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THE WITNESS

MAY, 1977
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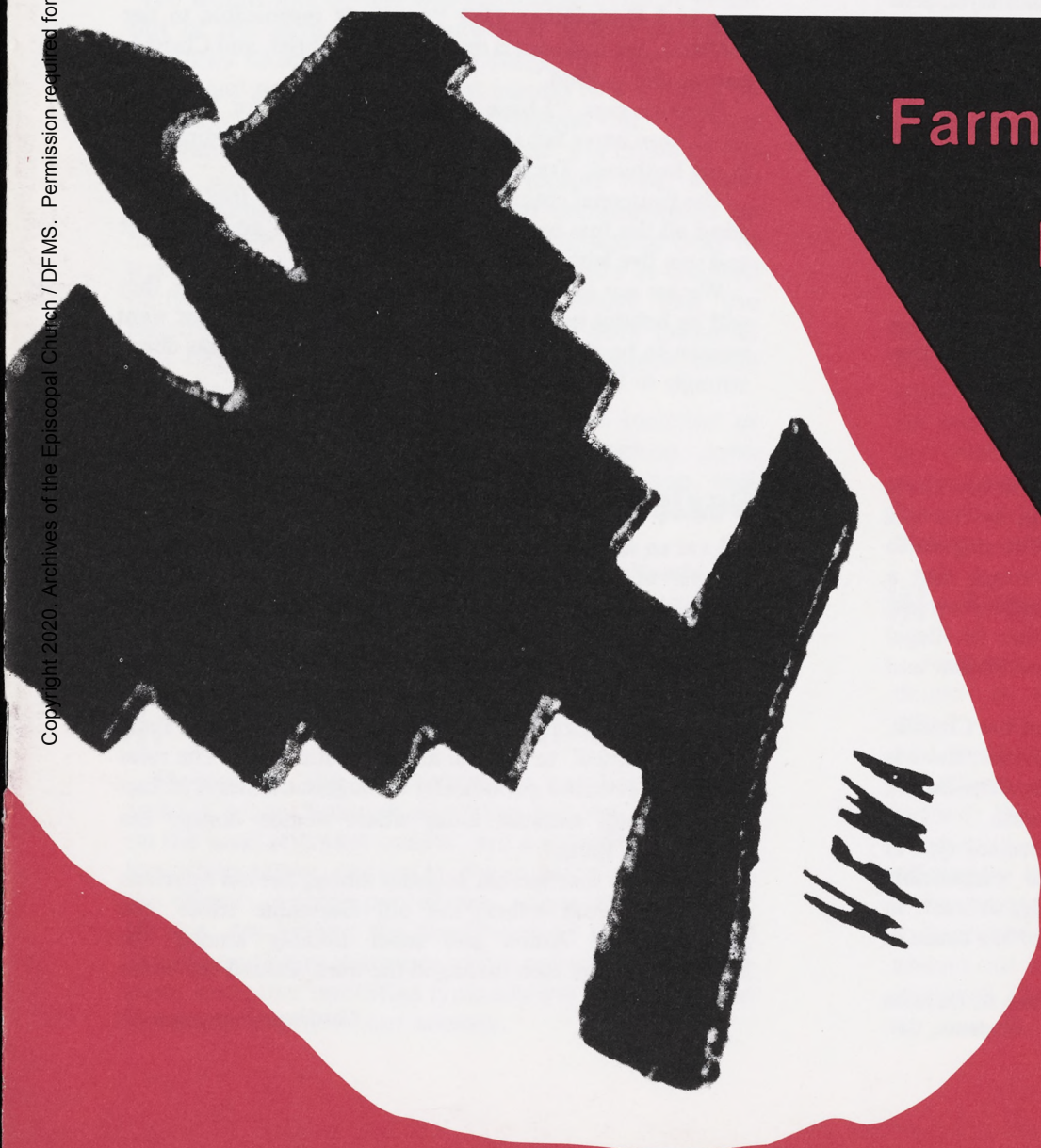
Farmworkers Advance

Lawrence Carter

Embattled Saints

William Stringfellow

Cueto/Nemikin Update



Letters to the Editor

Debts on Wall Street

The article, "Ties That Bind," by Richard W. Gillett in the March issue was excellent. Many good people assume that President Carter's religious expressions not only indicate his deep religious convictions but also his freedom from the realities of political life. Richard Gillett's article calls the latter into question in a most succinct style, and provides us with information that some of us have suspected; namely, that James Earl Carter has outstanding debts on Wall Street.

Richard L. Gressle
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Trying Again

O.K., here's my check for a reorder of THE WITNESS. I very much disagree with you, but I may be proved wrong. So I'll try again.

Rev. Louis L. Perkins
Cove Ore.

Not Fair Crying Foul

In your March issue of THE WITNESS, you cry alarm concerning the investigation being carried on by the civil authorities in our Hispanic Affairs Office. You neglect to mention that there is apparently strong evidence that a former employee, now being sought under fugitive warrant, may have used the facilities and his position in illegal activities. I submit to you that this is bad journalism and hypocrisy of the worst kind.

If the Church, or one who purports to be of the Church, chooses to enter into civil affairs or illegal activities, there is no basis for crying "foul" when the civil authorities do not allow a retreat into the sanctuary of the Church.

Especially should Christians be anxious to see any type of terrorist activities investigated and those responsible brought to justice. It is not possible, logically, at least, to justify bombings for any purpose, let alone in "the cause of freedom."

Rev. Charles R. Threewit
Modesto, Cal.

Suggest Legal Aid Fund

At our last meeting, the Pittsburgh Network of Church and Society came up with \$55 to send to Paul Washington (on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church) for the "Maria Cueto/Raisa Nemikin Legal Aid and Defense Fund." We trust that Paul will find a way to get the money to the women, and at the same time we sent a message to the Council that there *should* be such a fund if there isn't one already.

Helen Seager
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Likes to Submit

THE WITNESS which was sent to me as a Triennial Delegate is not a witness to Jesus Christ as Lord. St. Paul says in I Corinthians 11:3 "a wife is responsible to her husband, her husband is responsible to Christ, and Christ is responsible to God."

Denbigh says, "I have tried it, after being for Women's Lib; I have never felt such freedom as I have in submitting to my husband. Try it, you'll like it!"

The Episcopal church better get back to the Bible, never mind all the fuss over the Prayer Book. We are not upset and can live with either one.

We are *not* in favor of women priests, but can see they will be helpful in certain areas. If the Lord does not want women to be priests, He will take care of it. We do object strongly to homosexuals being priests.

Walter & Denbigh McGill
Warrington, Fla.

Sexism Revisited

I am an ardent feminist but I have to take exception to a number of things Rosemary Ruether said in her article "Sexism - Where Does It Come From" in the February WITNESS.

I don't think "sexism comes from the exploitation of female labor," but rather from the exploitation of one sex in favor of the other. For not in *all* "tribal societies one finds women confined" to manual and domestic labor. The roles have been reversed periodically throughout history; in fact there are still societies today where women occupy the number one spot.

There were matriarchal societies among the old Spartans and other Greek tribes, the old Germanic tribes, the Amazons, the Arabs and most notably among the Egyptians, where men managed the work around the house

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THE WITNESS

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I. The Urban Mission

"We would like to see the Episcopal Church break out of the kind of structure that seems to speak primarily to an upper middle class clientele . . ."

So read part of a statement issued to the press by a group of metropolitan bishops at General Convention. The release pointed to "the crisis of our cities where two-thirds of our people live; where basic human dignity is so often compromised by inhuman conditions; and where the image of God 'in the least of these our brothers and sisters' is violated daily." The release stated: "We believe that the resources of our church and nation, both personal and financial, must be mobilized to attack these problems at their roots."

The words, at least, were in the high tradition of the church. But a reporter asked Bishop John Walker, who had read the statement, "Bishop, this sounds like rhetoric. What are you bishops going to do about these concerns?"

The answer is that those bishops have already met and are continuing to seek appropriate actions to match their words. The results are not yet in, but their intent is clear.

II. The Hispanic Mission

Meanwhile, the urban mission has been dealt a serious blow. Spanish-speaking people, especially on the west and east coasts, are a significant part of the urban scene, central to the mission concerns of the church. A large percentage, especially of Puerto Ricans, are among the newly-arrived in the United States, and heirs therefore of the poverty, unemployment and other liabilities typically the lot of those on the bottom rung in our society.

Robert L. DeWitt

But the credibility of the church's mission to Hispanic peoples, and by inference to others "of the least of these our brothers and sisters" has suffered dramatically by virtue of the failure of the administration at Episcopal headquarters to support and defend officers of the Hispanic desk against investigative incursions by the FBI, and subpoenas to testify before a grand jury. (See further information elsewhere in this issue of THE WITNESS).

Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs are in jail, a situation which the Administration euphemistically calls "on leave of absence without pay." They are in jail protecting their commitment to the integrity of our mission to Hispanic peoples. This situation is not a helpful symbol of the church's commitment to the urban mission, at least as articulated by those bishops quoted above.

III. Venture in Mission

And this occurs at a time when the national church is girding itself for a major fund raising effort — "Venture in Mission" — which it is hoped will raise upwards of \$100 million. That amount, effectively raised with broad participation, could indeed be a powerful symbol for the church, producing both a sense of unity and the strength necessary for a significant thrust.

But what will be the meaning of and the response to such a venture when the Episcopal Church Center seems not to be clear as to the direction in which to venture? There is a danger that the mishandling of

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UFW Breakthrough:



'La Causa' Advances

by Lawrence Carter

The recent truce between the mighty Teamsters Union and the United Farm Workers represents a tremendous victory for Mexican Americans in their long struggle to achieve a place in the sun and dignity for their union.

So far as Cesar Chavez and the UFW are concerned, they are back at square one, with the Teamsters in command of the packing plant employees and the UFW, the fields. This is the way it was before the Teamsters tried to muscle in, in an effort to create a Teamster-run farm workers union.

There can be no doubt that Chavez and his union have emerged in a more dominant position than ever before. However, it should be noted that this battle won is not the whole war. There still remain the powerful growers who are either opposed to any union at all or to a Mexican-American union run by a Mexican-American. It's sometimes called racism.

The growers have lost a powerful ally, but they have a number of weapons left in their arsenal which will undoubtedly slow the United Farm Workers in their march.

In the month of April the four-year Teamster labor contracts in the Coachella Valley vineyards ended. It can be expected that the organizing effort of the UFW will be redoubled to win the right to sit down at the bargaining table with these growers. Already the roadblocks are appearing. In the nearby Imperial Valley one major grower, the Royal Packing Company, is in the process of forming a company union. Also a number of former Teamster organizers have created a paper union they call the Independent Union of Agricultural Workers, which according to sources close to UFW headquarters is another name for a company union. Some growers are going to great lengths to promote a no-union vote among their workers by increasing wages and instituting pension and medical plans.

The growers are using other weapons in their efforts to avoid the implementation of union contracts under the new

California Agricultural Labor Relations act. These vary from outright refusal to meet with union representatives to what is called "surface bargaining." This latter is a technique that means the growers sit down with union officials and quite agreeably agree to nothing but vague generalities.

What is shaping up in the vast California agricultural arena is a last ditch struggle to keep Chavez and his union out of the fields. The territory, contrary to some of the propaganda, does not consist of small family farms being "victimized" by Chavez, but huge acreage owned by a number of multi-national corporations like Tenneco, Standard Oil, the Chase Manhattan Bank and others. These represent formidable opposition because of the resources at their command.

It is a critical moment for the United Farm Workers Union. As a result of the Teamster invasion four years ago the union membership dropped to several thousand and only survived because of contributions from other AFL-CIO unions, church groups and loyal individuals. At the present time the membership has grown to more than 20,000.

Faith Strong

Only recently, to give non-union workers courage to defy the growers, 5,000 workers and supporters of the UFW gathered in Coachella to commemorate the act of betrayal by the growers and Teamsters four years ago when the conspiracy to sign sweetheart contracts was hatched, leaving Chavez on the outside looking in. The day began with mass, followed by a march, speeches, and a fiesta. It might be noted that it is the religious aspect in the UFW that induces the highest blood pressure response from the growers. That plus the fact that the union doesn't look like any union the growers can recognize confuses and angers the lords of Agribiz. They see a bunch of Chicanos praying, singing and dancing while they picket or demonstrate — and that's not just the way things are done in power's frame of reference.

Lawrence Carter, an Episcopal priest and author of "Can't You Hear Me Calling?," spent many years in California and has been in continuing contact with the United Farm Workers.

In an age when big labor is a look-alike of the American corporate enterprise with all the perquisites of the tycoon, the UFW is certainly a poor-looking relation. No swimming pools enhance the estates of this union's executives; no salaries of six figures are paid to its top men and women.

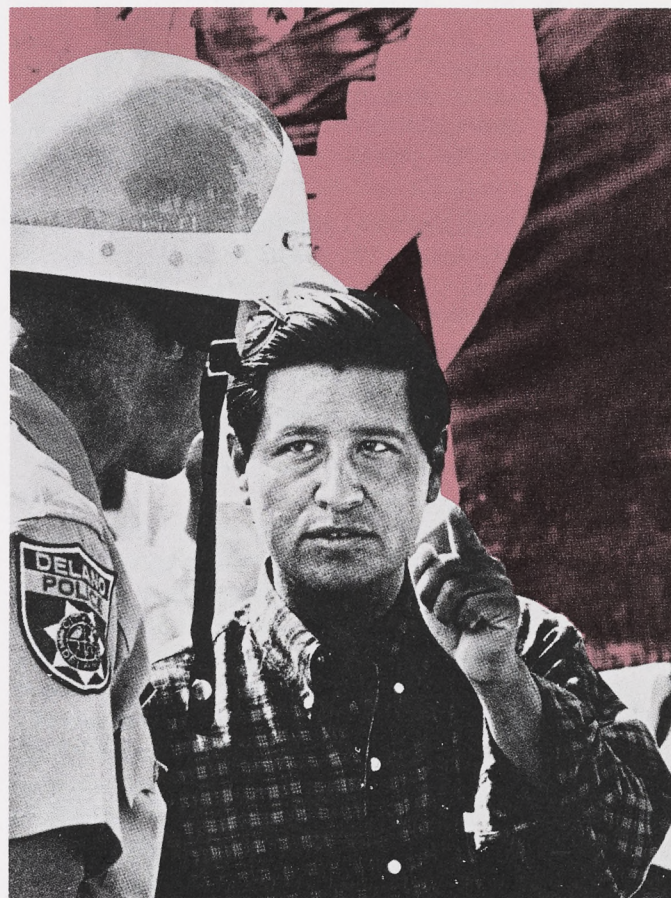
Their headquarters is hardly worthy of the name when compared to the union office buildings from the Atlantic to the Pacific which grace our cities with their granite, marble and glass. Headquarters of the UFW is a rundown former TB sanatorium in the Techachapi Mountains, a stone's throw from California's San Joaquin Valley, the scene of the many confrontations between the farm workers and the big growers of the region. In this place, called La Paz, Cesar Chavez and his people work for five dollars a week and subsistence.

The spirit of the UFW finds its source and life through Chavez, the son of Arizona Mexican-American farm worker parents. If the term *peasant* ever had any meaning in U.S. life it does so for the landless thousands of Mexican-Americans who annually move from the southwestern states up to the northern borders of the U.S. following the crops and harvesting them for our tables. Most farm workers have no home of their own and their children are exposed to little or no schooling. They live in unheated, insanitary shacks provided, at a price, by the big corporations which now control the agricultural enterprise in the United States.

"Agribiz" controls the lives and well-being of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children, except where they have been organized into the United Farm Workers Union. To date the union has mainly confined its efforts to the nearly 200,000 farm workers who work the California harvests from the Mexican border to Oregon. Except for Florida, where the union has negotiated a contract with Coca Cola's citrus enterprise that produces Minute Maid frozen orange juice, the UFW is only a cloud on the horizon to the growers in most parts of the American agricultural scene.

The question is often asked, especially after some notable defeats, how could Chavez and his rag tag union have survived against the powerful and rich Teamsters, the Agribiz corporations, and the U.S. government? The answer is nonsense to the pragmatic big labor leader, but it is simple in the extreme. Chavez and his followers firmly believe that their cause is just, that God is just, and that ultimately justice will prevail against the combined forces of the powers and principalities of American agriculture.

Even in the darkest moments in the union's history — such as the loss of the contracts in the Coachella and San



Cesar Chavez in non-violent persuasion

Joaquin Valleys and the recent loss of Proposition 14 in California — Chavez acts as if this defeat were in some sense a victory. And strangely enough this is what his defeats turn into — victories.

One must see the UFW and Chavez as a movement toward human dignity, of which the union is a sign and symbol. The field workers' control over their own destiny is what it is all about, and to lose sight of that fact is to miss the point. This is what has been behind the boycotts, the fasts, the marches, the strikes and the other more visible protests against a system which brutalizes men, women and children through the virtual peonage of the American agricultural system.

Undergirding all the motivation one cannot help but see that the real strength to carry on in spite of so many defeats, so much hunger, suffering and death lies in the Catholic religion and a dedication to non-violence to achieve their goals.

Since the conquest of Mexican California, the Anglo-Saxon majority has treated the native Mexican-American

on a par with the Blacks in the old south. They were given the stereotype of fun-loving, guitar-playing, lazy, lovable but slightly dishonest folk who needed the stiff Anglo backbone to make them productive workers. So they became the underpaid, overworked migrant who has produced most of the vegetables and fruits that grace the U.S. table.

Attempts to organize the California farm worker along more or less traditional labor organization lines began as early as 1945. At that time the Food, Tobacco and Agricultural Workers AFL-CIO had an organizational drive in Northern California. Through various means, including intimidation and political pressure, this was thwarted by the Teamsters who took over the cannery contracts as part of a deal with the AFL-CIO.

Teamsters Wed Antle

A more serious statewide farm labor organizing drive began in 1959 under the auspices of the AWOC AFL-CIO. As a result a number of locals developed strikes in the Imperial and Salinas Valleys. Two years later the teamsters, taking advantage of strikes against the lettuce growers of the Imperial and Salinas Valleys, signed an agreement with Bud Antle, one of the largest growers. At that time the Teamsters agreed to provide Antle with *braceros*, imported Mexican nationals, thus making them the only pro-*bracero* union in the country. An interesting sidelight on the Teamster-Antle relationship is the fact that the Teamsters are reputed to have loaned Antle \$1 million in 1963.

With the emergence of Cesar Chavez and his NFWA (National Farm Workers Association) in 1962 and its merger with the AWOC AFL-CIO in 1966 with Cesar Chavez as director, the farm workers' drive toward unionization was well underway. Those familiar with the ups and downs of the United Farm Workers recall the skirmishes with the courts and the ultimate negotiations which led to contracts for the union covering 60,000 workers.

The rich and powerful Teamsters bided their time until the UFW contracts in Coachella vineyards were about to expire in 1973 and renewal negotiations were being conducted between the growers and the UFW representatives. Meanwhile, behind closed doors, the Teamsters ironed out agreements with most of the growers holding UFW contracts, who then abruptly canceled meetings with the UFW and announced they had signed with the

Teamsters without consulting the workers involved in the contracts.

From this depth point in 1973 when the union had lost all but a few of its contracts to the Teamsters they have begun the road back. Today the UFW has some 56 contracts with some 20,000 union members. Their goal is reported to be 100,000. Last December the union called off its boycott of iceberg lettuce as most of the major lettuce growers have signed contracts with the United Farm Workers Union.

While the 200,000 farm workers include Filipinos, Arabs and East Indians, 70% of the total are Mexican-American, predominantly Roman Catholic.

In addition to the known number of farm workers there are uncounted thousands of illegal aliens who cross the Mexican-American border annually by means of a payment of money to a "cayote" who in turn hands them over to a labor contractor for work in either non-union or Teamster fields. The average labor contractor makes Simon Legree look like a Sunday school teacher.

It is necessary to recall that the Wagner Labor Relations Act specifically excluded farm workers from the right to bargain collectively — in effect the right to organize a union. Logically this came about because of political pressure of the Farm Lobby in Washington. This lobby is still effective in maintaining a farm support program developed in the dark days of the 1930s as an emergency measure to keep the American farmer in business at a time when foreclosures were the order of the day.

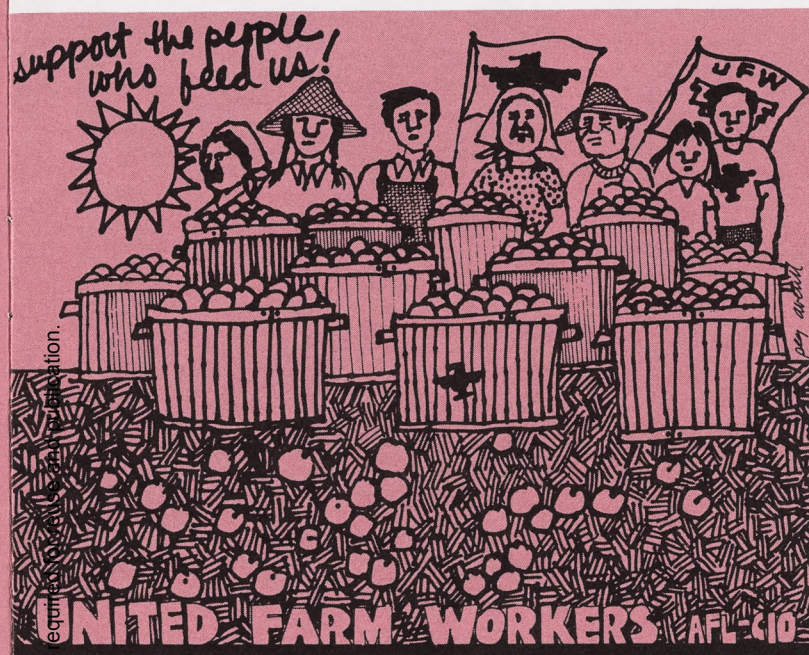
Labor Act Bulldozed

Until 1975 no state had enacted any legislation to give farm workers the protection offered by the right to organize a union and bargain collectively with the growers. In 1975 Gov. Jerry Brown of California bulldozed a farm labor act through the state legislature. Almost immediately the growers put pressure on the legislature to deny funds to the newly born Farm Labor Board whose job it was to certify elections and to adjudicate disputes between labor and management.

At the present time there are funds to run the state agricultural labor relations machinery until July 1, 1977. After that it is an open question whether the legislature will have the moral fortitude to counter the pressure of the Agribiz lobbies.

How can the UFW possibly win its battle against the massive combined strength of the growers, and the U.S.





Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Immigration? The latter two government agencies allegedly caused a relaxation of immigration rules to let thousands of Mexican nationals into the Coachella Valley in 1973 in an effort to break the strike by the UFW when the growers of that area signed sweetheart contracts with the Teamsters without even going through the formality of a free election on the part of the workers.

These are powerful adversaries.

But with the absolute belief in the justice of their cause, the farm workers have relied on two principal weapons in their non-violent struggle — the strike and the boycott. Farm workers and Anglo volunteers from every walk of life have picketed the struck fields of California and Safeway and liquor stores across the country in an effort to bring the big grape growers of California and the Ernest and Julio Gallo winery to the bargaining table.

The UFW has advocated two kinds of boycotts — primary and secondary. Under the primary, an individual or family boycotts certain products. The secondary is conducted outside the stores where the various boycotted products are sold; pickets distribute leaflets urging people to shop elsewhere. The secondary boycott is the one most feared and hated by growers and chainstores.

As a result of the act of betrayal on the part of the growers in 1973, strikes began in the Coachella Vineyards. In retaliation, the Teamsters hired goon squads reputedly recruited from motorcycle gangs who hurled obscenities and profanity at the pickets, in whose ranks were not only workers but also priests, ministers, nuns, students and

representatives of the AFL-CIO and the UAW. A number of pickets were beaten while the sheriffs looked the other way; one priest was clubbed and ultimately hospitalized for giving an interview to a *Wall Street Journal* reporter in a restaurant.

At that point things looked dismal indeed for Chavez and his union. Many contracts had been taken over by the Teamsters, his membership fell to an all time low and resources were failing.

On one tense day in 1973 Chavez met with a number of religious leaders from all over the country who had seen first hand in the vineyards of Coachella the brutality of the Teamster goons and the acquiescence of the police. He came on quietly and simply stated as he had many times, "They have the money, we have time on our side. We will win."

And what of the future of Chavez and his farm workers? The union has already fulfilled many of its promises to its members. They have health services provided, a retirement home, day care centers, a pension plan and a wage scale which permits them to cease being nomads over the face of southwestern and northwestern America. Most importantly the members now feel a sense of self-worth in having some control over their lives.

Grave Problems Ahead

However, there are grave problems ahead. The machines are coming. Machines that can test the ripeness of melons and tomatoes and pick them; machines that can blow the oranges off trees and pick them up. These and other technical marvels still on the drawing boards will largely eliminate the need for skilled and unskilled field hands. In their future thinking Chavez and his colleagues are trying to anticipate the advances in farm technology and prepare their people to be able to move into other fields of the American enterprise.

Ultimately, it is the human aspect of La Causa that makes the United Farm Workers Union AFL-CIO different from any other American labor organization. What Cesar Chavez is doing for the Mexican-American and other farm workers around this country is what Martin Luther King, Jr. did for the Blacks of this land.

La Causa is a spiritual movement which, although dedicated to non-violence, is at the same time militant in terms of seeking an end to injustice and a life of some stability for those who put the food on our tables.

Viva La Causa!



Remembering Maria & Raisa

by Mary Lou Suhor

Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin will have served more than two months in jail by the time this issue of THE WITNESS reaches its readers.

The former staff members of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs said in a recent message that they have been strengthened by the support that has been manifested for them, both inside and outside of prison.

"It has been clear from the beginning," they said, "that this is an issue which extends beyond just two women — that it affects all peoples involved in self-determination. The FBI and the Justice Department have tried to put us in a position of implicating people and thus play a part in their intensified efforts to destroy the Puerto Rican independence movement. We must continue to educate ourselves and convince others that the only alternative is to unite and struggle together against these forces."

Towards their own self-education in prison, Maria and Raisa have asked that anthropological and geographical books be sent to them, as well as historical novels. The two women face a 14-month sentence for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury investigating the FALN, an alleged militant Puerto Rican group.

In other developments over the past month:

- Pedro Archuleta, one of the founders of the NCHA, was subpoenaed from New Mexico to testify in New York. Archuleta, wearing a "We Won't Talk" button, told THE WITNESS that his being summoned is typical of the harassment by the FBI of a number of Chicanos who had been connected with the NCHA.

"This is like something out of the McCarthy era," he said. "We don't know who is going to be called next. I urge that people write their legislators to support Grand Jury reform legislation and to remind President Carter that in addition to supporting human rights



Maria Cueto, 00406-183

abroad, he should do something about how they are being violated here."

Archuleta is presently with a community organization in Tierra Amarilla, N.M., which sponsors agricultural co-ops, a medical clinic, law office, and family counseling and cultural services for a largely Hispanic clientele.

- Bishop Francisco Reus Froylan of Puerto Rico submitted an *amicus* brief for Maria and Raisa as their case went to the Court of Appeals. The Court ruled against them. Bishop Paul Moore of New York continues to follow the case closely, according to his attorney, Robert Potter. "If the two women decide to appeal to the Supreme Court, we will give serious consideration to filing an *amicus* brief there, perhaps in conjunction with the National Council of Churches," Potter said.

- Jay Weiner, who refused to testify before the "Patty Hearst Grand Jury" in Scranton, was released from Allenwood and issued the following statement: "My release after four months of pointless imprisonment ends another chapter in the ugly history of Grand Juries. I am out. But Raisa Nemikin and Maria Cueto are in prison because of their principled refusal to cooperate with the government's investigation of the Puerto Rican Independence Movement.

"Here's what happened to all three of us. We were stalked by FBI agents and served with Grand Jury subpoenas in highly volatile atmospheres. We were stripped of our Fifth Amendment rights . . . We were jailed . . .



Raisa Nemikin, 00446-183

"The three of us are part of a growing union of people forced to pay high prices for refusing to aid Grand Juries . . . We are a union of people who refuse to become informants, who are therefore jailed without a trial, without even being charged with a crime. We are jailed for asserting our basic human right to silence.

"I convinced a judge that I would never testify, that my jailing was senseless. I hope that other judges will follow the ruling in my case. The continuing efforts of many people kept my case alive. . ."

- To keep Maria and Raisa's case alive, Concerned Churchpersons Against Grand Jury Abuse sponsored a vigil from 2 to 4 p.m. on Maundy Thursday in front of the jail. The service included readings from Scripture and statements of support by personnel from the National Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ, the Center for Constitutional Rights and the Grand Jury Project, and concluded with the concelebration of the Eucharist by several Episcopal priests. Participants in the event included the Reverends Carter Heyward, Martha Blacklock, Sanford Cutler, Emily Hewitt, Ricardo Potter, Kathy Piccard, Ron Wesner, John Stevens, and the Rt. Rev. Robert DeWitt and members of the New England and Mid-Atlantic region of the Church and Society Network.

Messages of support to Maria and Raisa can be sent to them (include numbers under photos above) at the Metropolitan Correction Center, Room M-593, 150 Park Row, New York, N.Y. 10007.

Remembering

On behalf of the Executive Board of Church and Society, the Very Rev. Cabell Tennis sent an inquiry concerning the Cueto/Nemikin situation to Bishop John Allin asking for "A journal giving step by step the entire process from the original encounter through the litigation now in process before the Grand Jury." Bishop Allin's reply follows.

The Rt. Rev. John M. Allin
815 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

March 8, 1977

Dear Cabell:

In response to your letter of February 24 let me attempt to honor your request by reviewing my experience regarding the investigation and related problems concerning the Hispanic Commission.

From the outset last November and to the present, the FBI and the United States Attorney's expressed concern and approach to the Episcopal Church Center has been in connection with efforts to locate Juan Carlos Torres, (*sic*), a fugitive, who for a period of a year in 1976 was appointed by the former Hispanic Commission to membership on that Commission. I trust you already know that an apartment in Chicago rented by Carlos Torres was discovered to contain bomb materials and indications of his possible connection with FALN. Also discovered were Hispanic Commission reports recording his membership on the former Commission. (I enclose another News Release you may not have seen.)

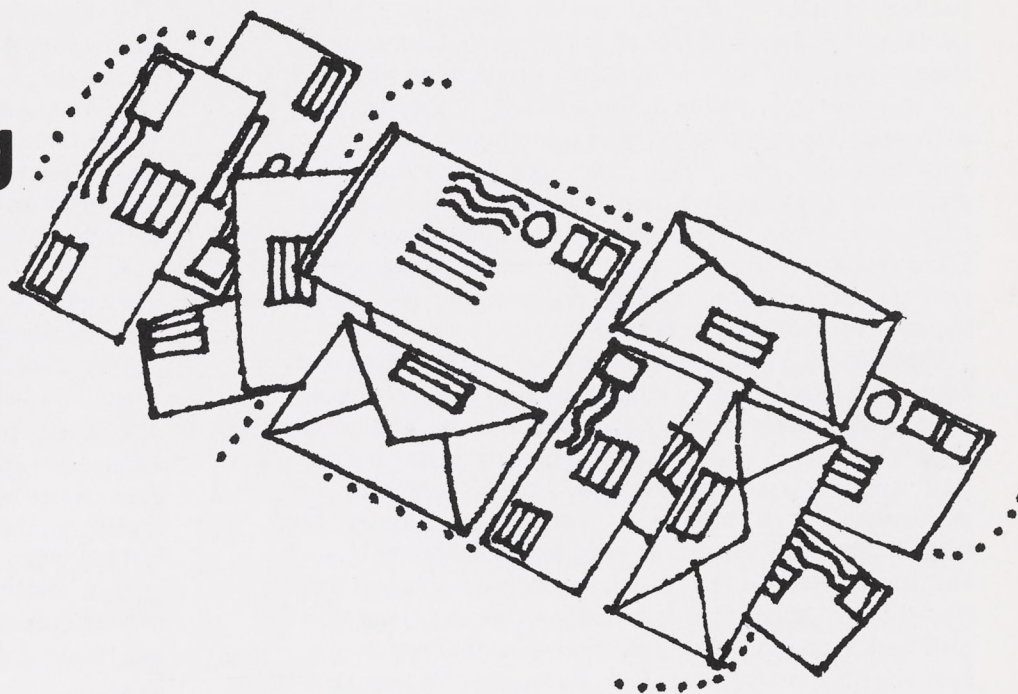
Our response to the Government's request for assistance in the search for identified suspects possibly connected with violent bombings of recent dates in Chicago and New York has been and is to cooperate in so far as specific information

can be made available which does not violate reasonable rules of confidentiality or jeopardize the protection of human rights. Legal counsel has been engaged throughout and care taken to maintain separation of Church-State issues.

Our assumption has been that staff members and the Commission have not been knowingly involved with groups engaged in violence. That assumption is presently being tested.

The two staff members, Cueto and Nemikin, voluntarily answered FBI questions upon request in November. They were informed at that time of the availability of legal counsel. In their interview they reported a meeting was to be held in Puerto Rico the following day. At that meeting they were approached by other FBI agents who were searching for Torres. They refused to answer questions on this occasion, stating they had done so the previous day. They maintained and continue to maintain that they have no knowledge of the whereabouts of Carlos Torres.

Subsequent meetings, between the two staff persons and two Hispanic clergy in New York City, stimulated the concern and activity of the Bishop of New York and his attorney, Robert Potter. In response to false rumors of a



possible invasion by the FBI into the Episcopal Church Center and violation of files of the Hispanic Commission, Bishop Moore and Robert Potter had a conference with me.

The procedure outlined by attorney Potter in that conference for responding to a government inquiry is essentially the one which has been employed. The government agents have been informed we could not respond to broad "fishing expedition" subpoenas. The Church's cooperation, it has been stated consistently, depends upon receiving specific requests and our determination of the ability to meet those requests.

Provision for legal counsel for the two staff members has been made thus far by my office. The staff members chose the attorneys who are representing them to date. They seem to have not chosen well. The attorneys representing the two staff members seem to have advocated a course of no cooperation for their clients, claiming an invasion of religious liberty. They seem to have persuaded Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin not to answer questions before the Grand Jury in spite of the fact that both women claim they have no information to submit other than that which they have already reported to the FBI. In other words they have been prevented from placing this testimony on the record of the Grand Jury even after being granted immunity by the Court.

For a time the Bishop of New York through his attorney, Robert Potter, joined in supporting their course of action. Others, including the Bishop of Puerto Rico, were enlisted to support the posture of non-cooperation with investigation of individuals suspected of possibly seeking cover behind Hispanic programs while engaging in violent acts. It is to be noted that the two staff members were not being investigated as suspects. They were rather being asked to supply any pertinent information which they might have concerning the activities and whereabouts of Carlos Torres.

After Court action attempted by the Bishop of New York and the Bishop of Puerto Rico was ruled out of order by the Federal Judge, although time was granted for appeal, the bishops withdrew without appealing. Since then nothing has been heard from either one of them.

Meanwhile the results are that Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin may be needlessly in jail for contempt of Court during the time the Grand Jury is in session, having been persuaded to refuse to give testimony which they have already voluntarily given to the FBI.

That testimony ironically, as Maria Cueto has reported to me, is that they have no pertinent information to give. They are under the impression their refusal will prevent investigation of their former Hispanic programs and somehow witness to the separation of Church and State.

The truth is their refusal has served only to cause unnecessary suspicion among the government agents while at the same time leading Cueto and Nemikin to isolate themselves from the Church Center Community. It has been reported to me that these two women now claim to be abandoned by everyone, including the Bishop of New York and the Hispanic priest who urged their non-cooperation with the investigation.

At my request a priest of our Church in Society staff has attempted to reach both Maria and Raisa to minister to them and to dissuade them from their counter productive course which only increases suspicion and investigation of them.

A proper inquiry to the Episcopal Church Center for assistance and pertinent information by authorized government agents searching for a fugitive suspected in violent bombings has been unnecessarily interfered with and complicated by some church members and related groups. The results have been helpful to no one. Suspicion and criticism have spread. Relationships have been strained and broken. Two individuals are needlessly facing jail terms.

I can assure you those of us in the Church Center Community are not without concern or experience. Our legal counsel is experienced in the Church-State relations field, having presented cases before the United States Supreme Court. We are committed to the total mission of the Church including ministering to acute human needs, protecting human rights, increasing good citizenship participation and improving our society, our nation and our world. We need all the help and energy available in our assigned task.

Reasonable inquiry, such as yours, is welcome. On the other hand, some self-appointed critics and those who are hyper-suspicious of both Church and State, drain energy from the total mission to which, I believe, this Church is committed. I continue to pray for better communication and coordination among all in our Church Community.

Thank you for your concern. This comes with my best regards to you and your family.

John M. Allin
PRESIDING BISHOP

CREDITS

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Maria & Raisa...

Since Los Angeles has the second largest Mexican-American population in North America [second only to Mexico City], the Southern California members of the Church and Society Network felt the impact of the arrest of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin "very personally," according to the Rev. Richard Gillett, convenor. They sent the following letter to Bishop Allin concerning the events which led to the arrest of the two NCHA staffers.

CHURCH AND SOCIETY
Southern California Chapter
P.O. Box 31187
Los Angeles, Cal. 90031

March 25, 1977

Dear Bishop Allin:

As concerned Episcopalians, we feel bound to share with you our gravest distress and concern regarding the present imprisonment of former Executive Council staff members Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin; and the prior widespread access by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to information in the church files of the Hispanic, Asian, Indian and perhaps other ministries located at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

Regarding the imprisonment of these two employees of our church, who worked in the Hispanic ministry section, there is, to our knowledge, no crime of which they are guilty other than that of refusing to testify before a Federal Grand Jury now in session in New York. For this, they are in prison, and may well remain there, until May of 1978.

In your statement of March 14, you declare that there have been in this matter no infringements of religious liberty or privacy rights, nor abuses in the Grand Jury investigation. We believe, on the contrary, that there have been infringements of all three of these principles. The infringements of federal grand juries upon the civil rights of citizens has been for some time a matter of serious concern among advocates of judicial reform. The new Attorney General of the United States, Griffin Bell, in fact expressed this concern at his recent Senate confirmation hearings. A nationally syndicated newspaper columnist, Murray Kempton, recently wrote that "It was a sign of the court's desperation yesterday that it knew of no way to get any closer to Carlos Torres except to send to prison a stenographer-typist [Raisa Nemikin, jailed March 1] for the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the Protestant

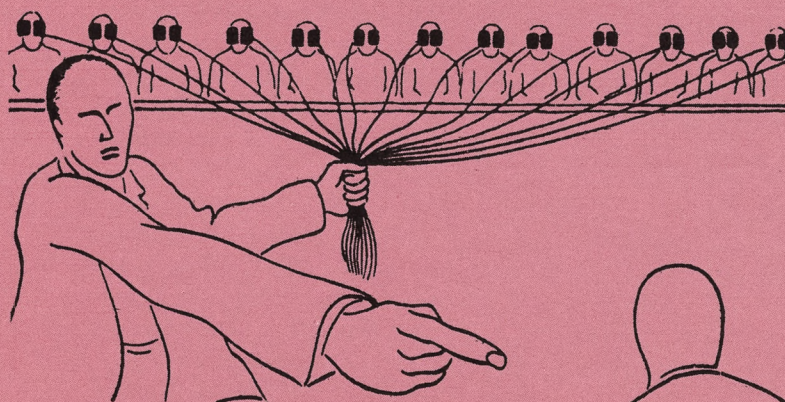
Episcopal Church."

Carlos Torres, the former volunteer lay member of the Hispanic Commission wanted by the FBI for possible terrorist activities, may well be guilty as charged. But this nation has always sought to affirm a person's innocence until proven guilty. Yet your statement appears to presume that Torres is guilty. By citing the mandate of General Convention of 1970 specifying that Church programs not be involved in any violence, you strongly imply his guilt as well as the implication of the guilt of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin.

We read in the unfolding chronicle of events regarding this matter that Maria and Raisa initially cooperated with the FBI and answered questions. When the FBI returned subsequently with broad subpoenas requesting files, records, lists of names and addresses, meetings, conferences and extensive other material dating back to 1970, however, both women rightly refused further cooperation on first amendment and other grounds.

Why did our Church cooperate and hand over the material requested by the subpoenas? Did you not trust Raisa and Maria and honor their consciences in determining what was meant by the word "pastoral?" The Diocese of New York, and the Bishop of Puerto Rico, in contrast, went to court as "friends of the court," in an effort to quash the subpoenas, seeing that they were an "invasion of the confidentiality necessary to the effective working of a religious body." Did you and other officers of our church not also take into account the recent widespread exposures by Congress, civil liberties groups and the press, of extensive unlawful and illegal abuses of the civil rights of persons by the FBI and the CIA in course of their investigations?

Some of us who are signers of this letter, know that our names, addresses, papers, and other documents are now in the hands of the FBI, because of the grave mistake of judgment, or of conscience, that high officers of the



Executive Council made in allowing wholesale entry and access by the federal agents to the files of the Hispanic and other ministries housed in the church center offices. Some of us have recently been questioned by FBI agents about this matter; a child's school has been visited by agents seeking information about his mother, a former member of the Hispanic Commission. *All* of us have hearts heavy with despair over the nationwide impact that this intrusion by government into church affairs is having upon the Church's ministry to minorities . . . who, in our society, are the poorest, the most oppressed and powerless, the forgotten of our great nation.

Finally, and perhaps most poignantly, we find reprehensible and unjust your action in placing Miss Cueto and Miss Nemikin on leave of absence without pay, citing that "by their own choice they are not able to fulfill their duties and responsibilities of employment." By their own choice, on the contrary, they are choosing to safeguard and protect what trust remains between the Episcopal Church in its attempt to minister to Hispanic peoples; and those millions of Spanish-speaking persons who have been historically denied, in our nation, the most basic human and civil rights.

We therefore join in asking you now to put the full weight of your office as Presiding Bishop, toward the defense and release from custody, of Maria and Raisa; to seek the return of all files and material taken by the FBI (as the Diocese of New York requested in its petition to the court); to seek forthwith to repair the extensive damage done to the Church's ministry to the forgotten and the oppressed of society by this affair; and to seek to allay the concern caused by this matter to other national and local church denominations in its possible implications for their ministries' vulnerability to similar police intrusions.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The Rev. Richard Gillett, Convenor
The Rev. Charles Howarth Belknap
Joan Howarth Belknap
The Rt. Rev. Daniel Corrigan
Howard Hoover
Lois Hoover
Polly Lucas
Roaslio Munoz
Edna M. Pittenger
John L. Pittenger
Virginia Ram
Nancy Von Lauderbeck
Janis Brack Young
The Rev. Roger H. Wood

Common Questions Re Maria & Raisa

Q. Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin are in jail because they refused to testify before the Grand Jury. If they had nothing to hide, why did they not testify?

A. First, what they *did* do. They *did* cooperate with early FBI investigations and they filed sworn affidavits in which they responded to questions concerning their knowledge of Carlos Alberto Torres. In short, they were willing to, and did, answer questions. What they *refused* to do was to testify before a *Grand Jury*, where

- one does not know what the questions might be;
- the proceedings are secret, so there is no way others can know what line of questioning was pursued, and whether such questions might have pertained to them;
- the witness is not allowed the presence of an attorney; and
- the witness may not refuse, under penalty of contempt of court, to answer a question as irrelevant, or inappropriate, or the information privileged.

Q. What was accomplished by the women's refusal to testify?

A. For them, a jail term lasting for the life of this Grand Jury — 14 months.

For the Hispanic community, the reassurance of knowing that representatives of the church were willing to make the sacrifice of going to jail rather than expose them to the risk of having their privacy invaded by wide-ranged and secret questionings.

Q. Should the FBI be seeking Carlos Alberto Torres?

A. Yes, because of the evidence which may link him to the so-called FALN bombings. Further, it was appropriate for the FBI to ask questions of the Hispanic Commission because of his brief relationship to it as a volunteer. But when the FBI discovered there was no information to be had there concerning him, they then engaged in what Maria and Raisa called a "fishing expedition" - seeking information concerning any and all persons connected with the Hispanic and other ministries. This is where their methods were excessive, and the compliance with them by the administration at the Episcopal Church Center was grievously at fault.

Q. Why all this criticism of the Grand Jury, when it was incorporated into the Bill of Rights, and was instituted to protect people from unjust prosecution?

A. Such indeed was its original intent. But in recent years, and particularly beginning with President Nixon's first term, the Grand Jury has been abused, and has often served as an investigative instrument of the FBI. For example, the following question was put to a witness in a Grand Jury hearing in Tucson:

I want you to tell the Grand Jury what period of time during the years 1969 to 1970 you resided at 2201 Ocean Front Walk, Venice [Los Angeles], who resided there at the time you lived there, identifying all persons you have seen in or about the premises at that address, and tell the Grand Jury all of the conversations that were held by you or others in your presence during the time that you were at that address.

(Quoted in "Grand Juries and Immunity Law," published by the Coalition to End Grand Jury Abuse.)

This is why legislation is currently pending in both houses of Congress to reform and restrict the use of the Grand Jury system, restoring it to its original purpose. ■

Living With Defeat

by William Stringfellow

A most obstinate misconception associated with the gospel of Jesus Christ is that the gospel is welcome in this world. The conviction — endemic among church folk — persists that, if problems of misapprehension and misrepresentation are overcome and the gospel can be heard in its own integrity, the gospel will be found attractive by people, become popular and even be a success of some sort.

This idea is curious and ironical because it is bluntly contradicted in Scripture, and in the experience of the continuing biblical witness in history from the event of Pentecost unto the present moment. There is no necessity to cite King Herod or Judas Iscariot or any notorious public enemies of the gospel in this connection; after all, during Jesus' earthly ministry, no one in His family and not a single one of the disciples accepted Him, believed His vocation or loved the gospel He bespoke and embodied.

After Pentecost, where the *Acts of the Apostles* evince an understanding and engage the confession of the gospel, resistance and strife are equally in evidence among the pioneer Christians. Furthermore, the *Letters* of the New Testament speaks of congregations nurtured in the faith amidst relentless temptations of apostasy and hypocrisy and confusion and conformity.

Subsequent events in the life of the church, especially its official acceptance by the emperor Constantine, and the institutional sophistication of the European churches, only modify this situation by complicating it.

There is simply no reason to presuppose that *anyone* will find the gospel, as such, likeable.

The categories of popularity or progress or effectiveness or success are impertinent to the gospel. The matter is signified forcefully by the text, *Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them.* (Romans 12:14) This is no adage prompted by sentimentality. It is a statement of the extraordinary relationship between Christians and the ruling principalities, by which Christians are authorized to recall political authority to the vocation of worship and thereby to reclaim dominion over creation for humanity. It

is a statement about the implication of the Lordship of Jesus Christ for the rulers of this age. To bless the powers that be, in the midst of persecution, exposes and confounds their blasphemous status both more cogently and more fearlessly than a curse.

In the *Book of Revelation*, the issue is expressed more severely and more straightforwardly than perhaps anywhere in the Bible. *Also (the beast) was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.* (Revelation 13:7) On the face of it, this is not an appealing or popular text. That may in itself be an explanation of why it has been so often ignored or even suppressed by commentators or why it has seldom been mentioned, much less commended, by preachers.

I have read this passage it seems a thousand times, and I admit that I am tempted to wish it were not there or to locate some pretext to dismiss it or gainsay it. I can find no way to rationalize the verse. Unlike some other passages in Revelation, it does not afford evasion or oversight because it is esoteric or enigmatic. It is a most unambiguous and matter-of-fact statement. It says what it says: during the present age, the Word of God allows ruling authority to wage war on the Christians and *defeat* them.

For the time being, in the era of the fall, until the consummation of history in the judgment of the Word of God, the beast knows success and indulges victory; the saints suffer aggression and know defeat. Surely the text mocks every effort — undertaken in the name of the Christian witness in this world — which is informed by calculations about effectiveness, progress, approval, acclaim, or any of the varieties of success. And that not only in circumstances where the Church openly imitates or emulates the way of the beast, but also where the calculation prior to action programs is more pretentious and claims foreknowledge of how a matter will be judged by the Word of God.

The churches and, within them, both social activists and private pietists, are virtually incorrigible — despite the admonition of Revelation 13:7 — in practicing some such deliberation before daring to witness. Where that be the situation, the professed saints succumb to the power of death by their profound skepticism in the efficacy of the resurrection and by their cynical dispute of the activity of judgment by the Word of God, by their anxiety about their

William Stringfellow is a theologian, social critic, author and attorney. This article is adapted from his new book, "Conscience and Obedience" (the politics of Romans 13 and Revelation 13 in light of the Second Coming).

own justification. So they — attempting vainly to forestall or obviate defeat — are defeated anyway, ignominiously.

Revelation 13:7 contains no melancholy message. It authorizes hope for the saints — and, through their vocation of advocacy, hope for the whole of creation — this hope is grounded in realistic expectations concerning the present age. Thus, the Church is enabled — as the first beneficiary of the resurrection — to confront the full and awesome militancy of the power of death incarnate in the ruling principalities in this world, nourishing patience for the judgment of the Word of God and, meanwhile, trusting nothing else at all.

The seemingly troublesome text about the defeat of the saints by the beast is, preeminently, a reference to the accessibility of the grace of the Word of God for living now. To mention the defeat of the saints means to know the abundance of grace. And that prompts no rejection of or withdrawal from the world as it is. On the contrary, it implies the most fearless and resilient involvement in this world.

Since the rubrics of success, power, or gain are impertinent to the gospel, the witness of the saints looks

foolish where it is most exemplary. One American political prisoner — Philip Berrigan — addressed that characterization of the defeat of the saints when he was sentenced upon conviction for attempting to dig a grave on the lawn of the White House in rebuke of the rule of the beast:

In pondering a few words for this occasion, I happened on Paul's first letter to the Church at Corinth . . . "We are fools on Christ's account." (1 Cor. 4:10). In a modest fashion, I have sought membership in this company of fools . . . Through over 39 months in prison, through long fasts and bouts of solitary confinement, through two indictments while in jail, I have been reckoned a fool, by pharaohs and friends alike . . .

Let no one find our foolishness puzzling. It is as simple as honoring the fifth commandment, and rejecting official legitimations of murder. It is obedience to the truth and compassion of Christ; or recognizing no enemy in the world . . .

It is as simple as respecting the planet as common property, as common gift and heritage. That is the "idiot" vision — that is the summons and task. For that, as Paul promised, one risks becoming the world's refuse, the scum of all. (1 Cor. 4:13) . . . The fools will never abandon hope, nor cease to live it.

This foolishness of the saints, this witness in the midst of defeat, is wrought in the relationship of justification and judgment. Nevertheless, one who knows justification to be a gift of the Word of God is not protected from the power of death. Yet the saint makes no concession to that power, while awaiting eagerly, patiently the vindication of the Word of God in the coming of Jesus Christ in judgment. ■

Continued from page 3

the Hispanic desk issue by the administration will be seen as an effort to mute "the scandal of the gospel", because it is an embarrassment to the effort to raise a large sum of money.

Christians know that the cost of discipleship is always high. True, it would be much safer to mount a ministry to Hispanics and others, which would make those to whom we minister more "accountable" to church executives. But such paternalism would vitiate the meaning of the gospel message.

The only success afforded those in this present age who profess the gospel is that of being faithful to the gospel, taking the risks which love always requires. And where that faithfulness leads is the real venture of the Church's mission. ■

Religious Rebuttal

A publication which deals with issues of religion, as does THE WITNESS, does not necessarily get nicer criticisms than the secular press, but sometimes the complaints are couched in a "religious" tone. For example the following, postmarked simply "Prospect Park, Pa.," was received in response to our sending a complimentary copy of our February issue on "Sexism:"



Coming up in THE WITNESS:

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Continued from page 2

and women occupied the place of power and influence.

Sexism surely existed there as well even though the word was not yet coined. I think an inaccurate idea is being suggested when the domination of men over women is pictured as having begun when man first dragged his lady by the hair into his cave.

Then I must warn that men only have a "relatively large musculature" in *this* culture. Certainly the Amazons were known for their physical prowess; the old Germanic ladies were 7 feet tall and their in-laws gave them swords and shields for a wedding gift. Today in Russia, where women are treated very much like men in every respect we find young athlete women growing up in sizes and shapes which remind us very much of men, small-hipped, flat-chested, muscular and very tall.

I think some of those generalities are also very much part of sexism, the kind which women must erase if we want to get rid of the stereotyped roles in which our Judeo-Christian culture has placed us.

Annette Jecker
West Milford, N.J.

Concerned With Analysis

At General Convention I had the privilege of being introduced to THE WITNESS. Among the reprints generously given to me on that occasion was Edward Joseph Holland's thought provoking monograph, "Look at Yourself, America!" Dr. Holland's attempt to subject American

history to analysis in terms of dialectical materialism seems to me to involve gross oversimplification. I am concerned with what appears to me as a forced fitting of reality to theory primarily because an oversimplified analysis can suggest an erroneous imperative. In particular I question that any specific socio-economic ideology, e.g. socialism as suggested by Holland, is prerequisite to social justice. (This doctrine is not only to be found as derivative of Dr. Holland's analysis, but also in the Church and Society study guide, introduced at the Convention).

It is not my intention to be negative. As a basis for an alternative program I would offer the principle that we Christians should be united in commitment to goals of achieving social justice in *specific* cases and causes; e.g., civil rights, peace, amnesty, the eradication of sexism.

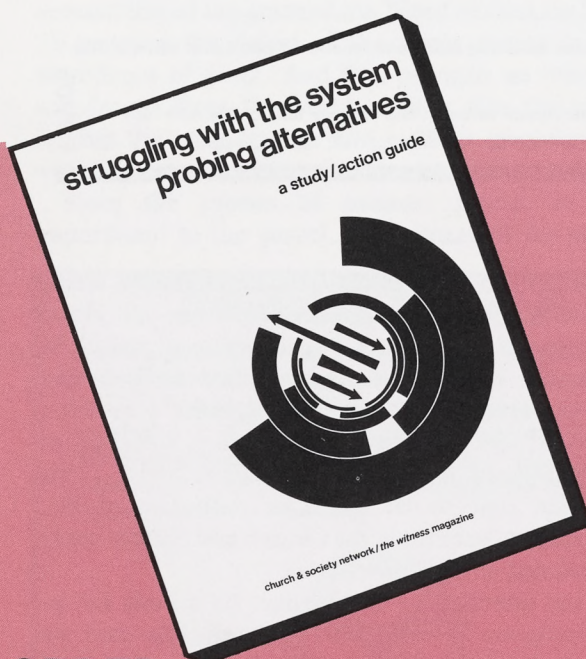
We must be committed to the decentralization of power and the maintenance of a viable balance of power among the many interacting elements in our society. (This plurality of empowered elements is, in fact more likely to be realized in a capitalist society than in a socialist one.) With this program, concrete progress can be made toward liberating oppressed people of our own society and of the rest of the world, in Christ's name, and we Christians can avoid the frustration of ideological differences among ourselves as we unite in this ministry.

M. R. V. Sahyun
St. Paul, Minn.

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