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## Reports From:

Roy Larson in Chicago  
Ken Briggs in Port St. Lucie  
Tim Smith in Washington  
Mary Lou Suhor in Assat (?)

# THE WITNESS

JANUARY, 1978  
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PEACE  
ON THE UNUSED  
EARTH





## Pledges 3% to Maria, Raisa

I have just received, via my parish priest, a flyer from the National Church explaining how my pledge is allocated. It says 3% will go to the National Church: "The National Church, working through the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, does things that cannot be done so well locally; supporting the efforts of minority peoples and the underprivileged in this country, and those dioceses in this country unable to support themselves . . ."

In view of the treatment given to our own Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin by our Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, I'm not so sure I couldn't spend my share better. Therefore, I would like to send my 3% directly to Maria and Raisa since they have been denied their salaries while they bear their witness. How can I get this money to them?

I realize my diminished pledge to my own parish will make things more difficult for my fellow parishioners who are not to blame for this — but there would seem to be no doubt where the greatest need and the most sacrificial witness is presently being manifested.

**Mary R. Shepard**  
St. Paul, Minn.

(As *THE WITNESS* reported in the December issue, funds for Maria and Raisa as well as for seven others jailed for refusing to testify before Grand Juries in New York and Chicago are being collected in New York. The Board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company joins *THE WITNESS* in suggesting that contributions for assistance to the families of those imprisoned be sent to: New York Committee Against Grand Jury Repression, Box 268, 161 E. Houston St., New York, N.Y. 10002. Make checks payable to the Committee, earmark "Survivor's Fund.")

## 'Gays' Impressive, Vulgar

Re the October issue of *THE WITNESS*, which focused on homosexuals in the Church. I'm trying very hard (and it *is* hard) to approach the subject with an open mind. The articles about Ellen Barrett, and the ones by Malcolm Boyd and Ronald Wesner spoke to me with a note of sincerity and "integrity." I was impressed.

Then I read the article by Sol Gordon, "It's Not OK to Be Anti-Gay," and the wholesome atmosphere vanished. I found this to be smart-alec and vulgar, and of no convincing or positive value. The "Poem" by Louis Crew I found also to be objectionable. I possibly represent a great many people who are trying to find their way through this problem, and I believe these two items have served no useful purpose, if you want to present the matter in a thoughtful and appealing way. Maybe the editor added injury to insult by introducing the Gordon article with the description "delightfully humorous and insightful." Not to me!

**The Rev. Howard R. Kunkle**  
Sedan, Kans.

## Will Use in Study Group

Just read the October issue—almost missed it. I thought I'd heard enough from the four pictured on the cover and put my copy aside. Then by Providence I picked it up to read Bishop DeWitt's "Witness to Truth" and Dr. Gordon's "It's Not OK to Be Anti-Gay." Those are two really fine statements. I'm enclosing a check for 10 copies of that issue. I'll hope to get 10 subscribers, but I'll start out by using the magazines in a group discussion and study in the mission here. Meanwhile thank you for one good issue after another.

**The Rev. Robert Griswold**  
Lakeview, Ore.

## Issue Fortright

Thank you for your forthright and altogether illuminating to say nothing re courageous, delineation of the gay issue in the church. I am a member of Christ Church Cathedral, which is endeavoring to minister in increasing ways to this diverse community of pilgrims, in these days when many are hurt, disillusioned, and angry about the actions of the church. Thank you for your witness and *THE WITNESS*.

**Marguerite Hyer**  
St. Louis, Mo.

## New Doctrine of Sin?

What was weighed in the balance and found wanting in the liberal movement of the sixties was their doctrine of sin, which was virtually non-existent.

What I suspect you call for in your November editorial is a new doctrine of sin, one which says that it's the greedy old capitalists, and the people who care too much about political freedom, who are the sinners; the proletariat are not similarly afflicted.

Your statement that "the economic and political structures of our society are so constituted that they do not function in the best interests of the people" sounds like the swell slogans which have helped so many people in the world, like the people of Cambodia, for instance. It doesn't sound to me like a good answer to a weak doctrine of sin.

**The Rev. Timothy Pickering**  
Bryn Mawr, Pa.

## Piccard Adds 'Beware'

*The Rev. Dr. Jeannette Piccard forwarded to THE WITNESS a copy of the following letter which she wrote to the Rev. Wendy Raynor of Edenton, N.C.:*

Dear Wendy:

Your letter in the August *WITNESS* in response to Suzanne Hiatt's article "Priests Wanted: No Women need Apply" has just come to my attention. I have been in Switzerland all summer and am just home. In Switzerland, I celebrated the Eucharist in my hotel room or the home of a relative because the Bishop of Fulham and Gibraltar refused to recognize my priesthood. The only *Episcopal* Church in Switzerland is in Geneva where I had no opportunity to go.

I thank God that you are able to fulfill your vocation. How about the young people in your parish? Will they still be able to be ordained 10 years from now? Not if the Commission for an Apostolic Ministry has anything to say about it.

Sue Hiatt was not bemoaning her lack of recognition. She is the most recognized woman priest in the Episcopal Church. She had altars available to her in 1974 and 1975 when none of the rest of us did. In the June *WITNESS* Sue was issuing a clarion call, a warning of danger.

You say, "The battle has been won!" Very true but the war is not over. CAM has sworn to do *everything* to change the canons again. True, no one can take your priesthood from you. If, however, the

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# THE WITNESS

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## Dissidents and Diffidence

Robert L. DeWitt

The September gathering of some 1,700 "dissident" Episcopalians in St. Louis has caused much conversation. At least among Episcopalians. The causes of their coming together were both immediate and remote.

The immediate cause was the 1976 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which took carefully considered actions to authenticate the ordination of women, and to revise the *Book of Common Prayer*. On the ordination of women, all the arguments were in long before the convention. The revision of the Prayer Book was the culmination of a painstaking process of scholarship and trial services which had extended over a period of many years. The convention deliberated, then took decisive and affirmative action on both issues. The group which gathered in St. Louis was opposed to these actions.

But there were also long-term causes of that meeting in St. Louis. Some Episcopalians had long opposed the involvement of the church in the affairs of society, especially when that involvement stood for poor and marginalized people, over against the established order of things. The empowerment projects of the General Convention Special Program, and comparable social programs of the National Council of Churches and of the World Council of Churches, had long been the special targets of their disapproval and resentment. Their attitude reflected the attitude of the establishment, of the status quo, of social and economic privilege.

But why the fuss? In any organization there are always people who object to the decisions of the majority. Every presidential election year millions of people in this country support and vote for the candidate who loses. So why *this* demonstration of opposition to the will of a majority?

At the very least, there is a political motivation. Given a small group "outside" who threaten schism if their will is opposed, and a larger group inside who counsel the importance of not offending them, there is the beginning of a base which might at least hope to reverse the actions of the last General Convention at the next. The temporizing and awkward preoccupation of the recent meeting of the House of Bishops with the dissident group would indicate that this political stratagem might indeed be proving effective.

Another facet to the St. Louis event, however, is also instructive. It is to see that group of dissidents as a distortion of the Episcopal Church, an exaggeration, a caricature, but one which teaches us something important about ourselves, if we have the humility to see it.

Consider that group: A tiny minority of the larger church of which it is a part; a group which withdraws into its own enclave to maintain "purity of doctrine;" a small body which takes its own liturgies, customs and traditions more seriously than it does its responsibility toward the larger church body, more

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# Answers Blowing in Windy City

by Roy Larson

*"I congratulate the Episcopal Church for holding these hearings. I'm glad to see you're getting serious about the city again."*

With those words, the Rev. Donald Benedict began his testimony Nov. 17 at an open hearing in Chicago conducted by a seven-member panel acting for the Urban Bishops' Coalition.

Mr. Benedict had a slight smile on his face and tone of mild sarcasm in his voice. "I don't often find myself in a position to congratulate the Episcopal Church," he explained.

Since graduating from Union Theological Seminary in New York and spending time in a federal penitentiary for conscientious objection to World War II, Mr. Benedict has devoted his entire ministerial career in the United Church of Christ to the alleviation of urban ills—first in the East Harlem Protestant Parish, next in Cleveland, and for the last 17 years in Chicago as executive director of the Community Renewal Society.

The hearing at the University of Chicago's Center for Continuing Education was the first in a series of five designed to pinpoint those urban problems to which the church is capable of responding. Representatives of 18 Chicago-area organizations appeared before the panel. Twenty-two others submitted written testimony.

The panel was chaired by the Right Rev. John B. Coburn, Bishop of Massachusetts, who, during the last decade, has presided with calm strength and graceful competence at some of the most tumultuous and historic sessions of the Episcopal House of Deputies.

On the panel were the Rev. Daniel Alvarez, director of a social service agency in Chicago's Latino community; Ms. Mattie Hopkins, a black Episcopal laywoman and Chicago public school teacher; the Right Rev. Richard B. Martin, executive for ministries on the staff of the Presiding Bishop; Peter Foote, a Roman Catholic layman who is secretary for

ecumenism and human relations for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago; Roy Larson, religion editor of the *Chicago Sun Times*; and the Right Rev. Antonio Ramos, Bishop of Costa Rica.

On the day before the hearings, the panelists were prepped by Byron Rushing, hearings coordinator, the Rev. Hugh White, project director for the Bishop's Coalition, and Stanley Hallett, an urbanologist at Northwestern University, who had been active in the redevelopment of Chicago's South Shore community. The Very Rev. David N. Harris, Canon of the Cathedral of St. James, interpreted the program of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago.

"We are in a period," Hallett told the panelists, "when we are aware that many of the old urban programs did not work, but we are not sure what the new ones should be. It's a time for taking fresh soundings, so we can think anew about what can be done."

Hallett urged the church to take on four responsibilities in its urban work: To know and to make public what's going on; to sustain the inquiry, asking questions about what it takes to create healthful, educated and secure communities; to point to right action, and to initiate and sustain communities in development.

During the seven-hour hearings, the panelists asked for and got an earful of advice on how the church can respond to the festering problems of the cities. These are some of the highlights:

- "The church can't do everything. It needs to concentrate on doing one or two things and doing them well. Specifically, I suggest the church focus on the issue of opening up the suburbs to make the whole metropolitan area an inclusive community. Our central cities are now segregated poorhouses." (John McDermott, editor, *Chicago Reporter*)

- "We need support in our struggle to fight mandatory retirement, watch-dog nursing homes, and to keep the







elderly in the mainstream of society. We need money to publish a monthly newsletter.” (Ruth Lind, The Gray Panthers)

- “Our (Indians’) main concern is to help our senior citizens get the help they need to break through layers and layers of bureaucracy. Over half the Indians in the country now live in urban areas. Twenty thousand live in Chicago, most of them in Uptown, the most crime-ridden section of the city.” (Matthew Pilcher, Native American Committee)

- “Grand juries are being used in unconstitutional ways to attack and harass Puerto Ricans, and the Episcopal Church has acted in concert with these agents of repression.” (Steven Guerra, National Committee Against Grand Jury Repression)

- “The church should help in the formation of a new coalition that unites Hispanics, Blacks and poor Whites.” (The Rev. Richard West, United Church of Christ)

- “Programs are needed that would make it possible for young people to aid senior citizens who are afraid to go out of their homes to shop, see the doctor and attend church.” (Velma Pons, Chicago Welfare Rights Organization)

- “An idea that has come from the churches is causing problems. That is the idea of service. The church should be hesitant about advocating an increase of institutional services. This results in transferring funds from the poor to the middle class, because it is the middle class that gets paid for providing the services. As things are working, our economy needs more broken families and more needy people in order to increase the Gross National Product. The church should direct its attention toward strengthening the primary groups in society—the family, the local com-

munity.” (Urbanologist John McKnight, Northwestern University)

- “The question of unemployment is THE question of the decade. What’s needed is a coalition on the right to earn a living. We need to begin lobbying for each other.” (The Rev. Donald Benedict)

- “The church should help destroy stereotypes of homosexuals, combat society’s fear of homosexuals, and support legislation protecting our civil rights.” (Spokesman, Good Shepherd Parish, congregation for Chicago gays)

- “Programs to aid ex-offenders are crucial. Sixty-eight percent of all crimes are committed by ex-offenders.” (Raymond Curran, the Safer Foundation)

- “I’m surprised we are the only organization for handicapped people represented at these hearings.” (Anita Ming, from the Red Door, a center for deaf people)

On the day after the hearings the panelists gathered for an evaluation with members of the project staff. The panelists were urged to be as critical as possible because they were told that their critiques of the first hearing would affect planning for the subsequent hearings.

Representatives of the support committee in the host diocese complained that several of the testifiers they had recruited did not have an opportunity to present their cases orally.

Bishop Coburn and others expressed the view that the panel should have heard “not just from the people affected by the decisions made in the city, but by the people who make the decisions too.”

Bishop Robert L. DeWitt observed the hearings would have had greater local impact if arrangements had been made for more members of the Diocese of Chicago to be present as observers.

Bishop James W. Montgomery of Chicago stressed the necessity of providing theological grounding for any new programs developed by the coalition. “Problems arise,” he said, “when our altruism gets ahead of our theology.”

Other panelists said insufficient attention was given to the special needs of children, to members of the Korean-American and Philippino-American communities who sometimes are harassed by agents of their home countries, and to “cultured despisers of religion” who have become alienated from the church.

Consensus was achieved on one point in particular: Everyone involved stressed the desirability of going forward in ways that make it possible for “the whole church” to move together. As Bishop Coburn put it, “If this just ends up as another national thing, it won’t go.” ■



### 3 Urban Institutes Set

The Coalition of Urban Bishops in cooperation with the Institute for Policy Studies will sponsor three institutes on "Global Dimensions of the Urban Economic Crisis" at the College of Preachers in Washington, D.C., it was announced by the Rev. Charles Rawlings of the staff for public policy programs. Dates have been set as Jan. 24-27, March 29-April 1, and Oct. 10-13.

"Purpose of these three identical institutes is to prepare the leadership of the Church to witness for the Gospel in the many-sided realm of public policy questions affecting human welfare in general and the life of the cities in particular," Rawlings said. "A theologian will be in residence throughout."

Among lecturers scheduled to address the institutes are Ronald Mueller, co-author, *Global Reach*; Gar Alperowitz, Explorative Project on Economic Alternatives; William Goodfellow, Center for International Policy; Iqbal Riza, Overseas Development Council; and Ambassador Neville Kanakartne of Sri Lanka. Lecturers from the IPS staff include Richard Barnet and Robert Borosage, directors; and Isabel Letelier, Michael Moffitt, Derek Shearer, Lee Webb and Howard Wachtel.

"Theological reflection and strategizing will take place throughout the experience," Rawlings said. "The institutes are not so much explorations of economics as explorations of our current moral dilemmas in the urban and world community; dilemmas that make familiar frames of reference such as 'urban' or 'nation' out of date," he added.

Brochures describing the institutes in detail can be obtained from Ms. Suzanne Watson, Registrar, Coalition of Urban Bishops, Church House, 2230 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44115.

### AS A MATTER OF FACT . . .

If Christ had been given the \$100 billion "Defense" Budget to spend on agricultural improvements, food for the poor, health care and education, he could have spent \$100,000 a day from his birth until now and still have 763 years left to spend on alleviating the world's suffering.

— Don Luce, Clergy & Laity Concerned

*Continued from page 3*

seriously than it does its responsibility toward the society to which it is sent; a dissident group which, with scrupulosity, sets up barriers between itself and others that could and would cooperate with it in carrying out a mission to this world.

Does this characterization of the St. Louis group fit the Episcopal Church as a whole? Are the dissidents proving themselves indeed to be our children? Have they in truth really understood, and are they reflecting what they have learned from the Protestant Episcopal Church, U.S.A.? Let us hope not. Granted, the Episcopal Church corporately from time to time has evidenced those characteristics. But individuals and groups have historically stepped forth, called by God through human circumstance, to save the church from itself, to rescue it from prideful withdrawal from its mission.

And who is being called to that task of leadership today? The House of Bishops? Unlikely, judging from their recent pastoral letter. The next General Convention in 1979? That is more likely to reflect concerns brought to it, rather than ones which are generated there. "All of us?" Everybody's business is nobody's business.

Then who is left? The church. That is to say, the numerous small bodies of believers, the many little communities of the Resurrection, the scattered fellowships of concerned people who care about the mission of the church. Nuclei of people, like you, who will reach out to others and together begin to "prophesy," to make known the will of God for the church and for the world. Groups who will speak the truth to each other, to their bishops, to their diocesan councils, to their standing committees, to their lay and clerical deputies to the next convention. And in so doing they will manifest that the church is far more than a huddled group of frightened people clutching desperately their false securities and proud possessions. ■

#### CREDITS

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# High Noon at Port St. Lucie

by Kenneth A. Briggs

## Dear Diary:

It's been over a week since my last entry, but I've been tied up at a meeting of Episcopal bishops and as a result have been both frazzled and muddled. The meeting took place in the tourist resort of Port St. Lucie, a sprawling seacoast development where fish jump sky high out of the water and alligators lie in dark lagoons around the golf courses. Normally the establishment would be populated by honeymooners and funloving sales representatives, so even among the young staff members this was something of an unusual occasion.

The bishops arrived like a flock of migratory birds descending for a respite from their journey. Many wore the plumage of their office. Others were less visibly marked but generally shared the same form and bearing that befits leaders.

Matters of carriage and deportment are important, but leadership does not depend on style alone, of course, and I began asking myself just whom they represented. The answer is not as easy as it might seem. True, they do hold authority over quite specific chunks of church geography, or assist those in command, but in these troubled times real authority seems to be earned rather than given by the act of consecration.

Such emotional issues have arisen recently in the church that deep fissures have opened up among both the folks back home and the House of Bishops. Individual leaders and special interest coalitions have sprung up on various sides of conflicts over women's ordination, the revision of the prayerbook and homosexuality, to cite just three.

No one quite knows what the invisible masses of parishioners really think about these things, but the factions invariably invoke the name of the "people" to undergird their positions. I notice bishops referring to what their diocesan consensus is "saying" without being sure exactly how much that conclusion would actually hold up. The conservatives, in particular, were likely to back their fight for a "conscience clause" to permit dissent from the approved policy of ordaining women by stating categorically that the church would have a full scale revolt on its hands if such a clause were not adopted.

When I arrived, late at night, the vanguard of bishops was already buzzing about the expected "High Noon" quality of the upcoming sessions. Bishop Paul Moore of New York had ordained a professed lesbian. Bishop Albert

*THE WITNESS* peeks into the diary of Ken Briggs, religion editor of *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, to find (re the Episcopal Bishops' meeting in Florida): "It was the worst crisis since the church lay in total disarray following the Revolutionary War . . . No sincere Christian can rejoice over an obviously worsening situation in one of the great branches of the faith."

A. Chambers had aided and abetted the rebellion by those adamantly opposed to women as priests. Bishop Chambers was specifically charged with invading the territory of other bishops in order to lend a hierarchical hand at getting a new church started. To prevent wholesale defections to this new outfit, the conservatives gravely appealed for the conscience clause so that, in effect, anybody could believe what he wanted about women's ordination and remain an upright church citizen.

Little did they know who would put the issue on the line. Presiding Bishop John M. Allin came right out and said at the very first hour of the meeting that he had searched his mind and heart and came away convinced women could not legitimately be priests. He would even resign if the brethren thought his conscience had steered him too far from his proper role.

Well, there were some who thought that he had, indeed, talked himself out of a job, but everyone was extremely jittery about saying so. After all, they reasoned, even though ordaining women as priests had been approved by the highest governing body of the church lots of people were angry as hell about it. So why not let them feel accepted even though they don't agree? And some remembered that the late Bishop James Pike, though hauled before the bishops on charges of heresy, had made it through unscathed. Combatting dissent this time by conservatives could lead to future assaults against liberals. So let bygones be bygones. Bishop Allin can have his opinions.

Two things struck me. One was that there was almost no mention of the feelings of the women who had been





ordained, particularly their expected reaction to being told by the Presiding Bishop that in their roles as priests they were considered non-persons. The other was that it reminded me of possible parallels. What if a presiding bishop said, "It's well known that our church has officially endorsed the concept that all men are created equal but I, for one, don't think black people should be entitled to vote." It's one thing, dear diary, for an individual to be vouchsafed private conscience, but another when that person is entrusted with the implementation of church policy.

So Bishop Allin got his conscience clause and a limp handshake of assurance that his brother bishops affirm his right to stay where he is.

So some felt he got off the hook, just as others thought Bishop Moore deserved harsher treatment for ordaining the Rev. Ellen Barrett. To add fuel to this fire, Bishop Kilmer Myers said flatly that he intended to license Ms. Barrett to perform her duties in his diocese. His was an eloquent appeal for understanding, as was Bishop Moore's. What defused the whole matter was that, under the law, Bishop Moore and Bishop Myers were *simon pure*. They had followed the rules. The only real debate centered rather voyeuristically on whether Ms. Barrett was known to be a "practicing" homosexual before her ordination. Failing to solve that mystery, the body voted a no-nonsense reaffirmation of the church's moral abhorrence of homosexual activity and attempted to exact a guarantee that nobody else would ordain such a person until the next General Convention when the issue comes up.

If Bishop Moore was the beneficiary of the rules, Bishop Chambers was the loser. By appearing to meddle in the affairs of the dioceses of other bishops, he had broken a clear principle of procedure. He also represented the

confederates who had already laid the groundwork for a new church (which, incidentally, promises to revive the "one true church" tradition). Bishop Chambers stated openly that his conscience had led him to break the law but such arguments ran aground in disputes involving rights of turf. He was "deplored and repudiated" though not censured.

The most troublesome aspect of the meeting was not the acrimony which arose around the particular issues. It was rather the pervasive sense of confusion and ambivalence that seemed to bespeak lack of confidence by bishops in their ability to point the way for the church at a time of deepening crisis. Serious membership losses are still taking place, more dioceses are financially hard-pressed and the turmoil in recent years has taken its toll. The "fashionable" church has begun to lose its composure and perhaps in the process has gained a healthy measure of modesty.

It is the worst crisis since the church lay in total disarray following the Revolutionary War. In a sense the church has been long in losing some of its Tory character. While there have been many bishops over the years who exercised great initiative and caring, the House of Bishops generally has not had to risk much. Bishoping has involved long hours of duties but until recent times few anguishing decisions.

It is precisely courage and adventure that seem called for at this time. Firm leadership could pull the church out of its doldrums by giving it a sense of identity and purpose. The overall impression left by the Florida meeting was one of uncertainty and peace-at-the-avoidance-of-conflict. I doubt the peace will last. Bishop Allin has seriously handicapped himself and there are continuing calls for him to step down voluntarily.

Other denominations, particularly Protestants, are saddened by the troubles of Episcopalians but also look upon these difficulties as just deserts for a church that has at times appeared aloof and smug toward other Christians.

Still, no sincere Christian can rejoice over an obviously worsening situation in one of the great branches of the faith.

For all their ambivalence and lack of direction, I deeply sympathize with the bishops' dilemma even from my safe vantage point behind a note pad. As a group, I admire their intelligence, concern and decency. They rightly point to many antidotes to counsels of despair, sketching a larger picture that includes spiritual riches and the strength of tradition. They are caught in circumstances that are hardly all of their making and which they cannot be expected to treat with magic cures.

Their forcing of a semblance of unity drew largely from the recognition that the church badly needs a means of



resolving disputes. The collegiality of the brotherhood made that possible.

What remained, in my view, between sessions at the typewriter, dips in the pool, and late-night discussions, was for the same body to give the church a sense of vision.

As one of the few journalists who showed up, I was thankful that so many bishops indulged my attempts to meet the requirements of my job and the results that issued from the same. They can have such meetings in such settings any time they want to and I'll sure try to be there.

## Church and Society Goes Commercial (TV)

There is probably nothing very remarkable in a small group of people busying themselves in a church kitchen making soup and bread for a church supper. There is probably nothing very unusual about a group arranging a panel discussion in a parish hall for a group of 75-100 people.

But it begins to seem a little out of the ordinary when the topic for discussion is "Who's Unemployed and Who Cares?"; when the panelists include a nationally prominent economist, a national lobbyist of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and a theologian. And it becomes probably *unique* when, following the panel discussion and the soup-and-bread supper, the group moves one block down the street to join a vice-president and a news director of an NBC affiliate, WBRE-TV, where the afternoon's panel discussion is replicated on video-tape for broadcast to thousands of people.

That is a bare-bones scenario of what happened on Oct. 26 at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. How come?

The local chapter of the Church and Society Network had been spending time over the previous months wrestling with the Study/Action Guide, *Struggling With the System/ Probing Alternatives*. They found the questions bewildering, the answers ambiguous, but the issue itself one of unquestioned central significance. In discussing what action they might take growing out of their study, they hit upon the idea of sponsoring a discussion on the question of unemployment. In northeast Pennsylvania, unemployment has been a chronic problem for years, and the present depressed state of the economy is simply accentuating something which that coal-mining area has been familiar with for longer than the people like to remember.

Ms. Margaret Ferry, national board member of Church

and Society, who was a part of that group, was the spark plug for this plan. With a lot of help from her friends, she and the other members of the Church and Society Network secured some matching funds from the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania, and gained the joint endorsement of the project by a number of religious and civic and labor groups in the area, including the TV station itself. The culmination was the event referred to above.

How can small groups of concerned persons share their concerns and some of their insights in a meaningful way? How can a small group of concerned persons count for something in this mass society of which we are a part?

Here is one way. This local chapter of the Church and Society Network has shared some informed insights about one of the most crucial questions in our society today with an estimated 30,000 people in that 17-county area. It took a lot of work. It took quite a bit of imagination. Perhaps it took a little luck. But most of all it took a small group of people sharing together some of their questions and concerns about our society, and asking themselves, "*What can we do about it?*"

As a result, thousands of people will have a little more accurate information, will labor under a smaller number of myths about the economy, and will have a considerably deeper perception of how they, as individuals and small groups, can contribute to the solution of that problem.

Incidentally, this hour program is available on a KC-30 Sony Videotape cassette. It features Dr. Robert Lekachman, economist; Ms. Evelyn Dubrow, legislative director, ILGWU, and the Rev. Norman Faramelli, theologian. For information write Ms. Margaret Ferry, P.O. Box 21, Bear Creek, Pa., 18602.

—R.L.D.



# Investing With a Conscience

by Timothy H. Smith

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*How can a denomination or religious order which has declared its concern for social justice invest thousands—even millions—in today's stock market in good conscience? How can Christians impact the rights and interests of shareholders as over and against the policies of corporations involved in flagrant acts of discrimination or sizeable payoffs overseas? Tim Smith, director of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, discussed these questions in testimony recently before the Subcommittee on Citizen Shareholder Rights and Interests (U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee). His remarks follow.*

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The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility is a working coalition of over 150 Roman Catholic orders, several Roman Catholic dioceses and 14 Protestant denominations in the United States which have come together in an attempt to maximize their impact as socially conscious investors.

With the wide variety of viewpoints represented within this coalition it would be foolish for me to pretend that I am representing *all* of these institutional investors in the name of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. They can and do speak clearly and eloquently for themselves.

What I *can* do is reflect accurately some of the common philosophy, social issues and strategies used by these church investors.

The denominations and orders working through the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility have a variety of portfolios representing billions of dollars of investments. While anxious for a reasonable return to pay pensions, maintain schools, and assist in program costs, these institutional investors are equally concerned about the way in which these dividends are made.

It would be sheer hypocrisy for an order or denomination to have passed resolutions advocating an end to discrimination in employment against women and minorities, or for an end to bribes and political contributions overseas, or resolutions indicating concern for the environmental effects of strip mining, or the role of investments in South Africa, and be an unquestioning investor in corporations involved in flagrant acts of discrimination, sizeable payoffs overseas, disregard for the environment or support for South Africa's racist apartheid system. We believe that investing entails responsibilities as well as rights.

While many churches have traditionally maintained a narrow definition of investor responsibility by refusing to invest in tobacco or liquor stock, during the last decade this definition has widened dramatically. No longer is the Wall Street Rule in effect — that is, sell a company's stock if you don't like what it is doing. Instead, church investors are employing a variety of approaches to impact

corporations. These include: Dialogue with management, stockholder resolutions (in 1976-77 approximately 80 resolutions were filed with 60 companies, and 25% withdrawn by the proponents when an agreement was reached with management), letters to corporations, church sponsored public hearings, research and publication of information, legal action.

The issues addressed are also much broader than the narrow morality of owning stock in tobacco and liquor. During the last decade as this movement has blossomed within denominations and orders; we have seen church representatives filing stockholder resolutions, speaking at annual shareholder meetings, holding investigatory hearings, and initiating fact finding trips. The latter included:

1. Bank loans to South Africa
2. The environmental effects of strip mining
3. Copper mining in Puerto Rico
4. Military contracting
5. B-1 bomber
6. Foreign military sales
7. Military personnel
8. Illegal political contributions
9. Foreign political contributions
10. Equal employment opportunity
11. Women and corporations
12. Images of women and minorities on television
13. Images of women in advertising
14. Corporate investment in South Africa
15. Corporate investment in Latin America
16. Corporate investment in Korea
17. Infant formula
18. Appropriate agricultural technology
19. Cash cropping
20. Land ownership and leasing
21. Sponsors of violence on television
22. Corporate ownership: Top 30 shareholders
23. Quality and pricing of drugs

In reciting the strategies employed and the social issues addressed by the church shareholder I trust I have



indicated the serious intent of these institutional investors. It is a seriousness which we believe is being mirrored among other institutional investors including major foundations, universities, insurance companies, mutual funds, pension funds, state and city portfolios. A large number of them are corresponding with management, voting on shareholder resolutions, and holding discussions with management on social issues.

That corporations affect our lives every day in a vast number of ways is a reality recognized by all levels of American society. The vast power and influence of U.S. transnational corporations is self-evident. It is expressly because of the influence and power of the U.S. transnational, a wealth and power surpassing that of dozens of nation states, that a meaningful set of checks and balances must be built.

The U.S. government obviously has an essential role in creating these checks and balances as do the governments of other countries. However, this job is so important that there need to be many other actors to insure that the corporation acts as a responsible citizen.

The existence and charter of the corporation have been made legitimate by laws passed by this government, and, I believe, are based on a larger social contract between the institution of the corporation and the society at large. It is necessary to have a wide variety of analysts within the corporation and without it, within the government and without it, to assess whether the corporation is living up to its social contract.

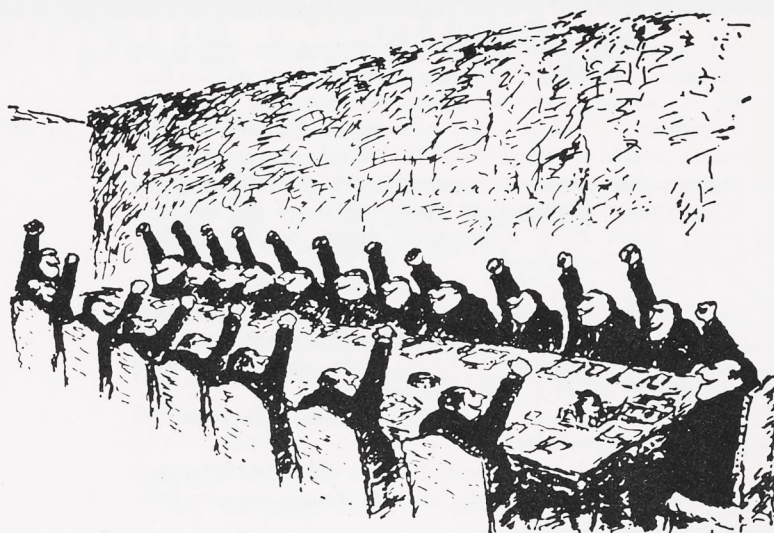
The church investors working through the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility are convinced that individual and institutional shareholders must play a role in building those checks and balances. It is a task that has taken many dollars and the energy of hundreds of persons in the churches over the last decade.

In light of these facts, it might be appropriate to indicate some of the lessons learned as churches have attempted to test the strengths and limits of "corporate democracy."

First, the corporate deck is inevitably stacked in favor of management. "Corporate democracy" is a clear fabrication, a fairy tale bearing little or no relationship to reality.

The conventional wisdom is that a corporation is owned by and operates for the benefit of its shareholders and that the Board of Directors and management exist to direct the affairs of the company and to protect shareholder interests. Supposedly the Board (the legislature) is responsible to the shareholders (the electorate) who have the power to replace them if management or the Board acts irresponsibly. Managements often refer to "your company" when addressing shareholders at annual meetings. The implication is that the annual meeting is a major event in corporate governance.

Another piece of conventional wisdom is that most corporations are owned by thousands of small shareholders. The theory is of course vastly different from the



*"All power to the board of directors!"*

reality: Corporate management and the Board act as an oligarchy. The rules of the game allow little input, oversight or control by the shareholders. For instance, shareholders have few means available to censure or alter a Board or management which has misused shareholder money by making sizeable domestic or foreign political payments or bribes.

Based on years of frustration with the proxy rules, a number of church investors are filing a major brief with the SEC as it reviews these rules. This brief will call for changes in the present rules to try to bring the concept of shareholder democracy closer to reality.

For instance, who are the real shareholders of American corporations? Much of that information is shrouded in secrecy since voting control and real ownership is often hidden behind nominee names. Many corporate executives state that they, themselves, do not know who their major holders are.

Recent research, however, may show that there is much more concentration in stockholder voting power than we are aware of. The Corporate Data Exchange, a New York based research group, has published a book on the principal stockholders of corporations in the transportation industry. The information on Gulf Oil and Mobil Oil is very revealing. It cites that the top 25 Gulf shareholders vote 22.06% of the stock and the top 25 Mobil shareholders vote 25.15% of Mobil's stock. This is a far cry from the image of a corporation owned by the small shareholder.

The conventional image of a corporation run on behalf of shareholders varies greatly with reality. Some corporate critics even talk about the disenfranchised and powerless shareholder. Moreover, for shareholders concerned about the social performance of their corporation there is



precious little information. Without information it is virtually impossible to evaluate the social bottom line just as it would be impossible to evaluate financial performance. This is why a number of church investors have joined in petitions to the SEC to require corporations to make disclosures to shareholders of relevant information on equal employment opportunity and the environment. Much more information could be legitimately requested. For instance:

- Should there be extensive additional information required on "questionable payments" overseas? Do shareholders deserve to know more about how their money was spent in such payments?
- Should banks be required to disclose their exposure overseas by country?
- Should major military contractors disclose particulars about their foreign military sales or details on who their subcontractors are?
- Should disclosure of information be required by U.S. transnational corporations regarding wages, benefits and working conditions for subsidiaries overseas?
- Should the activities of corporate lobbyists who are supposedly acting on behalf of the shareholders be fully public?

In many cases, disclosure of information of this type clearly overlaps with the financial interests of the stockholder. Increasingly, patterns of discrimination in employment or disregard for the environment result in costly legal battles, sizeable financial settlements and expensive compensatory programs within the company. The series of corporate scandals over political payoffs at home and abroad have had similar financial repercussions within the corporate community.

The social performance of a company and its financial bottom line are often closely connected. Regrettably, very little of this kind of information is readily available to shareholders or the affected public. There are a few signs of increased corporate disclosure that deserve note: Bank of America adopted a code of voluntary disclosure. General Motors produces an annual booklet for shareholders on issues of corporate responsibility. Chase Manhattan has produced a similar report this year. Over 30 companies we are aware of have made Equal Employment Opportunity reports. Over 25 corporations have produced reports on their South African operations. However, these are still the tip of the iceberg.

Yet, while these issues are clearly part of the roster of shareholder responsibilities, their ability to understand, much less affect, corporate policy is severely limited.

Much more is required besides information if individual or institutional shareholders are to exercise a meaningful role in encouraging socially responsible corporate policies.

The corporate system needs to be opened wide to allow increased participation by the "shareholder citizen," the

fractional owner of the corporation. Instead of tightening the proxy rules and making it more difficult for shareholders to communicate to each other, and the management and the Board (a posture taken by many corporate secretaries who have tried to further restrict the SEC rules regarding the filing of shareholder resolutions) the proxy rules should be opened up to facilitate healthy shareholder input on social and financial matters.

For instance, since Boards of Directors are self-selecting and generally members of the corporate network, should not the shareholders have the opportunity to propose alternate candidates who can be voted on by all shareholders?

Shouldn't the proxy rules be rewritten so that shareholders are easily able to file stockholder resolutions requesting information or the redress of a social grievance?

Shouldn't companies be required to meet near concentrations of shareholders instead of retreating to inaccessible spots such as Wilmington, Del., for a closeted and rapid meeting unencumbered by shareholder questions or comments. Some of America's most prominent corporations such as Bristol Myers, American Home Products, Newmont Mining, Coca Cola follow this practice of "if you have to have a shareholder meeting once a year make it impossible for shareholders to come."

Other suggestions for considerations for rule changes might include:

Requiring corporations to include the names of proponents of the resolution in the proxy statement.

Requiring a secret ballot. Presently management often resolicits votes of stockholders voting for certain resolutions.

Allowing adequate time for debate of resolutions at annual meetings.

Requiring cumulative voting.

Allowing ready access to lists of stockholders.

Insuring that unmarked ballots are not automatically voted for management.

Consideration should be given to major revisions of the corporate system to help democratize it. The basic point is this: A new set of rules needs to be formulated to allow and assist shareholders to play a creative role in building checks and balances for U.S. corporations. To ignore this need relegates the shareholder to a position of simply collecting dividend cheques and denies the broadening of both the rights and responsibilities of shareholders.

*[For further information concerning the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, write to Tim Smith, ICCR, Room 566, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027. For a free brochure describing the Corporate Data Exchange's Stock Ownership Directory of the Transportation Industry referred to in this article, write CDE, Room 707, 198 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10038].*



# The Clergy Surplus Challenge

by Jones B. Shannon

Recently the clergy surplus problem began to attract attention as though it were "news." I think there was a surplus even as far back as 1970. At least, so it seemed to those of us who were then serving on the Joint Commission on Deployment of the Clergy.

My own exposure began as early as 1957 when for some 10 years I traveled the country as Executive Director of the Church Society for College Work. Not being part of the bureaucracy, I was no threat, so clergy often confided in me on the difficulty they had in moving from one job to another.

This came as something of a shock. I had entered seminary in 1949 when everyone was bemoaning the shortage of clergy. Brochures were published (paid for by concerned laypersons), campuses were canvassed for recruits and the late Leslie Glenn about 1960 founded "More Men for the Ministry," the very title of which caused a few eyebrows to be raised in the later 1960's and 70's.

If the truth would be known, it is doubtful that a real shortage existed, even in those halcyon days. My own awareness of the surplus increased as a result of working for parishes as a consultant to vestries seeking a new rector. Those of us working for Consultation/Search, Inc. were besieged by telephone calls and letters to be followed by resumes from persons seeking a new position.

These experiences proved to me beyond the shadow of a doubt that the church was in real trouble in its deployment situation. In 1970 I began an article on the subject with this paragraph: "Most Episcopal laity still hold to the opinion that there is a shortage of Episcopal clergy. They are surprised when told that far from a shortage, there is definitely a surplus. The question really turns on how massive the surplus is. Bishops are under no illusions about a 'job shortage' when faced with the necessity of finding a cure for one of their graduating seminarians or attempting to help a priest who wants to move. . . ."

If it was bad then, one can only say it is much worse now. A few figures will help substantiate the fact. In 1970 there were a little over 11,000 clergy; now there are about 13,000 with approximately the same number of parishes and

missions (7,500). Ordinations to the priesthood continue to exceed age and disability retirements each year, and candidates for ordination were 510 in 1970 compared with a reported 669 in 1976. The latter is confused by the elimination of the category "postulant," so that not too much weight should be attached to the higher recent figure. Enrollment in seminaries has remained about constant with perhaps some slight decrease in 1977. It seems to be a fact of life therefore, that the number of clergy will continue to increase each year into the foreseeable future.

Yet, the number of baptized members and communicants is decreasing while the general population increases. Furthermore, there are more and more marginal parishes and missions. Practically every diocesan bishop is faced with a growing list of small parishes which face serious budgetary problems, to say nothing of missions whose budgets require larger and larger supplementary payments in order to survive.

## Full, Part Time Dilemma

In 1969 a study reported that 25% of parishes and missions were comprised of 90 communicants or less, and these congregations had annual incomes of \$9,521 or less, obviously insufficient to support a full-time priest. In some instances two or more churches were served by one priest, and this continues to be the case. However, if one priest did serve only one such small congregation, that priest would be underemployed because his or her full time could not be used creatively in the customary manner of serving a congregation. This leaves a question: In what other ways can time be used creatively?

The same 1969 survey showed that 50% of the parishes and missions had annual incomes of \$21,000 or less. Perhaps at that time this amount was about the break-even point for a parish to be self-supporting. However, in the intervening years since 1969, the cost of everything has gone up. Unless marginal parishes have been able to increase their incomes they have now slipped into the not fully self-supporting category. Certainly it becomes harder and harder to keep the doors open in at least half of our parishes and missions, while the clergy serving these churches are in an increasingly precarious position as far as employment is concerned. This conclusion is substantiated by a report circulated by the Clergy Deployment Office at General

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**The Rev. Jones B. Shannon** was in the investment business prior to his preparing for a ministry which began with parish work but led him into many aspects of the problems of clergy deployment.



Convention in 1976. Among the trends noted from 1970 to 1974 were the following:

- Total number of clergy has increased 7.3%. There is an annual net increase of 200 clergy per year.
- Baptized membership decreased by 11.6%; communicant membership by 6.7%.
- Parochial ministries represent three-fifths of the clergy.
- In parochial ministries 7% of all presbyters in charge, or assisting, are non-stipendiary.
- Non-stipendiary clergy have increased by 70.5% and they are now one-fifth of all clergy.

Much has happened since 1974. There are even more clergy, fewer baptized persons and fewer communicants. Instead of 11 fully accredited seminaries we now have 10, as two have merged. (This was the extent of the response to a position taken by the Board of Theological Education that the number of seminaries be reduced to five). As more men and women are ordained they join the ranks of those seeking a position within the system.

### 'Within System' Key Phrase

*Within the system* may be the key phrase. As stated earlier, there was a time in the late 1940's and early '50's when the cry, "*more men for the ministry*" was sounded on all sides. When a man enrolled in seminary two things were generally assumed: One, that he would be ordained; and two, that he would be taken care of *within the system* until he died or was retired.

Bishops debated their responsibility to "their" men on the basis that it was their duty to be sure that the priests resident in "their" dioceses had jobs. The sense of responsibility was particularly keen when "their" men entered seminary, and were ordained in "their" dioceses, and were placed by them when the men became deacons. Less responsibility was felt toward men who transferred into the diocese, but not much less. It was recognized that some dioceses sent more men to seminary than they could ordinarily place, so that some dioceses were "exporters" and others "importers" of clergy.

When a man first became interested in going to seminary the first step was to tell his rector or perhaps his college chaplain, who would then tell his bishop. If everything seemed normal, i.e., he had or was about to get his college degree and felt a strong call to the ministry, he became a postulant and was sponsored by his parish. Seminaries did not accept a man unless he intended to become a candidate for ordination. There were other steps such as approval by the Standing Committee and a bill of health from a psychiatrist. Often a part or all of the cost was paid by or through the seminary of his bishop's choice.



Once in the system, the man tended to look to "mother church" to direct and rule his life. To be sure, he had some choices (although often he had to have his bishop's and seminary dean's permission if he wanted to get married in course). After he was ordained priest he could decide to accept or reject a call from a parish or other approved judicatory. He could "progress" about as far as his talents would allow with little or no worry about having a job.

To say that all this has changed is greatly to understate the situation. An early development was one-year fellowships offered by the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation for outstanding men to test their vocation by spending a year in seminary without any decision prior to admission concerning ordination. This forced the seminaries to modify their policy with respect to ordination.

For the past several years men and women often have entered seminary without any sponsorship by a parish and often without the knowledge, let alone consent, of any bishop. A few years ago women began to enroll for a degree to allow them to become directors of religious education or fill a teaching position. Today, the process of candidacy may be initiated by persons *at any time* during their seminary career. It is not even assumed that a person will even take the General Ordination Examination. Nor do many, if any, seminarians operate under the illusion that "mother church" will look after its graduates.

Dean Harvey Guthrie, Jr., of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge spoke to the problem with admirable



forthrightness in the Spring, 1977, issue of *E.D.S. News*. Addressing the question, "Why do seminaries keep taking so many people?" he answers that "the church's ministry cannot be equated with *paid* jobs for *ordained* ministers." He goes on to point out that every Christian has a ministry and that "the ministry" is not to be identified only with ordained ministers.

Further, he states that even the need for *ordained* ministers cannot be equated with paid job openings. It seems that bishops and others by implication must find new ways of providing ordained ministers to congregations that cannot finance full-time positions. Dean Guthrie contends that with this caveat seminaries would be "shortsighted, irresponsible, suicidal" to reduce enrollments and "leave the church increasingly undersupplied with educated ministers."

Not everyone will agree with his position nor with his point that in this new situation seminaries must now help seminarians to help themselves and by implication go out and create jobs for themselves as well as raising or causing to be raised the money necessary to fund such a ministry.

This is a far cry from the approach which many in the church have ever thought possible. It certainly means that great care must be exercised in the kinds of persons who are admitted as students. In the not too distant past many who sought ordination tended to be passive, dependent psychological types. Not all, of course, and those that were noticeably so, often experienced difficulties because the jobs they were asked to do involved being a self-starter.

If the previous situation seemed to encourage persons who tended to be passive, the situation which Dean Guthrie sees as the present norm requires persons with resourcefulness, imagination, healthy aggressiveness and considerable courage along with the ever needed qualities of commitment to Christ, love of God and neighbor, and a call to service.

A move in that direction may be underway. I am told that persons entering our seminaries today are of higher caliber and more often than not decide to apply on their own without being "sent" by a bishop. This in itself, if true, is a healthy sign boding well for the future. It also may well be that having women in seminaries will increasingly prove to have a salutary effect on the educational process and will mean that more "whole" (holy) persons will be presented for ordination and/or will find a fruitful ministry.

## Women's Issue Not Settled

The times are difficult, trite but true. At the recent meeting of the House of Bishops in Florida it was

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### NICODEMUS

He is a hollow-headed fool  
But is considered bright.  
He comes by night  
(A damn good thing)  
To ask his silly question  
Though quite intelligent it seems . . .  
To seek salvation requires sincere concern  
But offers no pat answer(s).  
No wonder  
Gentle Jesus calls him  
Stupid.

Alyce S. Kyle

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abundantly clear that the issue of the ordination of women is not finally settled. Furthermore, the bishops considered the ordination of persons without ecclesiastical support or position. This means there will be a review of the canon which forbids the ordering of a priest unless the ordinand has a parochial cure, is a missionary under an ecclesiastical authority, is an officer of some recognized missionary society, is a hospital, welfare or military chaplain, or chaplain or instructor in some college or seminary, "with opportunity for the exercise of his ministry judged sufficient by the bishop."

(One change indicated would be in the personal pronoun, in light of the action of General Convention approving the ordination of women!)

Two things seem to be happening. On the one hand, more and more parishes and missions are in financial difficulties, some being kept afloat by non-stipendiary clergy as attested by the 7% figure given earlier. The percentage is undoubtedly higher now. Nevertheless, at least half of the parishes and missions are in trouble and many will not survive if they hold to the tradition of a full-time paid priest serving only one small congregation.

On the other hand, the increasing number of non-parochial and non-stipendiary clergy may be the "wave of the future" by which the church may be lifted up and carried into new and uncharted places with new and different forms of ministry, along with the modification and renewal of old forms. Thus the "surplus" itself may serve and may be serving as a catalyst by which new beginnings are undertaken through the imagination, resourcefulness and initiative of a new generation of clergy unhampered by the restrictions of past presuppositions.

This is a tall order and will not come to pass without struggle and travail. But it is a hope with signs of fulfillment already present, dependent, as is all Christian hope, on God in Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. ■



# Looking for My Roots

by Mary Lou Suhor

THE WITNESS from time to time calls an editorial consultation to ask various and assorted folks we feel are representative of our readership to give candid criticisms of the magazine. From our last meeting came the suggestion: "Why don't you let the readers know who you are? The personality of the staff does not emerge sufficiently through the editorial pages."

In a moment of madness, I volunteered to be the first to answer the question, "Who are you?" Flip answers come to mind: THE WITNESS' answer to the Dragon Lady. . . or "I am Mary Lou Suhor, have blue eyes, naturally curly hair, a mole in the middle of my forehead, and am doing pretty good for a person of my age and weight, thanks."

But instead, I'd like to describe how I spent my vacation last autumn in serious pursuit of the question, inspired by Alex Haley's "Roots." In case you've wondered but never dared to ask, Suhor is a Dalmatian name. We're French and Gypsy by heritage. Grandfather Suhor was a bar pilot on the Mississippi River before he died at a very early age. But my father's mother was French, and my mother's parents were French immigrants. So, not being quite courageous enough to pursue the Gypsy strain, I set out for la belle France.

From childhood I had been fascinated by my grandmother's stories of how she, Marie, and her husband, Joanes Porte, had sailed from Bordeaux to New York steerage class. They were in their late 20's, and were accompanied by her young son, Etienne (from my widowed grandmother's first marriage). My grandmother had met my grandfather in a small tobacco shop she was running, and off they went to the New World with only \$100 in their pockets. Unable to speak English, they headed straight for the French Quarter in New Orleans, the city where practically everybody in my family was born. My mother learned English when she went to school.

Life was hard for immigrants in the Promised Land. My grandfather worked most of his life in the *abattoir* or slaughterhouse. My grandmother took charge of the home/work projects — cultivating the vegetable garden and supervising the milking and making of cheese and

butter which the children sold, along with chickens, before they went to school in the morning. Etienne died at 14 from scrofula.

There was a concerted effort to "Americanize." The grandchildren, it was decided, would speak only English to facilitate their entrance into the American dream. Thus it was that when I went to France, I launched out unable to speak the language, except for the words of a few lullabies that I remembered plus a number of cuss words us kids seemed to have a knack for picking up. I had studied Spanish in high school; there was no French teacher in our public school.

My parents had visited our cousins in Assat some 15 years earlier when on a tour of Europe, but only had three hours with them before they had to get back on the bus. My mother gave me a photo taken at that time, a letter in French identifying me as a member of the family, and told me to get a cab from Lourdes and ask the driver to find the address.

Easy for her to say; she speaks French perfectly. The day I approached the line of taxi drivers at the train station with my Berlitz book, I struggled with the sentence,



Great-grandfather Pierre & Marie Louise

"Y-a-t-il quelqu'un qui parle espagnol?" "Si, senora." And so it was that I bargained with a driver (in Spanish) to take me to Assat (in a taxi) to find my cousins (in French). As we conversed enroute I discovered it would have been easier to detrain at Pau, but "*c'est la vie*."

Arriving at Assat we stopped at the gas station to ask about my cousins. The driver of a car which had just pulled in knew them and gave directions to their home.

Our arrival, for me, was like watching two foreign movies at once without subtitles. Seven of my cousins were trying to speak to me in French, I was asking the driver in Spanish to tell them that I couldn't understand, and the driver was trying to speak in French and Spanish to communicate with both of us. Suddenly I heard a voice say, "Do you understand?"

It turned out to be my teen-age cousin, Jean-Luc, who was studying English at school and who was to escort me and interpret during most of my stay. Thanks to Jean-Luc, and to my young cousins Evelyne, Agnes, Pascal, Eric and Odile who were also studying English, I was able to trace the history of the family tree with some accuracy. My prized possession is a photo given to me of my great-grandfather, Pierre, with my grandfather's sister, Marie Louise (my name!) when she was in the convent. Our family had never seen this.

My French cousin-hosts, Gerard and Josette Larque, were delighted that the children could communicate with me. Parents frequently are unable to observe such practical results of what their children learn in school, and the children were excited about the new world that had opened up. "I enjoy to speak these words," Jean-Luc told me more than once. To our delight, Josette discovered that she could understand my Spanish (as did others of my cousins, living that close to the Pyrenees). So early on, thanks to the children's English, some French, some Spanish, many gesticulations, and very much love, it became clear that we would be communicating.

Gradually they pieced together the family tree for me—the story of how life was passed down, as Houselander once said, "from generation to generation, kiss



to kiss." I tried to fill in the blanks for them as to what happened after Joanes and Marie arrived in the United States. I was carrying photos of my family taken at my own parents' 50th wedding anniversary in June, and identified all the "American cousins."

My French cousins work the fields in Assat, growing a wide variety of vegetables—lettuce, spinach, onions, cabbage. The children also have a field for which they are responsible.

My cousins would be in the fields by 7 a.m. and by 10 a.m. would "have 1,000 salads cut," Jean-Luc told me. Two helpers would wash the vegetables in the river and crate them. Then Josette would drive the produce to the local co-op for sale, as Gerard returned to the fields.

Dining with them was sheer joy. Madame Penouilh cooked the meals, every one a *cordons bleu* masterpiece, put together from fresh produce from the farm, preceded by an aperitif and accompanied by French wine. Her *garbure* soup was just like my grandmother's.

I was treated to a succession of these gourmet's delights for five days, as I traveled to be introduced at one cousin's home, then another, in Pau, Nay, Jurancon, Assat. The energy of the elderly, especially, amazed me. When I visited my grandmother's cousin, Madame Palengat, the 85-year-old woman was tending the

rabbits, and at the same time preparing vegetables for canning.

And for all you sports fans out there, my family tree turned up a national soccer star—Jean Michel Larque, of Bizanos, who starred for and captained the St. Etienne team to national and international victories recently.

There were many touching interludes: The children took me to the parish church to see where they and their parents had been baptized, and to the local town monument where my grandfather had played as a child; Josette accompanied me to bring flowers to the cemetery and to say a prayer at the tombs where our ancestors were buried; then she took me to gather souvenir leaves from the 200-year-old chestnut trees, which were standing even when my great-grandfather cultivated the land.

On the fourth day of my visit, I went downstairs for the lovely breakfast of aromatic, piping hot *cafe-au-lait* and bread and butter, and was surprised to see a photographer and a young woman in the living room. None of my cousins being around, I ventured, "*Bonjour. Je suis Marie Louise Suhor de los Estados Unidos,*" confusing my French and Spanish. The woman replied in perfect English, "We are looking for the American journalist."

They were from *Sud-Ouest*, (circulation 350,000), published out of Bordeaux, and

wanted to interview me about my "Roots" trip. Such turnabouts are a bit jarring, if not unique for a reporter, so after Caroline de Lacoste completed her interview; I asked her questions for an hour:

- On the difficulties of being a woman journalist in a man's world in Europe: They are "formidable" but this brilliant young woman who also holds a law degree and learned English while an exchange student in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1971, is holding her own;

- On the local area: Pau has a Socialist Mayor and the town council of 40 members is comprised of 35 Socialists and 5 Communists; the people are either farmers or industrial workers, the area being rich in natural gas;

- On her own background: She was born in Cameroun and her father decided to leave when the political climate clouded to establish a business in Dax.

Then I took *her* photo. This experience was to give me the first inkling of my French family's politics. When the interview came out the next day, Jean-Luc went out to buy copies of the paper. My cousins, it seems, receive either *L'Eclair* or *La Republique*, the Socialist papers published out of Pau.

Leaving my cousins after five days of eating, drinking, touring and loving exchanges was an emotional disaster. And I was loaded down with gifts: A coffee mug from Nay, souvenir linens from the days of my grandfather, family initials sewn in; photos, leaves. Jean-Luc gave me a necklace he was wearing. I gave Josette a necklace I was wearing.

My farewell dinner was a "con-celebration." The children were all going back to school the next day, some of them to boarding school, so they, too, got a glass of wine at table.

At the end of the meal, they all lined up to say goodbye to the American cousin: Celine, Dominique, Laurent, Jean-Marc, and all of those named before. Said Eric, with a bow and a handshake, "You will *writ* to us?"

Fear not, Eric. I will *writ* to you. Maybe even about you. After I waved "adieu" to all who had come to see me off at the train station, I cried happily and silently all the way to the Spanish border.

Dear Lord, if this be France, what might Dalmatia bring? ■



Mary Lou Suhor, seated center, and French cousins: Clockwise, Gerard, Josette, Jean-Marc, Evelyne, Pascal, Agnes, Marie, and Mme. Penouilh.



## Motion Pending for Release of Women

A motion for the release of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin was taken under advisement by Judge Robert L. Carter in New York Dec. 5, after attorneys for the women argued that further incarceration would be merely punitive and not achieve its intended purpose, to coerce them to testify. As THE WITNESS went to press, no decision had been reached.

Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin, executive director and secretary, respectively, of the Episcopal Church's National Commission on Hispanic Affairs, have been in jail since early March for refusing to answer questions before a Grand Jury investigating bombings by a group which calls itself the FALN. The women have contended that answering questions in secret session before a Grand Jury would be a breach of the confidences they shared with Hispanics in their lay ministry, and would have a chilling effect on the social mission of the church, to which they were committed.

Their position was backed by a broad segment of the Christian community, in

letters and affidavits presented to the Court. Eugene Scheiman, representing the National Council of Churches of Christ, and Robert S. Potter, representing Bishops Paul Moore, Francisco Reus-Froylan and Robert L. DeWitt, joined Ms. Cueto's and Ms. Nemikin's attorneys in arguments for their release.

The two women have been in jail for more than nine months, and could remain there until May 8. Grand Jury reform bills by Rep. Joshua Eilberg of Pennsylvania and Rep. John Conyers of Michigan currently in Congress, would cut to six months the maximum incarceration period for persons held in contempt.

Ironically, the U.S. District Judge who originally held the women in contempt, Marvin Frankel, says in his book, *The Grand Jury, an Institution on Trial*, "The existing oddity of holding a federal witness in jail for the remaining life of the Grand Jury seems uniquely undesirable, as does any rule that measures imprisonment by some fortuitous irrelevancy."

Seven other persons, in addition to Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin, are being held in contempt of Grand Juries in Chicago and New York. They were all somehow connected with the NCHA. Messages of support and greetings for the New Year can be sent to:

Maria Cueto, 00406-183  
Metropolitan Correction Center,  
Room L-583  
150 Park Row  
New York NY 10007

Raisa Nemikin, 00446-183  
Metropolitan Correction Center,  
Room M-593  
150 Park Row  
New York NY 10007

Julio Rosado, 07163-158  
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North  
150 Park Row  
New York NY 10007

Andres Rosado, 07164-158  
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North

150 Park Row  
New York NY 10007

Luis Rosado, 07165-158  
Metropolitan Correction Center, 5-North  
150 Park Row  
New York NY 10007

Pedro Archuleta, 06775-158  
Metropolitan Correction Center  
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.  
Chicago IL 60604

Ricardo Romero  
Metropolitan Correction Center  
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.  
Chicago IL 60604

Jose Lopez  
Metropolitan Correction Center  
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.  
Chicago IL 60604

Roberto Caldero  
Metropolitan Correction Center  
Dearborn & Van Buren Sts.  
Chicago, IL 60604

—M.L.S.



Raisa Nemikin



Maria Cueto



*Continued from page 2*

canons are reversed a bishop can, and probably will, inhibit women priests. When if the canons are reversed, your bishop writes to every priest in the diocese that they are not to permit you to perform any sacerdotal function at any time, anywhere within their cures what will you do? Celebrate in a living room? If you do, the priest in whose cure you are may, if he knows about it, find himself without a cure anywhere ever again. Would you want to do that to your friends?

How under those circumstances will you take communion to the sick, absolve the penitent, bless a marriage, or the poor, or the persecuted? What will you do when women come to you for counsel about their vocations? What will you tell them? Enter a convent? Marry a priest?

You, I and all women priests accept the priesthood of the members of CAM and others who think as they do. There is no need for them to hide in caves or anywhere else but, believe me, they are not willing to let you or me or any woman continue to function as priests if they can stop it. If they get their way, you will find that doors now open to you will be closed, those who smile at you now will turn their backs. God accepts our priesthood but certain rulers of the church do not.

Let us by all means "get on with our ministry" but let us also face reality. I add my voice to Sue's. Beware!

**The Rev. Jeannette Piccard**  
Minneapolis, Minn.

## Church Full of Surprises

I've just read Jeffrey Hart's rather amazing syndicated column on the Episcopal Church.

As a recently confirmed Episcopalian whose first interest in the church was faith and not structure or politics, I find myself surprised almost every day by the wide-ranging controversies that have been bursting into print.

So I thought that as long as Mr. Hart was kind enough to tell me where to order "Struggling with the System" and how much to send, I'd buy a copy. A church that fosters so much diversity is a lot more interesting than I dared expect.

**Sharon Smith**  
Hartland, Me.

## More Than Toe-Aches

A suggestion: There are various problems of greater significance than the local toe-aches of the Protestant Episcopal

babies in the various "Libs"—concentrating on their own navels, in my opinion.

Some better foci are subjects wracking society, to which the old "Church Union," "The Church Militant," "Christians for Socialism," and the Blessed Frank Huntington, OHC gave their strength. Nevertheless, carry on, because we have little else in our denomination.

**The Rev. Jack Russell**  
Boston, Mass.

## Sexism Still Major Issue

*THE WITNESS received a copy of the following letter from Edna M. Pittenger on behalf of the Los Angeles Chapter of Church and Society:*

### An open letter to the House of Bishops:

Recent comments by the Presiding Bishop and the subsequent "vote of confidence" you extended to him at Port Saint Lucie clearly indicate that sexism

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### CORRECTION

In the story about Tierra Amarilla in the December issue ("Missing Pedro, But Moving On") *THE WITNESS* incorrectly identified the Moises Morales infant, who died recently, as a daughter instead of a son.

Since the article appeared, *THE WITNESS* has also learned that the University of New Mexico Medical School recently evaluated the maternity program at La Clinica, under contract funds from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The study showed that before the program was in full swing, only 20% of the women in the area went through prenatal and postnatal care. Today, because of the influence of La Clinica, nearly 80% of the women utilize prenatal and postnatal care, either at La Clinica or through the public health department, with which La Clinica is in close contact.

This was seen as the biggest factor in the reduction of the infant mortality rate, now down to 17 per 1,000, as over against 36 per 1,000 in the area in 1969.

The NCHA of the Episcopal Church was one of the groups which helped to fund the maternity wing of La Clinica.

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continues to be a major issue for the Episcopal Church.

It is appalling and disturbing to learn that those in positions of power are "above the law". There have been other occasions in the past when the Presiding Bishop has chosen to ignore church law. He had been subpoenaed to appear as a witness in the trial of the Rev. William Wendt in Washington, D.C. in 1975 and refused to do so; recently in St. Louis he received communion from one of the dissident priests who had been deposed by Bishop Rusack of Los Angeles; and now he has ignored a decision by the Church's General Convention to admit women to the priesthood by declaring that he does not believe women can be priests "any more than they can be fathers or husbands." This is a ridiculous statement and leaves little doubt that his opposition to women priests is based purely on the fact that, in his view, they are the wrong sex. The issue should not be a question of sexual preference or biological makeup; the Call has gone out to women, not only from God, but from lay people who yearn for fresh new expressions of ministry from those who have too long been excluded.

Collegiality and abuse of authority prevail in the Church. Affirmation of those priests and bishops who, in opposition to Church law, refuse to ordain women or accept their ministry, is not a decision for John Allin or the House of Bishops to make. The *whole* Church has spoken positively on the issue in its General Convention over a year ago. If the Presiding Bishop's "conscience" will not permit him to ordain women or receive communion from them it is only proper that he *must* step down as the leader of the Episcopal Church!

**Los Angeles Chapter**  
Church & Society

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### COMING UP IN THE WITNESS

*Ellen Barrett reports on the Women's Meeting in Houston; Sandy Cutler on the Urban Coalition Hearings in Newark; John Bennett on Urban Theology; James Cone and Howard Dodson on Black Theology... and MORE ...*

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