

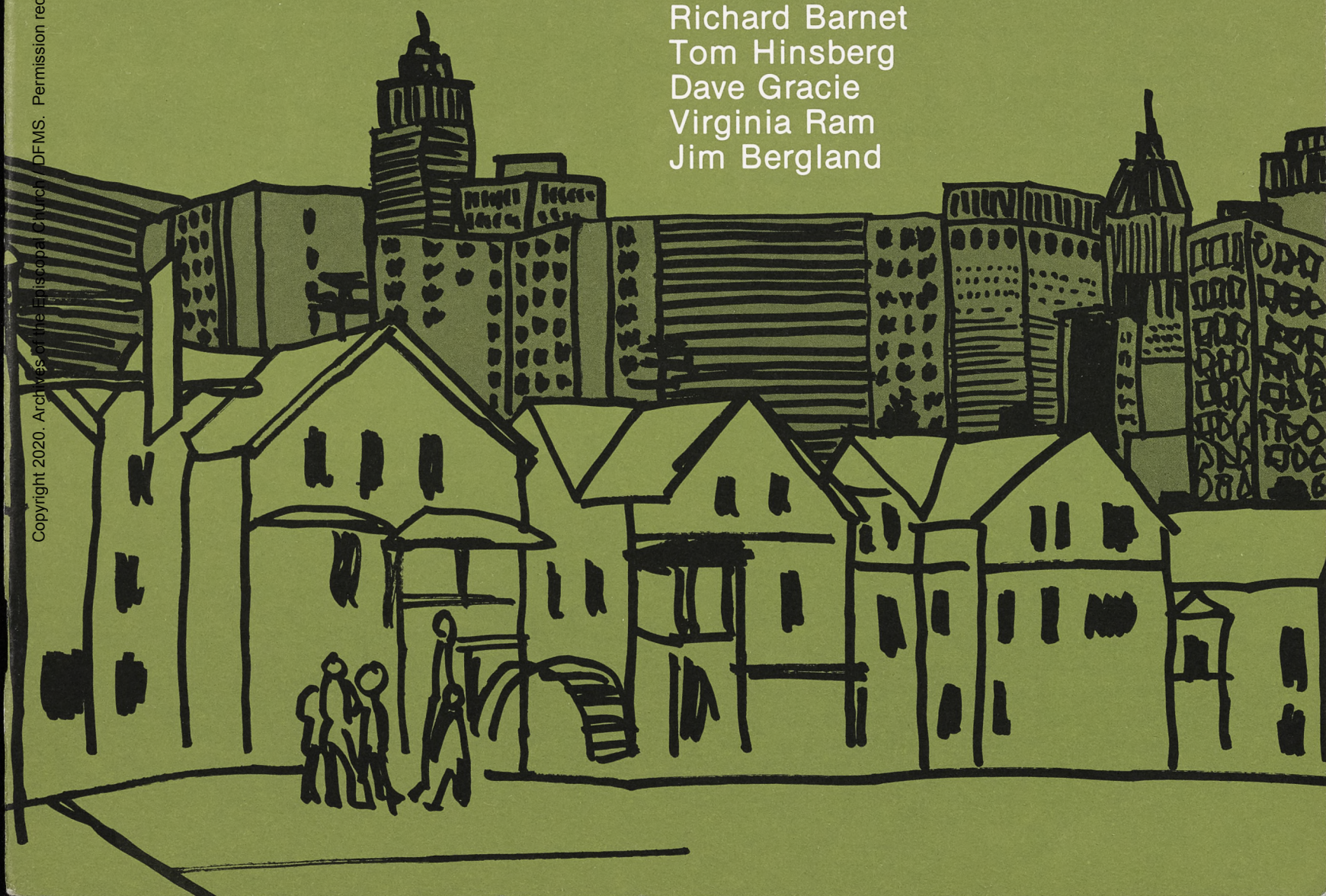
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THE WITNESS

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Problems of the Cities

Richard Barnet
Tom Hinsberg
Dave Gracie
Virginia Ram
Jim Bergland



Letters to the Editor

Behavior Irresponsible

Let us say it outright, the behavior of our administrative superiors and Executive Council in regard to the cases of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin was irresponsible. Perhaps this lack of responsiveness stemmed from naivete. Perhaps it was simple incompetence. Whatever the reasons, Bishops Allin and Wood missed a great opportunity for mission in the name of Christ.

But if they missed one so did we. Belatedly, the Executive Council (April 26-29) approved a policy on investigations which clarifies the *shared* responsibility of "senior corporate officers," legal council, and staff. Some of us were under the impression that similar guidelines had been established in the '60s. We do know for fact that this was not the first visit by federal investigators to "815 Second Avenue." Still, we muffed a great chance. At least "we" — in some representative way through Executive Council and through the bishops we have elected — failed to see *through* to God's judgment upon our household of faith.

"*The Cross is above the flag*" our bishops once wrote to us (1933). How like this branch of our Anglican household once more in our mission of reconciliation to follow the flag rather than walk before it. How sorry a scene when we relate as Christians to *any* nation-state on a level of practical convenience. How we are revealed to be conforming to human authority rather than being transformed by Our Lord the Spirit.

The Partners in Mission report that just came out of Louisville says in part:

"Episcopalians, along with all God's people, must be seen to stand for justice and reconciliation, though it may call for sacrifice, and must concern themselves in the world with hunger, human rights, and inequality of opportunities among nations . . . We see a need for a total vision undergirded by Biblical faith and Christian experience to enable the Church to take initiatives and anticipate rather than merely react to events and cultural change."

Isn't this, then, the point? The Gospel of Jesus calls us to embrace his cause as our own. Clearly his cause is the reign of God in our lives now. In other words: We have by God's saving activity become, for better and sometimes for worse,

part of God's mission in the world. We are the message — not all of it, but always a part of it. When one part of the Household denies or blocks the message, all of us grieve.

What we do with that grief can lead us more deeply into the way of the Cross as the way of life and peace.

Thomas Lee Hayes, Chairman
Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Support Position

We would like to express our support of your position on Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin. The articles in your magazine were excellent. We are proud that we know both of these courageous women personally. We have initiated in our area— Colorado and New Mexico— a Grand Jury awareness committee, to inform residents of the abuses, intimidation, and harassment of these two sisters, and now of our brother, Pedro Archuleta. We believe that these three are paying a high price for not cooperating with Grand Juries, and that the system should be exposed.

Priscilla Falcon
Alamosa Committee to Stop
the Grand Jury
Alamosa, Colo.

Corps of Trained Elites?

With reference to Richard Shaull's seminary critique (June WITNESS), yes, here in Princeton we have been sucked into a process in which our faith as vocation is rapidly being reduced to a scramble for professional skills. We are being turned into a corp of trained elites. The professional priesthood is the only group admitted into the church's holy of holies, and this institution has become our port of entry through the sacred veil.

Was it not the vocational orientation of the Christian faith that brought us to seminary? Why then have we been so easily regimented into a technical program for training professionals? Why is it that we have allowed our quest for a fuller understanding of our faith and calling to be parceled up into 24 different studies, many of which are required and specified as to subject matter and content? Why have we allowed theology as a vocation to be reduced to a demonstration of our ability to grasp and master a body of material a high priest has decided is important? Why have we not resisted a field work program that sets us up as para-professionals who are to use the churches as training grounds to show us what skills we still need to perfect? Why

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THE WITNESS

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Need for an Urban Theology Robert L. DeWitt

What has theology to do with the urban plight? A great deal. "*To see life clearly and to see it whole*" is the role and function of theology. Apart from such perspective, such vision, the people perish.

Consider the urban crisis. It is a cacophany of strident issues, each seemingly insoluble: fiscal bankruptcy, a shrinking tax base with rising taxes, public education producing functional illiterates, low productivity of municipal workers coupled with the rising demands of their unions, the flight of the white middle-class to the suburbs, the flight of industry to cheaper labor — the inventory is almost endless.

Given this urban dilemma, two reactions of Christians are dangerously damaging.

The first is to pass by on the other side, viewing the crisis as no proper concern of the church — a reaction condemned in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Yet this response is a perennial visitor to the human scene, and raises its voice recurrently within the church itself. It is a distortion of the Christian view, trying to keep an incarnational faith spuriously "spiritual." Jesus Christ, who used food and drink as the sacraments of his life, who healed the sick, cured the lame, and raised the dead, cannot lightly regard the distress of the cities where his people dwell.

The posture of indifference also manifests the self-righteousness of the pharisees. It callously seeks to fix the blame for urban ills on city officials, teachers, parents, students, firemen, police. This censorious fingershaking also has a long history. It is the lurking heresy which, generation after generation, seeks to associate illness with sin, seeing it as God's punishment of the waywardness of people.

The second damaging reaction to the urban crisis is that precisely of *not* seeing life clearly, nor whole.

This reaction results from missing the inter-relatedness of the parts of society, perceiving them rather as entities sufficient unto themselves. "If only parents would create a better home life for their children . . ." (as though they were not trying!); "If only teachers were more dedicated . . ." (they were trained as teachers, not as custodians); "If only municipal workers didn't keep asking for more money . . ." (but more money is being taken *from* them by the rising cost of living) . . . and so on.

St. Paul's description of the relatedness of all members of the body to each other can be seen as a parable of the urban crisis: If the leg becomes swollen because of poor circulation we do not condemn the leg, but we look for the cause of the poor circulation. Because if the leg suffer from poor circulation, let the lungs beware, and the head, and the heart.

Intelligent people are wary of simple solutions to complex problems, and rightly so. But it is clear that we need to see the urban crisis theologically; that is, in its entirety, holistically, as God sees it. And with proper Christian humility to see that we are all responsible, that the dynamics of the life of the human family — the systems whereby the necessities of life are produced and distributed — are the "poor circulation" which has accounted for the illness of our urban sisters and brothers and, if uncorrected, will by contagion afflict us all.

Such an approach will require doing many things differently. And abandoning, therefore, the American dogma that "we already have the best system." That system has *produced* our current urban dilemma, and that dogma reflects, at best, a fatalistic attitude. Hope for the forlorn cannot be placed in a forlorn hope. But hope can be placed in a God who cares for his people. And there is hope if people believe in that kind of God, and work to bring about a more humane social system. ■

For Whom the Economy Toils

by Richard Barnet

Richard Barnet, director of the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C., was invited to do a systemic analysis of the U.S. economy by a group of 20 urban Episcopal bishops who met in Chicago recently. The following is excerpted from his presentation.

Today it is easy to give a thumbnail sketch of any large city, even though one might never have visited there, for all major urban centers have the same basic characteristics of decay.

Unemployment, lack of services, underutilization of people, the breakdown of community (a term frequently used in the '60s as a synonym for suburb, to which it bears little relation), child abuse, despair—these are the danger signals which merit a serious analysis of our society over the past 30 years.

Primarily, urban centers should be understood as they relate to the national and to the international economy. It does little good to see big city problems as separate entities—a race problem here, a traffic problem there, pollution here, etc. The crisis of our national economy is profound and structural.

We tend to think of this economy as something which has good times and bad times, and from which there is eventually a recovery from the bad times. Over a short span, that is true. Viewed from a somewhat longer perspective, however, say, back to the near collapse of our economic system in 1929, we begin to see that some of the problems about which we have recently become increasingly aware have deep roots.

The New Deal, which many think of as the instrumentality which solved our economic problems of the late '20s and early '30s, in fact left a much more ambiguous legacy. In 1937, there was a serious recurrence of the depression and when the U.S. entered World War II, millions were unemployed.

The economy did not begin to respond in a vigorous way until the huge infusion of government funds into the war during 1939-45. This "military economy" into which the government is still pumping some \$50-\$60 billion each year has been the mainstay of the peculiar prosperity we have enjoyed as a nation. I say *peculiar prosperity* because, while it has produced

a greater profusion of goods per capita than any other society in history, it rests on myths which hide grave injustice.

One of these myths is that the engine of our prosperity is debt: The more we owe, the more we grow. During the years of the New Deal and the post war boom, the notion that we were saddling the next generation with the bills of that time was considered "reactionary." So we have arrived at a situation where a couple of years ago, the average American making \$11,000 a year owed more than \$2,000 in consumer debts exclusive of what he owed on his house.

Corporations in 1973 held \$2 in cash for every \$10 in current liability. But the credit explosion (more than 60 million people have either American Express or Bank Americards) and the notion that debt was a way one could permanently finance prosperity has run into real trouble. The new generation of reactors to that kind of liberal conventional wisdom say that what it is doing is buying inflation and a great deal of trouble for the next generation.

The second myth that sustains a peculiar prosperity is that the quality of growth is not important. Growth is inevitable, says this myth, and the creed of the corporation and society is "grow or die." The crucial question is whether the quantity of goods and services can be continually increased. So the measuring rod of progress becomes the Gross National Product, the sum total of goods and services. Here is where the military budget—now over \$100 billion—comes in. (The earlier figure of \$50 billion was the amount that the Pentagon can put into the economy through procurement; it does not include salaries for the armed forces, military bureaucrats, etc.)

In the late '40s and early '50s, conservatives who raised questions about military spending said that it would eventually bankrupt society if not controlled. Some of

Eisenhower's advisers honestly believed that the secret weapon of the Soviet Union was to trick us into an endless arms race wherein we would bankrupt ourselves. During much of this post-war period, about 80¢ of the tax dollar was going to the military. Today it is less than that but well over 50¢, and we are on the threshold of a major new escalation in which, conservatively \$100 billion or \$150 billion in new weapons systems will be programmed through the 1980s if projected programs go through.

But sparking economic growth through military production was simply part of a more general notion regarding stimulation of the economy; namely, that the quality of goods was not significant. What was important was quantity.

The issue of relating product to need or even developing the notion of need was not part of the way in which the economy functioned. Rather, we operated on the notion of what we called consumer sovereignty. That which consumers wanted necessarily determined the need.

This theory works rather well under ideal conditions of capitalism. And indeed, if we had a capitalist economy in the classical sense, there might be much to be said for it.

The problem, of course, and this represents the third myth, is that what we called and continue to call the free enterprise system is really a marriage of big business and big government operating under fundamentally different sets of principles than the system Adam Smith talked about. We have witnessed a period of enormous concentration of economic power in the hands of a smaller and smaller number of economic decision makers. Adam Smith's prediction of the "magic of the market" and his whole concept of market was extraordinary but it doesn't operate if producers stop competing. And that is precisely what has happened.

What we've seen is a process of perpetual merger. Between 1953 and 1968, there were over 14,000 mergers in manufacturing corporations in the U.S. in which the acquiring corporations, usually the bigger corporations, obtained \$66 billion in assets. Some 60% of these mergers took place in 1965-68.

This means that in every major area of our economy we have a situation which economists call oligopoly; that is, the market is controlled by three to five major firms.

In 1963, the year of the last major comprehensive study of concentration, the top four corporations were listed as controlling 99% of the market in automobiles; 96% in aluminum; 93% in steam engine turbines; 80% in cigarettes; 78% in copper; 58% in TV, and so forth. In other words, firms do not compete over prices. The day after General Motors announces a price increase, Ford and Chrysler follow suit. What firms do compete on primarily is expanding the market, with heavy emphasis on advertising. They try to develop an "aura" about the product to increase sales. As a result, advertising costs are substantial. In the soap industry, for instance, advertising accounts for at least 10% of the price of the product, — passed on to the consumer — who has to pay the cost of his or her own seduction!

On the other hand, a 1971 study by the Federal Trade Commission showed that where the top firms controlled only 40% or less of the market, there is increased competition and prices fall 25% or more.

One of the subsidiary myths of the free enterprise system is that government regulations keep our large corporations from getting out of line and maintain competition— the so-called anti-trust laws. It turns out upon examination that while these laws were written with a ferocity which would intimidate almost anyone reading them, they are, in fact enforced with a great deal of charity. Of all the business mergers between 1950-67 only 199 were challenged. Almost half of these were small firms of less than \$100 million in sales. The government won only 90 cases, and in only 48 out of 14,000 mergers during that period was any company required to divest itself of anything.

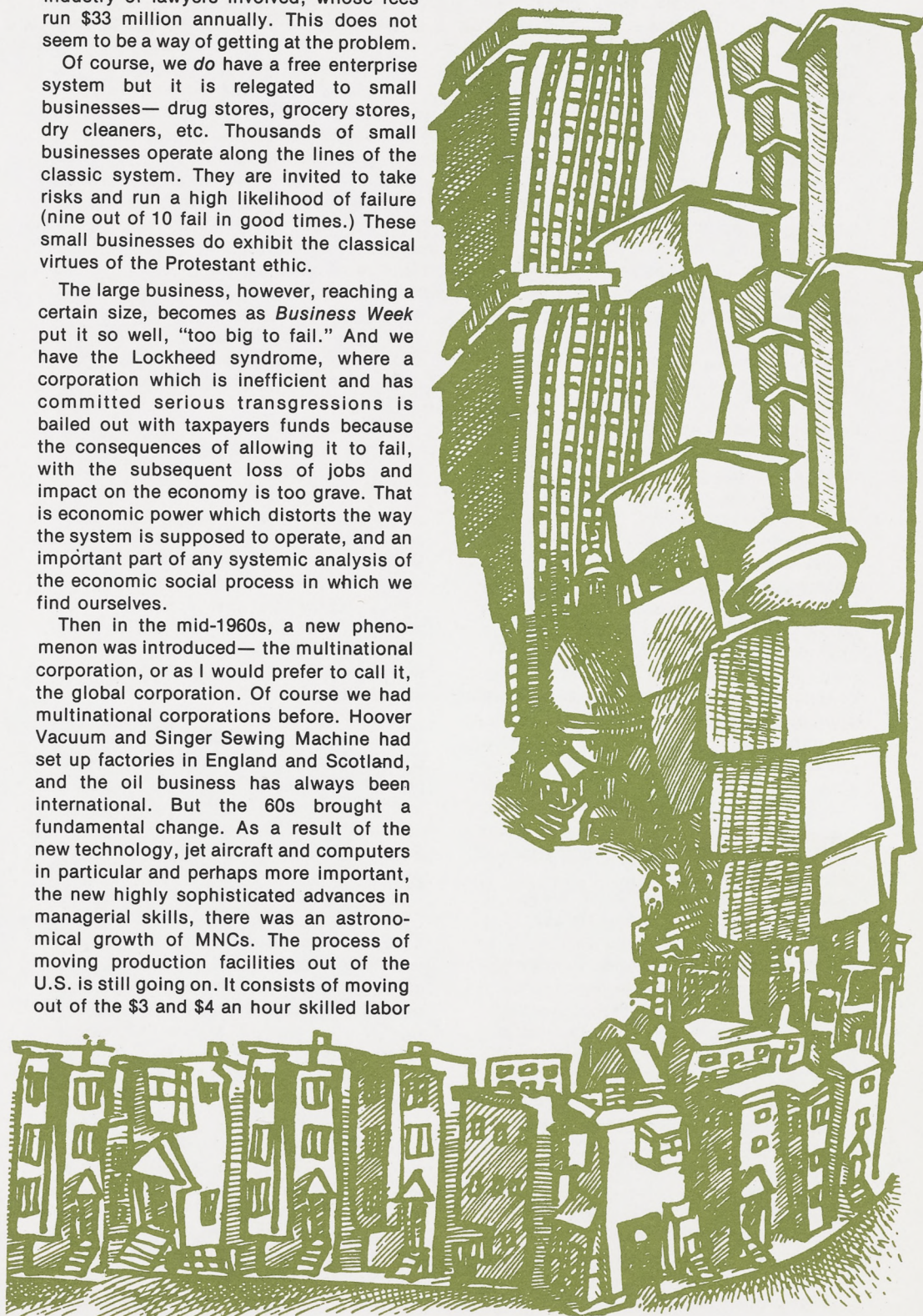
As another example, it is estimated that the current case against IBM will take some 15 years to resolve, with an entire

industry of lawyers involved, whose fees run \$33 million annually. This does not seem to be a way of getting at the problem.

Of course, we *do* have a free enterprise system but it is relegated to small businesses— drug stores, grocery stores, dry cleaners, etc. Thousands of small businesses operate along the lines of the classic system. They are invited to take risks and run a high likelihood of failure (nine out of 10 fail in good times.) These small businesses do exhibit the classical virtues of the Protestant ethic.

The large business, however, reaching a certain size, becomes as *Business Week* put it so well, "too big to fail." And we have the Lockheed syndrome, where a corporation which is inefficient and has committed serious transgressions is bailed out with taxpayers funds because the consequences of allowing it to fail, with the subsequent loss of jobs and impact on the economy is too grave. That is economic power which distorts the way the system is supposed to operate, and an important part of any systemic analysis of the economic social process in which we find ourselves.

Then in the mid-1960s, a new phenomenon was introduced— the multinational corporation, or as I would prefer to call it, the global corporation. Of course we had multinational corporations before. Hoover Vacuum and Singer Sewing Machine had set up factories in England and Scotland, and the oil business has always been international. But the 60s brought a fundamental change. As a result of the new technology, jet aircraft and computers in particular and perhaps more important, the new highly sophisticated advances in managerial skills, there was an astronomical growth of MNCs. The process of moving production facilities out of the U.S. is still going on. It consists of moving out of the \$3 and \$4 an hour skilled labor



areas such as Massachusetts, one of the early points of exodus— to the 30¢ an hour, \$1 a day labor pools in Taiwan, Singapore, Haiti, Mexico, etc. around the world. And what one sees on a global map is a shift of the world's production systems downward— into the southern hemisphere.

Relocation is a matter of company policy; the public is not involved, but the community suffers the social consequences of the move.

The mobility of companies is set against the immobility of the community. It is easy to move capital from one company or one bank to another, but not so jobs and people. This has increasingly become a major cause of urban poverty.

And it is not only the fact that the companies do move out. The mere *threat* of moving out has changed the power relations of this country.

It is well to reexamine another myth here— the social axiom that we have a system in which there is a balance of power between business and labor and government. The rise of organized labor during the 1930s did much to reverse unfavorable income trends and check the growing power of business. We're beginning to see a reversal of that. The mobility of business or the threatening of a move cripples labor's basic weapon, the strike. In some cases today unions are even negotiating wage reductions to keep a plant in the community, with the result that over the last four years there has been a decline in real wages of workers of about 8.7%, according to the Department of Labor.

Another comfortable myth we've all grown up with is the myth of equality. The moral basis of our system is that it is based on equality of opportunity. The justification of some having a lot of money, in theory at least, is that everybody has an equal crack at it and our laws and mores are all designed to get everybody to an equal position at the starting line.

Nobody expects *actual* equality but the theory is that the system makes it possible to count on the *trends* moving toward equality. And indeed, in the early period of this century, such trends were favorable. Some argue it was the New Deal. Others, that the real social force moving this society towards egalitarianism in this century was the war.

Extraordinary changes in standards of living took place for the bottom third of the

country during World War II. What has happened since the '70s, according to a 1972 library of Congress study, is a slow persistent trend toward inequality.

I believe that the impact of the corporation on the city and the impact of these major trends should be looked at with great seriousness. When we view pressing needs— low income housing, adequate mass transportation, delivery of health services beyond a small strata of society— we see that the major corporations have been unable to reconcile the production of these goods and services with the basic corporate goal— profits. There is a fundamental conflict between what society needs and the kinds of goods and services that produce the best balance sheet.

It is not possible for any single corporation to reverse this trend, because of the nature of the competition. When I said that oligopolies don't compete on price I did not mean to suggest they don't compete. They compete fiercely— for shares in the market, and in ways that put enormous pressures on companies not only to show the best possible annual statement but the best possible quarterly statement. The last thing they can think about is what their city is going to look like in five years.

What it comes down to is whether the ground rules around which they operate will be changed. As long as the myth persists that they are simply entrepreneurs in the tradition of Adam Smith and the corner drug store, they are going to stay as they are now— the only real social planners in our society, making profit without regard to social consequences.

We have been through a period where we have assumed that all of the dislocations, all of the inequities of our society were essential to a continuing process of growth. The basic notion of Keynesianism was that as the pie grows, it becomes possible for a better distribution to the poor and to those who are losers in the race, who are not as "productive" as the winners.

Now we are moving from the age of Keynes to the age of Milton Friedman. More people are talking about limits. We have seen in the United States and in the Western world in general the decline of productivity, the inability to control inflation and at the same time provide social services which have come to be the basis of expectations of the people. We are in

the process of abolishing the "free lunch" that Friedman likes to talk about— the transfer of payments in the form of social security, welfare, unemployment, health benefits, benefits to the old and sick— simply dismissing them as luxuries which the system cannot afford to sustain.

The underemployment problem is also greatly increasing, as manifested in U.S. university graduates. More and more people are becoming "honorary members of the middle class." They have been reared on a high set of expectations, received extraordinary training, and can find nothing to do to put their gifts and skills to work.

Today the watchword around the world has become "austerity." It is interesting to hear it from President Carter. The general feeling is one of tightening up, and in that tightening up the impulse, of course, is to tighten up on the poor and those who don't produce.

The fundamental question is: Who is the economy for?

We have no ready made theologies that can help us in this area. This is an entirely new situation and it is very unclear as to which directions institutions can take to deal with the crisis of the city and the majority of the people in this country.

One thing is clear. We are in the middle of a real examination of what democracy is about. Our economic system and our political system are out of "synch," and to many corporations the implication is clear: The political system will have to adapt to the economic system.

I suggest it has to be the other way around. Before there was General Motors there was a Constitution, and I'd rather start with some of the political and moral values of our society and examine our economic institutions to see whether they can be made compatible to those values. The alternative is to accept what has been presented to us as the survival of the fittest ethic, the lifeboat ethic, triage, etc. in which we are prepared literally to count out of our streamlined economic system a majority of the people of the world.

The final quarter of this century is going to be less stable than the last, and we are going to have to recognize that the price of maintaining life in the United States is the redistribution of economic and political power. We are either going to have more democracy in the next quarter— or much, much less. ■

Tale of All Cities

Detroit: Ashes or Hope?

by Thomas F. Hinsberg

Speramus resurget meliora cineribus. (We hope that it will rise better from the ashes).

— Motto: City of Detroit

The motto of the City of Detroit dates from 1805, when Detroit was destroyed by fire. It *did* arise better from the fire of 1805. Its rebirth from the fires of 1967 and the depression of 1975 and 1976 is still awaited and hoped for by those of us who call Detroit our home.

I am one of those people. I was born here, expect to live and die here. My wife and I recently purchased a house on the east side. As we were looking for a home we kept saying that we wanted something "*for the rest of our lives.*" We found an excellent older home which could not be duplicated in the suburbs for twice the price.

That house embodies the city for us. It has interesting nooks and crannies. It manifests the labor of loving craftsmen and an architect who believed in arches, rough plaster, ceramic tile, wrought iron. It brings together the tradition of Europe and the skill of modern technology.

Detroit is like that with its widely diversified ethnic population, its classical architecture standing side by side with the new Renaissance Center, the Gas Building, the new fountain in the riverfront plaza. The craftsmen of bygone days who did the carving, wood working, tile setting in the older buildings have almost disappeared from the scene, victims of Detroit's contribution to manufacturing—the assembly line. Having broken down the complex job of assembling an automobile to routinized parts, the skills of the craftsmen have become unmarketable and unneeded, not only in automobile production but in most other areas of our society — a disappointing fallout of "*progress.*"

As I drive home each evening I pass through vacant land which has been turned into small vegetable plots. I glance at burned out homes still reflecting amid the charred ruins, traces of their past beauty. Many of the homes which are still occupied show signs of decay.

The factories on Vernor Street are humming again but, early morning when the word has gone out, hundreds line

up at the employment office searching for a few jobs. The Kercheval office of the Department of Social Services is a grim reminder that for so many of these people there are no jobs now or in the foreseeable future.

There is death all about. The title "*murder capital*" while it is not fairly bestowed has enough truth to it to be believable. Crimes of all sorts are part of the air we breathe in the city.

While many of the crimes are violent, violence is not confined to the street crimes. Violence has first been done to these violent offenders of the law and public tranquility. There is no word other than violence for a situation in which the right to a decent job has been denied to between 10 and 15% of the employable citizens of Detroit. It is violent that close to 50% of our young people between the ages of 19 and 25 are unable to find work. It is violent that our school system is unable or unwilling properly to educate the city's young people. It is violent that welfare regulations require the unemployed or underemployed male to be out of the household so that his children can eat.

With this violence all about is it any wonder that the young people have learned to react to their condition in violent ways? They have been well schooled by the institutional violence in which they have been forced to grow up. They may not have learned well from their formal education, but they have learned too well from the experience of how society has treated them.

The economic problems of our industries and our city have had their effect on government services. It is an anomaly of our governmental plan that at the time intervention of government for the welfare of the citizenry is most needed the government itself is poor. The not too benign neglect of the major cities during the Nixon-Ford administrations has severely limited what government can do. Those least able to bear the burden of the depression have been the first to have their share of governmental benefits cut. The Department of Social Service's budget is the favorite target of demagogic politicians and comfortable citizens. False myths about huge numbers of welfare cheats have received easy credence by the citizenry. Millions of dollars have been spent by governmental agencies to discover that less than 1% of the people on welfare are cheats.

Thomas F. Hinsberg is Deputy Director of the Human Rights Department, City of Detroit. He is a former staff member of the Detroit Industrial Mission and currently serves on the Board of Directors.

Enough of the signs of death. We can look forward either to final interment or to resurrection. Do we have reason to look beyond the grave to a new morning, new life? This article is dedicated to those who hope.

In what can we base our hope? Traditional European theology would urge us to place our hope in the God transcendent and in Him alone. But a new current in theology urges us to seek for and to find God active in history, struggling on the side of the poor as they seek liberation. If this is where God is to be found, in the struggle for new life, then God is certainly present in Detroit. But we must look for signs, for indications that there is basis for the hope which is in us lest it become merely wishful thinking.

As one sign, some would point to the Renaissance Center, which even bears the name of resurrection — rebirth. It is certainly a sign of something new and alive situated as it is on the edge of the water, the symbol of rebirth, the instrument of baptism into the death and resurrection of Jesus. Will the tallest hotel in the world flanked by smaller office towers become a mountain of glory or a tower of Babel?

The hope of the investors and of the city administration is that it will indeed be a source of new life for downtown, generating new jobs and reaching out to the rest of the district to fill other office buildings with auxiliary services and related industries and professions. The proposed mass transit plan, the downtown-people-mover, the waterfront plaza, the string of waterfront parks are all predicated on the hope that rebirth will take place. But at this moment the Renaissance Place stands only as a symbol, although an awe-inspiring symbol, of hope.

More importantly, what does this symbol mean to the many impoverished and disillusioned citizens of the great city? Even if the enterprise succeeds and downtown receives a new burst of life this may have very little effect on the people who live at Kercheval and St. Jean, in the Jefferson-Chalmers area or even in northeast or northwest Detroit.

The problems of these people, the problems of the school system, the social service system, the health care system, the police and recreation system which service them are too complex to be solved by a single project.

I was in a discussion recently about the crime problem. One of the participants offered as a solution the strengthening of the family and the schools. I took objection to this as being too simplistic.

The schools and the family are dependent institutions critically affected by other more basic institutions. At the danger of also being too simplistic, I would affirm that there



can be no solution to the other problems of Detroit without a serious change in the economic base and philosophy which dominates this city and, in a real way, the nation.

As an example let me take my friend's suggestion that the solution to the crime problem is to be found in the strengthening of family life. The majority of young people who get into trouble with the law come from single-parent homes headed by the mother. Even in the homes in which there are two parents there is evidence of deterioration of parental authority, caring, and control.

A critical element in the deterioration of family life is the belief fostered by the economic institutions and philosophy of this nation that personal identity and dignity depend upon holding an income-producing job. In the poor family, the male head believing this myth finds himself unable to provide, loses his self-esteem, and leaves or resorts to deviant behavior. In the affluent family of the professional an inordinate amount of time is demanded and given to the job, making his presence and influence minimal.

In addition, the amount of advertising to which the family and the young are exposed through the medium of

television is astronomical. Before television, moral leaders were warning of the dangers of materialism and materialistic value systems in our society. The danger is present now in a new and virulent way. One can easily turn the pages of a newspaper and ignore the ads. It is much more difficult to turn off the advertising on TV, which has a subliminal effect even when we divert our attention.

One of the major causes of youthful crime in our city is the violence of television advertising which tells the young person that he or she is what he or she owns. If he or she does not own the products the screen portrays then he or she is nobody. If this young person is poor there is no way he or she can expect to get those products legitimately—no way he or she can become somebody. Those ads are produced so that companies can sell a product and make a profit.

Here, then, is the dilemma. As long as the economic institutions of our society maintain as their goal the making of a profit and use the ordinary means at their disposal to sell their products they will be contributing to the skewing of the values of society. This skewing results in the breakdown of the family and the increase of crime. As long as these economic institutions cannot assure that everybody that they reach can buy their products, they are increasing dissatisfaction and alienation. If Detroit is to again become a safe and peaceful place in which to live some solution must be found.

Some solutions offered are greater police protection, recreation programs, family counselling. But all of these and others get only to the symptoms, not the causes. Minimally a way must be found to assure that every one who wishes and is able to work will be provided with the opportunity, with a decent family wage. There is certainly enough work to do, if not in the factories then in the streets, the neighborhoods, the professions, social services.

Values at Stake

The cost of failing to provide such jobs is much higher than the cost of the jobs themselves. We are spending billions for new jails, judges, police, security systems many of which would not be necessary in such volume if jobs were provided. We are dealing with priorities and values.

But where is the hope in all of this? Solutions seem to be more and more remote. It is as though we are in a maze. We move toward an exit and find it blocked by another obstacle. Maybe there is no exit.

But there is, if we have the will. My hope lies in the conviction that all the elements of a solution to Detroit's problems are in existence. They must, however, be brought together. This requires the conviction on the part of diverse

numbers of people that Detroit is worth saving, that its people are important enough for the effort and sacrifice required. It requires a commitment to long-range planning and short-range implementation.

Let us take as another example the much publicized gang problem and the associated criminal activity of young Blacks in Detroit, especially on the east side.

We have for the most part, young males who have adopted uniforms for purposes of identification. They are unemployed and have despaired of getting jobs. Their fund raising activities are what is classified as criminal activity—robbing stores, stealing from people younger and older than themselves. Their actions sometimes result in violence and even death to their victims. They have cleverly developed game plans and strategies for their operations. They have leaders and a large number of followers. One becomes a leader by doing the things which are valued in the gang.

Absent the criminal activity, the above description could be applied to a football team or a fraternity or even the Boy Scouts.

These young people are seeking what all human beings seek, an identity; and they are doing it in the accepted human way by identification with a group which shares their values and offers them the chance to be somebody. The extra ingredient is that they are poor and they have despaired of acquiring the accouterments of the American male through the lawful method of getting a job and earning the money to buy clothes, a car, a home. The system is not working for them and they know it.

The few hardened criminals must be removed from the gangs. This requires police action, speedy, fair and firm justice by the prosecutor and the courts.

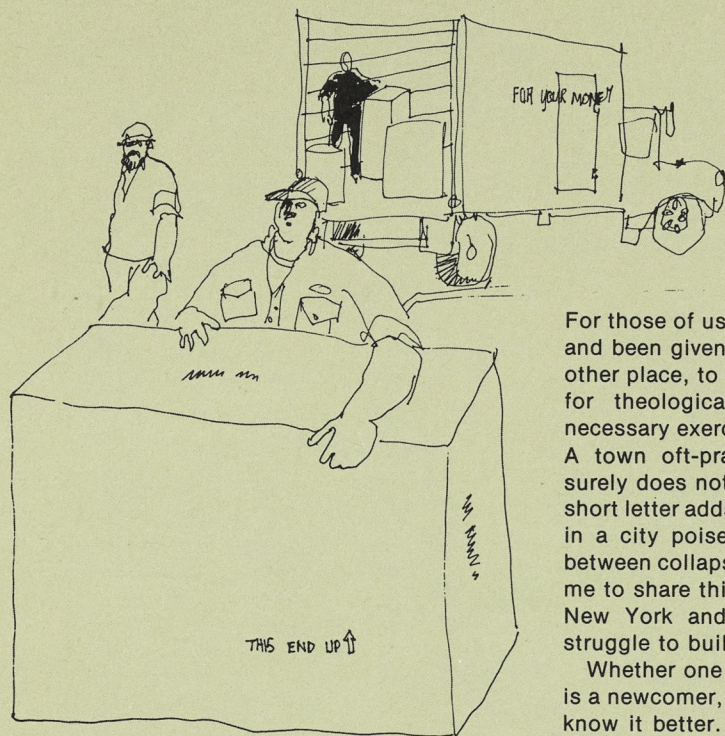
Now we come to a choice. Business and government interests have to come together and decide where best to spend their money — on increased security forces, larger prisons and more judges, or on providing jobs. The money will be spent one way or the other. Society cannot forever endure the kind of lawlessness that has occurred in this city in the past few years. Ultimately, and even now, the choice must be made between a police state, martial law or jobs for all who want them. The objections are raised, our stockholders will not stand for this, or we are so automated that there are no more jobs.

If, as some of its proponents say, ours is not the best system possible but the best that has yet been invented then the time for delivery is now. Any institution in a human society must face the ultimate test — Is it capable of

Continued on page 15

How to Find the Real New York

From Union Seminary in New York comes this "Student," by Jim Bergland, professor of practical theology, a newcomer, written by one who knows and loves the many facets of humanity of New York, seeing it not as a political problems, but as a setting for human drama.



Deliveries

For those of us who have lived here longer and been given more life here than in any other place, to extol this city's advantages for theological inquiry seems an unnecessary exercise in stating the obvious. A town oft-praised by famous persons surely does not need the faint praise this short letter adds. But your coming to study in a city poised again on the threshold between collapse and renaissance prompts me to share this non-elitist affirmation of New York and to welcome you to the struggle to build a new kind of city.

Whether one has lived here for years or is a newcomer, New York challenges us to know it better. To do this takes a sturdy measure of discipline since the city, as in a classic friendship, does not promiscuously reveal its inner mysteries. Your first step will be to abandon ways of thinking that restrict evidence in order to protect clear and distinct ideas.

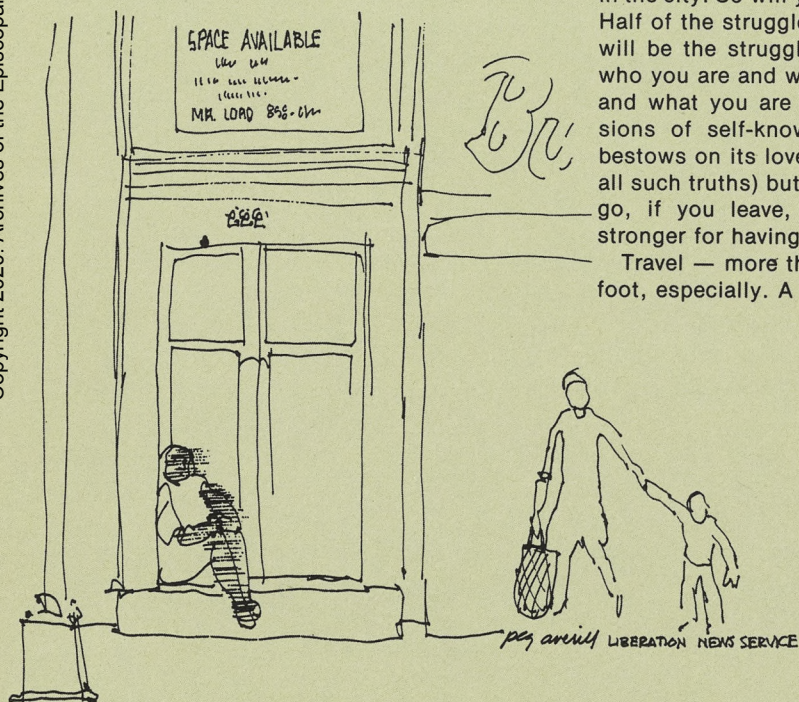
Your socio-economic class will indelibly shape the way you see/feel/know and live in the city. So will your race, sex, and age. Half of the struggle to live and grow here will be the struggle to know yourself — who you are and where you've come from and what you are becoming. The dimensions of self-knowledge that this town bestows on its lovers are bittersweet (like all such truths) but durable. Wherever you go, if you leave, you'll be clearer and stronger for having been here.

Travel — more than in most towns. On foot, especially. A reasonable goal would

be to visit each of the five boroughs and to be able to use the whole subway and bus system as soon as possible. There are many kinds of space to explore — social, architectural, personal — and the key is being able to move around. Learn to use the system.

Some wonders of this city can only be properly enjoyed if you're by yourself. That's what anonymity is partly about. But most of New York can't be experienced alone. The best discernment is social. If you're in love and your lover is with you, so much the better: You'll see and feel and know three times as much. Dialogue with a companion will clarify your observations.

Your visits to different parts of the city will need to continue for three or four years because there are several layers of history in each of the boroughs and hundreds of sectors: The "worlds" of stores, museums, parks, restaurants, theaters, institutions, landmark buildings, businesses and banks. A good guidebook (Michellin, Cook, *New York on \$10 a Day*) is indispensable, as if you were visiting Mexico City or Paris for the first time. Beyond the guidebook, spend some Saturday mornings in September in libraries, reading the city's history: Its geology, geography, and



Stoop sitting

Shopping



street singer

New York



es this "Memo to an Entering Theological of practical theology. As a guide to a d loves the city, it offers some clues to the seeing it not as a complex of economic and human opportunity.

climatology; its economic, cultural, literary, and political past. Urban pluralism remains confusing and opaque unless one works to develop a sense of a town's history.

You'll find a variety of crazy-people loose on our streets. Some may repulse or even frighten you; others' pathos may break your heart. Some are "that way" all the time; others merely have bad days. As a passerby, you probably won't be able to relate to them in any real way, but with as much sophisticated naivete as you can muster, pay attention to them. The images and languages of unreason in our city ought not be ignored, exiled, or degraded. They are part and parcel of the human situation, and the crazies you meet on the subway have no monopoly on unusual behavior.

Sometime in October, friends from out of town will want to come and visit you and the city. Normally, they'll have one of three ways of looking down their noses here:

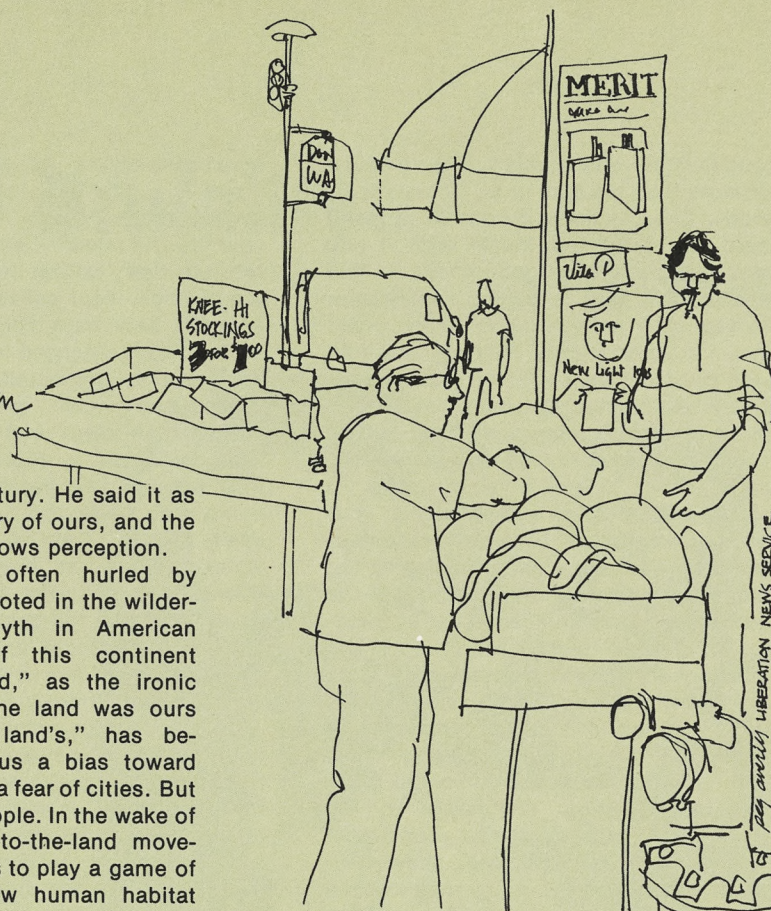
- The first reflects a traditional ambivalence about life in cities: they're exciting, but immoral. This critique of urban life has been made since the earliest days of Mohenjodaro by folks who by temperament or deliberate malice can see only the city's decadence and ignore its power to open and to free, to humanize and to civilize. My advice is that you ask such friends to read Rousseau's criticisms

Shopping for a real bargain

of Paris in the 17th century. He said it as well as any contemporary of ours, and the historical distance mellows perception.

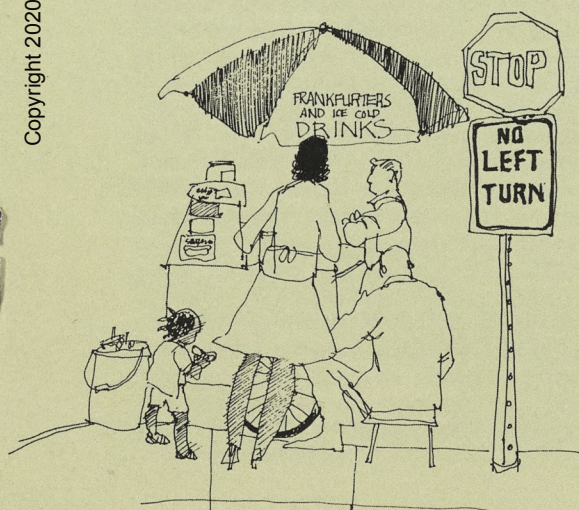
- A second barb often hurled by short-term visitors is rooted in the wilderness/promised-land myth in American life. The vastness of this continent "waiting to be claimed," as the ironic phrase from Frost, "The land was ours before we were the land's," has bequeathed to most of us a bias toward agrarian mysticism and a fear of cities. But we are now an urban people. In the wake of the most recent back-to-the-land movement invite your visitors to play a game of fantasy: Imagine a new human habitat here, and the steps needed to build it.

- The third way some visitors express their anti-city sentiment is in terms of scale. New York is too big; the pace is too fast; the mass of data clamoring for attention too much to sort out. Most of their perplexity about scale (and ours) is justifiable. It has always been the essence of wisdom to discern rightly the patterns in a body of evidence. But it is in places like New York and Rome and Calcutta and Tokyo as well as in thousands of expanding metropolitan centers in Third World countries that this is most difficult



to do. The size and complexity make one feel impotent, and this threatens those who are comfortable only when *they* are in charge. But in the face of this city's puzzling dilemmas we can relearn the merits of creative humility and begin to take ourselves less seriously as paternalistic social engineers.

The best way to deal with the bigness of New York is to develop an appreciation for its neighborhoods. No particular neighbor-



Brother & sister



lunch counter

hood tells the whole story and the city is a lot more than the sum of all its neighborhoods. But this place cannot be properly loved, cared for and fought with if one can't grasp "the neighborhoods." This means you'll have to belong somewhere: Access to a neighborhood is by being known in a community. You won't be told what you most want to know until you are known and trusted by some people in a particular place. So you can't be a tourist-style student and understand the urban setting in which you're living. To deepen the roots and authenticity of your theological studies, become a citizen of this town. Join our local struggles as the struggle of people everywhere. Taste the local joys. Ponder in silence the perplexities, in sadness the sorrows found in our common urban lives. Protest vigorously the injustices you'll find here, while acknowledging your own complicity in them and working to overcome them. Feel in your face the seasons come and go in your neighborhood, and share in the excitement on the streets as your neighbors blossom in the spring, show their bodies in the summer, enjoy their clothes and socializing in the fall, scurry about in winter. It's a four-seasons city.

Problems of food and energy are complicated by the seasons and the size of the city, and particularly for the poor whom you'll meet in your adopted neighborhood. Acquaintance with the voluntary associations and service institutions designed to "serve" them — in welfare, unemployment, housing, health, education, criminal justice — will plunge you into an urban dilemma at least as old as Rome: Poor folks weakened and rendered dependent by charity; service professionals becoming dependent on institutions. Resist the temptation to become an eager spokes-person for the city's poor or to reform quickly these institutions! Rather, listen long and deeply until your imagination is free enough to find new ways to empower poor people to gain their own voice. Such diligent listening to the city's poor in local neighborhoods will cause you to endure a painful silence as you wait for them to find their voices in confrontation with complex structures of oppression, and will lead you to the creative fringes of religious communities, many of them Christian.

Politics and worship will be warmly mixed together there and you'll find — as

have generations of seminarians from Union — that by shouldering local responsibilities weekly in such situations your life and ministry will become marked by a creatively critical compassion that is full of hope. Your colleagues and former students here have become responsible local citizens, engaged in the politics and worship of the community in which they're trusted and known, and felt their own growth from lower levels of professional responsibilities to higher levels during their three or four years here. In limited hours each week, and in a small slice of one's lifetime, they have gained clarity about the city as human habitat and themselves as citizens and believers, and have found that the knowledge and skills developed, the social and political graces given, are not left behind when their vocation leads them to another place.

Such a vantage-point will clarify your thought about the international context of the Christian message. Most of us here are first- or second- or third-generation immigrants, and the problems we're wrestling with lead quickly to a global framework for our imagination and strategies. If at first the variety of languages and cultures and life styles makes you nostalgic for a simpler setting, fight off this sentiment as a demonic temptation and make a new friend outside of your own culture. Soon — and sooner still if you'll work at a second language — both faith and thought will grow and be nourished in this broader environment.



Reading a racing form

Finally, this city will more readily become a living part of your theological journey if you leave behind all ways of thinking which consider nature to be purposeless and humanity its master, and styles of life which consider oneself to be more important than the realms of life "that exist to serve us." Bring with you a relationship to nature that is collegial rather than exploitative. If you are a naturalist, it will be easy to love this city. Or is it rather the other way around? Whatever. Its miseries and grandeurs, memories and hopes are mirrors of what we all are and of what each of us is.

A non-elitist affirmation of this town, then, is an invitation to struggle and to contemplation, and the reconciliation of each within one's own life. Here you'll ponder the human prospect in ways both frightening and ecstatically hopeful. Here you'll feel the yearning for liberation among the oppressed and in yourself, and be forced to take sides. Here you'll be cared about by particular people in local communities in ways that will strengthen your faith, feed your spirit, clarify your vocation.

On some occasions, your life and work here will lead you to places where you'll be asking for help. If a false pride prevents you from reaching out when that time comes, the city will either destroy you or drive you away. That happens not because the city is cruel, tough, and impersonal, but rather because false pride is self-destructive whether one's encounter with nature is in a wilderness or in one of the world's great cities. Nature in the raw — whether in the country or on the ocean or human nature in the city — is not genteel and innocent. People hurt in cities because people hurt people and because evil exists — not because cities are cities.

I stood on a ledge at sunset in Pompei once and realized that neither cities nor nature were everlasting. New York, for all its concrete and steel, is a fragile human construct dependent on food and water and heat from somewhere else and is as responsive to love and to neglect as a fine violin or a garden, as your personal library or your own body. If you learn while here to care for this town with critical affection and to love its people and yourself in the midst of shared struggle, both your faith and your theology will be deepened and become more hopeful. ■

Once More: Police Brutality

by David Gracie

Police brutality is not new, but it has become the talk of Philadelphia. The reason is that the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (a Knight paper) has been printing front-page, well-documented accounts of police beatings.

The story which received most attention concerned the beating administered to a law-abiding Black worker who was on his way at midnight, to pick up his wife from her job. Policemen actually broke their nightsticks on his body while pounding him unconscious on the street. This was witnessed by several women from Society Hill — a rare case of members of the White establishment seeing the evil at first hand.

The *Inquirer* also did a series which documented systematic beatings of murder suspects by the homicide squad. About the same time this series was running I was talking to a member of our parish whose son was being held in prison on suspicion of murder. I asked if he was well. "Yes," she said, "except that he still needs medical attention because the police kicked him in the testicles while they were questioning him."

It used to be that you had to read the newspaper of the Black community or know people who lived in the ghetto to find such information. Not many White people availed themselves of those sources. Now, as much of it comes to light in a major daily paper, more people realize that Philadelphia police have to be added to the list of leading governmental offenders against human rights.

Newspaper accounts have led to a federal investigation by the U.S. District Attorney and a planned investigation by the state legislature. Since the tenure of the Republican-appointed District Attorney is doubtful and since a battle is going on to keep the legislature from having subpoena power, it is too early to rejoice that help is on the way.

The response of the man at the top in Philadelphia, Mayor Frank Rizzo, is still unchanged. He is saying now what he has said over the years, including his years as city police commissioner: "The bottom line is: Nobody will get to them (the police) while I'm mayor of Philadelphia. Nobody." (*Inquirer*, 6/30/77)

A classic front page of the *Inquirer* (6/24/77) carried a picture of Rizzo, John Cardinal Krol and Italian Senate



President Amintore Fanfani. The mayor, in Italy for ceremonies surrounding the canonization of St. John Neumann, was giving advice to Fanfani on how his police should deal with crime and terror. The Cardinal was the interpreter, but the Mayor threw in an Italian phrase of his own. "With a pounding gesture of his fist, the mayor said the way to treat criminals was 'spacco il cap' . . . the phrase, freely translated, means 'break their heads'." He went on to arrange for 10 Italian policemen to come to Philadelphia, to learn our ways of doing it, promising, "We'll show them how to eat those guys up."

Directly under this article was a picture of Edgardo Ortiz, wearing torn, bloodstained clothing, after having been beaten by Philadelphia police in his own home in the presence of his wife and daughter. "His overalls were torn in the course of the beating and fell to the floor. As Ortiz, handcuffed by then, bent over to try to pull them up, a policeman clubbed him with a blackjack, cutting open his head and splattering blood across the porch, which was littered with toys and dolls." As in several of these accounts, there was a racial epithet, a policeman calling Ortiz a "big Spic bastard".

We can only expect what we are getting from the mayor since it was the fact that he *would* crack heads that made him the hero of frightened and angry White voters during the years of the racial rebellions. In 1967, as police

The Rev. David Gracie is vicar of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church, Philadelphia.

commissioner, he personally led a billy club charge against 2,000 Black high school students who were demonstrating for better education in the public schools. Since there was no racial uprising in Philadelphia in the late '60s, Rizzo was rewarded by being elected mayor. But his quips and boasting register less favorably with the public now, since the newspapers present him in a different light than they did in the days when he was being promoted as the great White hope, especially by Walter Annenberg — then publisher of the *Inquirer*.

A change at the top may be forthcoming in a few years' time. Until then, each policeman who wants to see it that way can argue that the road to the top, from cop on the beat to mayor of the town, is a road marked *spacco il capo*.

How have the churches responded? The Baptist Ministers' Conference (Black pastors) have been most forthright. They supported the federal investigation and demanded the suspension of the officers in the Society Hill case. Heads of judicatories including our own bishops met off-the-record with the mayor to express their concern. Bishop Lyman Ogilby, in addition, has made public his support for the Baptists' demands.

An incident some years ago indicates what impression all this makes on the mayor. One of our priests had witnessed a police killing on the streets. The man gunned down was deranged and had been swinging a big board. He was dangerous, no doubt, but the priest wrote the newspapers saying that he thought he need not have been killed but could have been apprehended some other way. Rizzo's response was: "I don't tell preachers how to preach the Gospel. I don't expect them to tell me how to run the police department."

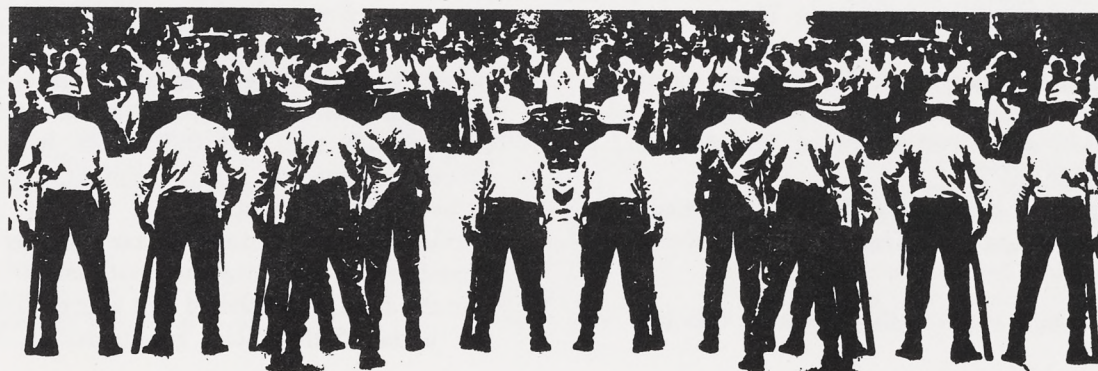
One Protestant leader has suggested developing an approach to the officers on the force who are concerned as Christians about carrying out their work in a way that is compatible with their faith. But he and others realize that in a town with a big Roman Catholic population, it is the Cardinal who holds the key to that door, and he will not use it.

To effect change in the Department one has to move from strength. A parishioner of mine who used to ride with a motorcycle gang told me of an encounter they had with the police in which they were reminded: "We are the biggest gang in town. We have the most weapons and the best communication. Don't you forget it."

When that force moved on the Black Panthers back in September, 1970, shooting their way into their headquarters in a dawn raid and stripping young Black men naked in the street, an emergency community meeting was held at Diocesan headquarters. The assembled representatives of community organizations, churches, and civil liberties groups looked for a position of strength and decided they could find it in the courts and the Constitution. A temporary restraining order was obtained in federal court which stopped the police from further illegal arrests and attacks on people based on their race or their politics. That Labor Day weekend, while thousands of people invited by the Panthers gathered at a People's Constitutional Convention, the police were forced to keep a low profile and peace reigned in North Philadelphia.

A serious legal effort was undertaken to make that injunction permanent and to have a court-appointed master supervise a reorganization of the Philadelphia police until observing the Constitution became the rule and not the exception. The judge heard much evidence but delayed his ruling for years. And when he did rule it was only to order some changes, albeit important changes, in the police internal complaint procedures. The City of Philadelphia appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court which overturned even the mild remedy.

That took the wind out of much community effort to bring about reform until recently when the Public Interest Law Corporation succeeded in obtaining LEAA funding (under the Safe Streets Act) to provide legal help for those whose rights have been abused by the police. That enabled a real step-up of legal defense and offense. Several suits have been won in cases of police beatings and killings, thereby



raising the price of brutality. Then the *Inquirer* began its crusade.

That is the big picture. From the perspective of a city parish it all seems the same somehow. Just six blocks from St. Joseph's church in Detroit the police kicked off the rebellion of 1967 by the way they raided a "blind pig." About nine blocks from St. Barnabas Church in Philadelphia this weekend police shot and killed a Puerto Rican man in the doorway of his home, sparking a minor rebellion there. Bricks flew, police and neighborhood residents were injured, and 18 people were arrested.

As we discussed this latest incident at announcement time at Sunday morning worship, these points were made:

- "It sounds very much like what happened to one of our families a year ago, only, thank God, no one was killed then. There was a broken door, a beating and three false arrests. That's all." (I was in court as the three young men defended themselves against the charges the police lodged against them. When the prosecutor summed up the police case, the judge laughed out loud. It was that absurd.)

- "The police didn't have to kill him. There must have been other ways to deal with the man."

- "There was anger at the big show of police force: paddywagons, mounties and helicopters. Why don't the police just withdraw? The neighbors aren't going to fight each other. It is the police they are angry with. If the police withdrew, everyone would go home and be quiet."

I thought about that question as I visited the scene of the slaying and the riot that afternoon and talked to the very angry widow. ("The police had a contract out on my husband," she said.) Is the reason they don't withdraw simply that an occupying army cannot withdraw without admitting defeat? In a newspaper story one of the policemen rationalized the whole thing this way: "People we've talked to who knew the guy said we did them a favor. He was a violent nut." (*Inquirer*, 7/4/77)

I write this to ring the alarm bell again, but more than that I want to invite discussion and exchange of experiences. Is there a united Church and Synagogue approach that can be of more help in curbing police abuse in our cities? Is there a lay ministry strategy that can be designed? Or has some city somewhere had success with a political approach to the problem?

Some of the pieces of a possible solution are evident here. If the *Inquirer* keeps it up, if there are federal indictments, if there are more successful lawsuits, if we in the churches and other institutions keep the pressure on, if the mayor is replaced, then maybe we will begin to deal with this constant violation of human rights which has the force of law in our city today. ■

New Publishing Company Directors

The family of the late William Spofford took the initiative some several years ago to make possible the re-publishing of THE WITNESS magazine. A new board of directors of an entity called the Episcopal Church Publishing Company was constituted to carry this out. It was comprised of Bishops Morris Arnold, Robert DeWitt, Lloyd Gressle, John Hines, John Krumm and Brooke Mosley, and Dr. Joseph Fletcher. The board established a system of rotation for the directors, and also made provision for enlarging its membership.

Consequently, at the June meeting Bishop Krumm and Dr. Fletcher retired from the board. New members elected were Joan Belknap of Los Angeles, law student at the University of Southern California and assistant to the director of the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation; Barbara Harris of Philadelphia, who is in public relations, has been active in the Union of Black Episcopalians and serves as a director of the Absalom Jones Institute; Charles Ritchie of Saranac, N.Y., who is in the investment business, has served as a deputy to General Convention and is on the board of the Episcopal Divinity School; and Helen Seager of Pittsburgh, an educator who has been active in civic affairs.

Continued from page 9

meeting and dealing with human problems? If it is not then it must be replaced. No element of the society can deal with all of its problems. But the problems in Detroit are basically economic problems. If those are solved then the others will admit of solution. If those are not solved no solution is possible.

Pope Paul VI says in his encyclical, *The Development of People*, that "every human being has the right to food, clothing, shelter, basic education, health care, a decent job." If the right exists then the dominant institutions of the society have the obligation to provide real opportunities for the fulfillment of that right. They have not done that in Detroit.

The hope of the city, then, lies in the ability of the system to work for the welfare of all the people. It rests also in the power of the people themselves who have continued to make their will known and to exercise their not inconsiderable, if unconsidered, power. They do this not only in the ballot box but in the exposure of their needs in such recent happenings as the reversal of the Wayne County Board of Commissioners' policy of forcing indigent non-emergency cases to go to Wayne County General Hospital and their demonstration of opposition to the Department of Social Services' move to take away funds for chore help in the homes of indigent poor and disabled.

Some might say that the hope is very tenuous. If so and it is unfounded, then where do we go? ■

It All Began at Epiphany

by Mary Lou Suhor



Should you drop into the office of Epiphany parish in East Los Angeles some afternoon to see what's happening, your mental computer could get overloaded within a short span of time. When I visited there for a couple of hours recently, the following took place in rapid order:

- Maria Martinez, the first woman in the parish to serve as senior warden, volunteered to take me on tour of the church, pointing out wall hangings with Aztec motifs, Mexican crucifixes reflecting the heritage of the parishioners, liturgies printed in Spanish and English, a niche holding a 300-year-old statue of the Virgin, from Latin America.

- Rosalio Munoz and Joel Flores introduced themselves and explained some of the services they were concerned with: Immigration problems, human rights for undocumented workers, current legislative battles, forums, marches.

- Father Roger Wood, pastor, returned from a community meeting with the sheriff and police, loosened his collar, sat by an oscillating fan and briefed us on the event. "Not a bad meeting, but it's a long struggle to set up an ongoing group to deal with police brutality and related matters. You're called a Communist at the slightest suggestion of a Police Review Board. We exchanged views and discussed our differences. The police claim, for instance, their computer says that calls are answered within 3½ minutes; the community says it's 20 minutes to never . . ." He is interrupted by a series of phone calls.

- Nancy Van Lauderbeck came in to work on tickets for the next parish fundraiser. "Did you see the church basement, where *La Raza* newspaper was started and where the Brown Berets met?" she asked.

I turned to the program director in disbelief. "Is it always like this?"

"Oh, this is a slow day," said Virginia Cueto Ram, prominent Episcopalian laywoman who has worked for 30 years in the parish, the last 12 on the staff. "Let's go out into the streets so you can see us from other angles."

As we drive up and down the barrios, Virginia Ram says sadly, "Now you are going to understand some of my nightmares about Maria. If I hadn't invited her to spend summers with me to work in the parish, she might not be in jail today. I did this to her. The church did this to her. We are all culpable."



Virginia Ram and 300 year-old statue of the Virgin

This Maria, of course, is Maria Cueto, Mrs. Ram's niece, the former executive director of the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church Center. She is in jail since March for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury investigating bombings attributed to the FALN, a militant Puerto Rican group. Maria and her secretary, Raisa Nemikin, claimed that the Grand Jury system as presently constituted did not protect their First Amendment Rights or the confidences they enjoyed with the people with whom they worked.

Mrs. Ram pointed to a complex of buildings. "There's the General Hospital, and there's the Juvenile detention center. Father Wood spends a lot of time getting our kids out of there. Now I'll show you St. Bartholomew's, which has been converted into BUSCA — the Barrio Union Scholastic Community Association.

We got out and circled the grounds. "Look there's a tree Maria planted. The idea here was that after services on Sunday we had an empty building all week long. I thought, why lock God up and say, see you next week, Jesus? So Maria and Rose Marie Ramos and Inez Hernandez and Bea Arellano started a center here during the week to develop remedial reading classes and a bilingual and bicultural



Ricardo Reyes, parish artist, and friends

consciousness for children and parents. Maria worked three summers on this project.

"In the Fall, there was a marked difference in the progress of the children. Their teachers were mystified and asked the parents why. They proudly said, 'We sent them to our *own* school.' Now the community has taken over the center and Father Wood and I simply oversee activities. Our policy is to get the *people* to do things. Now I'll show you where the gangs hang out . . ."

We drove some distance and stopped in front of a small building.

"See that's where Maria started a storefront ministry for



BUSCA: Barrio Union Scholastic Community Association



Virginia Ram, program director, and Rosario Gasparro, former vestrywoman and community organizer,

gang-oriented kids. We had a pool table and a juke box in there and called it PELA Storefront. Some of those kids went on to school, some found jobs like in the post office, and some were killed. One of the kids who hung out there was an artist and Maria supervised the mural he painted." Now we had stopped in front of a long wall covered with two scenes. I asked if we could take a picture.

"OK, but I'll have to get out so the people will see me with you. In some areas you have to be escorted through by gang members to see murals."

Photo taken, we got back into the car. Over a Mexican meal, Mrs. Ram explained:



MURAL: Our Lady of Guadalupe, and of the Barrio

"Now perhaps you can begin to understand the consciousness of Maria and Raisa. They are in jail not because they want to be martyrs, not because they are obstinate or rebellious, or have something to hide. It's just that you don't betray the people you've been working with. You deal with them to the fullest consequences. Our consciousness was heightened by serving on the Hispanic Commission. Our loyalty was to the *ministry*, not to any 'terrorism.' "

Ironically, a strong non-violent strain runs traditionally through Virginia Ram's family. Her husband, a pacifist, studied under Gandhi and was a first cousin to Nehru. He was killed in a liquor store holdup in Watts. Virginia had to take over his business and raise her sons, Phil and Richard, who were then 12 and 9 years old, respectively. Phil was a conscientious objector during the war. ("It would have been like putting another bullet into my father," he said.)

Mrs. Ram even tells how she admonished the young parish artist for designing a wall hanging of an Aztec Christ with a clenched fist. " ' Hey, isn't that a rather violent posture for Jesus?' I asked him." The next day she found that the artist had sewn a flower in the clenched fist.

Emotionally, the jailing of Maria has torn apart "Tia Butch" — as Virginia is affectionately called by her niece. "I'm trying not to let sentiment interfere with my work, but it's hard to get my head together. I'm loyal to the church and I've never confronted bishops like this before. I don't want to be vindictive, but we're trying to relate here to a ministry almost unknown to the church — dealing with identity problems, oppression, poverty, and relating at our own level — at the level of the people."

That "loyalty to the church" and "Virginia Ram" are practically synonymous is manifest in her long years of church service. She was elected to the Executive Council on the first ballot at General Convention in 1976, and has been highly honored by both church and civic officials. A plaque from the Mayor of Los Angeles and a diocesan Bishop's award — the only one given in 1973 — decorate her walls. (When an FBI agent left his calling card in her door recently, a Church and Society colleague suggested she frame it and hang it up "between the Mayor's citation and the Bishop's award.")

There was one period when her faith wavered. For three years after her husband was killed, she did not go to church. "I cried every night and ended up exhausted, having to take three pills to get to sleep. But the parish priest brought me back, and Father Luce ultimately talked me into taking this job. I gave up \$600 a month to do it, since I was working with a government program at the time. Now I still end up nights exhausted, but I don't need the sleeping pills."

After she was elected to the Executive Council in Minneapolis, the parish wanted to give her a testimonial dinner. "Over my dead body," was her response. "I consider my election a tribute to the *people* of this parish."

Virginia Ram drops me off at the end of the day and we make arrangements to meet again. I head for bed. The indefatigable Virginia Ram drives off to her next meeting, and to begin preparations for a *lechon* dinner for 14 Church and Society members at her home the following night. ■

RECENT EVENTS AROUND THE GRAND JURY

- *Pedro Archuleta, the third member of the Hispanic Commission to be jailed for refusing to testify before the New York Grand Jury, was flown to Chicago (without the knowledge of his attorney) and held in contempt of the Grand Jury there. The move seemed superfluous since he as well as Cueto and Nemikin are serving possible sentences through May, 1978, in New York, where the "life" of the Grand Jury runs longer than that of Chicago. Over 300 people marched to the courthouse to support Archuleta.*

- *Bombs exploded in two midtown Manhattan office buildings Aug. 3, killing a 27 year-old man and injuring seven other persons. The FALN claimed responsibility for the explosions. More than 100,000 people were evacuated as threats were received, including those who worked at the World Trade Center and Empire State Building. Commented THE NEW YORK TIMES, "Three people are in jail for failing to cooperate with investigations, but neither these arrests nor others, including one last week, have put the police closer to determining who planted the bombs." (Week in Review, 8/7/77).*

(Deadlines prohibited further coverage, but THE WITNESS will present an analysis of these and other events in future issues).

Continued from page 2

can't we see that a Ph.D program constructed along disciplinary lines and demanding comprehensive examinations as the main mechanism for accreditation has abandoned vocation in favor of professionalism?

The veil has been torn! We are free to realize that the high priests have been using their vestments of expertise, curriculum requirements, field work, teaching assistantships and comprehensives to defend law and order through professionalism and to oppress the liberating power of the Gospel.

Our classrooms, chapels and churches must become the foothills of critical struggling in the battles for liberation instead of training camps for professionals and performing arenas. Our hierarchical structure of high priests and initiates must give way to a priesthood of all people where everyone is engaged in the crucial action of theology as a vocation. I for one have been forced to recognize the rent in the veil and must spend the rest of my time here at seminary attempting to live out the implications of God's radical act in Jesus Christ. Such activity can be carried out only in a community of faith. Can there be such a community here at Princeton Theological Seminary? Or will it be that we are so offended by the transgressive style of Christian life and work that we will close our ears to the teaching of the Gospel?

Joe Nyce
Princeton, N.J.

Why a Lesbian?

By this time the public is well aware we Episcopalians have something most exciting happening all the time. I've been an Episcopal priest for over 50 years. During that time we've never been without some schism about to divide and destroy when, unexpectedly, another crops up, causing us to forget the other. There are always some Episcopalians who fret about controversial issues. I do not. But I do sympathize with those so seriously concerned.

However, I find much that is disturbing Episcopalians, and others too, appears to be on the side of humanity instead of legality. Certainly that is where Jesus would have us be. When he walked up and down the roads of Palestine he comforted some, challenged others, loved all sorts and conditions of people. Naturally, he caused raised eyebrows when he informally talked to the prostitute at the well.

He said to the adulteress when the men about to stone her walked away, "I certainly don't condemn you. Go and sin no more." He included the prisoner on the cross with him in Paradise. He ate with Zachaeus whom the crowd said earned his money unfairly charging too high profits for his efforts. His real charge to mankind was, "Inasmuch as you

have visited the prisoner, fed the hungry, cared for the fatherless, and made the stranger welcome you have done it unto me."

And now the Episcopal Church in the name of the very humane Jesus ordains a woman who publicly states she is a lesbian. Of all women, why a lesbian? Besides, some insist it isn't legal. Even though it becomes increasingly evident anything done in the name of Jesus can't be kept within the confining legality of organized religion. Jesus was crucified because he couldn't be. And he was so consistent in his humanity.

When Jesus and his disciples were chided by the orthodox of his day for plucking grain to eat on the Sabbath thus violating the Sabbath, Jesus said, "Legal or not the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." So impossible for some to accept. But then so much of Jesus is impossible to accept by those who put the canons above the way Jesus would have us live.

Today we are increasingly recognizing the homosexual (and the lesbian) has the same rights as others. That he or she is not sick or handicapped as we have previously thought. They may be anathema to some but not to Jesus.

Healing the sick, saving the lost and understanding the sinner. Seeking redemption for those who have lost sight of the unique reason God placed them on Earth. We Episcopalians may agonize in our efforts. But we must keep trying.

The Rev. W. Hamilton Aulenbach
Claremont, Cal.

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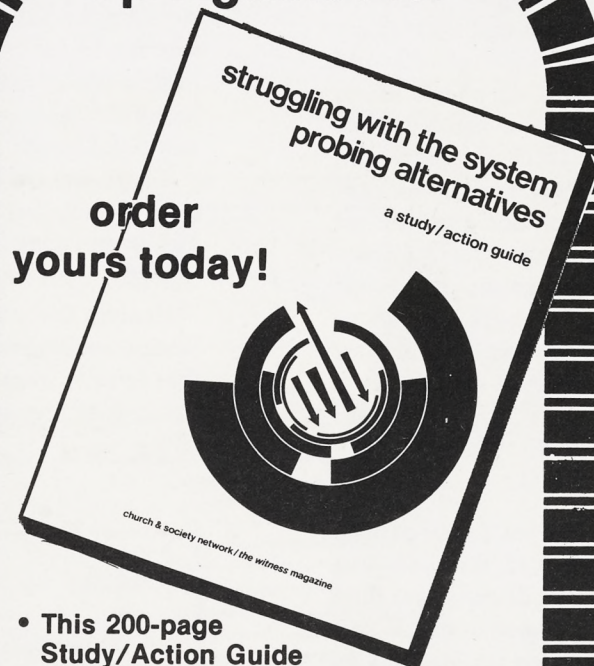
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