it should be; by constantly being responsive to the people under its governance.

In our time, when there is such an erosion of authority, we must place a premium on creative thinking and acting which can save authority from authoritarianism, which can redeem authority lest all is lost. Sometimes "heresies" have led to the development of a more authoritative faith — witness Galileo: "the earth, it moves." Some political rebellions have led to the establishment of a more legitimate form of government — at least so thought Jefferson, Adams and Madison.

When authority is in jeopardy, responsible people must confer with each other to determine how best to restore it by adjusting it to new revelations of the truth.

The Post-Theistic Debate

The Feb. 2 issue of The Witness included articles on post-theistic thinking by Thomas Dean and Richard Shaull. Because of the importance of the subject, and because of the volume and variety of reactions generated by the articles, we are devoting this issue largely to the responses of our readers.—Editor

On To The Promised Land

One has to respect Thomas Dean and Richard Shaull for their integrity and courage. I must, however, bear witness that faith in God is strong and living for many of us, and that this faith does not lead us into a never-never land but precisely into the encounter with history and the future to which we have been called by the Biblical prophets and Jesus.

When Paul van Buren was a student in Basel, he wrote me more than once to try to dissuade me from the “quest for the historical Jesus,” which, he said, was a blind alley. I think I understand all the difficulties, but yet I am persuaded that the “new quest” brings us a relatively clear and consistent picture of our Lord that is a firm foundation for Christian theology. As for faith in God, there are philosophical difficulties, but these inhere in the nature of faith, for faith is not sight or proof. God may or may not make the conditions of my life and death easier, but I think he gives me strength to face these conditions and I rejoice to believe in Him and trust Him.

The New York Times review of A. J. Ayer’s recent book, “The Central Questions of Philosophy”, leads me

to conclude that skepticism — even about the bases of moral action — cannot be refuted philosophically. Each of us adopts the world view that makes most sense to him. I stand by the world view of Jesus, who took God the Father and King as his first premise, while I know full well that I must work with, and love, those who disagree.
—The Very Rev. Sherman E. Johnson, Mansfield, Ohio

Radical Brinkmanship

When you asked me to write an article about *Post-Thiestic Thinking* you gave me specific instructions to present the central thrust of the book, *not* my reaction to it. When you published what I wrote, you called it “Response to Thomas Dean.” I think that entitles me to a word of clarification.

In trying to describe Dean’s “imaginary journey,” I pointed out how he had stimulated and helped the development of my own thought. But my *response* can’t stop there, for several reasons:

1) I accept Dean’s judgment that my own theology is still too tied up with a “metaphysically untroubled affirmation of God”; I am also excited about the new directions he offers for working on the problem of self-transcendence and social transformation. But as someone who is overwhelmed by our inability to break out of one-dimensional existence and to think and create the fundamentally new, I want to explore the power that religious language, symbols, stories — *and experience* — can provide for this task. Tom Dean may be interested in this; his book doesn’t give me much help for going about it.

2) I am unhappy with the author’s “untroubled affirmation” of a certain type of rationality which I think is being seriously called into question by an emerging new perception and consciousness among significant numbers of blacks, women and young people today. In other words, I think the time has come for a much more radical break with our Western intellectual tradition than Dean has made. I, too, want to overcome the dichotomy between theory and praxis, but I suspect that, to do it, we will have to find a way of reflecting upon our experience which goes far beyond the conceptual framework Dean uses.

3) I have been greatly influenced by Marx and some contemporary Marxists, such as Ernst Bloch. And I think an ongoing dialogue with Marxism is important for us

especially in this country. But I am much more troubled than Dean seems to be with Marxism's failure thus far to provide us with models of permanent transformation. Some of us now realize that Christianity is no longer intact. I wish more Marxists would come to the same conclusion about their faith. Out of that recognition on both sides we might arrive at a much more fruitful dialogue.—*Richard Shaull, Princeton, NJ*

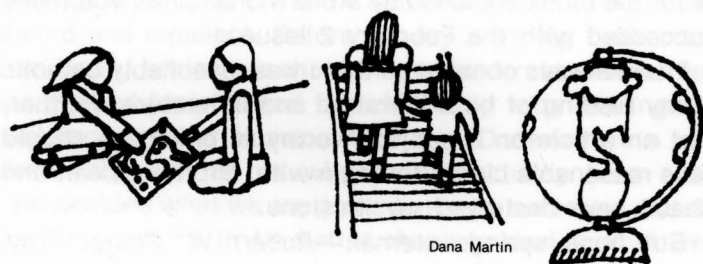
Blank's Not So Beautiful

I have read with interest the articles on post-theistic thinking. I am pleased to report I am now fully liberated from any belief in God. So I am taking radical steps to live my new faith as becomes it.

First, I will be leaving my wife of 16 years, because we know each other well enough. It's time to know some other or others. I do this in the name of "loving my neighbor as myself." My guilt feelings are nil. My watchword is "Free at last! O blank blank! I am free at last!"

Secondly, I will radically turn over all my material goods (they're not much) to my heirs and assigns . . . meaning my kids. They will probably need considerable psychiatric treatment. Or, maybe with me gone, they will need none. Anyhow, I'm taking New Testament charity seriously without reference to theism. "The blank won't provide, so I'd better!" is my motto.

Thirdly, I will be leaving the ministry. Not surprising considering all the theistic words which I am continually being bombarded by or bombarding with as one of the cloth. That's not a sentence, but I am a post-theist which means grammar is not worth worrying about. After all, the Great-I-Am just ain't.



Dana Martin

You can see my liberation has big consequences, and I want to thank you and Tom Dean for setting me on the right track. Say . . . is he related to . . . ? Blank bless you! Relevantly,—*The Rev. Harry Hoffman, Purcellville, Virginia*

What The Devil . . . ?

What the devil is going on? First we endorse no patience (The Philadelphia eleven), then no morals (Gibson Winter) and now no God (Dean-Shaull).

The underlying assumption in all this appears to be that man is essentially a good guy and can make it on his own. 'Tain't so. Hasn't anybody there read history?

What are thousands of faithful pastors supposed to think? What they want are mags which will help them with the propagation of the Gospel, not undermine it. If you really feel the need to do the latter, do in under another aegis.—*The Rev. George W. Wickersham, II*

Unsavory Language Study

Thanks for publishing excerpts from Thomas Dean's book and for your own endorsement of it, "Plowing New Ground."

I've been spending some time on my day off trying to identify and to set down just what there is in these two essays that annoys me, that doesn't ring true. Maybe it's the campground hysteria, the bandwagon atmosphere.

I can't believe that you and Professor Dean honestly find his mind-boggling discoveries of the symbolic nature of language and the possibility of Christian-Marxist dialogue. Golly, gee-whiz, fellows: Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and old Karl have been around for quite a while. A pinch of their ideas has been seasoning the cultural stew for decades.

I wonder, is it the convergence of three different idea-worlds and languages that occasions all the excitement? Like the creation of some new constellation from familiar planets? Is this what has got the two of you running-on so?

While I share your enthusiasm for theological re-

construction, I ask myself whether such a reconstruction can be built on the tip of your exclamation point. I don't think so. What I have before me is another scholar's attempt to do the apologetic task on linguistic positivism and the Marxist dialectic. Shucks, guys, you make it seem like Armageddon.

I guess I do not see so limited a range of "live options" as my author and my editor do. Or maybe, it's because in my post-theistic world I want the God-beyond-God to share with me the particularity of personhood.—*The Rev. Albert L. Mahan, Maple Glen, Pa.*

Shaul and Dean — Refreshment

Your February 2 issue was food and drink to this starved and parched reader. I am one of those who feel that the "Word" came from a dead language (as the editorial said) and that the Episcopal Church is too preoccupied with its own survival. I feel isolated in this small town, since I am not interested in the activities of the sincere church people who spend so much time on institutional concerns, Bible study and Altar guilds. The article by Thomas Dean, "Post-Theistic Thinking" and response by Richard Shaul give me hope that there *will* be a theological reconstruction that takes seriously the social witness of the Church. I have written in red and pinned to the kitchen calendar Shaul's words, "Our goal is not the realization of our human destiny but the creation of a more human future." Thank you for being.—*Barbara S. Lloyd, Palmerton, Pa.*

Less Than A Bellyfull

In the February 2 issue the editor introduces the contributions of Thomas Dean and Richard Shaul by saying of Dean's new book and Shaul's response "we think this work is important, too, because it is concerned with a theological reconstruction that takes seriously the social witness of the Church, without which our faith ceases to be prophetic, ceases to be truly Biblical, ceases to be Christian." I'd call their views a form of theological destruction.

Over the years I have a strong record of involvement in the social witness of the Church, but Professor Dean

appears to me to jettison the transcendent God, eternity, and the historical Jesus, so in my view he has already ceased "to be truly Biblical . . . to be Christian." After reading the two pieces my reaction was "what thin gruel! not adequate nourishment spiritually." Then I reflected, it is nothing more than a new version of humanism. The needed balance of immanence and transcendence is lacking. If I were unable to believe more than Professor Dean, I would feel that as a priestly person I am only a professional pallbearer for humanity descending dismally into discouragement, defeat, destruction and death. Love and hope cannot long endure without living faith in a transcendent God.—*Rt. Rev. Edward R. Welles, Manset, Maine*

Getting The Future To Run On Time

I have just read the Feb. 2 edition of *The Witness*.

As a scientist in electronics and now a parish priest for the last 16 years, I find post-theistic thinking by Dean absurd and therefore offensive. The commentary by Shaul is hardly less so.

What makes the so called radical theologians feel that they must deny theistic thinking of the past in order to experience the freedom to plow new ground and all that jazz? Theistic thinking is the background which informs and opens up the future. The past is what we build upon. Atomic theory, for example, exists against the background of Newtonian physics. One does not deny the past in order to probe the future. That way one is condemned to relive the past, waste the present and delay the future.—*The Rev. Canon W. H. Paul, Waretown, N.J.*

Engraved In Stone

If it was your aim to make *The Witness* a magazine for the theologian, safely insulated behind ivy covered walls or for the monk enclosed by stone monasteries you really succeeded with the February 2 issue.

I have always considered that I was reasonably catholic in my reading of both literature and illiterature. Further, that an article on a subject worthy of enlarging should have reasonable clarity to begin with. Brothers Dean and Shaul have destroyed my illusions.

But hope springs eternal.—*Robert W. Crane, Troy, NY*

A Witness To Our Witness

by Paul M. van Buren

In the "Preface" to his new book, *Post-Theistic Thinking* (published in the Feb. 2 *Witness*) Thomas Dean proposed to show that both recent trends of secular theology and current attempts to develop a radical political theology suffer from a failure to work out consistently the theoretical grounds of modern finitist thought. If that were done, he attempted to show, both of these newer as well as more orthodox theologies would prove to be incompatible with the foundations of contemporary thought. What would be possible, however, would be "post-theistic thinking," sufficiently indebted to Biblical themes and images to warrant being called "Christian," and sufficiently attuned to central aspects of Marx's early writings to lead us to a radical social analysis. Dean's aim was to see if he could move the Marxist-Christian dialogue beyond a fruitless debate about God to a humanly productive dialogue about people. Any who are interested in that dialogue would do well to read more than the preface.

I do not want to speak directly to Dean's thesis or to its logical circularity. Before responding to him, I think we have prior work to do, and the letters to the editor which Dean's essay stimulated convince me of it. Tom Dean is an intelligent, sensitive, widely-read person, deeply concerned about matters religious, human and social. A philosopher, not a theologian, he has nevertheless exposed himself more fully and thoughtfully to what he hears Christians saying today than most — probably more than most clergy, not to speak of the so-called "average layperson." What he has heard from us he finds absurd and repellent. Before we say anything further to Tom Dean, I think we should try to understand what he has learned from us and from his fairly wide reading of contemporary and classical theology. Once we are a bit clearer about what our witness has actually been and have decided what we are going to say to ourselves about *that*, we shall be in far better shape to decide what we ought to say to Mr. Dean.

1. Dean hears our witness as primarily a witness to theism, to belief in an absolute, transcendent Being that serves as the answer to our need for an infinite and absolute grounding of our finite, contingent existence. He hears us saying that people "have a need for reassurance and certitude precisely at those points in life where their own strength runs out . . . Such assurance can be provided only if it is grounded in a source of being that is itself infinite and absolute," and that is why Christianity is superior to any alternative position. Evidently Dean does not hear Christians saying that their God is the Lord of Israel who is calling his people to a role in history which is a burden, offers no guarantee, and is full of risks.

2. He hears us saying that our focus is and ought to be on God, on a transcendent Being who is not of this world and therefore of another world. He hears us interpret the words "My kingdom is not of this world," as meaning that the kingdom is not *for* this world, either. Our hope, he hears us saying, lies in that other world where each of us, individually, will find his or her reward. Presumably he does not hear us saying that God is the lover of this world, that for Him there is no other world than this one He made and loves, and that He calls us collectively to newness of life, in a renewal of this world, and for the sake of this world.

3. Tom Dean hears Christians saying that their norm for life and thought consists of a collection of ancient, highly mythological documents: the Bible. That is where we go for our answers. He does not seem to hear from us that our norm is a living One or that we are seriously listening for what might at any time turn out to be a new thing. He does not gather that Christians read those ancient writings to familiarize themselves, so to speak, with a certain voice, so as to recognize it when they hear it again. We don't seem to have given even a hint of an impression that we seriously expect Him who spoke before to speak to us again, today or tomorrow. Not so does he see us using the Bible, either in church or in our writings.

4. He hears us appealing to Biblical events and stories as "symbolic vehicles for unchanging existential truths about man or history." I rather think we have all heard enough sermons that do this (when have we heard anything other?!) to understand how Mr. Dean picked up this notion. Clearly he has not heard us remembering actual, concrete events and their particular, historical interpretations as clues to understanding Him who may

be doing a new thing now in our midst. Our witness does not seem to be to One who has committed himself irrevocably to a particular people and promised them an actual, locatable bit of this earth's surface. No, we seem to have made it clear that the general, the universal, and the abstract is better, is God's way. We call this spiritualizing and we give the impression that it is good.

5. Tom Dean hears from us that we think the world to be utterly dependent on God, so that at every moment and in every aspect, if God were to turn his back, so to speak, the world would disappear. Our doctrine of creation comes through as our pat answer to the question why anything exists and why it continues to exist. God is our explanation for the world. Evidently Dean does not hear us saying that the Creator really created the world, giving it its own life and autonomy. He does not hear Christians saying that their God is so free and so loving, that he can allow the world which he has made to be itself apart from Him, that He does not need to prove Himself by having everything dependent upon Himself.

6. Finally, our witness comes through to Mr. Dean as that of a self-confident, self-assured Establishment, unconsciously co-opted by the bourgeois Establishment, individualistic, otherworldly and full of answers. We say we know of matters which we also say are beyond human understanding. Above all, he hears from us a triumphalism that hardly squares with the world we live in. We seem so certain of our own salvation and of a kingdom that is beyond doubt. Since these we push out into another realm concerning which no doubts can be tested, our triumphalism is not impressive. He does not seem to hear from us groans which match those of the environment and those of the Spirit, of which St. Paul spoke (Rom. 8), agonizing for the liberation of the sons of God. He does not hear us deeply worried, as the earliest Christians were, by the delay between Easter and the promised Kingdom of the Messiah that still hasn't arrived! He does not hear from us a tension between the righteousness of God and the Establishment of this present age.

Before we say anything to Tom Dean, I think we ought to have the honesty to admit that he has heard us fairly well. He could cite Biblical texts for each item of our agenda (and he would have learned from us that degrading, unhistorical misuse of Scripture!), not to speak of church pronouncements, sermons, books of theology and the Prayer Book. That has been our witness. It seems

obvious that before we ask any questions of Mr. Dean, we need to settle among ourselves what we have to say to this witness and what we intend to do about it. Let us thank Tom Dean for bringing this matter to our attention.

Paul M. van Buren: author; associate professor, Department of Religion, Temple University.

Anglicans: Will Women Win?

Parishioners of the Anglican Church of the Ascension in London formally petitioned Bishop Mervyn Stockwood of Woolwich, known as a controversial "progressive," to ordain to the priesthood Elsie Baker, a deaconess who has served the parish for 33 years. It is the first request for ordination of a woman to the priesthood in Church of England history. Stockwood was not available for immediate comment; it was believed he will not act on the petition until the denomination agrees to the ordination of women. Assistant Bishop David Sheppard, an evangelical, voiced approval of women's ordination.

The topic has been a subject of study throughout the Church of England, and each diocese has voted on it in a straw poll. The results of the voting are to be reported to the July session of the church's General Synod. That meeting may determine in which direction the church will move on the issue.

News sources quote an unnamed Anglican authority as saying that forty-one of forty-three diocesan synods see no important barriers to women's ordination.—*Christianity Today*, May 9, 1975

Schism — Threat Or Promise?

by David Ward

William Stringfellow's article, "The Church in Exile," (*The Witness*, Mar. 9) provokes this response which goes a step or two beyond his conclusions.

Just as a divorce is a formality, signaling the legal termination of a relationship already damaged beyond repair, so is schism in the Church. It can be argued that both divorce and schism are immature responses, and that neither act offers a true solution to the dilemma of the parties involved. I believe that both are to be seen as some kind of last resort, to be acted out only at that point where the ultimate integrity of a couple or a church is threatened with destruction.

While there has not yet been, in Stringfellow's phrase, "a dramatic, formal breakaway and the separate gathering of a new church," my contention is that the breakaway has already occurred, and that the gathering of a new church is only a matter of time. The schism is happening now, quietly but effectually, across denominational lines. I am not comfortable with the concept of a Church in Exile. Exile implies a prior banishment, a period of biding time until it is permissible or safe to return. I have doubts about the wisdom of trying to go back. I see the new church called, like Lazarus, out of a tomb into a new day.

I once hoped, and almost believed that institutions, including the Church, could be renewed from within, that new yeast could work wonders in old dough. I no longer hold that belief or that hope. It is becoming clear to me that new wine cannot be stored in a shrivelled wineskin: new cloth does not make a good patch for an old coat.

The new church must be prepared to loosen its grip on the apron strings of its old mother, and risk everything except its own hard-won integrity. I am scared by this thought and its implications, but anything less, would represent a direct rebuff to the promptings and insistence of the Holy Spirit. If I am wrong, and it is still

possible to effect radical changes within the present structure, I am willing to learn how to accomplish them. My present belief is that it is now too late in the day to expect a dramatic change in the ecclesiastical weather.

There have been too many compromises, too many games, too many hesitations. I am not only talking now of the issue of women's ordination. That is only one issue among many on which the old church has temporized and repeatedly demonstrated its institutional unresponsiveness, its refusal to budge when shoved by the Holy Spirit. How many last chances can the Church be given to manifest some readiness, some zeal to be about our Father's business instead of its own?

The 1976 General Convention may huff and puff, prevaricate, stall and strangle itself with procedural legerdemain. It probably *will* do so, as well, if not better, as it did in Louisville. If this happens, I believe that the scattered, new church should not be overwhelmed by surprise. It should gather itself immediately, in Minneapolis, and decide whether it is to move toward exile or schism.

It would be arrogant to deny the faint possibility that the Minnesota Convention could surprise us with some actions taken in a spirit of renewal rather than through a blind instinct for self-preservation. If this should happen, it would be a case of too little, too late. If I am right, plans for the gathering of the new church should not be delayed indefinitely.

At a recent vestry conference, we discussed the purpose of the vestry. There was a strong feeling that a vestry is more than a random group of amateur housekeepers condemned to a three-year stint of dull chores. At the end of the day we stated our purpose like this:

"To grow in the love of Christ, by creating a climate of trust in which everyone may take the risk of becoming responsibly and responsively human, wherever it may lead, and at whatever cost."

If this is not the purpose of the Church itself, what is?

David Ward: Rector, St. Paul's Memorial Church, Charlottesville, Va.; chaplain, University of Virginia; Steering Committee, Women's Ordination Now.

Network Reports

Coming Events

- Central East Region, June 3-4
Wilmington, Del.
- Central South Region, June 5-7
Kanuga Conference Center, Tenn., Lex Matthews, convenor
- New York - Connecticut Region, June 14-15
Syracuse, N.Y., Milton Coleman, convenor

Indianapolis Network: Ordination of Women, Hunger

The Indianapolis Network took the following action on April 21:

- Sent a letter to Bishop John Craine encouraging him to invite Jane Hwang of the Diocese of Hong Kong to celebrate the Eucharist in his diocese.
- Requested Bishop Craine to select a Sunday in the near future when all the churches in the diocese would focus on the issue of ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate.
- Offered its services to the Episcopal Community Services to distribute emergency food in the Indianapolis area.

Participants include: Elaine Stone, Marcia Fellows, Dee Hann, Lena Harris, William Holbrook, William Klatt, Jacqueline Means, Audrey Savage, Donna Niednagel and Tanya Vonnegut.

Religious Leaders Support Farm Workers

Eighty interfaith religious leaders joined the National Farm Worker Ministry in early May as part of an observation of National Farm Workers Week.

In their statement they urged constituents "to look to Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers as important ethical and spiritual leaders in our time." They also pledged their personal commitment to boycott non-UFW grapes, head lettuce and all Gallo wines. The Episcopal Church did not participate.

New York-Connecticut Region Meets in Manhattan

Fourteen persons from the four Episcopal dioceses in New York and the Diocese of Connecticut met on April 25-26 at Trinity Church, Wall Street, in New York to organize Church and Society networks in their areas.

The deliberations focused on two questions: What is the social mission today? What criteria are needed to guide those involved in the social mission?

The group largely concurred with Robert DeWitt's analysis that a major block to the social mission today is the hierarchical shape of our major institutions.

Besides the rigidity of these structures, all our institutions, including the churches, are dependent and beholden, DeWitt said, "to the plantation colony," large corporations which possess the controlling power in our society.

In planning what they will do to initiate networks the group decided that local networks should include:

- 50 per cent women and 50 per cent men.
- Persons presently involved in social mission — activists, planners and thinkers.
- Persons "in exile," that is, discontented individuals and groups outside the churches.
- A wide age range including young adults (16 to 30 years) and senior citizens, persons over 65.
- More than token representation of minorities.
- At the least 50 per cent laity.
- Persons concerned for "systemic change" in contrast to persons committed to maintaining "the system."

Participating were: Esther Littrell, Majorie Rudd, Paul Rohrdanz, Milton Coleman, William Mercer, John Burr, Henry Atkins, Al Powers, Jack Woodard, David Garcia, Emily Hewitt, Carter Heyward, Arthur Korthueuer and Robert Potter.

Bethlehem Network Organizes

All persons present at the first meeting of the Bethlehem

Church and Society Network in Lansford, Pa., on April 3, signed the Statement of Affirmation and Invitation for Women's Ordination Now and sent a check for \$50 to support ordination of women to the priesthood.

The meeting was preceded by a Mar. 26 celebration of the Eucharist by Carter Heyward at a private home in Bear Creek, Pa., with 16 persons present. This Eucharist celebration followed an interdenominational Lenten service in Wilkes-Barre at which Carter Heyward preached.

Members are: Jane Durand, Wilkes-Barre, Margaret Lee Ferry, Cambridge, Mass., Joseph Frazier and Donna Urbia, Lansford, Barbara Lloyd, Palmerton and Rose Tucker, Nanticoke.—*Peg Ferry*

Time For Amnesty Is Now

The struggle for an unconditional amnesty for draft resisters and deserters is continuing following the demise of President Ford's "earned reentry" plan. Only 16.3 per cent, or 22,000 out of the estimated 137,000 eligible took advantage of Ford's clemency program, according to the *New York Times*.

There are over 200,000 non-registered draft resisters who went underground during the Vietnam War.

The amnesty fight is also being waged in behalf of the large number of Vietnam veterans with less-than-honorable discharges. These vets, most of whom come from the blue collar class, with about one-third from minority communities, are denied GI benefits and are refused medical attention for their service connected wounds and diseases.

Three amnesty bills have been introduced in Congress since the clemency program expired: Rep. Bella Abzug's (D.N.Y.) War Resisters Exoneration Act of 1975; Sen. Philip Hart's (D.Mich.) National Reconciliation Act; Sen. Gaylord Nelson's (D.Wis.) Clemency Board Reorganization Act of 1975. None of these bills calls for unconditional amnesty. The major organizations representing resisters, deserters, their families and allies have joined together to press for total amnesty and nothing less.

In a May 8th editorial the *New York Times* stated that, if President Ford expects Americans "to close ranks," such a regrouping "must inevitably include those who disagreed both about the war itself and about the personal steps they took, in and out of government, to support or oppose it. The danger that full amnesty may

absolve some whose motives were surely questionable is a far lesser risk than saddling the nation's conscience with this singular exception to the spirit of a new beginning."—*Hugh White*

To See Ourselves As Others See Us

With the Episcopal Church today being lampooned so much both by those inside as well as those outside, it is coldly comforting to see a sister communion in similar straits. The following items are taken from *The Catholic SUBSTANDARD & Times*, published in Philadelphia.

The Catholic Church long ago, perhaps without realizing it, solved whatever problem of overpopulation there might be.

It encouraged men and women to marry and bring into the world large families; but out of those families, it asked for a generous supply of priests, monks and nuns who would vow themselves to continuous chastity. Their example inspired people of the world with the possibility of purity. At the same time, their professional chastity kept them from increasing the world's population. So . . . by example of pure lives lived by men and women, the Church removed any possible danger of overpopulation.—*Daniel A. Lord, S.J., 1946*

I am a Catholic married to a non-Catholic; may we both be buried in the Catholic cemetery?

Yes, provided the non-Catholic party measures up to the requisites for classification as "an approved non-Catholic."—*Sign Magazine, 1951*

In the case of a fetus with two thorax sections and one head, the head should be baptized absolutely and each chest baptised conditionally.—*Charles McFadden, O.S.A., Medical Ethics for Nurses*

Papal legate on the capture of members of the heretical Cathari, 1209: Kill them all. God will know which are his.

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