

THE WITNESS

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The Witness reserves the right to condense all letters.

Too Much Garbage

The problem of "grain inefficiently used" in the production of meat (Richard W. Gillett, *World Hunger and Future Christian Response* — *The Witness*, October, 1975) requires an understanding of the use of land as well as the vicissitudes of weather in the Great Plains area. The basic assumption that all meat represents lost grain production that could feed the world's hungry people is, at best, questionable and may prove to be counter-productive.

In the year 1974 over 35% of all beef marketed in the United States was not "grain-fed" at all. Rather the steers were matured on prairie grass land that could not support the production of grains without the risk of erosion and another "dust bowl." The remaining 65% of all steers attained an average of 800 of their 1100 pound market weight by utilizing the same grass as well as roughage, such as potato peelings.

In spite of the fact that land producing feed grains often produces less profit, small farmers in Kansas raise them in place of wheat as a hedge against poor weather. Wheat matures in late spring and depends on spring rain, feed-grains mature in late fall and depend on summer and fall rain. Without this "hedge" against the weather, many poor farmers could not survive in a bad year.

The feed-grains raised not only give a form of insurance to the poorer farmer, they make it possible to utilize thousands of acres of grass land that would be non-productive without them and they speed up the production of beef. The resultant meat has a higher amount of usable protein than either wheat or corn. Not only would a boycott of beef produce hardships on small farmers, then, it could result in less food being produced.

A recent study made of the eating habits of people in restaurants indicated that over 60% of

the food served is returned to garbage. One can only guess the percentage in the average home. It might be worthwhile for a family to learn about the disposal of food in garbage, along with "what the meat quantity may represent in terms of grain inefficiently used" as suggested by Richard W. Gillett.

The Rev. Thomas H. Ferris — Winfield, Kansas

"Count Me In!"

The November, 1975 issue of *The Witness* was absolutely the best; beginning with the report on the House of Bishops' meeting and continuing with Edward Kessler's article on "Practical Christian Radicalism," it struck many responsive chords.

There is something eerie about what goes on in the Church with respect to the world. The perceptions of the old World Fair film, "Parable," become more accurate as time goes by: The little group of liberated people sitting in a tight circle on the lawn ministering to each other; and the circus goes down the road; and the clown follows the circus

If the Church and Society network is concerned with these kinds of things and we try to talk about living in the Kingdom, the way Ed Kessler sees it, please count me in!

I've had trouble in the past relating to some of the things which have appeared in *The Witness* — but this issue really caught me where I'm living. Please continue to do what you've always done so well; that is, to 'cry in the wilderness', which gets to look, more and more, like the Yorkshire Moors and the Judean Dessert, and Diamond and Gratz Streets as the days go by.

The Rev. John F. Hardwick — Philadelphia, PA

Coming in April Issue

Glimpses of Bishop Pike, from the forthcoming biography by William Stringfellow and Anthony Towne.

THE WITNESS

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Editorial Pyramids and Shepherds

by Robert L. Dewitt

One of the great problems of our time is bureaucracy, be it governmental, industrial or ecclesiastical. The populist entries in the presidential sweepstakes this year will leave no doubt in our minds. They will remind us of what we already know only too well. Big Government and Big Business will be pilloried and pummelled for every vote that such criticism can produce. "Government and business ignore the little people." "Government should be returned to the people." "Business does not act responsibly toward the consumer." As we all know, there is more than enough validity in such truisms to make them plausible. And probably enough political shrewdness in the uttering to make them effective. After all, what are we commemorating in this bicentennial year?

But where are the demonstrations of how it could be different? Where do we find the precedents to follow? Where do we find the examples demonstrating how individuals and groups can function effectively to resist the bureaucratic pattern?

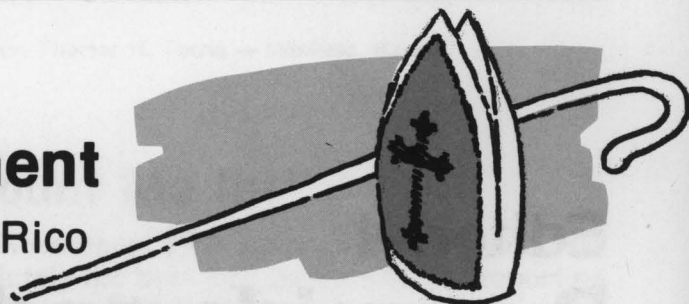
Bureaucracy is perhaps best symbolized by a pyramid, with the power at the top. The church in its own life reflects this bureaucratic pattern. The current immobility of the Episcopal Church on the issue of women's ordination is ample and melancholy evidence of this fact. Any one of several bishops holds the key to resolving the dilemma, but no action is taken.

The pastoral letter issued recently by the Bishop of Puerto Rico on "Social Improvement" presents a different image of the church. It is the result not of bureaucracy but of democracy. Consequently it speaks of and to the real needs of real people. It is in touch with reality because it derives from human contact. The people requested the issuance of a pastoral letter on this subject. The bishop consulted with them in preparing the pastoral. The result is a model of how a bureaucracy can be made to serve people. Big Government, Big Business, and the Church, need more such models.

Much attention is being given by the churches to the problem of world hunger. The Diocese of Puerto Rico and the Ninth Province of which it is a part has pondered its responsibility toward that tragic reality. That study has led them to create a Commission on Social Betterment. At the request of his local commission, and in consultation with people from his diocese, the Episcopal Bishop of Puerto Rico issued a pastoral letter, excerpts of which follow. The pastoral received considerable attention and comment from the media in Puerto Rico .

Pastoral Letter Concerning Social Improvement

Francisco Reus-Froylan, Bishop of Puerto Rico



Francisco Reus-Froylan, Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Puerto Rico, to all Episcopalians of Puerto Rico, to all Christians and to all men of good will: Salvation, Peace and Justice in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our true salvation, our peace and the justice of God in us.

Recently our Presiding Bishop, the Right Reverend John Allin, sent a message to the members of the Episcopal Church, setting forth his deep concern over the suffering caused by hunger among wide sectors of the world's population. The pastoral concern of our Primate springs from the Gospel principle of radical solidarity of Christians with all men, and especially with the poor. The Gospel teaches us that conversion to God manifests itself in conversion to taking sides with the "Lord's poor ones," so that we must search for the face of God in the face of the poor. But it has been a noxious error of us Christians to understand the poor as underprivileged individuals, not as poor people, as a poor class.

The message of the Presiding Bishop ought to be seen as a daring challenge to us: not only to alleviate the hunger of some few individuals with whatever leftovers there might be from our tables, but to struggle shoulder to shoulder with all those who labor for the creation of a society no longer bound by the roots from which hunger springs for hundreds of millions on our planet. We must translate the Gospel phrase of "the kingdom of God" into a concrete and historically realizable utopia: the kingdom of justice and of peace

Beloved Episcopalians of Puerto Rico, beloved fellow-citizens, all of you: At my consecration as Bishop 11 years ago today, I made a vow to the Lord and to my people that "those outside my particular religious confession will not be outside my heart, nor outside my pastoral concern." I address all of you in order to share my pain and my hope We must all commit ourselves for the realization of our historic future as the Puerto Rican people; this is a project which we may not evade; it is also a privilege which we must not scorn.

Our participation in the constructing of the new human community starts from the perspective of our faith and from an imperative of God which thrusts us forward, a perspective which draws us towards a still unrealized future.

The same God who sent Moses to liberate his people and who encouraged sit-down strikes among the unpaid workers of the construction industry in Egypt, that same God calls us toward our future. When we see the frustration and dehumanization of a great part of our people, we could succumb into the temptation of abandoning this task and awaiting the so-called "will of God." But our God must not be a pretext for inactivity and fatalistic hopelessness

There is a painful word that describes our situation: *dependency*. We have left the orbit of the Spanish Empire only to fall into the orbit of the invisible (but palpable) imperialism of the multinational corporations. We have become something we never wanted to be: a dependent society, a dependent people

It hurts us to admit we are a dependent society. The recent economic crisis at the center of the economic empires, with the consequent dismaying backlash for our Puerto Rican society, shows clearly that ours is a satellite economy. It depends completely on such economic fluctuations as market prices and labor-management disputes in the metropolitan centers. Foreign industries invest their capital here in order to exploit the calloused and expert hands of our workers. For some, this is a sign of robotization. But we do not think that the progressive industrialization of Puerto Rico automatically will turn our men and women into robots, because our people will hold tenaciously to the treasured cultural and spiritual values which have characterized us — those things which make us a noble people.

But we see with deep pain that, faced with the high cost of living and the growing demands of the workers for a just return for their work, foreign entrepreneurs are removing light industry — the industry which is the source of so many jobs — from our island. This leaves us with a deeper dependency. Also, this leaves us with heavy industry which provides relatively few jobs and a threatening pollution of our skies and waters.

Worst of all is the pretension of dressing up our starkly dependent situation with social handouts which threaten to degrade human beings.

No wonder there is violence in our island. We do not approve of — although to try to comprehend in a Christian way — random violence, the turning away of the hopeless who look for refuge in hallucinations induced by drugs, the alienation of some religious groups, a progressive erosion of our most dearly held values — frugality, hospitality, unity in the family.

We must all join together to stop this erosion: to preserve our common values and use them as a starting point for building up the world which awaits us. Our Christian action would be of little use if we were to limit ourselves to the introduction of palliatives which alleviate but do not cure.

We do not pretend to have the solution in our hands. We even have to confess, without evading the truth, that our Church is still a

dependent Church within a dependent society. I like to think of us Episcopalians as no more than a handful of grains of wheat scattered throughout our island. So I want all members of the Episcopal Church of Puerto Rico to make a commitment of solidarity with all those who work for a more just society.

Our Church is designing and beginning to carry out a program of pastoral action and of social improvement which will respond to the imperative of our vocation as Christians. I ask that all Episcopalians work together in this program, so that together we may search out and explore ways of solution. "The leadership of the Church has to live immersed in the life of its people, and at the same time must recognize the signs of the times which proceed from the action of the people, so that we may exercise a renovating ministry, wherein each person may be able to contribute to the whole process." (From the Commission on Social Betterment: "The Haiti Document.")

It is necessary that we all reflect critically, after making a serious analysis of our situation, and that we do not remain immobile with our hands folded. Christ sends us out to take sides with the poor and powerless people. He insists constantly on showing his real presence in the poor and humble. It is there where we must seek and find Him.

In our program of social improvement, we want to work with all who, in different ways and from different motives, look to remove our dependency. At the moment we can visualize some goals:

1. *To stir the conscience of the local churches to the grave problem of hunger in the world and among our people, and to help them in compiling data — on a global as well as a local level — relating to this problem.*
2. *To train local teams whose members would be dedicated to a thoroughgoing program in their communities.*
3. *To identify models and experiences which show some success, and to present new projects which might offer new solutions to this kaleidoscope of problems.*
4. *To live out real self-giving in service to the poor as a people and as a class.*

5. *To commit ourselves to be examples of the new life in Christ, with hopes of being the salt of the earth in the renewal of the life of our country.*

6. *To make use of all the means within our reach to exercise our prophetic vocation of renouncement and denouncement of oppressive structures as well as the announcement of a "new heaven and a new earth."*

This program cannot be carried out without a profound involvement of all Christians in this polis. Polis is the modern society, the responsibility of man and the creation of man. We must re-create our human community without destroying it. Moreover, we must announce, on the march and in action, the possibility of this realization.

Given under my hand this 30th day of November of the year of grace, 1975.

Francisco Reus-Froylan, Bishop of Puerto Rico

Two Views of Evangelism

1. The definition of Evangelism, passed by the House of Bishops, and proposed in a letter dated April 18, 1975, from the Rev. A. Wayne Schwab, Evangelism Officer of our National Staff:

Evangelism is "The Presentation of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in such ways that persons may be led to believe in Him as Saviour and follow Him as Lord within the fellowship of His Church."

2. The following definition of Evangelism comes from the Bolivian Thesis on Evangelization in Latin America Today, and was produced by the Methodist Evangelical Church in Bolivia; quoted in *One World* (a publication of the World Council of Churches), No. 4, March, 1975, in an article entitled; "Jesus Christ Frees and Unites," written by Mortimer Arias:

"Evangelization is the announcement of total liberation in Jesus Christ. Evangelization is preached to a whole being: individual and social, physical and spiritual, historical and eternal. Evangelization sets in motion the forces of liberation. The Gospel of Jesus Christ aims to free people from all the forces which oppress them, whether internal or external, individual or impersonal. To announce this Gospel means denouncing all idols or powers which hinder God's liberation purpose for people. Consequently, action for justice and participation in liberating tasks are part and parcel of preaching the Gospel."

On the Sentencing of Good Father Wendt

by William Stringfellow

On January 10, in the forenoon, the Rector of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church of Washington, D.C. was sentenced with a formal reprimand by his bishop, the Rt. Rev. William F. Creighton. The event took place in the Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea (the follower who begged Pilate for the crucified body of Jesus so that he could put it in the place that had been prepared as his own tomb) which is, not inappropriately, located in the bowels of the National Cathedral. Counsel for Wendt made the following statement, given here in its entirety, and without comment.

"After the Court of Appeals by the barest majority, upheld the 3-2 Trial Court verdict adverse to Father Wendt, motions were duly submitted by the Defense to show cause why sentence should not be imposed.

"The chief subject of the motions concerned the fact that the sentence of the Trial Court categorically lacks *canonical* status. The sentence recommended was specifically removed from the provision for possible sentences in 1967 and thus it is a nullity.

"The Appellate Court received the motions. It did not convene to deliberate them; we do not even know if they were read. It is reported the court was "polled" in some manner, though whether that has legal competence is problematical. Perhaps only the civil courts afford us a remedy for this situation.

"Meanwhile, the canons of the Episcopal Church restrict the sentencing authority of the Bishop. He may execute a sentence or lessen it. He may not exceed or increase the sentence entered by the Trial Court.

"Right Reverend Sir, you have a quandry. You sit today to pronounce sentence but the scope of your authority canonically would appear limited to diminishing a nullity.

"To proceed, in the circumstances, to sentence Wendt would be outrageous — and ironic, too, when one recalls that the court which tried Wendt unanimously adjudged the Presiding Bishop guilty of flagrant canonical dis-

obedience and the Bishop's Council of Advice has stated that this should be overlooked.

"Furthermore, Bishop Creighton, your quandry is compounded because there is no way any sentence pronounced today can settle the substantive issues of the trial. The Defendant has not exhausted his rights or resources and we here certify to you that the Defense, at the impending General Convention, will seek the ultimate court of Review pursuant to article IX of the Church Constitution. That alone warrants a stay or adjournment in sentencing until after General Convention.

"Perchance, there is another way altogether, however, albeit it more audacious, which would redeem this day and be more suitable to your capacity as pastor *pastorum*; more compatible with your spontaneous inclinations as a human being.

"In a moment good Father Wendt (that is how the courts named him) will stand before you to be sentenced. In the name of Christ, whom, even now, we await eagerly as the Judge of the living and dead, will you say this to him:

"William Wendt, the ecclesiastical courts of this Diocese have found that you have offended by authority as your Bishop.

'If that be so, I forgive you''

Thereupon, Father Wendt stood before the Bishop, accompanied by two presbyters of his own choosing, as is his right, the Rev. Allison Cheek and the Rev. Lee McGee.

The Bishop pronounced sentence.

William Stringfellow: author, social critic, attorney and theologian, has been legal counsel for Father Wendt, representing him before the ecclesiastical courts.

Religion?

Sri Chimoy, the Indian yogi who heads the UN Meditation Group, surpassed his own unofficial world's record for poetry-writing in a 24-hour period by writing 843 spiritual poems between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday. The 44-year-guru, whose disciples include jazz-rock guitarists John McLaughlin and Carlos Santana, had previously written 360 poems in one day on April 28. He said he used powers of concentration developed through meditation to keep himself going.

"What's My Line?"

by Mary Lou Suhor

The setting was the TV quiz show, "What's My Line?"

A panel of celebrities was trying to guess the occupation of a husband-wife team (U.S. Army helicopter pilots). The panel has established the fact that the vocation was unusual for the woman, because heretofore it was considered physically and traditionally dangerous.

Then Arlene Francis asked her, "Are you one of the newly-ordained Episcopalian women priests?" The audience roared.

But was Ms. Francis so far off target? Are not women — and men — who wish to exercise a prophetic priesthood in the United States today living dangerously?

If they are serious about confronting the injustices of a powerful system controlled by powerful men, they are taking risks. Episcopalian women seeking priesthood dared to challenge an all-male authority structure which fosters relations of dominance and dependency. Apparently the powers-that-be think such women are dangerous.

But for broader implications, their struggle has to be seen as part of the wider women's movement in the United States, whose demands, if carried to their ultimate consequences, are now considered by many to be revolutionary. For example, a country with an unemployment rate of 10 per cent and working middle classes suffering from inflation, cannot tolerate demands of equal rights, equal employment, and equal pay for women. In this context, FBI forays into the women's movement and grand jury investigations of radical feminists make sense. They indicate that women activists are considered a threat to the capitalist system. (Incidentally, an *ad hoc* national committee of concerned churchwomen from various denominations has been formed to discuss strategies to counter such harassment. The Division of Church and Society of the National Council of Churches is serving as the organizing center.)

But just what is it that women want? Are their demands selfish? Exaggerated? Un-Christian?

On the contrary. In her new photo-documentary book, "Women at Work," Betty Medsger shows why women are hurting:

- *Of the 35 million women in the U.S. labor force, a majority work because of economic need. About 3/5 of all women workers are single, widowed, divorced, or separated, or have husbands whose incomes are less than \$7,000.00.*
- *Of all families in the United States, one out of eight is headed by a woman. Almost three out of 10 black families are headed by women. Among all poor families, more than two out of five are headed by women and almost two out of three poor black families are headed by women.*
- *Fully-employed women with four years of college have approximately the same income as men with an eighth grade education. Fully employed women with five or more years of college have approximately the same income as men who are high school graduates.*

Many women in the oppressed categories have found their problems are not of an individual, but of a social nature, and therefore call for political solutions. Frequently those who start by asking feminist questions end up seeking socialist answers.

It should surprise no one that challenging questions are being directed today at the middle-class Episcopalian church. As Juliet Mitchell points out in her book, "Women's Estate," the ideological dimensions of a revolution are likely to come initially from within the dominant class.

A Harlem mother of seven children, on welfare, for instance, may experience her plight as "natural" or inescapable, and lacks the means to call attention to her pain. An ordained Episcopalian unjustly denied her priesthood at least is in a position to ask why, and to move others to ask why through page one stories in the *N. Y. Times* and *Washington Post*, as well as in *The Witness*.

In both cases, the socialist analysis is that "the general denigration of women is an inevitable consequence of capitalism, and inferiorization is essential to its functioning." Since U.S. churches have "religiously" supported the capitalists system, some questioning, prophetic voices would be welcome at this point. Clearly, the moneyed classes (and male sex) which hold power will not easily renounce it.

Perhaps the clearest spelling out of these problems took place at the Theology of the Americas Conference in Detroit last August. Liberation theologians from Latin America, supported by other Third World voices, warned it is folly to try to rectify institutional violence without analyzing the capitalist system as the root of oppression. To liberation theologians, socialism is, in large measure, an indictment of capitalism. It is directed toward building a new society which would overcome the inequities of an anarchic economic system based on the principles of "rugged individualism."

In a certain sense, if socialism didn't exist, God would have had to invent it.

Unfortunately, Middle Class USA has come to equate capitalism with the American Way of Life. If church folks have been surfeited with rhetoric about "atheistic communism," they have heard precious little about the systemic evils of "atheistic capitalism."

The Detroit theology conference revealed that many who are seeking a methodology to bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth and to implement Christ's mandate to "feed the hungry, clothe the naked," have found a convergence between Christianity and Marxism.

Given the current anti-communist, pro-capitalist bias of church and state alike, are not such men and women living dangerously?

Mary Lou Suhor is co-director of the Cuba Resource Center, an Ecumenical group which circulates information on life in Cuba and on the churches in Cuba. Her articles have appeared in *National Catholic Reporter*, *Christianity and Crisis*, *Response*, and other church publications.

The Wizards of OM

by Dan Georgakas

Spectacles staged primarily for the benefit of the media have become a favorite device of American humanists. During the 1967 siege of the Pentagon, a group of artists led by Allen Ginsburg chanted "Om" and shouted magical formulas in an effort to levitate the Pentagon. That incident became part of poetic legend in this country. Unfortunately, the Pentagon did not levitate and the war in Vietnam did not end.

A 1975 Om event was publicized twice on the front feature page of the *New York Times*. That event was the Spiritual Summit Conference held October 21-24 to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the United Nations. Sponsors could boast that a cosmic mass had involved Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, Moslems, and Jews and that these faiths represented 2.7 billion persons or one-half the world's population. There was the additional prestige of an international podium, a concluding \$50-a-plate dinner at the Waldorf Astoria, and a full week of programming staged at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

Certainly any effort to underline the unity of interest among the peoples of earth deserves respect. The Spiritual Summit Conference, however, had an agenda that, at best, was highly suspicious. The organizers called for a conscious movement away from "political ideology and special interest groups" to the "wisdom of the ages" and the cultivation of "spiritual resources." A UN translator is not needed to decode the message: "Off the streets — into the temples."

One special-interest group the summiteers did not oppose was themselves. In fact, they suggested that their existence be sanctioned by the creation of a new UN agency which would mobilize spiritual resources around the globe along the lines proposed by the spiritual diplomats. That approach raises the question of who was represented at the Spiritual Summit Conference. Most of the individuals who were involved had some responsible position in one organized religious body or another, but none of them had been particularly delegated by his faith

to be an official spokesperson. Typical of the summiteers was the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, dean of the Cathedral who had no directive from his congregation or the Episcopal Church, to say nothing of Christianity as a whole. Such realities quickly dissolved the illusion that 2.7 billion Earth folk were represented at the Summit. Equally relevant is the fact that funding for this affair did not come from religious communities but from an organization called the Temple of Understanding founded in 1960 by Mrs. Judith Hollster who has sponsored four other spiritual summits in various parts of the world.

Spiritual summitry is primarily a matter of pageantry. Typical events were concerts, art displays, and a series of ceremonies booked into the Cathedral like a spiritual variety show. Tickets for the evening performances were \$7; the matinees went for \$3. The paying audience could partake in Shinto, Jain, and Native American ceremonies or listen to the UN symphony, a jazz flutist, or Margaret Mead. One observer commented that the Church of the Spectacle had arrived to exorcise the ghosts of the social gospel.

The central role played by the Cathedral disturbed many in the New York area. With the perils of New York City's default brinkmanship making life more and more difficult, particularly for the academic, black, and Latin communities which surround the Cathedral, a call away from political action seemed like exactly the wrong note played in the wrong place at the wrong time. The about-face from the activism of the 1960's prompted some church people to ask if there ever had been a genuine urban strategy. The current reality in New York is that each individual church must support itself or face possible consolidation or outright closing. This policy amounts to an ecclesiastical version of "benign neglect." As one church deacon put it, "The upper class church with \$5 million in the treasury and five people in the pews will stay open while the church struggling to deal with the social problems of the working class and the poor will be judged a failure if its books don't balance. What we did in the 1960's now seems to have been part of a fad; and the fad for black and Puerto Ricans has passed."

Criticism of the Cathedral came from traditionalists as well. One minister from Long Island suggested that the Cathedral was more interested in grabbing headlines than in saving souls. This minister was opposed to using the church for non-Christian rituals. He said, "You don't play polo on a baseball diamond."

The Spiritual Summit Conference, in short, never connected with the everyday lives of ordinary people even though it is destined to live on in press releases and bureaucratic bulletins. The public relations which handled the publicity for the conference also handles the publicity of Dean Morton. In a press-sheet aimed at television producers, the PR people seem to satirize the career of the very man they ostensibly promote.

"He's worked in the slums of Newark and Chicago, and marched with Martin Luther King... As the dean of the largest cathedral in the world and a man who is constantly in the limelight, he's an excellent show guest, either as a featured guest or for rounding out a show... Not too wordy, doesn't preach."

Street wisdom in the U.S. teaches that the government never acts in behalf of social justice until stimulated by violence or the threat of violence. The movement which built up in the 1960's around issues of war, poverty, race, and sex has become unfocused and undirected even though economic realities have become harsher and promise to get worse. In New York City the fiscal crisis has led to reductions of services to the point where the middle class as well as the poor is being affected. In the midst of this social confusion, the Cathedral seems to be content with humming "Om." But, alas, nothing is levitating.

Dan Georgakas is co-author of *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, a study of urban unrest with emphasis on the period 1967-1974.

Look at Yourself, America!

THE AMERICAN JOURNEY, PART IV

by Edward Joseph Holland

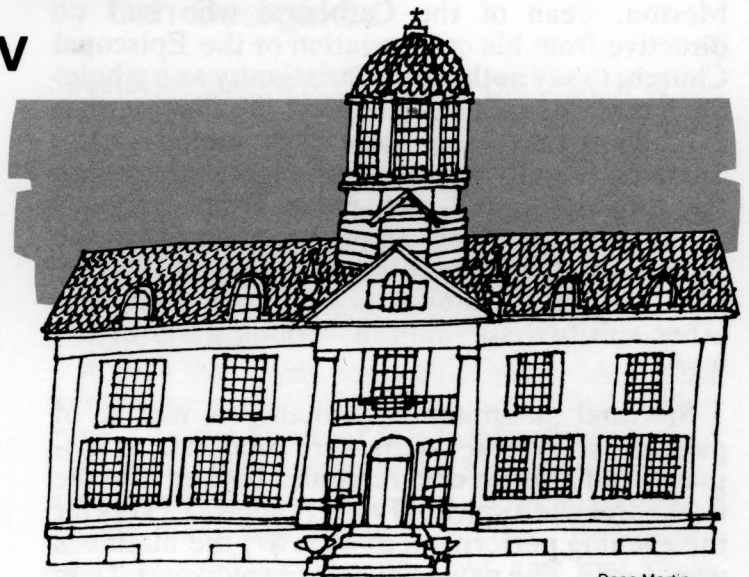
Where do we go from here? As members of the American ruling and ruled classes, we have options before us which might either perpetuate the imperialism, racism, sexism and classism waged by our ancestors in the name of property rights or step onto untraveled, uncharted paths which may or may not lead to the liberation of all persons. Having shared with us his structural interpretation of the social struggle in the United States since the formation of the colonies, researcher Joseph Holland, in the last of a series of four articles, makes some predictions about the future we shall mold together. In addition, we have asked for and received reactions from various interested persons to Mr. Holland's presentation. Those statements, edited for our purposes, follow.

Projections

Projecting trends is extremely precarious. Any number of forces and events can intervene. With that in mind, however, we might risk looking at two poles toward either of which present American social history could gravitate. In addition, any number of points in between is theoretically possible.

The first pole might be called the fresh triumph of capitalism. This is not unlikely, since despite continued Marxist anticipation of catastrophe, Western capitalism has survived with considerable resilience and maneuverability. On the other hand, there is some reason to believe that the present crisis may be unique, since the frontiers seem to be gone.

The issue of socialism is also a real question even for the controlling classes, as evidenced in the feature article of *Time* titled, "Can Capitalism Survive?"¹ There was a period briefly when the ideological program of American capitalism took the tack that we were in a post-capitalist society and the age of the end of ideology had come upon us. Even recently some



Dana Martin

assert that the question of capitalism and socialism is a 19th Century issue, with little meaning for today. One group which certainly doesn't feel that way, however, is the class of American capitalists.

A number of recent phenomena point this out — like the *Time* article, and the ads run by such old firms as Tiffany's, Chase and Mobil in defense of capitalism. There seems to be a new ideological offensive underway in American society and we can probably expect more of it. Two signs of its moving beyond ads are the decisions by the Advertising Council of America to begin a mass public education campaign on the free enterprise system. Also, Disney and Exxon have recently formed a joint agreement to produce a series of high school multi-media series defending the free enterprise system. Ideological discussion, it seems, will only get sharper.

Defense of American capitalism, however, would have to be waged on two fronts, one external and one internal. The new external offensive is perhaps signaled by the Daniel Patrick Moynihan appointment to the United Nations ambassadorship and by an article by Irving Kristol in the *Wall Street Journal* describing a new "Cold War" against the world's poor (not against their poverty, but against their

1. *Times*, July 14, 1975, pp. 52 ff.

power).² Moynihan, in turn, in a programatic article in *Commentary* simplistically lumps Third World nations under the rubric of "British Socialism," which he says, everyone knows can't work.³ Thus, the battle by the U.S. elites against the majority of the human race takes on ideological tones.

"Liberal capitalism," to use Kristol's phrase, can produce the goods and wealth, while "British socialism," to use Moynihan's phrase, simply cannot. If the Third World wants to starve itself because of allegiance to British socialism instead of accepting liberal capitalism, that's their problem. The defense of declining American imperialism is then taken up under the disguise of self-respect and self-affirmation for ourselves as a nation.

Such a hard line may not be necessary for long, if the architects of the Tri-Lateral Commission can succeed in bringing some "new rich" nations of the Third World into the Western club. But that is still an open question. If those strategies are not successful, the appeal to American self-respect by the upper classes may run into problems at home, for these same groups are structurally forced to turn the screws on the domestic working class. This brings us to the question of domestic projections.

There is good reason to believe that the social legislation which grew from the New Deal on, attempting to take the rough edges off liberal capitalism, will be progressively overturned. This could leave us with a much more vicious capitalism, required to tolerate high unemployment and unable to provide adequate social services to the casualties. This is not a question of bad will or evil intention. It would be a structural imperative of declining growth and intense international competition. Thus, economically, the projection would point toward downward mobility replacing former upward mobility, and acute suffering, for the nation's poor.

Already malnutrition is growing in certain sectors of the nation, especially among the very young and very old. In the process, there will be a tendency to avoid surplus populations, especially among the poor, and to tailor population to fit the economic crisis. This tendency is already creating a society strongly prejudiced against the presence of both children and the elderly. It also

will probably assume strong racist overtones. Zero Population Growth recently tipped its hand in this regard, linking its cause to the balance of international payments and the control of criminal forces in our society.⁴

Undoubtedly the downward mobility and closing out of opportunity will create great social unrest, but it could be of two kinds, and which one it is will probably determine which way the nation goes. On the one hand, American working people could fight among themselves for scarce resources (white against black, men against women, old against young, English-speaking against Spanish-speaking, one region against another, etc.). Or, the heterogeneous American working class could for the first time begin to develop a broad solidarity and a common class consciousness. If it is the first, it will be easy to mobilize "productive workers" against "non-productive" people who "drain the nation's energies", against "welfare cheaters", against "criminals", "non-union workers".

Either way, the social upheaval will probably create strong pressures on the state to move away from persuasion to overt force in ordinary life. Liberal democracies across the world are experiencing crisis as their institutions prove incapable of managing dissent or of providing channels for the necessary social restructuring of the contemporary crisis. Just as Daniel Patrick Moynihan speaks of the "tyranny of the majority" in the United States, so Gerald Ford warned during the last Congressional elections (when it was felt by some that pro-labor forces would gain a "veto-proof Congress") of the danger of a "democratic dictatorship." The rhetoric is surprisingly parallel. Vice President Rockefeller, in an address to the 63rd annual meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, contended that there is question whether the American system "is a viable way of life," and stated that it remains a question whether "free societies can discipline themselves sufficiently to deal with problems in the long term."⁵ He answered "yes" to both questions for the present moment, but thereby touched the central political question for American capitalism in the future.

If the elites of military-police-intelligence agencies are further strengthened as a result of social discontent (and there are signs of growing

2. Irving Kristol, "The New Cold War," *The Wall Street Journal*, July 17, 1975.

3. Daniel P. Moynihan, "The United States in Opposition," *Commentary*, March, 1975, pp. 31-44.

4. See the testimony of Bob Packwood in the Alien Employment Act of 1975 (Congressional Record Vol. 121, No. 119, Washington, Thursday, July 24, 1975).

5. *The New York Times*, April 30, 1975, p. 56.

integration among them, as well as of strengthening despite the appearance of public restraint), these elites would inevitably assume a greater role in public policy. Indeed, the role of institutions of force seems to have become central in all processes of contemporary social change, whether from the right or the left, across the world. There is no guarantee that the United States would remain immune from that broad tendency.

The tendency to use government force to hold the system together parallels closely the growing drift toward state capitalism (albeit a non-welfare capitalism). This in turn would give more rigidity to the social system, combined probably with class immobility (except perhaps downwards) and therefore much more class consciousness.

Culturally, the notion of freedom would have to be redefined (and is already being done) around discipline rather than opportunity. Here the colossal power of cultural institutions in advanced industrial societies assumes paramount importance, especially for religious groups which form part of the cultural superstructure.

There is danger for the more "liberal" churches whose social action programs or even educational institutions depend heavily on major capitalist foundations. Once this dependency was true only of the "established" Protestant traditions, and not of the Catholic Church nor of the more populist Protestant churches. Now, however, capitalist foundations have a broad role in theological education and in religious social action. This brings a very subtle shaping process of reward and punishment, which inevitably constrains the political imagination.

In addition, there would be strong tendencies for religious movements to provide programs of "adjustment" to the social crisis. Elements like simple living and the charismatic movement here can go either of two ways, toward non-critical accommodation to a declining capitalism and imperialism, or else toward fundamental social criticism.

Religious groups must beware of the tendency "not to take sides" in strong social conflict issues, and to withdraw from sources of tension. They would thereby legitimize the existing situation and spontaneously produce pastoral

strategies of accommodation. Critical religious groups, on the other hand, must beware lest they produce outrage and little insight. They can easily fail to link themselves to a broad popular base and to institutional mediation, thereby replacing prophecy with eccentricity.

At present, there seems to be a fresh opening within broad sectors of the American working class to fundamental questions, even to the issue of socialism and class consciousness. In the minds of many, the American Dream has begun to dissolve. The failure in Vietnam and the necessity of a defensive posture by the U.S. in the UN have undercut the external aspects of the dream, namely the belief that America was number one in the world, loved by all as the grantor of freedom and prosperity. At home the revelation of broad structural corruption in Watergate, and the growing perception of clear unity between Big Business and Big Government, together with the sense of collapsing opportunity during the current recession, have undermined the domestic aspects of the dream. Probably one of the most powerful agents of the Dream's collapse is the combination of loss of higher education opportunities and the loss of job opportunities for those with higher education.

This can be seen very clearly in the new educational policies being worked out by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education.⁶ The Commission predicts over the next decade or so the collapse of most all private colleges not based on major capitalist endowments. This would leave the Ivy League schools as institutions for children of the upper classes. The state schools would contract somewhat to become the technical-professional-managerial training schools for the middle sectors of society. The universal appetite for higher education would be appeased by a retooling of junior or community colleges into lower level technical schools, perhaps integrated into the national public school system, thus delaying the entry of youth into the labor force. Already it is clear that the social class of college youth is shifting upward under mounting tuition costs. Many families who for one generation or two rose above rather poor financial and educational backgrounds may suddenly find their offspring collapsing back into them.

6. *Dollars and Sense*, March, 1975, pp. 4-5.

Even the racial struggle seems to be moving slowly toward a redefinition taking class into account, without discarding the issue of racism. The struggles of the 1960's for civil rights opened up opportunities for the small middle classes of racial minorities, but left the vast racial underclasses in the same if not worse positions. Reporting on the 65th annual conference of the National Urban League, Austin Scott noted that at least four of the conference's major speakers

*"... argue that the possibility of such an underclass, the continued upward movement of some blacks who do have good educations and middle class values, and the realization that problems can no longer be solved through unlimited economic growth, combined to mean that class is now a more important factor than race in remaining poor in America."*⁷

Further, there seems to be a fresh and growing sense of coalition building among groups formerly polarized along line of race, language, culture of internal class stratification. One factor assisting this bridge-building process is undoubtedly the re-emerging of the women's movement. Women from different sectors of the heterogeneous American working class seem much better at building bridges throughout that heterogeneity. It may be, then, that the women's movement could prove an important internal network linking the fragmented American working class.

This growing sense of social class and the collapse of the dominant definition of the American Dream creates great opportunity for creative political and religious searching among the broad and complex American working class. The danger, however, may be that such work would prove so threatening to the social classes which presently hold power and/or privilege, that government force would be used to repress those who fertilize the cultural-religious imagination and organize the political power of the American working class.

The second pole to which the social system could head is a socialist direction. The current discussions of American socialism are still too immature to describe what might be an "American model," but it is an alternative which must be carefully examined. For many, it is the

alternative toward which the working class of this nation, slowly or rapidly, with clarity or fuzziness, consistently pushes us.

Consistent with the Christian belief that suffering is the source of redemption, exploited groups are having a major impact on the critical retrieval of the Christian tradition out of the broad crisis of Western capitalism. Black, Asian-American, Hispanic-American and White ethnic Christianity powerfully raise racial and cultural oppression as core issues of faith in the modern world. Radical Latin American Christianity, as well as major leftist Christian movements in Europe and North America, are raising the issue of class exploitation as equally central. Feminist theology raises the central issue of sexism. The Native American religious traditions, whether Christian or not, radically challenge the Western rape of the earth and the consequent loss of the religious mystery following from ecological relationships. Third World Christianity in general, be it African, Asian or Latin American, raises the issue of imperialism. It could be that some appropriation of the Marxist tradition will provide a framework within which each of these powerful streams of insight can understand their mutual enrichment. If that occurs, then the cumulative retrieval of the core Christian tradition would point toward a fundamental critique of the structures of capitalism and toward some generalized approval of socialist tendencies.

Of course, such approval would not portray socialism as an absolute utopia, nor as an eschatological realization of the Kingdom of God. It would simply suggest that, while not perfect, it might be structurally preferable to the current situation. Whether such a judgement is wise probably constitutes the most overarching question for Christians of this country and of the whole world, as we grapple with the Spirit of God in discerning the signs of the times.

The fruit of this discernment may prove a significant factor in determining toward which pole the American Journey will head in the present crisis. It may also prove an important ingredient in finally answering the as yet unanswered question of the two definitions of freedom — property rights or human rights — which two revolutions so far in the American

7. Austin Scott, "The New Apathy and the Poor," *The Washington Post*, August 5, 1975, A-16.

Journey have not settled. The closing of the frontier, the slow retreat of American imperialism and the decline of economic expansion may be setting the stage for a clear choice.

Edward Joseph Holland is a staff associate at the Center of Concern, an independent center for policy analysis and public education, initiated by the Jesuits and dealing mainly with international social issues.

This is the conclusion of Edward Joseph Holland's perceptive monograph on *The American Journey* entitled "Look At Yourself, America!" The complete 4-part series is now available at 50 cents in a bound booklet. Write THE WITNESS. For use in group discussions, inquire about quantity discounts.

Response to Holland

U.S.A. Destined for Division

by James Lewis

Last spring, the Rev. Marvin Horan, a fundamentalist, self-ordained preacher, was convicted in a federal court in Charleston, W. Va. on charges of conspiring to bomb public schools. Horan had been one of the leaders of the anti-textbook group that had been adamant in its protest of newly-adopted textbooks for the 900-square mile Kanawha County with its 4,600 public school students.

To many, outside of West Virginia, the media was able to sell the image of a poverty-stricken West Virginia still hopelessly engaged in a Hatfield-McCoy struggle. In reality, the struggle was cultural, economic, class, racial, and religious. It was an extremely important struggle which offered a microcosm of the larger struggle going on in the United States.

Just after the Horan conviction, the Charleston Gazette did a front page human interest story on his return, while waiting for appeal, to his tiny church in one of the hollows just outside of Charleston. The article described his welcome by the congregation and elders and told how, when given a bill from Appalachian Power Company, he commented on the necessity of paying the bill even though the power company was stealing

them blind.

Interestingly enough, Appalachian Power at that time was in court appealing a rate overcharge, refusing to reimburse the public consumers. On top of that, it had also been revealed that Appalachian Power had been buying coal at a high rate from a coal company created and owned by itself and had been purchasing country club memberships for its executives.

A striking piece of irony and absurdity occurred the very day that the Horan story appeared in the newspaper. That very day a group of elderly citizens was gathering at my parish, St. John's Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston, to protest high power rates for elderly persons on fixed incomes. The irony resides in the fact that Horan and I had been locked in battle with each other in the textbooks dispute.

The lesson is clear. The created issues, whether they be over textbooks or busing, women's ordination or some other legitimate area of concern, are in reality divisions which keep us from uniting on fundamental issues. Marvin Horan and I had fought bitterly over the textbooks rather than coming together on the fundamental economic issues that are strangling both congregations. Rather than unite against the stripping of this beautiful land and the taking of that valuable coal to profit the large coal companies who care little about the men who journey into the mines, we fight over school books.

Holland hopes for a new and "broad solidarity and a common class consciousness." The alternative, unfortunately, is where we are right now, Americans polarized and fighting among themselves. My idealism and sense of justice begs for solidarity. My observation of Kanawha County, alias U.S. of America, is no such luck. We are destined for division and struggle, perhaps until exhaustion. Then, maybe Holland's alternative will become real. The "fresh and growing sense of coalition" he sees growing among women just had a rude set back in New York with the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment. Kanawha Countians could have predicted it. We still would rather fight than switch. At least for a little while longer anyway.

Response to Holland Holland's View Simplistic

by Dwight Jensen

Mr. Holland criticizes Patrick Moynihan for "a programmatic article in (which he) simplistically lumps Third World nations under the rubric of 'British socialism.'"

Mr. Holland hates the sinner but loves the sin. His article is thick with simplistic lumps. He lumps Soviet state capitalism, Chinese labor-intensive communism, and the goals of Eugene Debs with other systems and theories and dream under the rubric "socialism." He writes with misplaced emphasis, misread history, missed perceptions and a mist of rhetoric.

He does seem to have grasped, or to have read about, the rising anger of have-not nations and the unease and bewilderment of Americans in the face of this anger. From there he has irrationalized backward to conjure up his version of history.

He omits a word in the opening of Part III: "Property rights versus the rights of the individual. The struggle was decided by the elite of the American colonies . . ."

It should read, "The struggle was not decided . . ." It continues. In Jackson's day it led to popular election of the President. Populism and progressivism culminated in popular election of senators and in an income tax law that built a middle class to take control from the very wealthy. The struggle continues in the field of civil rights even under a split Supreme Court and a regressive Administration.

Frontiers do seem to be closing. Resources do seem to be limited. Have-not nations are beginning to assert themselves. American and world economic structures do require reform. But let us approach this problem with fresh ideas, not rhetoric. We have no evidence so far that a free press can exist outside a capitalistic system. We have no evidence that a free people can retain their freedom without a free press. It is, therefore, worthwhile to consider saving capitalism, but bringing its benefits to those now excluded.

Locke, enunciating the doctrine of property rights, specified that each person is entitled to

the property he needs to support himself. Accumulation beyond that should be held within bounds, but this can be done under our existing system.

The system built by the founding fathers, whatever their purpose, allows us to work out such problems without revolution. If solutions are slow in coming, that's irritating, often harmful — but it does make for a stability that human beings need. We have the system. What we need is leaders committed to justice and to orderly procedure.

The role of the church in all this should begin, but not end, with a dedication to the principles of respect for all people, humane stewardship of property, and the realization that we await the future on pins and needles we still do not see camels passing through the eye of the one, nor Marxists dancing on the head of the other.

Dwight Jensen is a free lance journalist in Boise, Idaho. He is also former assistant editor of the Intermountain Observer and was on the news staff of KBOI TV in Boise.

Response to Holland "The Philosophers Have Only Interpreted . . ."

by Ira Einhorn

"The Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."

Karl Marx

For several reasons Marxian analysis has never captured the imagination of the American people. For one thing, the 'average' American does not bemoan his lot. He has been conditioned to identify with the possibility of upward mobility. He senses his freedom in the possibility of transcending his situation in a personal way. He rarely identifies with his class. He certainly does not see his liberation in terms of class identification. The idea of individuality has been stamped into his thought patterns, and he storms the frontier of wealth, often achieving his goal without realizing that co-optation has occurred in the very moment of his success. Another intermediary has been formed, another link has been forged in the chain that binds us all into a system that needlessly exploits a large percentage of its members.

That dream of possibility, however, is fading. The failure of the system as a whole is becoming more obvious. Capitalism has lost its legitimacy and the process of demystification is slowly underway. Thus the forces that have militated against the type of conscious class identification that is necessary for collective action are no

longer operative.

Openness to previously-ignored modes of structuring our society is spreading: an example is my 33-year old stockbroker brother who told me in a recent telephone conversation: "A few years ago, when you said the country was heading Left, I thought you ought to have your head examined. Now I agree, and I am in favor of it. Tell me what to do and I'll do it."

Herein lies the problem. Can socialism come without the fully embodied class war? Can American wealth be shared without violent destabilization? Can the Left face the opportunity of generating a theory of transition unencumbered by the language of Marx?

The preservation of spiritual values by the church in the face of this Leftward thrust is made doubly difficult by the historical alignment of the church with the economic status quo and by the present wealth of the church. Legitimacy has been lost. It can only be reinstated by actions which encompass the Marxian ideal without neglecting the very needs of the spirit. This will require a radical transformation of church attitudes. Yet the model is there. The ministry of Christ drew its power from his identification with the poor and downtrodden.

Ira Einhorn is a free lance writer and author of "78-187880." He is presently working in a corporate planning project, and considers himself an enzyme for change.

The Last Shall be First

No one has ever made so devastating a criticism of our social and moral standards as the Teacher who put the harlot above the Pharisees, a penitent robber above the High Priest and the prodigal son above his exemplary brother.

T. E. Jessop, contemporary English Theologian

General Convention, Democratic?

Henry H. Rightor of Virginia Theological Seminary has written in the Washington Clergy Association newsletter concerning the lack of democratic representation in the House of Deputies.

He writes, "In neither House of Convention do we have the proportional representation of church members which is essential to a 'Democratic form' of government. This is understandable in the House of Bishops, as our church is 'Episcopal' as well as 'Protestant!'" In the House of Deputies, however, where proportional representation in some form might be expected, each diocese has four clerical and four lay deputies. So — El Salvador, with 66 communicants, has the same representation in each order as Connecticut, with 82, 387 communicants; Eau Claire, with 2,867, has the same as Washington, DC with 36,561.

"The Declaration of Independence refers to governments as 'deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.' Such consent requires some approximation of proportional representation in the House of Deputies, if Convention is to have the authority and integrity needed to further the mission as a church."

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