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Roots of Racism

Barbara Harris
Chris Cavender
Henry Atkins



The Trilateral Commission:

Ties That Bind

by Richard W. Gillett

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION:

What is the Trilateral Commission?

1. *Something in my college European history course.*
2. *An ecumenical group studying the Holy Trinity.*
3. *A group founded by David Rockefeller.*
4. *A group among whose members have recently been President Carter, Vice-president Mondale and four members of his newly selected cabinet.*

ANSWER: If you checked No. 3, you have really been doing your homework. If, in addition, you checked No. 4, go to the head of the class [maybe you should even be President].

The meteoric rise of Jimmy Carter to the Presidency of the United States in such a short time has left the public little opportunity to really know who he is, what he believes, and where the influences upon his thinking have come from.

One aspect of Carter's rise to power that has received strangely little attention in the public press is his membership in the Trilateral Commission, an international group "formed in 1973 by private citizens of Western Europe, Japan, and North America to foster closer cooperation between these regions on common problems." (The Commission's own description). Robert Sheer, writing in that famous November issue of *Playboy* (alongside the "lust" interview with Carter) reports that Carter told him he was "never to miss a meeting of the Trilateral Commission during the next three years, and that he had received his basic foreign policy education under its auspices."

The concept of trilateralism itself is the subject of an article by Richard H. Ullman in the October 1976 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the prestigious quarterly published by the Council on Foreign Relations. (David Rockefeller, interestingly, is the chairman of the Council.) In the article, Ullman details the usefulness and the reasonableness of a

new working alliance among the powerful non-Communist nations. He states that in the present world climate "a united front on the part of the advanced western societies (i.e., Japan, Western Europe and North America) has seemed to many observers the only effective way both to counter the new demands and militant actions of the Third World (such as the 1973 OPEC boycott) and also to meet the prospective threat of the Soviet Union."

Robert Sheer identifies David Rockefeller, Nelson's brother and the dean of the U.S. financial establishment, as "instrumental in the founding" of the Trilateral Commission. It was Rockefeller and Zbigniew Brzezinski, Carter's new director of the powerful National Security Council, who asked Carter to join the Commission which they founded. Brzezinski served as its first staff director.

These links are also mentioned briefly by Oswald Johnston, writing in the *Los Angeles Times* (Dec. 17, 1976). But generally little seems to have been written in the mass media about these connections. One wonders why. [*THE WITNESS* can be credited, incidentally, with mentioning them in an excellent article, "The People's Choice" by Lynda Ann Ewen, November 1976.]

Jordan 'Resigned' to Facts

Early in the fall presidential campaign, when Carter was still being projected as an anti-establishment candidate, advisor Hamilton Jordan stated that if people such as Brzezinski and Cyrus Vance became head of National Security and Secretary of State respectively, he'd consider it a failure, and would resign. Those appointments happened (not, as yet, Jordan's resignation). Vance, in addition to Brzezinski, is a member of the Trilateral Commission.

Moreover, Carter named two more members of the Trilateral Commission (according to its membership list as of August 1975) to crucial cabinet posts: Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense and member of the Commission's Executive Committee, and Michael Blumenthal, Secretary of the Treasury. Blumenthal and Brzezinski, according to Tad Szulc, writing in the *New Republic*, are the two men who will make U.S. foreign policy for the next four years.

Carter had earlier picked Walter Mondale as his

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THE WITNESS

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It Can't Happen Here?

Robert L. DeWitt

Sometime in December it came to the attention of staff persons at the Episcopal Church Center in New York that FBI agents had been given access to the files, travel records and other information relating to the Hispanic affairs desk.

It was also learned that the FBI visit to the office had been allowed — presumably with the knowledge and consent of the Presiding Bishop's office — after hours, when the office was closed. Further, there were indications that samples of type from various staff typewriters had been taken, presumably for the purpose of cross-checking.

Why all the antics above? Though no one knew for sure, it was surmised that the interest of the FBI arose from their frustration in seeking clues to the bombings in recent years which they thought to be related to Puerto Rican Nationalists.

More recently, two women from the Hispanic Office, Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, were subpoenaed by a Grand Jury, and Cueto spent a day in jail for contempt. (See her statement to the press below).

As of this writing, hearings on those subpoenaed have twice been postponed. An additional subpoena served on the Presiding Bishop, requesting all records from the Hispanic Desk since 1970 has been removed. (See Executive Council Memorandum to Presiding Bishop John M. Allin below).

We hope that by the time this WITNESS reaches its readers, these matters will have been appropriately resolved. Regardless, certain issues

raised by the incidents clearly emerge:

First is the Church-State issue. The security of the State has, in this country, its own proper constitutional safeguards. But those safeguards are held in tension with the rights of due process for individuals, as established in the Bill of Rights, and by the "wall of separation" between Church and State, that the Church may pursue its mission without undue interference.

Why, then, did the administration at the Episcopal Church Center grant the FBI such unwarranted free access to the private files of one of its program units? Is there an integrity to our national mission as a church, or are the various units of it made vulnerable, separately, by the willingness of the administration to collaborate with the FBI?

To what extent can the church protect its proper ministry, its staff people who are charged with carrying out that ministry, and those to whom it is relating in that ministry, from arbitrary and secret investigations by government agencies such as the FBI?

Second, the penetration into a diocese. The Episcopal Church Center is not only a national church office. It is also located in the see city of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, which has legitimate interests in and pastoral responsibility for the large number of its people — in this instance Puerto Ricans — who are threatened by an investigation of the Hispanic desk by a government agency. Has not the national center overstepped its bounds by interfering in the rights of the diocese to protect its parishoners who are part both of the

diocesan and national church ministry?

Third, the Puerto Rican implication. This matter could prejudicially affect the self-respect of the people of the Episcopal diocese of Puerto Rico, and its relationship to the national Episcopal Church. Bishop Francisco Reus-Froylan of Puerto Rico, commenting on his concern, said, "What would prevent the FBI from coming to my office in San Juan and demanding access to all my files?" Suspicions directed toward a total ethnic group can only raise the suggestion of racism in the minds of those suspected.

Fourth, the Ecumenical ramifications. Particularly because this happened in a national church center, there are deep implications for the agencies of other religious groups, denominations and interdenominational agencies. What the Episcopal

headquarters allows or resists in terms of governmental access will be a threat to, or protection of, other bodies in carrying out their ministries. All Latin desks and divisions of various denominations for example, within the National Council of Churches in New York, the U.S. Catholic Conference in Washington, D.C., or the Disciples of Christ headquarters in Indianapolis are more vulnerable when such a precedent is set. (See box).

Throughout the world the tendency toward totalitarianism has evidenced an increasing use of repressive measures to inhibit freedom, and the labeling as "subversive" any attempt to resist that repression. At the close of the bicentennial year when we celebrated our freedom, who would have dreamed there was a serious threat to that freedom in the national office of our own church? ■

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON

HISPANIC AFFAIRS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH



NCC Agencies Concerned

The Justice Department investigation of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church was described as a "renewal of the harassment and intimidation of church persons which took place during the civil rights movement and the war in Vietnam," in a communique circulated jointly by two agencies of the National Council of Churches.

Signed by Lucius Walker of the Division of Church and Society (and associate general secretary of the NCC), and John F. Stevens, interim executive director of the Joint Strategy and Action Committee, the letter stated:

"We are concerned about an urgent situation. A Grand Jury in New York City is presently investigating the activities of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church. Its staff has been subpoenaed and office records have been turned over to the FBI.

"The subpoenaing of Episcopal Church staff and records may well set a precedent which can affect many other church individuals and organizations, especially those involved in social action programs and ministry.

"As persons who are involved in social ministry, it is very important to understand the Grand Jury process, its effect on your obligations, and the constitutional rights of individuals and churches."

Cueto Press Release

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Since 1972, I, Maria Cueto, and Raisa Nemikin have been, respectively, the Executive Director and Secretary of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs (NCHA) of the Episcopal Church.

On Nov. 18, 1976, the FBI visited our offices which are located at the Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York City, requesting information about the Commission, its activities, and membership.

Since then there have been additional visits and financial and personnel records relating to the Commission have been subpoenaed to be used as evidence in Grand Jury proceedings investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement in Chicago and New York City.

We were subpoenaed on Jan. 7, 1977, to appear on January 10 and 14 respectively. Upon my appearance before the Grand Jury, I requested time to hire an attorney, whereupon my request was refused.

I was consequently held in contempt of the Grand Jury on the grounds of refusal to take the oath without consulting with retained counsel and told that I would remain at the Metropolitan Corrections Center for the duration of the Grand Jury if I did not submit.

While I was still in custody, I was served with another subpoena in the name of the Presiding Bishop, John M. Allin, "and any authorized employee of the NCHA" commanding that "all records, documents, reports, notes, etc., relating to the Commission from 1970 to 1977 inclusive, this includes names, addresses of all persons who have been involved with the NCHA as well as a list of all meetings, conferences, and convocations sponsored by the Commission, wholly or in part, and the names and addresses of all persons attending these meetings," be brought before our next Grand Jury appearance.

On Jan. 20, 1977, an agreement was reached between the Episcopal Church Center and the U.S. Attorney's Office. The terms of the agreement were that the U.S. Attorney's Office would withdraw this overbroad subpoena upon the Church's voluntary production of the information sought in the subpoena.

On Feb. 4, 1977, our motion to quash the subpoenas was not granted by Judge Lawrence Pierce. It was obvious to us that Judge Pierce had made his decision prior to hearing our lawyer's argument and had erroneously determined that we as lay ministers were not Church people but "social workers," thereby interpreting the Church's mission and infringing on our First Amendment rights.

We are particularly concerned at the precedent that will be set which may permit the various denominations to inadvertently cooperate in repressive measures through which the government will identify progressive persons, agencies and organizations within the Churches and attempt to isolate and make their work ineffective.

It is obvious to us that this investigation by the U.S. Government through the Justice Department is a fishing expedition to intimidate, harass, frighten, and prevent the Churches, its agencies and constituency from effectively carrying out its Christian mission and ministry to oppressed and forgotten minorities in the U.S. and especially to eliminate the support of the denominations of the Hispanic communities in their fight for equality, justice and self-determination.

Executive Council of the Episcopal Church
815 Second Avenue
New York, New York 10017

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Presiding Bishop
DATE: January 18, 1977

We are surprised and distressed to learn that a subpoena has been served on you. We also have been surprised with the previous subpoenas served on other staff members of the Episcopal Church Center. We respectfully request that legal counsel, competent in Church-State matters consult with you on basic strategy regarding these subpoenas. We are pleased to learn that the other staff members have been provided with legal assistance competent in the field of religious and civil liberty and trust that such support will continue.

Religion is given a unique status in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Along with freedom of the press, religious freedom is seen as one of the necessary bulwarks of a free society.

Through the 200 years of the republic there have been points of direct challenge or testing about these two freedoms between the Church and Christians and the State. These points of testing generally come at times of changes of values, understanding and emphasis either in the nation or in the religions — that is at times of social change and religious ferment. We must not confuse our preferences on the passing issues with the continuing issue of religious freedom.

Taxation of church property, conscientious objection to military service, prayer in public schools, funding of religious education, practices in publicly supported religious institutions (hospitals and abortion) are items that recently and presently are subject to constitutional adjunction. With the press, there are also similar cases: confidentiality of sources, reporting on national security matters, and coverage of trials immediately come to mind.

We believe that the request for material from the files of Executive Council program units is a matter with ramifications for basic freedom within the nation which necessitates the advice of legal counsel competent in Church-State, and Religious Civil Liberty law.

Racism? Not That Again!

by Barbara Harris

The problem I have with the subject of racism is that we usually spend hours in circular discussions which go nowhere and avail us little in the way of behavioral or attitudinal change.

People who express their concern by gathering to talk about it usually regard the definition of racism as some academician's phraseology that pertains to people other than themselves. They generally are unable or unwilling to perceive their own complicity and are frankly offended when they are judged racist, or conclude that their contribution to the perpetuation of racism is so minimal as to be of no consequence.

Unfortunately the definition of racism does not speak to its overt manifestations — let alone to the subtle ones. The definition in part says, "the assumption of inherent racial superiority, domination and discrimination based on such an assumption, and race hatred." But a clue to the assumptions and attitudes that pervade our society and impact the interaction of whites and racial minorities can be found at the very top of our system, the central government.

In its census data gathering, the government decrees that our society is inhabited by two species, whites and non-whites. And that translates into persons and non-persons. The non-persons get a grudging break-down into Blacks; Spanish surnames (whoever or whatever they may be); Indians, including Eskimos and Aleuts; and "other," which is anybody else passing by who has some pigmentation.

Given that kind of *imprimatur* at the top, it's easy to see how the rest flows down and how society readily accommodates to this. Racism presupposes that certain groups are incapable of doing certain things, or reaching certain levels of achievement, and so they are programmed out, thus rendering absolutely hollow such phrases as equal opportunity.

It writes off the economic survival of huge segments of society by determining an "acceptable" level of unemployment in the full knowledge that the percentages for



minorities will rise well above the base line figure. It tempts this country to play around with legislation regarding who should have children and who should not. If you are white and affluent you may give birth to all the children that your body can bear, with all their super-consuming of our limited resources. But if you are poor and minority and pick up a welfare check, and cannot curb your sexual appetites, then maybe your reproductive capabilities ought to be curbed.

Racism sets double standards of justice depending on the level of sophistication of the crime and whether it is black on white, or black on black. And so on through the various areas of our life.

By the time it gets to the one-on-one relationships, the racism syndrome has reached the quintessence of refinement. When it was being considered whether or not I was a fit candidate for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, I had to go on a paranoia-inducing overnight session with five clergy and lay people. At the start of this encounter we introduced ourselves and established who we were professionally. I allowed as how I managed public relations for the 14th largest oil company in the country and

Barbara Harris, a national board member of the Union of Black Episcopalians, is a public relations executive and candidate for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

outlined what that entails. What I said would have implied that I was paid somewhat above the minimum hourly wage.

In the course of a conversation which followed, a professor pointed out to me the advantage of going to seminary versus some alternative programs of preparation. I told him it was quite possible I could take a leave of absence and spend some time in the seminary. He said, "That would be awfully good if you could save enough money."

Racist manifestations in the church are on a par with the rest of society, if not worse, since they are cloaked in the garb of Christian witness and stewardship. Note the trade-off of social concerns and ethnic grant programs for some vaguely defined program of evangelism and development that completely forgets the admonition found in the Epistle of James that faith without works is dead. Nothing much has changed in the church since the Rev. Quinlan Gordon challenged the General Convention in Houston in 1970. At that time he suggested that the church ought to make a choice as to whether it was going to

maintain a chaplaincy to the oppressor, or a ministry to the oppressed.

If you put a frog in a pot of boiling water it will jump right out. But if you put that same frog in a pot of tepid water and gradually let that pot come to a boil that frog will stay right there until it boils to death. I would suggest that we could sit and boil to death in the gradual intensification of the heat of racism.

I said at the outset that forums seem to do little to change attitudes or make much progress towards the elimination of racism. That raises the question, then, why do we talk about it at all? Langston Hughes — our Black poet laureate answered that better than I can in a bit of biting lyrical verse:

*Seems like what drives me crazy
Don't have no 'fect on you
But I'm goin' to keep on at it
Till it drives you crazy too. ■*



The True Faith

the last three pews
on the lefthand side
were for the colored families
who lived near the Basin

at Communion
they always waited
until last
to walk down their aisle

for the Offertory collection
no one ever knew
if we should
pass them the plate
and it never
was really
decided

— Jim Donahoe

What Manner of People Dwell Here?

by Chris Cavender



A long time ago a traveller, seeking a place to live, came to a village. On the outskirts of this village sat an old man.

"Old man," inquired the visitor, "what manner of people dwell here?"

The old man replied with a question. "What were they like where you come from?"

"The people were unkind, dishonest, prone to gossip, and unfriendly," said the visitor.

"Well," returned the old man, "You will find that the residents of this village possess similar qualities. It may be wiser for you to continue your search for a place to live."

The ancient story continues that another wanderer, seeking a place to live, approached this same village and the same old man sitting. Again this visitor asks, "Sir, what manner of people dwell in yonder village?"

And the old man questions again, "What were they like where you came from?"

"The people were friendly, honest, fair, and willing to help a neighbor in need. I hope I have the good fortune to find such good people again," replied the visitor.

"You will discover such people as you have described in this village," said the wise old man.

A profound truth is conveyed in the story above. The person who is okay with himself tends to believe that other people are okay. The person who is deceitful will tend to think other people lie most of the time. Human nature tends to operate this way. One of the causes of racism has its roots in human nature.

Since I am Dakota, or Sioux, I will treat primarily of Indian-white relations. The Indians were, in the view of the first Europeans to arrive on these shores, a symbol of what the white settler must not allow himself to become. The Indian warrior was a kind of survivor, a relic of the savage past that civilized man had left behind long ago. Thus, to destroy the Indian was to destroy savagery; to control the Indian was to protect white culture from being subverted.

Men of all races and times have held in the unconscious, desires that are inadmissible to the conscious. Such desires, sometimes murderous or incestuous, are often projected onto others. When we project evil or sordid desires by perceiving them in other people, we are able to criticize or even to act against others. So it was that the American

Indians, in the eyes of whites, became stereotyped symbols of lewdness, sloth, dirt, violence, and treachery.

Projection, as a way of self-deception, a way of convincing oneself that "the evil impulses are out there, not here in me," is a convincing explanation of the psychological basis



Chris Cavender, former executive secretary of the National Committee for Indian Work of the Episcopal Church, is assistant professor of education and history at Macalester College, St. Paul.

of racism, and the Indian was one of the first historic victims.

Another of the roots of racism lies in the Judeo-Christian tradition. At least two connotations of white superiority can be found in the Bible. For example, one verse in the book of John (*John 3:19*) equates darkness with evil and light with good:

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Colors Discriminatory

Other verses speak of "scarlet sins" being made as "white as snow" (*Isaiah 1:18*), or "whiter than snow" (*Psalms 51:7*), and "white like wool" (*Revelation 1:14*). The point here is that the color white is suggestive of the pure and good, while the color black is associated with evil and things negative. Note such common words found in the English vocabulary as "blackmail," "blackball," "blacklist," "black market," and "black sheep." It is not difficult to see how the white man, psychologically, would associate himself with good, and perceive the black person and any other non-white peoples as bad.

Although my preceding interpretation may not be theologically sound, I feel it does represent the perceptions of many non-white peoples toward the Bible and that they do speak of an emotional reality.

The second connotation of white superiority that

Europeans have derived from the Judeo-Christian tradition is found in what I call the evangelical imperative.

The evangelical imperative involves going out to the people of the world and proselytizing. For example, in the book of Matthew (*Matthew 28:19-20*) we read:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Another verse (*Luke 14:23*) says:

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

The underlying assumption of this evangelical imperative is: Christianity has the truth, the true religion. Other religions do not, or do not have as good a truth as Christianity, therefore the people who adhere to these other religions are not "saved," are "sinful," are "condemned," and, therefore, are inferior. Alas, how different from the tribal perspective of respecting another man's vision.

Another contributing factor to the idea of racism is the historical experience of Europeans with non-white peoples. As Europeans stumbled into the areas of America, Australia, and New Guinea, the natives were pushed aside and their lands were utilized for missions, Sunday schools, mines, plantations, farms, and grazing land. Even well-meaning missionaries seeking to convert the natives both to Christianity and into a labor force often destroyed the lands and culture of the people they sought to protect.

Europeans, with their greed, technology, and superior numbers, dominated. In connection with this, some European powers attempted to apply Aristotle's doctrine of "natural slavery" to the American Indians. To cite Author Lewis Hanke:

Generally speaking there was no true racial prejudice before the fifteenth century, for mankind was divided not so much into antagonistic races as into "Christians and infidels." The expansion of Europe to Africa, America, and the East changed all this and thus the story of Spanish experience has a value for those who would understand race issues on the world scene.

Aristotle's authority remained so strong among Christian thinkers that some eminent Spaniards did not hesitate to apply his doctrine of natural slavery to the Indians. Others discovered that the experience and dogmas of the past were only partially helpful in

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Getting at the Roots

by Henry Atkins

In the United States, racism is a very deep *white* spiritual problem. We often call it some other kind of problem, but that is only a way of deceiving ourselves. Let me then suggest that the first step in the transformation of the white mind in the church today is a revolutionary return to biblical faith: A faith which takes seriously the power of the Holy Spirit to work in our lives in very concrete ways.

One illusion that whites in this country have today is that prejudice, bigotry, and racism are more or less the same thing. They are not. Prejudice and bigotry occur on the level of individual relations. Both whites and non-whites have reaped this bitter fruit of prejudice and bigotry. Racism is different.

Racism occurs in its most dangerous form on the level of the relationship of people to the institutions of society. Therefore, all of us whites who have our hopes tied to and interwoven with the major institutions of our society (government, church, education, and finance) are racists because these institutions perpetuate racial injustice. I say *all of us* because these institutions are controlled by whites. There is, for example, no non-white controlled U.S. Senate. There is an integrated Senate which has few non-white members. There is no non-white U.S. Supreme Court. There is a Supreme Court (integrated) which has one black justice. There is no non-white controlled House of Bishops on the Episcopal Church. There is an integrated House of Bishops which has no non-white diocesan bishops.

4 Elements of Racism

White racism in its institutional form has four major elements or characteristics. They are:

1. Whites reserve most major decision-making positions for themselves.
2. Whites control access to and usage of institutional resources by various formal and informal means.
3. Whites assume that their values, life style, and culture are superior.
4. Whites explain 1-3 by pointing to faults within the minority community.

Our biblical faith calls us to mission — to proclaim the word of God in the world and to its institutions. It is simply not enough for the people of God to refrain from personal

prejudice and discrimination. We have created our institutions and by God's grace we can transform them. The solution lies in the ability of us whites to recognize the need to take our own institutions as mission areas. We must quit focusing on the victims of racism as the problem. Let us not turn to our non-white brothers and sisters and say what are you going to do about racism? Let us turn our attention to the forces perpetuating racism which are to be found in the white communities of this nation.

Part of being on a spiritual journey, part of what it means to be transformed, has to do with the willingness to look inward, to perceive the oppressor within ourselves. In classical spiritual terms it is the realization that there is no illumination and reconciliation without purgation. I would call on our church to begin (*again*, perhaps) a corporate spiritual pilgrimage. One in which the false images and values of racism will be stripped away. One in which a new vision of what it means to be white will emerge and also be transcended.

Before I move to some criteria and concrete suggestions there are other illusions I wish to point out.

Sees Racial Armageddon

Roy Wilkins, the executive director of the NAACP, said in a recent issue of *Jet* magazine: "White Americans are not yet ready to accept Negroes as their equals; Negroes will not accept anything less. That is the collision course we're on. We're on the road to racial Armageddon".

Brother Joseph M. Davis, executive director of the National Office for Black Catholics said recently, "There is evidence, renewed every day, in a wide range of cities, that we may be heading toward racial conflicts even more serious than those of the late '60s."

Many whites that I encounter in my day to day life in 1976 simply don't see what Mr. Wilkins and Brother Joseph are talking about. For many, racism was a 1960s problem that we have pretty much cleared up. "After all, can't non-whites now vote, and eat at Howard Johnsons?" "Isn't it the white person who has the problem getting the new job today, not the black?" Our task as whites is to speak to this.

Part of our problem in relation to social transformation is that we are faddish. We move from issue to issue — from racism to eco-justice to world hunger, and on and on, never making the kinds of commitments that need to be made to bring about real transformation. We desire to be "*with it*." Racism is very much *with us* in the mid '70s and the

The Rev. Henry Lee Atkins, Jr., is vicar of the Community Church of the Advent, Washington, D.C.

judgment of our Lord will center around whether we were faithful, not whether we were *"with it."*

Power Study Urged

Finally, I would suggest that white church people begin to form small groups across the country to explore the nature of their own racism and the meaning of their whiteness. I would strongly urge that whites look very closely at how power is used, how resources are used and how norms and values are set. Looking at such questions as "What does Thanksgiving day mean to an American Indian?" would be a start.

Secondly, I would call on these groups to move from this critical stage to a reality-based action aimed at the transformation of our racist society. I believe that organizations such as Church and Society might provide the

focus for much of this coming together. I would also call on the Executive Council of our church to let all dioceses and congregations know that it is willing to aid them with resources (persons and materials) to combat racism.

Thirdly, I would like to see whites begin to examine and live new life styles. Racism is nurtured by fear of individual loss to non-whites. Maybe by living together in a more communal way our own consumer ethic, which depends on the exploitation of non-whites in this country and others, will be questioned and transformed. Maybe through community we will be able to sustain commitment in the long struggle against racism.

Fourthly, I believe that the nature and functioning of racism must enter our meditation and prayer life. Let us not rely only on our own actions, no matter how enlightened, but let us also pray for the action of God in our lives and institutions in the struggle against racism. ■

“THOSE
WHO PROFESS TO
LOVE FREEDOM
AND YET DEPRECATE
AGITATION

are those who want crops without plowing. This struggle may be a moral one, or it may be physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and never will.”

— Frederick Douglass (1857)



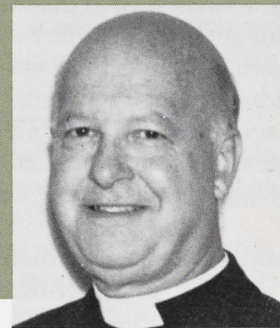
The Great Black and Red Hope:

More Subversive Christians



Frank Turner

The preceding articles by Barbara Harris, Chris Cavender, and Henry Atkins were adapted from the Church and Society/WITNESS panel forums on "Racism," presided over by the Rev. Diane Tickell, Episcopal mission priest in Alaska, at General Convention. Following are questions addressed to the panelists by the Forum respondents: The Rev. Franklin Turner, of the Executive Council staff on Ministry to Black Episcopalians, and Bishop John Burt of Ohio.



John Burt

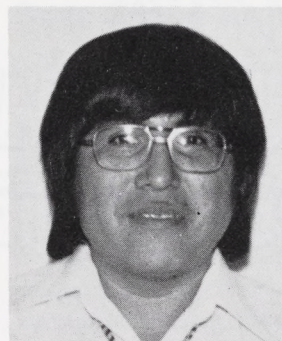
Frank Turner: After I had accepted the invitation to appear on the panel I kicked myself for doing so, mainly because as I thought about it, it reminded me that I have been down this road before. In the 50s and in the 60s I was invited time after time to go out into the suburbs to talk about how horrible it was to be a Negro in America and I bled all over the place, you know. Now in the late 70s not much of significance happened to alter the conditions we were exposing at that time.

So I came to this meeting with some skepticism — as a doubting Thomas. I'd like to ask the panel, after all the talk, the presentations, the papers, the resolutions, what is really going to happen to my life and the life of my people to be of significant change when I get back to where I live? And can we expect any more out of this "new" concern about racism, sexism and hunger? I wonder if the emphasis these days is not on sexism and hunger rather than on racism.



Barbara Harris: I don't suppose I'm the one who really ought to take a crack at that because I find myself too much

in agreement with Frank. I'm afraid that most of these discussions, particularly the racism aspect, are somewhat academic. And until there is some significant commitment to do perhaps the hardest thing for a human being — that is, voluntarily to change a comfortable life style or wait for somebody to change it for you — then this is going to continue to be an academic exercise.

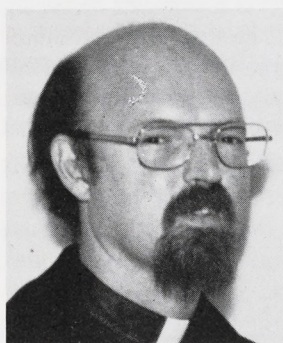


Chris Cavender: I guess if you wanted an answer right now I'd have to say I don't know. But one of the things I wanted to call attention to with regard to change for *my* people is a report from a consultation held recently on the Rosebud reservation, sponsored by the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), and the Joint Strategy and Action Committee (JSAC), two ecumenical groups. One of the resolutions suggested that, with regard to land ownership, the churches inventory their assets on Indian property and think about giving the land back.

Also Vine de Loria, Jr., author of *Custer Died for Your Sins*, whom I consider one of the outstanding intellects on

the contemporary Indian scene, has written something I'd like to share with you, a passage in which he talks about missionaries. He says:

"One of the major problems of the Indian people is the missionary. It has been said of missionaries that when they arrived, they had only the Book and we had the land. But now we have the Book and they have the land. An Indian once told me that when the missionaries arrived, they fell on their knees and prayed. Then they got up, fell on the Indians, and preyed."



Henry Atkins: I would like to speak to Frank's question in terms of the white church. I believe it was Einstein who said that there are problems created on one plane that cannot be solved on that same plane.

Most of the efforts of whites in the area of race relations have been in trying to rescue victims who were created as a result of white actions. I think there is a crying need for whites to see racism as a spiritual problem. It's going to take a movement away from the level at which the problem is created in order to speak to it.

In concrete terms, whites must see themselves and their institutions as mission. While I share Frank's feelings, I do see flashes of hope of people who are willing to live new life styles and take their mission seriously. My fantasy was that no one would come to this meeting to talk about racism. I'm encouraged that this standing room audience is present. But what is needed, I stress, is a radical transformation. To be anti-racist in this society is to be subversive. As a matter of fact, to be a Christian in this society is to be subversive.

Bishop Burt: I'd like to express appreciation as to how these three presentations built up to a mighty crescendo.

I also would like to raise the question whether the temptation which we've heard expressed here — either to indulge in weariness, "I've been up that road before," or cynicism — whether this is an appropriate posture for delegates to this convention. Is there not a concrete way that

we can help people to get hold of it? How do we address the system, the structures that are controlling so much of the racism, and how as a church can we present programs, ways, directions that we can go?

Atkins: I would speak to part of that. In the 1960s when the empowerment of black people was an agenda item there was a second part which had to do with looking at racism as a white problem, which somehow got ignored. The main focus was on what we're going to do for *them*. We're going to give *our* money to them; we're going to open *our* church to them. But as long as it's still *ours*, we've got a problem. Therefore I would welcome an educational program in terms of white consciousness which would focus mission on our own institutions and our own people, which are primarily white. Also any program that made the relationship between the nature of spirituality and racism would be something I'd welcome.

Burt: It may be that we should talk about this when we establish what the real priorities are in Venture in Mission, the major fund-raising program under discussion at this convention. It may also be that there should be a concrete re-emphasis in the national church budget. And I think it not out of order to put in a plug to a large number of people who feel concern in this area to be alert and ready and eager to help in this process as the drama unfolds. ■





"They made us many promises, but they never kept but one; they promised to take our land, and they took it."

— Sioux Chief
Red Cloud

Continued from page 9

attempting to answer the moral questions posed by the discovery of America. (Author's correction: Indians discovered America!!)

It was the Spaniards who first realized the necessity to work out Christian laws to govern their relations with the Indians they encountered.

It was a temptation to the Europeans in the 16th century as it has been to white men in the 20th, to let the notion of racial inferiority become an excuse to push the Indians or other natives from the lands they occupied.

"Where did racism come from?" is a complex question, provocative of others. For example, how does the economic institution of capitalism relate to the dynamics of racism? Does Darwin's theory of "the survival of the fittest" in any way contribute to the attitudinal development of racism?

However, what I have presented in the preceding statements, my view of human nature, some teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and the historical experience of native peoples with Europeans, contributes to *my* perspective on the origin of racism. ■

CREDITS

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Continued from page 2

Vice-president. Mondale was also a member of the Trilateral Commission.

Who are some of the other American members of the Commission? The list reads like a *Who's Who* of the elite establishment of this country. In addition to David Rockefeller (on the executive committee, of course), there are such figures as J.K. Jamieson, Chairman of Exxon; Alden Clausen, president of the Bank of America; J. Paul Austin, of Coca Cola (Carter's close friend); I. W. Abel, of the Steel-workers; Lane Kirkland, of the AFL-CIO; Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers; many corporate lawyers, and an appropriate sprinkling of liberal professors and congressmen. In the whole list of 70 members there appear to be but two women.

So what does that prove?

Of itself it proves nothing conclusive about what kind of president Carter will be. It is most enlightening, however, to look briefly at a recent report of the Commission, titled *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the Governability of Democracies to the Trilateral Commission* (1975, New York University Press paperback). A complete list of members as of August 15 of that year is in the Appendix.

Pessimism Widespread

The report acknowledges the current widespread pessimism about democracy in the Trilateral Countries. It attempts to analyze the causes of that pessimism and prescribes some remedies.

Prof. Samuel Huntington (a Carter campaign advisor, incidentally), analyzing the state of democracy in the U.S., asserts that in the 1960s we saw "a reassertion of the primacy of equality as a goal in social, economic and political life...the classic issue of equality of opportunity versus equality of results was reopened for debate." As a result, he says, there occurred "a substantial increase in government activity and a substantial decrease in government authority."

Huntington's remedy? He concludes that "some of the problems of governance in the United States today stem from an excess of democracy...needed, instead, is a greater degree of moderation in democracy."

This amazing statement is echoed in the introduction by an even more astonishing paragraph analyzing the challenges to democracy: "At the present time, a significant challenge comes from the intellectuals and related groups who assert their disgust with the corruption, materialism and inefficiency of democracy and with the subservience of

democratic government to 'monopoly capitalism'... In some measure, the advanced industrial societies have spawned a stratum of value-oriented intellectuals (*sic*) who often devote themselves to the derogation of leadership, the challenging of authority, and the unmasking and delegitimation of established institutions..." The paragraph concludes, "This development constitutes a challenge to democratic government which is, potentially at least, as serious as those posed in the past by the aristocratic cliques, fascist movements, and communist parties."

Reading through this incredible but carefully written report of 211 pages, one cannot but get the impression that where the authors claim *democracy* to be under increasing question they really mean *capitalism*. And that if it takes a little clamping down on democracy to save that system, then so be it.

Perhaps the idea behind last year's Senate Bill One (that monumental piece of proposed legislation overwhelmingly repressive of civil rights) is just what they have in mind. It will be interesting, indeed, to see what backing that old bill now gets from the new administration.

Healthy Paranoia?

What to make of the Rockefeller connection to the Commission and to Carter? Certainly, we *can* overdraw the conspiracy theory — although, after Watergate, the 1973 coup in Chile, and now this, one begins to think that paranoia is no longer a mental illness! But David Rockefeller has been nestling up to kings, captains and presidents for a long time, and with not such a noble record in favor of the poor and oppressed.

Back in 1962, according to a massive new biography titled *The Rockefellers* (by Peter Collier and David Horowitz) published just last year, David helped convince John Kennedy to adopt an investment credit and accelerated depreciation allowance that represented a massive redistribution of income from the poor to the wealthy. Later, he was to be an advance man for the Nixon administration on many fronts: the Mideast, Egypt, Romania, and even China, where David's Chase Manhattan became in 1973 the first U.S. Bank to be correspondent bank for the Bank of China.

The Chase Bank was also an early investor in South Africa. David steadfastly denied that American business was propping up the *apartheid* regime there, even after pickets holding signs saying "*Apartheid has a friend at Chase Manhattan*" picketed the bank's annual meeting in 1967.

Doesn't it really leave you with a few questions about Carter's rise to power, and about his plans for the country?

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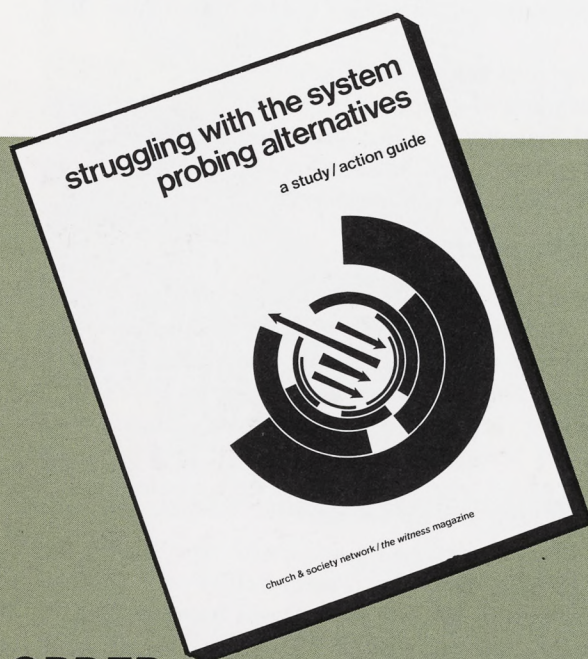
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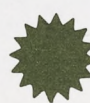
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