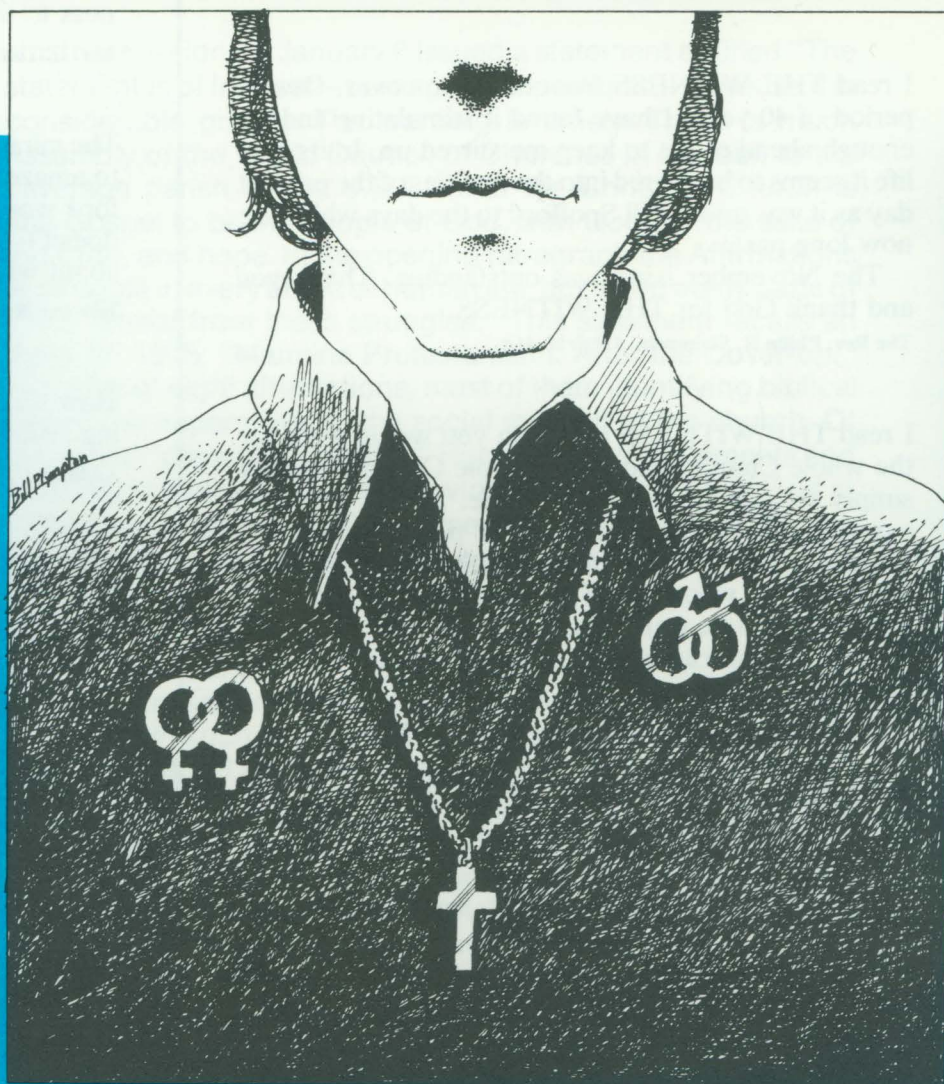


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THE WITNESS

February 1976
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■ The Gay in the Church

by Brian McNaught

Responses by:

Paul Moore
Coleman McGehee
Rollin Fairbanks
Louie Crew

■ Sex and the Unmarried

by Robert W. Cromeey

■ Look at Yourself, America!

The American Journey—Part III by Edward Joseph Holland

Letters to the Editor

The Witness reserves the right to condense all letters

I enjoy THE WITNESS! The articles are long and deep enough to be thought provoking, while short and relevant enough that I always find time to read them. Thank you.

Sandra L. Weisenreder, Webster, NY

I read THE WITNESS from cover to cover. Over a period of 40 years I have found it stimulating and far enough ahead of me to keep me stirred up. In its new life it seems to be geared into the realities of the present day as it was under Bill Spofford to the days which are now long past.

The November issue was outstanding. Thank you and thank God for THE WITNESS.

The Rev. Philip H. Steinmetz, Ashfield, MA

I read THE WITNESS and wish you would write for the whole Church, and to the whole Church, and not simply to and for the avant garde. In this area, for example, there are thousands of people who have worked hard, served the Church well, say their prayers, and whose chief work now is to grow old gracefully and die well. Remember also that since there is much to conserve, a good conservative can be noble.

Rt. Rev. Richard S. M. Emrich, Sun City, Arizona

After reading the excellent editorial, "Eloise and Abelard" in the November WITNESS, what a shock to come upon such an incredibly sexist article, "To Those Who Stay," by James Lowery on the very next page. What an ironic juxtaposition. The shock hit me when Mr. Lowery continually (five times) used the masculine pronoun for the Holy Spirit! Does Mr. Lowery not know that the ancient Hebrew word for spirit (ruach) is of the feminine gender?

Ann Smith, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

I have found it (THE WITNESS) stimulating enough over the years to feel that a subscription is very worthwhile. The degree of stimulation remains strong, if it in fact has not increased.

Rt. Rev. Christoph Keller, Jr., Little Rock, Arkansas

While I find myself in substantial agreement with Dr. Massey Shepherd's letter, I trust that your publication will serve a useful purpose in clarifying the issues before the Church. More is at stake than partisan church politics, and THE WITNESS should try to be a reconciling instrument in strengthening our corporate witness to the Gospel of Christ.

Rev. C. Townsend Ruddick, Jr., St. John, Barbados

The miracle of the resurrected WITNESS never ceases to amaze us. I am sure Bishop Johnson and Bill Spofford would cheer; I'm not at all sorry that everyone doesn't—if they did I'd be worried. As it is, I'm worried about whether my subscription is paid up.

Jane and Roger Barney, Ann Arbor, Mich.

How we enjoy the challenging, forward looking, probing articles. Thank you.

Ambrose C. Miller, Middletown, RI

Why don't you ever say something nice about conservative, praying, church going people who believe in the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Book of Common Prayer.

Joseph M. McCarty, New York, N.Y.

Within this issue we present you, our reader, with Part III of Edward Joseph Holland's perceptive monograph on the American Journey entitled "Look at Yourself, America!" When the series of four is completed you may write THE WITNESS for extra copies for use with group discussions.

THE WITNESS

Robert L. DeWitt, Editor; E. Lawrence Carter, Robert Eckersley, Antoinette Swanger, Lisa K. Whelan, Hugh C. White, Jr. Editorial and Business Office: P.O. Box 359, Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002. Telephone (215) 643-7067. Subscription rates: \$9.00 per year; \$1.00 per copy. *The Witness* is published monthly by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. Board of Directors: Bishops Morris Arnold, Robert DeWitt, Lloyd Gressle, John Hines, John Krumm, Brooke Mosley and Dr. Joseph Fletcher. Copyright 1975 by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. Printed in U.S.A.

Editorial

A Tract for the Times

by Robert L. DeWitt

A task force of the Boston Industrial Mission on January 6 issued a statement entitled "The Boston Affirmations."* The statement is of interest—perhaps of importance—because it is a theological appraisal of considerable gravity. The warning is timely. There is much evidence—from the recent Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Nairobi, to the ongoing life pattern of the average parish in the U.S.A.—that the Christian Church is temporizing with the call of the Gospel to be the people of God, with God, for the sake of those who need liberation, and truth, and hope. In the opening paragraph the Affirmations identify this concern: "We see struggle in every arena of human life, but in too many parts of the church and theology we find retreat from these struggles." This statement recalls an article in THE WITNESS of April 13, 1975, "Mainline Protestantism: After the Cover-up."

The statement continues with a list of eight affirmations, most of them identifying biblical doctrines which clearly undergird the imperatives of the social mission of the church. Of especial interest is the section entitled "present Witnesses." Here are listed movements and signs in contemporary world society in which are seen the evidence of the Spirit of God at work, such as the struggles of the poor, of ethnics and of women to overcome injustice; the challenges to the idolatry of nationalism; efforts in the arenas of science and art to find meaning and hope.

The Affirmation concludes with this paragraph:

On these grounds, we can not stand with those secular cynics and religious spiritualizers who see in such witnesses no theology, no eschatological urgency, and no Godly promise or judgment. In such spiritual blindness, secular or religious, the world as God's creation is abandoned, sin rules, liberation is frustrated, covenant is broken, prophecy is stilled, wisdom is betrayed, suffering love is transformed into triviality, and the church is transmuted into a club for self- or transcendental-awareness. The struggle is now joined for the future of faith and the common life. We call all who believe in the living God to affirm, to sustain and to extend these witnesses.

THE WITNESS commends The Boston Affirmations for study and reflection. We feel it is a needed reminder to the church that its social mission is not optional, but is an inescapable imperative of the gospel.

* Copies of the full statement can be obtained from the Boston Industrial Mission, 56 Boylston Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

The Dilemma of the Gay in the Church

by Brian McNaught

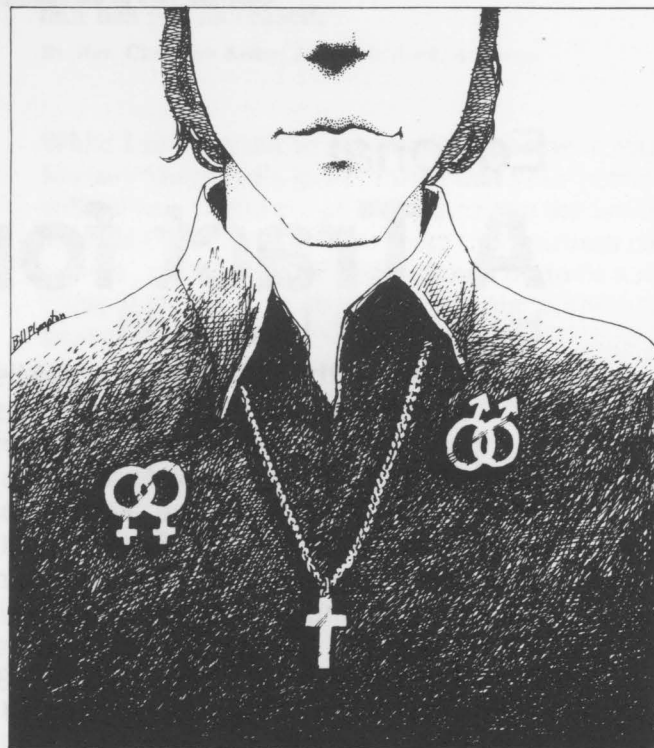
The delegates laughed nervously as they processed to communion. Accompanying a slide show, a voice echoed through the auditorium.

"When people think about homosexuals they imagine an over-weight, middle-aged man by the name of Bruce, who, with pink scarf tied loosely around his neck, limps and lisps his way through helpful hints for interior decorating."

The Episcopal clergy and lay delegates to the 142nd annual convention of the Diocese of Michigan laughed nervously and then immediately defeated a resolution which would have attempted to guarantee for homosexuals basic human rights.

Beginning as a protest five years ago by members of the gay community at the Diocesan Convention, the resolution on homosexuality was the result of two years of study by an appointed commission of theologians, churchpersons and representatives of the gay community.

In May, 1974, the Diocesan Council passed a resolution based on the findings of the Commission. When presented to Convention that fall, delegates voted to postpone debate pending a year of study by the delegates of the resolution.



Some 650 reports were sent out for study in the parishes. Delegates were encouraged to involve their parishes in a discussion of the resolution on homosexuality and to report back their findings, with suggestions. Some 300 reports came back.

In addition to asking the church to take steps "to create an atmosphere of openness and understanding about human sexuality and, particularly, about homosexuality," the resolution on homosexuality called for all ministries, professions and occupations to be open to qualified people "whatever their sexual orientation . . . An oppressive or destructive use of sexuality within personal relations, whatever the sexual preference or orientation, should give reason to doubt the candidate's fitness for office."

The resolution stated that all aspects of the church's life—"education, liturgy, pastoral care, fellowship"—be available to all persons, regardless of their sexual orientation. This was not interpreted as a blessing of homosexual marriages in church celebration.

Finally, the resolution called for an active campaign on the part of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan to fight those civil laws which oppress voluntary acts between mature persons. Harassment and violation of basic civil liberties were cited as targets to direct energies against.

Though the resolution had the 544 delegates split fairly evenly, its sponsors had predicted victory. The nervous laughter should have told them differently.

To have guaranteed passage of a simple resolution on equal rights for homosexuals, the communion procession should have stopped, the lights turned up, the projector and tape recorder off and the delegates forced to confront their nervous laughter.

Long before we can expect that Christian persons will secretly favor equal rights for everyone, we have to deal with the stereotypes and myths which make Archie Bunkers out of all of us. A reminder of the Gospel imperatives to love the least of our brethren will not accomplish justice among the 20th Century Christians. Not sufficient either is strong direction from a spiritual shepherd, as the delegates received from Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, who advised them to pass the resolution.

Christians today need as much convincing as the folk from Missouri. Regardless of what Jesus or the bishop say, they have to see it for themselves.

The enemy of the oppressed is ignorance. Most especially in the persecution of the homosexual, blind ignorance has led to an atmosphere of paranoia, hatred and repression causing despair, loneliness, isolation, mental breakdown and frequently suicide.

Before we share with concerned Christians the paths they might take to help undo what is being done to their gay brothers and sisters, we should first stop the procession, turn up the lights, turn the projector and tape recorder off and engage in dialogue on our own concepts of what it means to be gay.

Let's first take the stereotypes: effeminate men; masculine women; promiscuous; interested in children; wish they had been born the other sex; suffer from lack of sexual maturity; condemned by Scripture; hideous in the eyes of God.

Nervous laughter? Why?

As a gay male who regards himself as healthy, reasonably comfortable and well-integrated, I think it is a dehumanizing exercise to explain myself and my basic humanity to persons who oppress me. It is like asking a black man to prove, through appropriate data, that he does not naturally smell funny, that his brain is

the same size as a white man's and that his penis is generally no larger.

And yet, as a political activist, I am aware that heterosexuals, regardless of their religious persuasion, need to be assured that their nightmares are just that and reality presents a different picture.

Let's start with some basics. A widely accepted percentage of the number of persons we are talking about is 10 per cent of the total population. Some estimates are larger, some smaller, but on the whole, 10 per cent is the figure most widely used by gay activists. That refers to persons who are exclusively homosexual in their orientation. But even that figure is deceiving, for as soon as you suggest that 10 per cent of the population is homosexual, the natural deduction is that 90 per cent of the population is exclusively heterosexual. Not so.

Dr. Alfred Kinsey and his successor at Indiana University's Institute for Sex Research, Dr. Ward Pomeroy, place human sexual response on a continuum scale of 0-6, 0 indicating exclusive heterosexuality and 6 indicating exclusive homosexuality. The majority of the population falls between those two dichotomies.

According to their studies, about 37 per cent of the males above the age of puberty have had at least one overt homosexual experience to the point of orgasm. About 13 per cent of the males react erotically to other males without having an overt experience after puberty. For women, the figures are 13 per cent and 7 per cent respectively.

The institute further estimated that only 15 per cent of male homosexuals are easily recognizable and only five per cent of lesbians could be characterized as "butch." The overwhelming majority of homosexual men and women defy society's stereotypes of the effeminate, limp-wristed, lisping male and the masculine woman. Statistically, gays permeate every walk of life, from bishop to baker. Most live secretly, terrified of discovery and its personal and economic consequences.

On Nov. 20, 1970, the National Association for Mental Health stated: "Throughout history, in all cultures, a certain number of persons have been drawn to deviant sexual behavior. Such behavior does not constitute a specific mental or emotional illness."

Likewise, in 1966 the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry and in 1972 the American Psychological Association made similar statements. For gays, however, the most significant stand was taken in Dec. 15,

1973, by the Vatican of them all, the American Psychiatric Association, which by unanimous vote of its Board of Trustees, removed homosexuality from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders.

“ . . . This diagnostic category is distinguished from homosexuality, which by itself does not constitute a psychiatric disorder.”

Pomeroy wrote: “If my concept of homosexuality were developed from my practice, I would probably concur in thinking of it as an illness. I have seen no homosexual man or woman in that practice who was not troubled, emotionally upset or neurotic. On the other hand, if my concept of marriage in the U.S. were based on my practice, I would have to conclude that marriages are all fraught with strife and conflict, and that heterosexuality is an illness. In my 20 years of research in the field of sex, I have seen many homosexuals who were happy, who were practicing and conscientious members of their community and who were stable, productive, warm, relaxed and efficient. Except for the fact they were homosexual, they could be considered normal by any definition.”

In the area of child molestation, less than one per cent of the homosexual population is involved in crimes against children. Police blotters across the country will affirm that the heterosexual is the major molester of children. If we were to be consistent with the logic which has sought to keep homosexuals out of the teaching profession, we would have to suggest that children are only safe with homosexual teachers. Obviously that is absurd. I, for one, had many heterosexual teachers who were fine, healthy people, normal by any standard. Child abuse is a disorder which is as much abhorred by the homosexual community as it is by the heterosexual community.

There are no statistics to present about promiscuity. While it may be true that sections of the gay subculture (the bars and the baths) are known to provide an atmosphere for easy sexual contacts, the same holds true for the heterosexual singles bars and Playboy Clubs. The bars in both cultures only attract a small percentage of the population. With the gay community the exception often is extended to be the norm.

The unfounded myths with which we operate when we deal with homosexuals has led to a national temperament which, in its paranoia, would publicly, and with pride, exclude homosexuals from every walk of life open to heterosexuals. We keep homosexuals out of the Armed Forces, the classroom, the pulpit, the

Charismatic Prayer Group and the fire and police departments. If caught in the act of love making, homosexual men or women in most states can be fined heavily and sent to prison where they run the immediate risk of rape by heterosexual inmates (another myth challenged?).

Homosexual men and women grow up isolated from their families and friends and fellow employees. They are forced onto an island which is frighteningly lonely and desperate, suicide being the number one cause of death of young gay people.

When I revealed my homosexuality, my four-year, award-winning column was dropped by *The Michigan Catholic*, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Detroit, and I was subsequently fired. Yet many heterosexuals complain they don't know any homosexuals. Do they wonder why their homosexual friends don't come forward and identify themselves?

In looking back I see that we have neglected a major myth. That was intentional, for the myth that homosexuals are condemned by Scripture and hideous in the eyes of God is the primary source of the problem.

In my work within Roman Catholic gay activism I have identified my church as the major oppressor of the gay community throughout history. I say that as a Roman Catholic who sees value in the church and as an individual who wishes to continue to work within the system.

Non-Roman Catholics should not feel a sense of relief that we place the blame on Rome. My statement reflects my tendency to identify the church as the major political force in the Western world. But the blame is shared by the Episcopal Church and every other religious denomination which has preached the Judeo-Christian ethic.

As is true with many of our oppressive attitudes towards minorities, our source of ignorance is a selectively literalistic approach to Scripture. Blessed are the poor. Slaves be obedient to your masters and wives to your husbands. Women can't be priests because they were never intended to be equal to men. Homosexuality is “condemned” in Genesis, Leviticus and Paul's letters to Romans, Corinthians and Timothy.

Like every other unliberated group struggling for survival in a Judeo-Christian setting, gays have been forced to go back, study and then explain that most of our attitudes come from a patriarchal society which saw “spilling of the seed” as a threat to the increase of the race . . . a tribe of people small in number, political in nature, which was constantly being threatened by

much larger, more powerful tribes. "Spilling the seed" was a threat to the birth of the savior.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Biblical writers tell us how they perceive the beginning of the world and the purpose God has placed on all things. Men were created first; women from them. Men were the rulers and the providers. Women were the vine which was destined to bear fruit (no pun intended).

As long as that social order prevailed, the Chosen People would grow abundantly and subdue all oppressors.

Modern Scripture scholars, including Canon D. S. Bailey, tell us that we have misinterpreted scripture. If indeed we must scour the pages of the Old and New Testament for our answers to 20th Century problems, then let us scour in the frame of mind in which the passages were written.

Genesis 19, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, which all too often has been the source of pulpit protest against homosexuality, was never intended to be a statement on homosexuality, according to Bailey. Rather, the citizens of the famed city were destroyed for violating the law of hospitality. Though all of the men and boys in the city surround Lot's house (Kinsey would be baffled by the percentage of homosexuals allegedly living in Sodom) so that they might "know" the angelic visitors, Bailey states that in the 964 times "know" is used in Scripture, it never means homosexual intercourse.

Other scholars of Scripture tell us that the death by stoning penalty of homosexuality in the Old Testament was a reaction to the practice of temple prostitution engaged in by polytheists and not a statement on "constitutional" homosexuals. In fact, Jews of that time were culturally unaware that persons could be totally homosexual in orientation.

St. Paul condemns effeminacy and pederasty in his reaction to practices in Rome where homosexual prostitution was rampant.

In the dawning of Christianity and the writings of later thought leaders such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, the Christian world formulated its strict formula for all genital activity. Augustine and Aquinas stated that right order dictates the only proper use of genital activity is within the confines of blessed marriage and then only for the procreation of children. Thus we have restrictions on masturbation, pre-marital sex and birth control, not to mention homosexuality, (which incidentally by the Middle Ages was referred to as "peccatum illud horribile inter Christianos non

nominandum")—the sin so horrible that it must not be mentioned in the presence of Christians.

These attitudes of the church, as with all attitudes of the church, showed their ugly face in the formulation of civil laws. Homosexuals throughout our bloody Judeo-Christian ancestry were condemned by the state and punished by death. The normal means of extermination was burning at the stake, a practice which led to the use of the term "faggot," in reference to homosexuals.

Without going into the atrocities perpetrated against hundreds of thousands of gay men and women throughout history, suffice it to say that it wasn't until 1861 that the death penalty for sodomy was removed in England. In Scotland it remained until 1889. In Nazi Germany, gays were rounded up from all occupied territory and either shot on sight or shipped for extermination to concentration camps.

Today Christian denominations refuse to ordain homosexual persons. In cities where legislation is pending which would guarantee for homosexuals the civil rights afforded every other person in this country, most church officials come out loud and clear against such measures. In the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, where even discussion of the issue was considered "forward thinking," delegates screamed out their opposition to reconsider the defeated resolution which would have merely stated support for civil rights.

As a Christian gay I am led to identify another major source of oppression for gay men and women and for women in general. Challenging this source is generally far more threatening for even the most liberal Christian.

In his now famous book, *A Theology of Liberation*, Gustavo Gutierrez states: "Modern man's aspirations include not only liberation from exterior pressures which prevent his fulfillment as a member of a certain social class, country or society. He seeks likewise an interior liberation, in an individual and intimate dimension. He seeks liberation not only on a social plane but also on a psychological one."

When Fr. Gutierrez was in Detroit recently I asked him what his presentation said to gay men and women. He responded that gay men and women must come to grips with their own theology based on their experience of struggle.

For me that means re-examining not only Scripture but our source of inspiration. As a gay male who seeks, through the instruction of his church, to find his own image and likeness within the source of all understand-

ing and meaning, which we call God, I am forced to conclude that our God is inadequate.

Our God, the Father, who takes Israel as His bride, who protects and forgives her, who chooses one of her virgins to be His mate says nothing to me of my gayness and the expression of it.

Our God, the celibate Son, says nothing to me of my gayness and the expression of it.

Our God, the Holy Spirit, in the form of fire or dove, says nothing to me of my gayness and the expression of it.

My alienation from the image and likeness of the heterosexual, patriarchal Trinity is prompted by my experience of struggle as a healthy and happy gay male.

Woe to the gay or straight sister who is encouraged to look desperately in the Trinity for the image and likeness of herself.

The Jewish theologian and philosopher Martin Buber, in his book *I-Thou*, asserts that to give God dimensions is to limit God. To suggest even "all powerful" is to put God in the category of power. Despite that, heterosexual man has created in his own image and likeness a God which reinforces his lifestyle and beliefs.

It is not a bad God. It is merely a limited one.

Liberation from the oppression which is inherent in our culture means that all oppressed persons, be they gay or straight, male or female, black or white, rich or poor, must not only battle the signs of oppression but also the source. Liberation means discovering in your own experience the dimension of God as reflected in your own life. It means restructuring your concept of the divine without abandoning the revelation of love shared with us.

BRIAN MC NAUGHT is a graduate of the Marquette University College of Journalism. He is a free lance journalist because of his recent termination as a reporter and columnist for The Michigan Catholic for being involved in the gay civil rights movement. Currently he is National Director of Social Action for DIGNITY, an international organization of gay catholics.

TEN EPISCOPAL BISHOPS AFFIRM

ROMAN CATHOLIC STAND ON "GAYS"

Bishops Thomas Gumbleton and Joseph Imesch, auxiliary bishops of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit stated in a letter to Brian McNaught,

"... we have a serious obligation to root out structures and attitudes which discriminate against the homosexual as a person. We will exert our leadership in behalf of this effort."

This statement was affirmed by the following Episcopal Bishops:

Bishop H. Coleman McGehee Diocese of Michigan	Bishop George E. Rath Diocese of Newark
Bishop Paul Moore, Jr. Diocese of New York	Bishop Richard M. Trelease, Jr. Diocese of the Rio Grande
Bishop Frederick Wolf Diocese of Maine	Bishop Lyman C. Ogilby Bishop J. Brooke Moseley Diocese of Pennsylvania
Bishop Wm. Henry Marmion Diocese of Southwestern Virginia	Bishop Charles E. Bennison Diocese of Western Michigan
Bishop John M. Krumm Diocese of Southern Ohio	Bishop Robert Spears, Jr. Diocese of Rochester

Response to McNaught

Concerning Civil Rights

by Paul Moore

In Brian McNaught's article "The Dilemma of the Gay in the Church" he dealt clearly and quickly with many of the misconceptions people have about gay persons and with the problems facing them. I have always been concerned about the different communities of our culture, both within and without the Church, who are discriminated against because of history and misunderstanding—poor people, welfare recipients, Black people, Spanish-speaking people, Orientals, women, and the rest. Perhaps the *most* misunderstood minority is the so-called "gay community."

Working toward the understanding of gay people—why they are the way they are, how they feel, what their problems are within society, how much of our misunderstanding and prejudice comes out of our own sexual insecurity, what of the seeming direct conflict between a gay life and some Scriptural statements—all this makes our understanding of them and our acceptance of them in society perhaps more difficult than that of any other group. As the Bishop of

New York where the gay community is large and articulate and influential, and of a Diocese which has hundreds—perhaps thousands—of gay people within its congregations, one faces this situation with some trepidation. Here are some of the difficult problems.

What is the best way by which scriptural statements condemning all sexual acts outside of marriage can be explained? Mr. McNaught's article gives us some good leads on this, but such commentary is little known and therefore might well be suspect by many churchpeople. How do you deal with the seeming conflict between the standard of married sexuality which is still the accepted standard of the Church and the fact that homosexuality must exist outside of marriage?

Can homosexual persons be married in any sense? How do you deal with the radical difference in reaction between traditional people who are shocked and horrified by the very mention of homosexuality in polite society and yet are faithful churchpeople and perhaps quite "liberal" on other issues, and those parts of the community and Church who are more than ready to accept a new interpretation of homosexuality along the lines of Mr. McNaught's article? Is the issue of homosexuality in any way related to the other great sexual issue of our Church, the ordination of women? Can the issue of homosexuality be considered outside consideration of the whole subject of sexuality, including the common practice of clergy counselling, or at the least condoning premarital intercourse between couples?

This is a large and deep agenda; there are many differences among authorities who write on the subject. People's feelings are perhaps more intense in regards to homosexuality than they are even on the subject of racism.

Nor are these questions unrelated to the welfare of the homosexual members of our Church. I feel very strongly that every person has a right to decide whether or not he or she wishes to reveal his or her true sexual nature, but those gay persons who do not wish to reveal their sexual preference are deeply threatened by a discussion of these issues—and understandably so.

All of these questions are difficult enough for the layperson but they become even more difficult when the clergy are involved. Because an ordained minister has a responsibility to be a role model many of our people find the concept of a clergyman openly practicing the gay life to be abhorrent. They feel that such a

role model is not one to which they wish their children exposed. Thus there is a deep conflict between the advantages of openness and honesty and the need for Anglican clergy in certain cases to conceal their sexual identity if they wish to be employed as clergy and accepted by laypersons in most congregations.

It seems to me that the best of all possible solutions should be the rapid increase of understanding of the facts of homosexuality insofar as they can be determined, together with a compassionate and generous minded understanding of the rights of such persons to be Christians and to be fully accepted members of the community. As this process of education and understanding continues the atmosphere hopefully will become more accepting of gay people, and within that more accepting atmosphere gay people can become a respected part of the Church. At this point I cannot see the ultimate solutions to all of the problems stated above, but I do think it is an urgent responsibility of all churchmen to encourage open understanding.

In the meanwhile we must at least fight vigorously for the civil rights of all persons without regard to sexual preference. As their civil rights are gained and as the cultural atmosphere increases our understanding—both within and without the Church—they will by their own integrity, passion, and courage win the respect of their fellow churchmen.

Paul Moore is Bishop of New York. Several months ago, with the endorsement of his Diocesan Convention, he attempted unsuccessfully to prevail upon the New York City Council to protect the civil rights of homosexuals.

Response to McNaught

Concerning the Biblical View

by Coleman McGehee

The Bible contains mistakes, inaccuracies, contradictions, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings and yet it is still the primary record of God's revelation of Himself to the world. That is why the Bible can be the most difficult book of any book to read. And so with all this in mind, and more, I took the various citations in the Bible which have to do with homosexuality and over a period of time carefully studied them. I had assumed that homosexuality was condemned clearly in

the various Biblical passages. But I discovered surprisingly enough some interesting revelations as is often the case in reading and studying the Bible.

I discovered that the famous passage from Genesis having to do with Sodom and Gomorrah viewed for centuries as God's condemnation of homosexuality in the Old Testament may have nothing to do with homosexuality at all.

I discovered that much of the Biblical mention of homosexuality occurs within the context of a discussion of idolatry which, of course, Holy Scriptures condemns.

I discovered that some passages such as in Leviticus include homosexuality together with a long list of prohibitions that make up the holiness code and which we certainly would not observe today . . . For the Christian this legal code has been superseded by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

It must be pointed out that Jesus in his ministry to our knowledge never said anything about the subject of homosexuality. He did affirm human life, however, at every point and showed us that the test of our commitment lies in our attitude toward and treatment of other human beings.

Homosexuality, I am more and more inclined to conclude, is not so much a problem but a mystery—a mystery which may be insoluble. A mystery which is given us and which perhaps we must somehow accept and live with. Could it be, I ask myself, that homosexuality is right for some persons?

Coleman McGehee is Bishop of Michigan. Under his leadership a unique program of diocesan education has taken place over the past two years on the subject of homosexuality. The narrow margin by which the resolution, referred to in McNaught's article, was lost at the recent diocesan convention is eloquent testimony to the effectiveness of and the need for education on this subject. The remarks above are excerpted from his convention address.

Response to McNaught

Concerning Sexual Rights

by Dr. Rollin Fairbanks

In accepting the invitation to respond to Brian McNaught's article I was influenced by three factors.

First, as a former member of the Diocese of Michigan I have a continuing interest in what is happening there. Second, among the several courses which I teach at the Episcopal Divinity School is a seminar on human sexuality. Third, I respect the courage and honesty of those gay persons who have "come out" or acknowledged their sexual identity. Therefore I admittedly embarked upon this assignment with favorable anticipation. This attitude, however, has not been completely sustained.

Sex, whether heterosexual or homosexual, continues to be a very loaded subject in our present society. Many people still react emotionally and thereby lose the objectivity essential for creative dialogue. This is true of both sexual groups. I sense some of this in the foregoing article, with a resulting distortion of some of the issues at stake.

For instance, there is the use of the unlikely caricature of Bruce—an image many people would not necessarily associate with homosexuals. While the responses to the Commission's study (303 out of 645) are mentioned, we are not told what was said or indicated. Also there is no comment, speculation or interpretation as to why the 342 did *not* reply. The reported nervous laughter of the delegates to the Diocesan Convention seems to have been misunderstood or misinterpreted and given undue importance. There appears to have been the assumption that the passing of a resolution (no matter how well intended) would necessarily produce tolerance and understanding and make for positive thinking. People must first be informed and educated in order to vote for and try to live by the presumably well thought out proposals in the Commission's Report. As a position paper intended to stimulate discussion, this article at times appears to be more like a bill of complaint (howsoever justified) rather than a reasoned and persuasive appeal setting forth the claim of gay persons for an honest and honorable place within our society.

There is no indication that McNaught is aware of or sensitive to the very real and persistent anxiety felt by heterosexual individuals in regard to homosexuality although I am sure that he knows this. He is certainly right in criticizing the Church for being unjustifiably punitive, treating homosexuality as a sin. He has also dealt knowingly with the exploitation of biblical references for the purpose of moral condemnation. It is significant and hopeful that those involved in mental health have finally stopped considering homosexuality as a disease or mental illness. There remains, however,

the viable argument that homosexuality represents the second step in psychosexual development. There are many persons who because of behavior believe themselves to be homosexual but who are in reality (in terms of sexual identification) actually still on the first step, that of narcissism. This model of psychosexual development is admittedly rejected by many on the gay side of the fence. The discovery or realization of bisexuality also challenges but does not necessarily refute the psychoanalytic model to which I have referred.

As a marriage counselor I have become aware of the fact that sexual practices long associated with homosexuality (fellatio, cunnilingus and anal intercourse) are or have become common and accepted practices by many heterosexual couples within our society today. This fact plus the emergence of bisexuality may deplete the ranks of homosexuals or separate—for them—preference from practice.

In conclusion, the primary purpose of McNaught's article is a warranted appeal that individuals not be disenfranchised and denied their rightful privileges as persons and citizens of our society simply upon the basis of their sexual orientation and life style. The issue, as I see it, is civil rights not sexual rights. To challenge the latter is to confuse the issue.

Rollin Fairbanks is professor of pastoral theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge. A few years ago he participated in a panel presentation to the House of Bishops on the subject of homosexuality.

Response to McNaught

Concerning Love and Charity

by Dr. Louie Crew

I am less apologetic than Brian.

Christ loves us Gays right now! His love is aggressive and affirming.

From the moment Christ welcomed the Roman centurion, the history of Christianity has been the extension of the Gospel to hitherto excluded persons. God is no respecter of genital conditions. "Whosoever believeth in Him" is not the same as "whosoever has heterosexual orientation." Gay Christians are joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

The Church does not have the power to change Christ's conditions for the Kingdom of God. Gays would violate the living witness of the Holy Spirit in our lives were we to negotiate our salvation with laity, priests, or bishops. No more properly can we follow the false religion Respectability, for we follow the Cross.

For too long our church has defaulted the Great Commission to take the Gospel to the more than 20 million Gay Americans for whom Christ died. For centuries her only audible whimper to gays has been, "Repent and become heterosexual," a doctrine with highly suspect scriptural authority and with no clear and convincing evidence of efficacy.

Many persons have known that there have always been plenty of gays in the Episcopal Church, where sensitivity and talent have always been welcome. Were all gays not to show up to give sermons or perform in the choir or contribute to the collection plate, hundreds of churches would have a formidable struggle, even if for only one Sunday. Why then raise a fuss, in view of the obvious rewards for keeping silent?

The word "Integrity" does not mean "conventional virtue," but "wholeness." Sexuality is so much a part of wholeness that integrity is surely impossible without an integration of sexuality into all other aspects of personhood. Requiring gays to remain covert in ways not required of non-gays effects de facto excommunication.

Imagine a gay person introducing as such his/her gay date or spouse at your next service.

Try stating the intention "for all gay people" or "for my gay cousin(s)" at your next Communion.

Very tellingly promiscuity does not similarly upset the church, if contained in all the allowable places. Churchpersons clearly want such evidence to "prove" our special, second-class "depravity."

The experiences of the early Christians are very real to contemporary gay Christians. Paradoxically the Church herself has become our Colosseum.

Brian talks about his need for a revised understanding of theological terms. The more catholic I realize gays to be, the more I hesitate to try to state for all gays our theological aspirations. Personally I would be very happy to see all churchpersons take seriously the familiar bidding to Communion—to be "in love and charity" with us gays.

Dr. Louie Crew is director of "Integrity," an Episcopal gay organization.

Look at Yourself, America!

THE AMERICAN JOURNEY, PART III

by Edward Joseph Holland

Property rights versus the rights of the people. Property over people was favored by the elite of the American colonies and has warped the American Dream ever since. More and more the American Dream has become an American Nightmare for the unpropertied. For 200 years a complicated battle has been waged by the "rabble" against classism, imperialism, racism and sexism. Within that setting, researcher Joseph Holland has been probing "The American Journey" and in this, the third of four articles, he draws our history to a close. Expansion, a necessary ingredient for the liberal definition of freedom, is no longer possible and the "rabble" at home suffer for it.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Limits and Crises

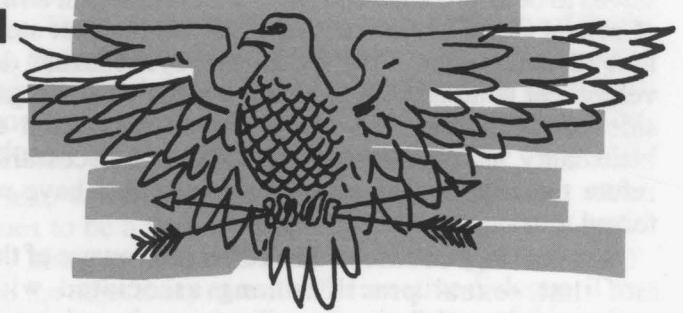
In the post-World War II era, American capitalism as a national system reached both its inner maturity and its outer limits. Because the escape valve of the frontier and expansion has come to an end, fundamental restructuring is required in the nation's economic, political and cultural life. The crisis of this restructuring is so basic that it calls into question the substance of the American Dream since the nation's foundation.

Response to this crisis could gravitate toward either of two poles, one salvaging the power of the controlling classes through a shift toward state capitalism and a reduced, but perhaps more lethal imperialism; or the other, a social challenge to capitalism itself.

In examining this third phase of American history (from World War II to the present), we will examine the outer limits met by American expansion in the Cold War era, and then the inner limits of the structures of American capitalism in its maturity. Finally we will look at the fresh challenges coming from the major social movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

Outer Limits

In the Soviet Union, western capitalism ran into its outer limit. An Iron Curtain, built from both sides, divided the capitalist orbit from the socialist orbit. Early on, each orbit had a single center of dominance, namely the USSR and the USA. With their separate spheres of influence fairly well defined, each center in turn found an outside enemy against



which it could rally great national energies and fears. Heightening the fears was the ominous backdrop of the atom bomb.

The Chinese revolution and the division of Korea further contained the capitalist world, and thereafter new socialist successes began. The Cuban revolution was the first great shock. The victory of the Vietnamese liberation forces and the general turn of Southeast Asia toward socialism further heightened the sense of contraction.

At the end of World War II only seven per cent of the world's population and 18 per cent of its land mass were governed by Communist governments in 17 nations.¹ Since then, the socialist movement in Western Europe has assumed new strength, especially in Portugal, Italy and France. Socialist movements in Latin America and parts of Asia are contained only by brutal repression, and Africa has seen its first Marxist-Leninist government in Mozambique.

These very broad socialist successes spell the failure of the Cold War containment policies. United States capitalism no longer has the military capacity to stop the spread of socialism.

Other factors, not necessarily socialist, contributed to the end of the Cold War era. Its fears became a handicap to doing business across ideological lines, whether in the sale of wheat to Russia or the transfer of technology generally. Also, in the wake of the split between China and Russia, U.S. foreign policy shifted from a bi-polar strategy to a multi-polar strategy and a framework of interdependence and detente.

Despite the territorial defeats of American capitalism's Cold War strategy, the capitalist system still grows dramatically within its remaining territory. This takes shape in the transnational corporations, which are shifting considerable productivity off the American base. In search of cheaper labor, as well as markets and raw materials, American capitalism began exporting jobs, especially in textiles and electronics, but also in heavy industries like automobile manufacturing. While the growth often increased the GNP of poorer nations, it also often increased internal class polarization and external dependence.²

1. U.S. News and World Report, June 2, 1975, pp. 24-25.

2. Center Focus, newsletter of Center of Concern, # 12, August, 1975.

The transnationals began to create an international social class of privilege, made up of tiny minorities from each nation, and to manipulate labor markets across national boundaries. They also aggravated global unemployment, by stressing urbanization and capital-intensive technologies in industry and agriculture.

The imperialist side of the transnationals has begun to be checked recently, however, by a broad coalition of socialist and non-socialist Third World nations in the United Nations. These nations, which form the majority of the human race, are more and more aligning themselves against the Western industrial nations, especially the United States.

Two recent documents from the United Nations point to this. They are the "Declaration on a New International Economic Order" and the "Charter on the Economic Rights and Duties of States."³ While neither document has enforcement power, both reflect the present world economic situation. Not all the nations challenging the old order are themselves models of justice, but by their growing coalition, they are weakening the hold which the Western industrial powers, under U.S. leadership, held over most of the world market.

This seems to mean for America a weakening and restructuring of its economic empire (not necessarily its collapse). The restructuring of the empire, in turn, probably means the decline of internal economic growth and the end of upward mobility within the United States. These possibilities point to the end of the dominant interpretation of the American Dream, namely the myth that God chose America as number one, to bring freedom, prosperity and peace to its own people and to the rest of the world.

An interesting cultural effect of this reduction of Western power concerns the function of Western religion in the global community. Christianity little by little ceases to reflect in the cultural sphere the old economic and political arrogance of the West. For the first time perhaps, it has begun truly to listen to the message of the religious traditions (including the secular religion of Marxism) of the peoples of Asia and Africa and even to the religious traditions of the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Inner Limits

Two fundamental contradictions emerged within American society in the post-World War II years. The first was the contradiction of domestic social policy with foreign economic and military policy. The second was the contradiction between the promises and the performance of the social system. Both contradictions were generated by capitalism in its maturity and each continues to aggravate the other.

The first contradiction appeared in the deficit balance of payments in the late 1950s which by 1974 reached more than \$10 billion. The deficit has been checked recently partly by severe recession.

3. *Ibid.*

There were many reasons for this deficit flow. First, the transnational corporations have been exporting production, causing the nation to increase imports. Second, the continued growth of American military power in protection of U.S. commercial interests across the globe, caused further capital drain.⁴ Third, the devaluation of the dollar, while making U.S. goods more competitive at home, raised the costs of U.S. military presence abroad and of foreign imports. Fourth, and most well known in the popular mind, the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) cartel used its own economic leverage to gain higher prices for oil.

This last reason is especially important, partly because oil is such a basic commodity in the U.S. economy (centered around the private automobile), but also because the OPEC experience is being taken as a model by other Third World exporters of primary commodities. There are some signs that OPEC is moving toward orchestrating a giant Third World cartel.

The point of all this is very simple. A major shift is occurring. Foreign commercial and military involvements by the U.S. formerly took the pressure off domestic social tensions. Now they are aggravating them.

The various domestic efforts to stop the deficit balance of payments seem to point toward greater social and ecological exploitation at home, the second fundamental contradiction.

Socially the screws are turned on the working class, including some middle-income sectors. The most obvious example is an attempt by the controlling classes to put labor back in its place, especially through massive unemployment. The government has been willing to tolerate in the current recession an unemployment rate of approximately 10 per cent (unofficially much higher and incredibly high for certain sectors, approaching 50 per cent for Black youth).

High unemployment reduces the bargaining power of workers and sometimes even forces them to accept blackmail, like the threat that factories will move elsewhere unless the firm is allowed to lower wages.

Despite all the rhetoric in the media about increasing labor costs holding back growth, real take home pay of workers in private industry plunged, for instance, from nearly \$97 a week in September, 1973 to a little more than \$87 a week in February, 1975. And in 1975, it takes more than \$18 to buy the same basket of groceries that was bought with \$12 in 1970 and with \$10 in 1965.⁵

The affluence of the American labor force is deceiving. The image of Big Unions protecting American workers applies only to about 20 per cent of the American labor force, and among those, some of the most highly paid per hour (e.g., the building trades) are experiencing extreme unemployment.

"Twenty five years ago," according to a *Washington Post* reporter, "two out of three families could afford to buy a medium-priced new home. Today fewer than one out of five

4. Sidney Lens, "Strangelovian Morality," *National Catholic Reporter*, July 4, 1975, p. 4.

5. *U.E. News*, April 7, 1975, p. 1.

can." In addition, rents in many urban areas are skyrocketing. While salaries may have increased dramatically, the structural costs of living in this society have increased even more dramatically. The automobile for many workers, for instance, is a necessity in a society where the creation of an effective mass transit system is fought at every turn by powerful lobbies. Even good higher education, the heart of the American Dream, was and remains (probably more so today) beyond the economic reach of most working class people.

Inflation in turn facilitates a negative redistribution of income. The upper classes whose money is secure in fixed sources find their wealth inflating with the general inflation process. Working people, however, who depend only on salaries, find their paychecks shrinking every day. This reduction in domestic purchasing power among the working class gives the national economy more buoyancy in the international market, since with less internal consumption, it becomes less dependent on foreign oil and on other foreign imports, thus partially redressing the negative balance of payments.

There also have been deliberate and successful efforts to transfer the tax burden of the system's social recklessness down to the middle and lower middle sectors. Taxes rose as much as 30 per cent recently, the highest single figure in the inflationary bag. The high tax costs are due basically to two items in public budgets: the incredible military costs of maintaining a world empire, even in decline, and the incredible social costs (welfare, prisons, unemployment compensation, etc.) of maintaining the free enterprise economy in a highly automated context.

Two other elements have helped redress the deficit balance of payments, both of them opposed to domestic and global welfare. They are international food sales and international arms sales.

The Food for Peace program since World War II has been hooking poor, foreign economies on products and technological styles which precipitate capital-intensive technologies and massive displacement of peasants. At home something of the same process has been occurring as giant agribusiness corporations crush small farmers almost by geometric progression, and gather up the productive lands of the nation into the hands of a very few powerful interests. The foreign economies, like the small farmers at home, come to a point where they can go no deeper into debt for the purchase of capital-intensive agricultural technologies, and then their internal food production suffers, making it possible for the transnational interests to buy up the best lands and use them in many cases for the production of cash crops for export.

The net result is less jobs and less food for the people of the nation and world. Similarly, the foreign export of our own food (generally not to the poor, but to the already well fed rich nations like the Soviet Union, members of the European community, and Japan) causes higher food prices for the

already strapped working classes at home. Yet foreign food sales, to the detriment of many people of the world and in this country, are a central factor in righting the deficit balance of payments.

Also foreign arms sales, running over \$8 billion per year, to each party in any and all conflicts, makes the United States one of the major arms dealers of the world.⁶ Besides contributing to the threat of a war-torn world, this economic strategy makes large sectors of organized labor sympathetic to the arms race and beholden to the military industrial complex.

All of these structural phenomena—weakening labor power through unemployment, sustained inflation, downward shifting of the tax burden, and the sale of food and arms in the international market—have the cumulative effect of decreasing internal consumption and therefore moving toward a favorable balance of payments. Thus the national economy floats securely in the international market, but human needs at home are thrown overboard to keep it afloat. It is the "lifeboat ethic" which works not only against the world's poor, but also against the poor and the working class at home.

Ecologically, the costs are also severe. First, one proposed strategy to offset dependence on foreign oil is Project Independence, which basically means turning to strip-mined coal (much of it on Indian land, as well as in Appalachia) and to nuclear power, both extremely dangerous to the natural environment. Second, just as in production, efforts are made to hold down labor costs at the price of the health and welfare of the working class, so efforts are made to hold down ecological costs, at the price of a safe, natural environment.

Fresh Challenges

During the Cold War years, it seemed as if American capitalism reigned triumphant. The red purge of McCarthyism routed the enemy at home and supposedly America exploded with prosperity. Past struggles were forgotten and the present now seemed to become an absolute. This collapse of the critical spirit, particularly during the 1950s, was due to the rapid expansion of the new middle classes, and increased opportunity for many workers. American capitalism was exploding in the post-war period, stimulated by the war-subsidized industries which were still busy building up a global military apparatus.

The expansion of opportunity took the cutting edge off social protest. American ideologists began to speak of the end of ideology and of the arrival of the post-capitalist system. While still short of its goal, the system counted on "expanded participation," not radical challenge. The problem was not to find better structures but to give the structures more time and room to do their job.

A strong sense of dissent was present for a while in the late 1940s. It revived again in the 1960s, even if its analyses were not always adequate. In the 1970s it began to move toward

6. *New York Times*, April 14, 1975, p. A-12.

maturity and to regain continuity with the historical tradition of the American Left, reaching back to the pre-McCarthy era and even back to the struggle over two separate definitions of freedom in the first American Revolution.

In analyzing the resistance of this period, we can perhaps speak of three overlapping and closely related waves.

1. The first wave came from the resistance of the labor movement. Beginning immediately after the war, being set back temporarily by the Cold War (including McCarthyism), a radical critique has recently revived. This is seen particularly in the AFL-CIO's organizing support of poor Hispanic and black workers, through the United Farm Workers and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, as well as in the growth of hospital workers unions, the militancy of textile unions like the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, (the Farah boycott), the reform movement in the United Mine Workers of America and a parallel reform movement in the Steelworkers of America. In addition, there is the beginning of a new international consciousness, at the very time when it seemed that much of big labor leadership was climaxing in a combination of isolationism and imperialism. Perhaps the best expression was the solidarity of the UFW with Chilean farmworkers, after the violent overthrow of the Allende government.

Finally, working class women have succeeded in bringing their issues to center stage in the labor movement. The year 1974 saw the emergence of the Coalition of Labor Women United, when more than 3,000 women from 58 internationals joined in Chicago. Partly because of the women's organized power, the AFL-CIO in its 1973 convention switched its position on the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) to one of support.

Also, small farmers' groups like the National Farmer's Unions have been fighting big business on the agricultural side. The food system is increasingly becoming the property of giant transnational corporations, which manipulate the consumer and crush the small farmer by converting to energy and capital-intensive technologies, further aggravating unemployment and ecological recklessness.

2. The second wave of criticism rose more from the consumer than the productive side of the American populace. It was generated by the variety of social movements which appeared with strength in the 1960s. They perhaps can be gathered under the rubric of community organization and addressed themselves to issues which organized labor was not directly facing, mainly because of its concentration on collective bargaining around work-place economic issues.

The most powerful of these waves was the tremendous upsurge of the Black Freedom Movement, under the cry of civil rights, attempting to turn back the counter-revolution of the post Civil War Reconstruction. As the movement developed it shifted its tone toward Black Power, but the impulse was the same. Though the movement contained such diverse leaders as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, the tragic assassination of both men was seen by many in

the movement as a double blow to a single force.

Other ethnic groups also began to organize along the model of the Black Freedom Movement. The Chicano movement emerged with a range of leaders from Cesar Chavez to Corky Gonzalez. Puerto Rican consciousness was heightened and the Puerto Rican Socialist Party made an important strategic decision to begin organizing within the continental United States as well as in Puerto Rico itself. The Indian movement revived and soon became an important cultural force challenging the dominant values of the West. Similarly, white subcultures began to organize, like Appalachian whites and later Catholic white ethnics.

At first, these groups often wanted only a piece of the pie. Supported in many cases by government funding under the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), or later by capitalist foundations, they accepted the official ideology that the capitalist system was infinitely expandable. Some even began to speak of black capitalism. With the crushing of the self-determination side of OEO by the Green Amendment, and the subsequent whittling down of programs, it became clear that, for the moment at least, the system was not infinitely expandable. As the old frontiers closed, John Kennedy stirred hearts with a promise of a "New Frontier." When it failed to emerge, Lyndon Johnson tried to turn the nation creatively away from frontiers entirely, and inward instead to a "Great Society," which could afford both "guns and butter." Now it becomes clear that not only is there no frontier but there is no great society within.

As a result of the disillusionments from these struggles, a profound reassessment has been going on in many sectors of American society. Even many people from the middle income sectors of society have begun to reassess national purpose and national institutions. The most powerful incentive for this reassessment was the brutal and tragic war in Southeast Asia, perhaps the worst blasphemy heaped by the elites upon American democracy, to say nothing of its effects on the Vietnamese. Only the combined resistance of the Vietnamese liberation movements and key sectors of the American public brought the war to a halt.

From within this disillusionment, the New Left emerged, full of immaturity and inadequate analyses, but together with the revived tradition of the older American Left promising to raise again with power fundamental questions. The New Left, in turn signaled a broader revival of the American socialist tradition, the third wave of fresh challenge.

3. The third wave is still very young but could be described as an explicitly anti-capitalist and pro-socialist political movement in America. On the one hand, it reaches back to the complex roots of earlier American socialist movements; on the other hand, it reaches out in the present to those whose anger and resistance, while not producing on the articulate level a socialist critique, perhaps might lead to that. Like the other waves, this movement is internally complex, composed of groups with quite different viewpoints on analyses, strategies and goals, but all agree that the question

must be pressed to the fundamental level and that it is working people of America, of all regions, races and cultures, as well as of both sexes, that must transform the nation.

Many church groups had roots in the first wave (labor struggles), and many pressed on heroically to the second wave (racial, ethnic, sexual, consumer and community movements). Church support from many of these groups did not come easy. More often than not there were great struggles within churches as to which side the churches would come out on. Generally too there was no single position, but division within the churches around these issues. But gratefully, major sectors of the churches became known, because of their participation in these struggles, as friends of the common people.

While the third wave is still young, controversies around it have already begun within church circles. It is possible that identification with this third wave, admitting much internal differentiation, may prove the test in coming years to tell which of the churches remain the friend of the common people.

Such an assumption of the socialist framework would not mean a replacing of long-developed traditions like Black Christianity, Native American religion, Hispanic Catholicism, White Populist Protestantism, white working class Catholicism or feminist theology, but simply linking all of them in a mutually critical and constructive coalition of interpretation and action. Understandably there would be fear from many groups that their particular richness might be destroyed, warped or compromised in such a framework, and such danger certainly could be present. To prevent this the framework of socialism would have to be the servant of such a coalition and not its master.

NEXT MONTH: Where do we go from here? Joseph Holland makes some predictions and is joined in comment by members of the labor force.

Sex and the Unmarried

by Robert W. Cromeey

Celibate, married or discreet. You must be one of these to get ahead in the Episcopal Church. Sex in marriage is okay. No sex, as in celibacy, is okay. Non-married clergy, male or female, are in limbo. There are those who say that if Episcopal clergy choose neither to be married or celibate, they are probably gay. Non-married clergy, if not gay, are probably not having any sex. Then there are those who assume non-married clergy are having sex, and it's okay if it is done with discretion and with people outside the parish.

The real situation is that there are many clergy, men and women, who have never been married nor have they taken the vows of celibacy. They express themselves sexually in one way or the other. They masturbate. They may do it happily or with guilt, depending on their degree of sexual liberation.

The rumor is true, let's face it, that many clergy are homosexual. Some bishops, priests and deacons express their sexuality with persons of the same sex. They, too, do it with varying degrees of freedom or guilt.

Heterosexual clergy who are not married have sex with people of the opposite sex. Furthermore, in the last 10 years, there have been large numbers of clergy who are divorced. They too have sex while not married. Some of them may be homosexuals who have left

PARADOX

by Edward P. Allen

Our need to be free conflicts
with our need to be useful.
We want our independence
but we also want
some involvement
with other people—
as long as we don't get
trapped in their needs.

So what each of us needs
to maintain some freedom
and to avoid
feeling unnecessary
is a group of people
who have made a commitment
to back each other up
as we reach out,
together and alone,
to those around us.

A group that recognizes
our peculiar abilities
and fluctuating cycles
of availability and concern.

A group we can trust to be with us
when we need it—
come hell or high water.

The choice, it seems is between
independence and loneliness
or freedom in community.

Edward Allen, an Episcopal priest, is chaplain at the University of California in Irvine.

marriage to follow a new sexual orientation. Many more are heterosexuals who have sex regularly or irregularly with people of the opposite sex during the time they are not married.

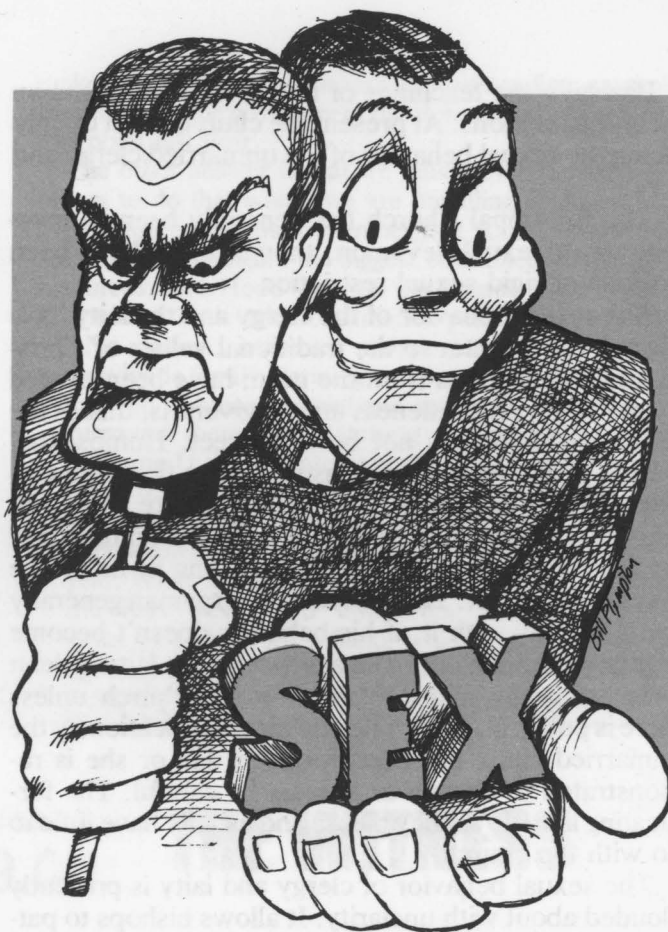
The time has come for honesty and plain speaking about this matter in the church. It affects not only the lives of the clergy, but also the sexuality of the laity. Younger people today fornicate, that is they have sex outside of marriage. It is open and honest. They make no pretense to be sexless. They may make some hollow protestations of virginity with their parents, but do not do so with their peers. Most young people will probably marry some day. Vast numbers of single young adults have little to do with the church, in part because of religious anti-sexualism. They no longer will subordinate their sexuality to the "church's teachings."

Men and women who have been divorced certainly have had sex in the past, are used to it, and plan to have it while they are not married. They ignore the traditional teaching of the church that such sexual behavior outside marriage is wrong.

More and more senior citizens are becoming open about their sexual drives. They participate in sex, though they are widows, widowers, or have never been married. In some homes for the elderly sex is specifically forbidden at worst, or sex is made impossible for lack of privacy. Some seniors are challenging these rules.

What is bringing about these trends in sexual thinking and behavior? There is a new sex consciousness in the Western world. Its worst expression is in pornography in films, books and magazines. Its best expression is in a desire on the part of many people to have better, more enjoyable sex. People are paying attention to sex and enjoying it more. Many married people whose sexual relationship has become stale turn to counseling or therapy for new ways to enjoy their sexuality. People are not denying themselves sexual enjoyment because of some abstraction about sexual purity. The clergy are not denying themselves, the laity are not. But the church is not openly talking about what its clergy and laity are in fact doing. So there is a snickering "hush-hush" about sex in the church. It is okay, but let's talk about it.

A very obvious development opening people more fully to their sexuality is the easy availability of birth control methods, simple cures for venereal disease, and the accessibility of abortions. The ancient taboos of pregnancy and disease, to keep people extremely careful about sexual expression, no longer have much power.



Another reason the church is facing more open sexual behavior is the growth of celebrations in the church. Liturgies where people sing, applaud, and touch each other are sexually arousing. I think this is okay and people should learn to handle openly and honestly any sexual feelings which do emerge. People can learn to acknowledge their sexual feelings toward each other. They may or may not choose to act on them.

Another basic element in the growing sexual awareness in the church is the recognition that as people experience love, forgiveness and community, there is a sexual dimension to those feelings. We used to talk about love, forgiveness and community; now many are experiencing these elements. People get turned on as they acknowledge their love for each other, openly apologize to each other and live in a loving community-family. The church's formularies do not fit these new trends.

Traditionally the church expects its members to have sex within marriage or to be celibate. The New Testament can be quoted to forbid fornication. There is no evidence that Jesus had sex of any kind. St. Paul was not comfortable about sex. The anti-sexual and celibate traditions of the first 10 centuries are strong.

Basically the teachings of the church are based on these assumptions. At present the church is not openly facing the sexual behavior of the unmarried clergy and laity.

The Episcopal Church has generally been benevolent about sexual deviation, though there have been pockets of rigid sexual restriction.

The sexual behavior of the clergy and the laity have always run counter to the traditional values of Christianity. Aberrations from the norm have been treated by pastors with gentleness and forgiveness, unless the sexual behavior has not been discreet. Homosexual clergy, if discovered, have usually been fired and dismissed from the ministry, though there are signs that this is not as automatic as it once was. The homosexual lay person is generally tolerated so long as he or she stays in the closet. The adulterous clergyman generally can get away with it, if his behavior doesn't become regular or scandalous. The adultery of the laity is dealt with pastorally and contained in the church unless there is public scandal. The odd bit of fornication by the unmarried cleric has been forgiven. He or she is admonished to abstain or at least be careful. The fornicating laity do as they please and usually have little to do with the church.

The sexual behavior of clergy and laity is presently clouded about with unclarity. It allows bishops to patronize priests with benign forgiveness for sexual activity apparently forbidden. Priests can say, "There, there, it's not so bad," to youngsters who masturbate. Pastors, with a patronizing wink, say to unmarried lovers, "Though it's against the rules, no one really cares." People, unmarried, living together or having sexual relations cannot clearly celebrate their relationship in the Christian community because their behavior isn't quite cricket by the traditions of the church.

This is the Anglican way: Loving, forbearing, forgiving and discreet. It is also dishonest, unjust and irrelevant to the changing sex consciousness of our time. It assumes sex outside of marriage is wrong. It is forgiveable sin. But it is sinful and wrong for the non-married to have sex.

I believe that candor is called for now. I believe it is time for the Church to say loud and clear that:

- Sexual intercourse between consenting unmarried people is good and healthy.
- Sexual relations between consenting persons of the same sex is good and healthy.
- Masturbation as a way for persons to give pleasure to themselves is good and healthy.

The American Psychiatric Association has deleted homosexuality from its list of illnesses. What a great thing it would be for the church to encourage homosexuals to find pleasure and love with partners of the same sex. What a gift of freedom it would be for the Episcopal Church simply to state that sex between consenting persons is good and healthy. What a gift of freedom it would be for the church to assure people that masturbation is a gift from God for pleasure and relaxation.

Many clergy and laity masturbate, and express their sexuality with others of the same or the opposite sex. The non-churched do the same. Officially the church still hesitantly teaches marriage or celibacy. I believe the church should get its outdated formularies and traditions caught up with what is happening in God's world. Such clarity on sexual matters could help people experience the love, forgiveness and joy which is what the church is in business to proclaim, and God's business to grant.

Is there any Christian justification for this emerging sexual freedom? I think there is. The Church's ethics are always changing and developing. Divorce, race and war are three areas where many Christians thought there was a firm teaching and tradition. Today these three areas are defined and re-defined according to people's deeper understanding of the dynamics of human life. Family structure does not disappear if there is more flexibility in divorce. Racial attitudes change as minority people assert their essential humanity. Christian warfare is impossible in a nuclear age.

Human sexual behavior is changing as people realize their bodies are gifts from God to be enjoyed. People's stewardship of their bodies includes pleasure. The human spirit is recreated and renewed in loving sexual contact. A person is transfigured in orgasmic response. Death and resurrection are deeply symbolized as people die to their old self and become renewed in joyous sexual union. There is the strong possibility that the Holy Spirit is active in and through the sexual lives of people, teaching, developing and bringing about change. As we look theologically at the emerging sexual patterns, is it possible to see the activity of the Spirit giving new meanings to human sexuality? I believe so. God is calling the world to a new dimension of sexual, loving expression. The new sexuality is producing love, caring, intimacy, openness and honesty. Certainly there are pornographic abuses. But I believe the pluses are greater than the minuses.

The church members are changing their sexual behavior. I hope the church as an institution can examine

again its basic ethics and be an instrument to free people to enjoy their God-given sexual gifts.

Robert W. Cromey is a non-parochial priest of the Diocese of California.

Response to Gillett Article on Hunger

by Derwent A. Suthers

I have been acutely aware of the reality of world hunger since working with the Church World Service food program in north-east Brazil several years ago. The causes of hunger are complex and inter-related as Mr. Gillett suggests. He says there are tough questions to be faced: global redistribution of resources, government policy, behavior of our agricultural giants, domestic unemployment, over-consumption at home. I find it strange that he does not here or anywhere in the article refer to the most obvious tough question of containing the population growth rates that are threatening to double the number of mouths to feed in just 35 years. How can we hope to attain a balance between supply of and demand for food if we attend only to these other questions? A quotation from John Stuart Mill to fill the column at the end of the article is surely not enough!

It is no coincidence that all the major international conferences sponsored by the United Nations over the last three years: The Environmental Conference (1972), The Conferences in Population, Law of the Sea, and Food (1974), and the International Women's Conference (1975) featured population-related issues either at center stage or as an important sub-agenda. For example, how can we set about raising the status of women without giving priority attention to the fact that more than seven in ten of them around the world are at risk to their health, and trapped in the most confining of economic and social roles, through lack of the means of regulating their own fertility? Here, as in the issue of hunger, the basic necessity of the means of fertility control has to be a part of the answer.

One might hazard a guess as to why the conspicuous omission from Mr. Gillett's article. The proclamation of the need to identify with minorities and oppressed peoples is sometimes seen as ruling out any mention of the population problem as there are those among these groups—mostly men I might add—who have seen this issue as one of genocide toward their own population. There are two answers to this. One is that people everywhere, particularly women, no matter what their culture or economic status, have evidenced an increased use of contraceptive technology when it is truly available to them in a way they can understand and appropriate for themselves within their own life styles. It is not a question of imposition of alien values but making available the means within a given society for people to have this new dimension of freedom. Even societies that have been insistent in their denial that they have a population problem are beginning to take steps to

make this freedom available. An outstanding example is Brazil where the government has done an about-face on just this point last year.

The other answer is that we must never presume to ask others to do that which we are unwilling to do ourselves. Furthermore we must remember that Americans of middle and higher income are the biggest consumers of the world's resources. Jack Hood Vaughn, the President of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America pointed out recently,

"No nation, however prosperous, is exempt from worldwide family planning and population challenges and the web of human, social and economic problems which surround them. Eye-catching announcements on the declining U.S. birthrate over the past decade, encouraging as they are, mask the persisting reality in this country of hundreds of thousands of unwanted births, and a population increase of almost two million persons, every year. While the gravity of the problem may be greater in the less developed countries than in the more developed—here it's a factor which aggravates and multiplies other personal and societal problems, there it threatens even the meager vision of raising human comfort above the level of subsistence—its roots and consequences are fundamentally the same.

'The future is purchased by the present,' Samuel Johnson said. How we act now on family planning and population issues will determine the quality of the human condition in the year 2000. In today's world context, inaction—or 'letting nature take its course'—is a reliable prescription for disaster. Intelligent action—inspired leadership, backed by the day-to-day work of many thousands of committed individuals in this country and around the world, and the support of an informed and concerned public—is not just a desirable option; it's a crucial necessity."

I would hope that the Episcopal Church which has been conspicuously absent from the arena of fertility and related issues—both in education and action—would take steps soon toward creative programs and support of those on the front line of the battle for human freedom and responsibility in this basic area of sexuality which is indeed also a battle for human survival.

Mr. Derwent Suthers is the Senior Regional Director for the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern Regions of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

Gillett Replies

I appreciate the carefully reasoned and articulated response of Derwent Suthers to my article. He is right on one score: I should have mentioned that population growth is a most serious aspect of the world food crisis.

The question which Mr. Suthers does not really address is fundamentally this: are people in poor nations poor because they are having too many babies, or are they

see back cover

Gillett Replies (Continued)

having too many babies because they are poor? Lester R. Brown, perhaps the best known American authority on world hunger says, "there will be little chance of bringing birthrates down rapidly enough to avert disaster without a more equitable distribution of income and social services." He joined the main thrust of opinion at the U.N. World Population Conference in Bucharest (an opinion opposed unfortunately, by the United States official delegation) in recognizing that economic and social development, not birth control programs, are the most effective means of reducing population growth rates. South Korea, Taiwan and China are recent examples of such development, as well as the State of Kerala in India, according to Arthur Simon in "Bread for the World."

Beneath the population concerns of many people, moreover, lurks a suspicion—that if the poor were smarter, they would not have so many children. "It is perhaps a measure of the condescension inherent to the population problem so far, that the biggest lesson that has had to be learned is that poor people are not stupid; that they make rational decisions over their own lives; and that large families are very often an intelligent response to economic circumstances," writes Tarzi Vittachi of the U.N. Fund for Population Activities. Particularly is this true in the rural (and poorest) areas of developing countries, where parents depend upon their children both to help them with crop-raising and harvesting for their own survival needs, and also as security in their old age.

Suthers is partly right about something else in my article. In omitting any mention of population, I guess I did succumb to the fear that it might be interpreted by the poor as genocide. However, my own nine years of living in the Caribbean showed me time and again how even well-meaning economic and social "advice" from both government and the private sector turned out to be bad. And our proffering of advice, money, and technology to the poor nations has thus far largely been either tied chiefly to our own substantial economic advantage or to that of the wealthy elite in those countries (and most often to both). With that sorry record of colonialism and exploitation, what kind of credibility do we have, even if offering birth control devices to poor nations were the principal solution? Thus, I see our role in this country as that of limiting our own consumption and population, especially when you consider that U.S. average total resource demand per citizen is about 50 times that of a citizen of India. More importantly, I see our role (as I indicated in my article) in the churches as one of working over the long term, and in all the ways available to us, to help bring about a new international economic and social order that allows for a just distribution of the world's resources, and an authentic expression, by the peoples in the poor nations themselves, of their own cultural, social, and economic life.

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