

# THE WITNESS

VOL. 62, NO. 4  
APRIL, 1979  
\$1.00

ARCHIVES AND HISTORICAL  
COLLECTIONS, EPISCOPAL  
CH. RCH  
AUSTIN, TEXAS

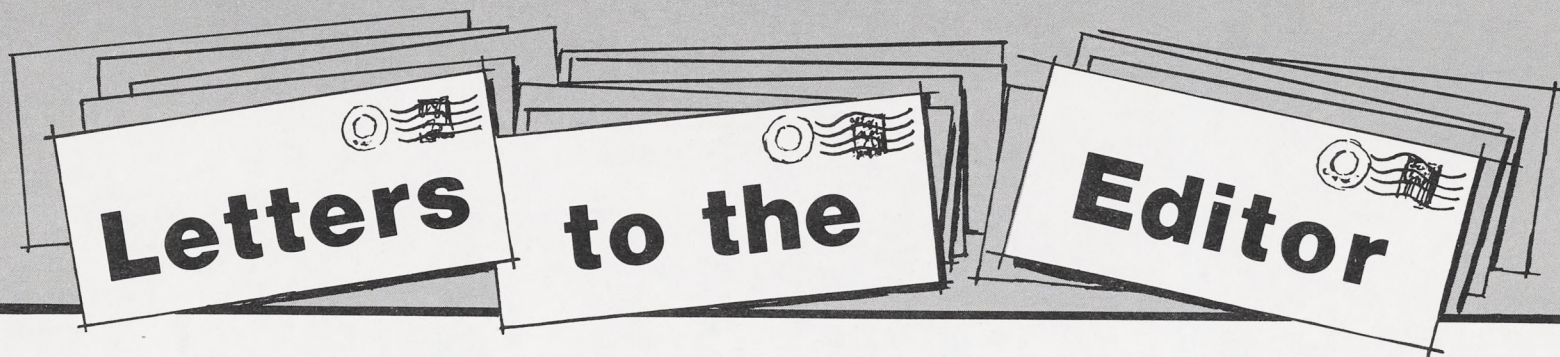
**Puebla: Watershed  
For Roman Catholics**

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LATIN AMERICA



## Clergywife Seeks Support System

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

This is a letter that has been in the wastebasket a number of times, and now, it is being written hurriedly, before I lose my gumption — and before someone can pooh-pooh it, causing me to scurry back in the corner like a scared rabbit.

When I married five years ago, it was a classic storybook affair — love at first sight, hasty courtship, brief engagement, a joyous and beautiful church wedding. Young priest from a parish in New York City's ghetto marries liberal young writer, devoted churchwoman from another large eastern city. It was a romance made for the 1960's.

How many times did people comment on the perfect match, thinking of how deeply involved I had been in the church and how exquisitely transferable those skills, philosophy and devotion would

be to my new role as clergy wife? Indeed, even I was so deluded.

How could I have guessed that I would now assume an unexpected role, that of a totally disenfranchised woman in the church? How could I have known that there would be no priestly counselor to aid me in times of crisis, sorrow or discord? How could I have predicted the sudden feeling of being on the outside of the laity and the clergy? How could I have understood that instead of being sent to General Convention or being a frequent delegate to Diocesan Convention, as so often in the past, I would seem to become invisible at parish meetings when the search was on, sometimes in vain, for suitable candidates?

In essence, how could I have planned for the circumscribing of my life in the church by unspoken expectations of tradition where a clergyman's wife is

viewed as an appendage of his, useful surely as his right arm but meant to be just as silent.

There was no way to guess. There had been no audible complaints from clergy wives I'd known to heighten my awareness or to enlighten my expectations. I had been insensitive to that telling silence that I now know so well.

I had even been amused at the teasing about my becoming a "dowdy parson's wife." That seemed so unrealistic, so Victorian, it was funny. Little was I to guess that there is today in 1979 a real basis for it. True, there barely is a person who expects a clergyman's wife to dress in dour colors (though my penchant for slacks has raised an eyebrow or two in the small town where I now live). Yet, there are those who expect me never to have a controversial opinion, to steer

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## And There Comes a Time

Involuntarily I empathize with Dr. Frances Piven's private anger and her frustrated espousal of the oldest of all "voting" mechanisms: mass protests and large scale defiance. (January WITNESS) Ceremonial voting is particularly empty for the inner city poor and others of society's excommunicated third. At best this symbolic exercise has yielded them only symbolic victories and many tangible defeats. Clearly they

cannot influence policy except by "voting" their outrage, their muscles, their cunning and despair. They deeply understand triage though they have never heard the word. In our system's fiscal crises by formulae they are jettisoned by a faceless elite of which many churches and parishioners are subsorning elements.

This then is to ask Dr. Piven or someone else with competence in the

necessarily related fields to analyze the all too credible power of elitism in our society. Her thesis, in "Private Anger and Public Protest," seems to fly in the face of this institutionalized and all pervasive power. Elitism, according to Thomas R. Dye and L. Harmon Zeigler (in *The Irony of Democracy*), asserts that "society is divided into the few who have power and the many who do not;

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# THE WITNESS

Subscription rates: \$9.00 per year; \$1.00 per copy. *The Witness* is published monthly by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. Board of Directors: Morris Arnold, Robert L. DeWitt, Barbara Harris, Suzanne Hiatt, John E. Hines, Mattie Hopkins, Joan Howarth, H. Coleman McGehee, J. Brooke Mosley, Joseph A. Pelham, Robert S. Potter, Helen Seager. Copyright 1979 by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. Printed in U.S.A.

Robert L. DeWitt, Editor; Mary Lou Suhor, Managing Editor; Kay Atwater, Robert Eckersley, Ann Hunter, Susan Small, Lisa K. Whelan, Hugh C. White, Jr. Editorial and Business Office: P.O. Box 359, Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002. Telephone (215) 643-7067.

## Praxis Makes Perfect

Robert L. DeWitt

The bible has two great companion stories of God's acting on behalf of people — the Passover in the Old Testament and the Resurrection in the New Testament. Each action was a response to a specific human tragedy: one was the enslavement in Egypt of the people of Israel, the other was the crucifixion. Each signaled the release of people for a new and cooperating relationship with God in the ongoing process of creation.

In the Old Testament the Passover was the spring which released the people from their bondage, making possible the Exodus. But God's initiatives always call for a response. God is determined that people join in the divine efforts of creation and redemption. Praxis — a word we are encountering more frequently — denotes the participation of people in that process of the transformation of society. God is leading the world toward "a new heaven and a new earth", and praxis refers to people cooperating with this historical destiny. The word essentially means action in a reciprocal relationship with theory, faith linked with practice, each informing the other. In this issue of THE WITNESS Pablo Richard presents some arresting historical notes on the Exodus, attempting to identify the praxis which that saving event called forth on the part of people.

In the New Testament the Resurrection called forth the people of the new covenant, and the history of the church since then is the account of the ways in which people have been faithful, and at times faithless, in their praxis.

Whenever the church faces a hard decision about the thrust of its mission in and to the world, stubborn realities of reaction often debar it from taking the courageous course, the faithful course. These realities are such factors as prudential considerations of institutional self-preservation, or an unholy alliance — unofficial but powerful — between the church and the established powers of society. This is not a new phenomenon for the people of God. The Old Testament prophets bridled at this same reality in the life of the nation-church which was Israel of old. And Good Friday recalls to Christians this same harsh reality of a fallen world awaiting redemption.

In the days of those prophets, as at the time of the resurrection, this circumstance called for an "over-against" factor, the intervention of a new force, a new praxis. It required people who would at that time and in that place speak out for and represent what the official church at that time and in that place was not capable of doing.

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# Puebla: Watershed For Roman Catholics

by Gary MacEoin and Nivita Riley

*"Latin America today holds 40% of all Roman Catholics, will hold 50% by the year 2000. A Considerable part of the leadership, perhaps more than half, will follow the Puebla guidelines and retreat to the protective sacristy womb, condemning itself to irrelevancy and sterility. But many bishops, priests and religious will stay with the suffering people and share their trials, hopes and ultimate victory. The church of tomorrow will be as different from that of yesterday as was Constantinian Christendom from the church of the catacombs . . ."*

More clearly than ever before, the profound division within the Latin American Roman Catholic Church was evident at the Third Episcopal Conference, Puebla, Mexico, which ended mid-February. On the one side, those who share the cornmeal soup of the poor; on the other, those who from a distance watch them consume their miserable repast.

The two attitudes could almost be distinguished by country. Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Colombia were overwhelmingly conservative. Brazil led the progressives, supported by Peru, Ecuador and some Central Americans. The Mexicans attempted an unstable balancing act, with two Mexican bishops — Manuel Talamas and Jose Llaguno — openly with the progressives.

The objectives of the conservatives were clear, having been set out in the preparatory documents prepared by the bishops' secretariat (CELAM) headed by Colombian Bishop Alfonso Lopez Trujillo. They wanted an outright condemnation of the theology of liberation because it incorporates Marxist ideas incompatible with church teaching. They also wanted to return the clergy to their traditional function of support of the status quo, abandoning the poor for whom in many countries they today constitute the only voice of protest against ever-growing oppression. And, since an "enemy" is always useful to distract people from their real needs, they wanted to revive the anti-Protestantism that has been dormant and by many believed dead since Vatican Council II.

The conservatives were moving from enormous strength. Not only had Lopez Trujillo packed the CELAM secretariat with his own people, but he had the support of the Roman Curia, desperately anxious to maintain the status quo everywhere because of its involvement with the beleaguered Christian Democrats in Italy. This alliance was able to exclude all progressive Latin American theologians from the Puebla Conference, putting the drafting of documents in the hands of conservative Europeans identified as hostile to the theology of liberation. It was said they had the backing of Latin American military dictators and of United States policy makers who shared their fear of social and political change. And their publicity was generously funded by such extreme rightwing Catholic foundations as DeRance of Milwaukee and the European-based Aid to the Suffering Church.

Recognizing the conservative trend in both church and society worldwide in the 1970s, the progressives sought mainly to retain the openings gained at Medellin. Their main argument was that Medellin was neither fully implemented nor exhausted. In addition, the conditions it had described had worsened: Peasants exploited; Indians in subhuman conditions on the margin of society; young people frustrated and disoriented; women robbed of their human and Christian dignity; ever-bigger and more fetid slums; growing unemployment and underemployment.

Pope John Paul II's statements on his visit to open the conference tended to favor the conservatives more than the progressives. Indeed, his major speeches echoed — and presumably were written by — Lopez Trujillo and his associates. He told priests and nuns that they were not politicians and should avoid the tendency "to substitute

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Gary MacEoin and Nivita Riley have an academic background in both Latin American and church affairs, and a combined experience of reporting on world events for half a century between them.

action for prayer." At the formal opening ceremony, he included only one passing reference to the poor. He deplored interpretations of the Medellin documents that were "sometimes contradictory and not always correct or beneficial to the church." And he also had a warning against "excesses" of which some theologians of liberation were "guilty."

His final talks, to the Indians of Oaxaca and the industrial workers of Guadalajara struck a significantly different note, suggesting that feedback on his earlier statements caused him to throw away the prewritten texts and speak for himself. At Oaxaca there was a ringing condemnation of poverty and a clear support of the demands of the Indians to have their lands restored to them. At Guadalajara, he called on the workers — as he had frequently done in Poland — to stand up for their rights. The Pope's visit did more for the conservatives than for the progressives, yet left the major conference issues unresolved.

As the conference got under way, the conservatives made a grave tactical blunder. They had chosen Puebla as probably the most reactionary city in all of Latin America, a place where the bishops would be isolated from outside influences. They decided to mobilize the reactionary opinion of Puebla and present it as representative of what the Latin American "faithful" believed. The local newspapers labeled moderate members of the conference, including Cardinal Landazuri Ricketts of Peru and Archbishop Marcos McGrath of Panama, as subversives and cryptocommunists. The local businessman's council blamed "Marxism in cassocks" as the cause of inflation,

economic instability and trade unions. Women paraded the streets shouting "Christianos, si; comunistas no." Such tactics brought a strong protest from the three presidents of the conference.

This blatant interference undoubtedly helped to make the final documents less conservative than had been anticipated. But they bear all the marks of compromise — self-contradictory, windy, ambiguous, and dull. Undoubtedly, the most significant point is that they do not attempt to condemn the theology of liberation. That represents an overwhelming defeat for Lopez Trujillo. Besides, what slight credibility he may have had was destroyed by the publication in Mexico City's prestigious newspaper *Uno Mas Uno*, of a private letter he had written to a bishop friend a few days after Pope John Paul II was elected. It reveals him as an intriguer without moral or ethical concerns. It effectively rules him out as next president of CELAM, probably also ends his ambition to be named a cardinal.

The final Puebla document dealing with the *comunidades de base* (grassroots communities) that have sprung up everywhere since Medellin is one of the most constructive. Today there are more than 100,000 of them, according to a coordinating center in Mexico. The Brazilians claim to have at least 80,000. A typical community will have 15 to 20 members, usually poor people and neighbors. Each develops its own internal leadership, its priorities and objectives. Church conservatives and military governments



condemn them as centers of conspiracy and Marxist infiltration.

The fact that the Puebla document encourages them is, consequently, important. However, it hedges its approval with an insistence on hierarchical control — totally contrary to the spirit of these communities. If they have a relationship with a priest or minister (and most of them do), it is based on agreement and mutual respect. The stress is on the development of ministry among their own ranks, thus avoiding “clericalization.” They do not accept a priest as pastor and leader just because the bishop assigns him. Some even avoid using the word “minister” because of its clerical overtones, referring to those who perform community services as “animators” or “pastoral agents.” In spite of the reservations in the Puebla document, it is unlikely that this substantial autonomy and distance from the institutional structures will disappear.

On the contrary, the need for the grassroots communities to maintain their internal leadership and autonomy has increased because of a bewildering volte-face on the issue of clerical leadership of the oppressed masses. Taking off from the Pope’s warning to the clergy not to become involved in partisan politics, the conference made a radical distinction between what “belongs” to the laity, and what is of the “competence” of bishops, priests and religious (nuns and brothers). It defines all these officially identified members of the church institution as “ministers of the unity of the church.” They deal with politics “in the wider and superior sense . . . the common good . . . fundamental community values . . . internal harmony and external security,” and such things.

The activities of citizens who seek to resolve “economic, political and social questions,” however, is declared to be “the proper sphere of the laity.” It is precisely in these areas that the battle for human rights and dignity is being fought throughout Latin America, and in most countries all organized resistance other than that under the umbrella of the church has long been crushed. If the clergy were now to withdraw, as the Puebla document recommends, the people would be left defenseless to their enemies.

Extensive discussion with leaders or progressive Catholic movements from all over Latin American who had come to Puebla to make their needs heard, even though from outside the seminary prison within which the bishops had isolated themselves, has convinced us that those who have shared the cornmeal soup of the poor will continue to do so. As Nicaraguan priest, poet and guerrilla leader Ernesto Cardenal expressed it to a cheering audience at Puebla: “*No ecclesiastical document will stop us doing what the Gospel tells us to do.*”

Puebla is thus a clear watershed. Latin America today

holds 40% of all Roman Catholics, will hold 50% by the year 2000. Some considerable part of the leadership, perhaps more than half, will follow the Puebla guidelines and retreat to the protective sacristy womb, condemning itself to irrelevancy and sterility. But many bishops, priests and religious will stay with the suffering people and share their trials, their hopes, their ultimate victory. We can expect that church of tomorrow to be as different from that of yesterday, as was the Constantinian Christendom from the church of the catacombs. The result, far from being a break with the past, will be a return to Christian roots.

One of the more insidious elements in the advance documentation issued by the CELAM secretariat was the charge that a significant factor in the decline of religious belief and practice resulted from the inroads of “liberal” Protestantism. Although toned down in the Puebla statements, the innuendo remains. Indifferentism, they say, is encouraged by religious pluralism. In addition, they charge that many “sectors” are clearly and stubbornly anti-Catholic. The major Protestant contributions to the struggle for liberation are ignored, and ecumenism is limited to “dialogue” and “human development.” Here again, the bishops only reveal how far removed they are from reality. The Reformation as a divisive issue has ended in Latin America. From here on, what exists are progressive Catholics and Protestants against conservative Catholics and Protestants. No document will change that fact. ■

***“Let me say, at the risk of  
appearing ridiculous, that the  
true revolutionary is guided by  
strong feelings of love.”***

**— Che Guevara**

love  
comes  
walking  
on  
a  
fire  
spun  
tight  
sun  
gold  
high  
tension  
wire  
we  
dance  
or  
die

**— linda backiel**

Women at Puebla:

# A Paternalistic Pat on the Head

by Faith Annette Sand

*"Unfortunately, Latin American bishops need a lot of consciousness-raising as to the role of women in the church."*

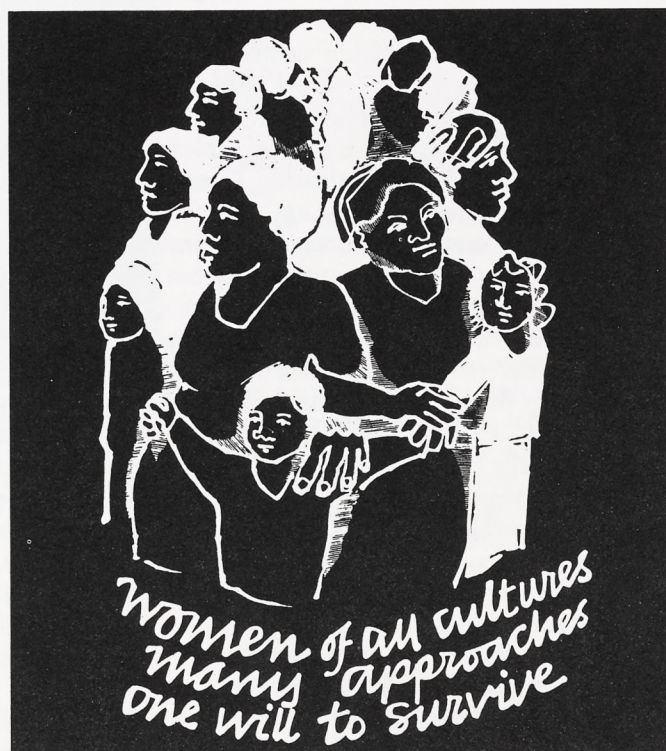
There were 364 official delegates to the third Latin American Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference in Puebla — of whom 23 were women.

What can be said of a church that allows 23 women to speak for 140,000 nuns plus 141 million Catholic women while there are 341 men representing the 47,000 priests and 135 million men in the Latin American church? The officials were quick to point out that it was better than Medellin, the last bishops' conference in 1968, where only 13 women were in attendance. But "better" is still not speaking to the ever-widening gap between the reality and the fantasies of the church's hierarchy.

In a continent where there is one ordained priest for every 6,000 Catholics no one even whispered about the possibility of ordaining women willing to fill in the horrendous gap. A few slight references were made to the role of women in promoting grass roots communities, but it appears that the Catholic hierarchy would rather lose the war than surrender this battle. The only feasible explanation to the male hierarchy's refusal to look at the women's issue with any kind of seriousness seems to be their unwillingness to give up their paternalistic, prestigious status. If women are given even a modicum of power in the church, some men might have to move over. Or some men won't be promoted as hoped.

The sad part of Puebla was that so few Christ-like qualities were shown by these towering representatives of "Christ's church on earth." Certainly Jesus never ignored or belittled women during his peregrination here on earth. Yet one of the privileged 23 women at Puebla — the mother superior of a large order — told how many bishops mocked the comments any woman dared to contribute to the sessions. She overheard one bishop lean towards another to

**Faith Annette Sand** is a freelance religious writer with 18 years experience in Latin America.



Drawing by Bonnie Acker/WIN.

conjecture who had written that speech for a woman speaking on a theological issue.

Of course, there were some who spoke out for women. Certainly Dom Helder Camara — the man who first suggested forming a Latin American bishops conference and called the first meeting in Rio in 1955 — has long been a strong advocate of women's rights within the church. And the Puebla document, besides asking pointed questions such as "Do we in fact live the gospel of Jesus Christ in our continent?" speaks to the oppression of women in a few passages, admitting that "in some cultural groups the women are placed in inferior positions." Some, like the

Latin American bishops "cultural" group. And like most every other Latin American "cultural" group.

When speaking of the participation of the laity in the church the document says that "*women merit special mention*" because they "*today enjoy a participation which each day takes on greater importance in pastoral responsibilities, although in some places this participation is still not sufficiently appreciated.*" Like by the Latin American bishops. The document also admitted that when speaking of the oppression of the indigenous people, the workers, and the marginalized in the cities, that it had to be admitted that "*women in these social categories . . . are doubly oppressed and marginalized.*"

That the document was this vocal about the oppression of women in Latin America is due in a large part to a group who came to Puebla under the aegis of Betsie Hollants and the women's documentation center — CIDHAL — in Cuernavaca, Mexico. In Puebla they called themselves "Women for Dialogue." Rosemary Ruether was there with a group from Garrett Seminary in Chicago, where she teaches. The Women's Ordination Conference also sent representatives from the States. Seminars were held examining the historical roots of discrimination against women and how the institutional church has used women in religious orders to maintain the structures of domination.

The conservative organizers of Puebla had tried to exclude progressive voices from the conference and to preclude any threatening exchange of ideas by not allowing the "enemy" to participate. This meant no liberation theologians should be allowed, nor strong women, nor a real ecumenical presence. The working theory was that if the circle was small enough, control could be maintained. The problem was that within that circle there were some voices, such as Dom Helder's, which couldn't be eliminated. Conservatives knew they had to neutralize these. So 117 Curia-appointed delegates were added to the list of the 1975 representatives from Latin America.

But this manipulation was too obvious, too neat. So the bishops invited the liberation theologians to attend and stay "extramurally" and be available to give "counsel." It didn't take long to figure out that most of the action was happening outside those well-guarded walls of the Palafoxian Seminary where the conference was going on. (A conservative estimate says that at least a fourth of the document was written outside the walls by the excluded theologians who kept in daily contact with various bishops.)

And it didn't take newsmen long to discover that a lot more information was available at the "unofficial" news conferences sponsored daily by a local group of "interested lay persons" — CENCOS, a documentation center in Mexico City. The CENCOS conferences not only gave

theologians such as Gustavo Gutierrez, Leonardo Boff and Jon Sobrino plus liberal bishops a chance to meet the press with a freedom of exchange which was prohibited from the "official" news conferences, but it also provided the women in Puebla a forum for their discussions.

It was here that the CIDHAL group got to dialogue with the media and interested liberation theologians. It was here that the mothers from El Salvador who came all the way by bus to appeal to the bishops got someone to listen to them. They are almost without hope in their search for someone to intercede with their government, to discover the whereabouts and condition of their sons — arrested and most likely tortured for disagreeing with the government. Here the women from Argentina came — the women who walk every Thursday in that mute protest at the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires. They brought a computerized list of the 14,000 people who have disappeared in the last 10 years in Argentina. (To the government these people have become "non-persons." But when one looks into the eyes of a mother who has two sons on that list, one knows that no bureaucratic double-talk can ever make her own flesh and blood into a "non-person.") These women came to appeal to the church as the only power which could speak to repressive governments.

Venezuelan liberation theologian, Pedro Trigo, said that the real tragedy of the Catholic Church at Puebla was that she again demonstrated that she is incapable of being truly self-critical. The church is not asking the right questions. For example, instead of questioning the ethics of a paternalistic structure which allows for the exploitation of women within the church, she speaks to women as though they were children, serfs, concubines.

That was the problem for women at Puebla. Women are needed as the submissive servants to the male-dominating class. It might not be too Christian, but it is comfortable. The document drafted in Puebla acknowledges that the Catholic Church in Latin America is losing the intellectual, the youth, the worker. The church no longer is a viable part of their lives. Because the Catholic Church is attended so faithfully by "pietistic" women, the church is probably not aware that it is also losing strong women, intellectual women, working women.

One hopeful sign that the bishops are becoming a bit anxious about the future is evidenced in a joke circulated at Puebla. It allowed that "the prophets are saying that at the Third Vatican Council the bishops will be allowed to bring their wives. At the Fourth Vatican Council they'll bring their husbands."

The laughter was a bit thin. Unfortunately, the Latin American bishops need a lot of consciousness-raising as to women's role in the church. ■

# Asking Too Many Questions

by Roger H. Wood

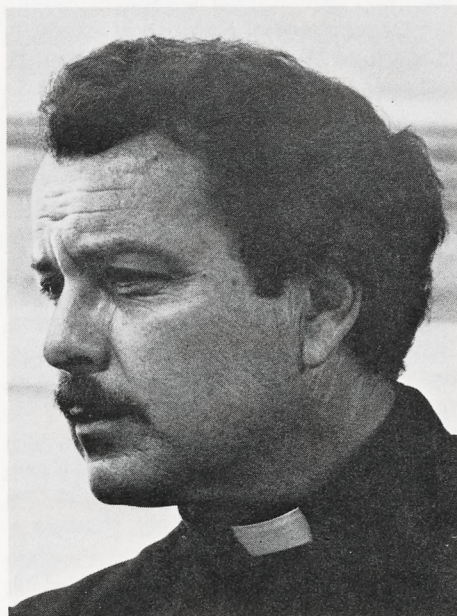
At a cocktail party in Carmel several years ago, I learned not to ask a stranger, "What do you do?" because he might be comfortably unemployed as the heir to a San Francisco fortune. At a dinner party in Chester County, Pa., I learned not to ask the hostess how it came about that her view of fields and woods is so untroubled by houses, roads and power lines, because it might be she owns the land as far as the eye can see.

Many of us in recent years have learned not to ask the parents of young couples who are living together, "Oh, when were they married?" because it might be they never were. In the barrios of East Los Angeles, I have learned not to ask a mother where her son has gone for what she calls a "vacation" because she might be telling me he is in jail.

The Church of the Epiphany, along with 20 Roman Catholic parishes in the United Neighborhoods Organization, recently engaged in a massive voter registration drive in East Los Angeles. We learned not to press the question, "Well, why don't you want to register?" because many are not citizens. We have also learned in recent years not to press the question to those in need, "Well, why haven't you applied for medical — or food stamps — or welfare — or unemployment — or worker's compensation?" because many do not have documents to prove their eligibility for such services.

The fact is that great numbers of people with whom we live and to whom we minister in Lincoln Heights are undocumented. They are not able to prove they are legal residents of California. Such persons are part of the

**The Rev. Roger H. Wood** is rector of the Church of the Epiphany, East Los Angeles, Cal. This article is reprinted with permission from *The Episcopal News*, publication of the Diocese of Los Angeles.



fabric of the community and we can only guess as to how many and who they are. Our understanding of ministry is to be the church in the name of Jesus Christ where we are, and we do not ask too many questions.

Our experience living and working with individuals and families that we know or suspect to be undocumented is overwhelmingly positive. That is one reason why we deplore the term "illegal alien." Of course it is a technically and legally correct term, but it is not pastoral. Webster's defines "alien" as "wholly different in nature; incongruous; unsympathetic; adverse." And to label a person "illegal" is a contradiction in terms.

Furthermore, since undocumented persons either work or are dependent upon someone who does, we believe "undocumented workers" is the most appropriate description for this group in our community.

At Epiphany, we try to remember our history in connection with those

undocumented workers who come from Mexico. Any Mexican who received a grammar school education in Mexico is familiar with the details of the Mexican War and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Such persons certainly do not consider themselves aliens in a land that by any objective reading of history was taken from Mexico in an unjust war.

Until recently almost everything reported in the media about undocumented workers was alarmist and often hysterical. There were shrill allegations that "illegal aliens" are the cause of unemployment, crime and disease and are draining away tax dollars by their wholesale dependence upon public services. Such charges are becoming less fashionable as their irresponsibility and unsubstantiated factual bases are gradually exposed. Studies from Orange, San Diego and Los Angeles Counties indicate that undocumented workers contribute far more in taxes and fees than they receive in services. Welfare departments report few errors in their screening processes. The undocumented are unable to collect on the deductions from their pay checks for social security, worker's comp, and unemployment insurance.

The Hollenbeck Division of the Los Angeles Police Department serves the major portion of the city part of East Los Angeles where many undocumented immigrants live, shop and recreate. Recent reports show the division has one of the most favorable records of crime statistics in the city. There is no evidence that our streets are any less safe than elsewhere. And Epiphany Church is open and unguarded for prayer and meditation during daylight hours most days of the week.

Nobody seems to be able to arrive at definitive conclusions as to the

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# How War Economy Subverts

For a century, from 1865 to 1965, the United States paid the highest wages in the world in its manufacturing industries. It not only did that — it also produced goods and services that were acceptable and saleable in American markets and abroad as well. But something happened, roughly in the 1960s, that made it impossible for many American firms and factories to hold their former markets.

What happened to change that capability was the introduction of a permanent war economy. By war economy I mean an economy in which the military product is counted as an ordinary economic end product. In any industrialized society two categories dominate the scene in terms of resources. One is capital — that refers not simply to money, it refers to real resources — the personnel hours, the machinery and the power, the plant, the equipment — used for production. The second category is technology, which refers to the ideas, to technique. In industrial society capital and technology control the capability for production.

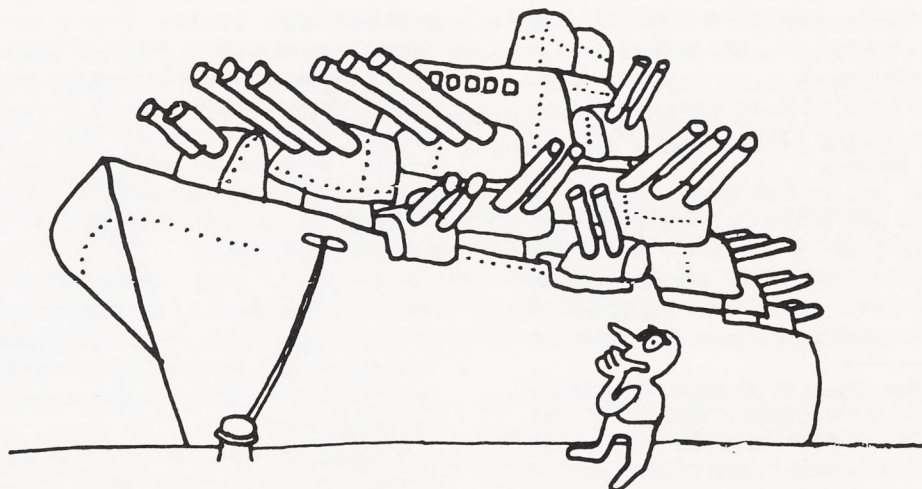
What happens to capital and technology in a war economy? From

1951 until the present day, *every year*, the fresh capital fund made available to the Department of Defense is larger in magnitude than the capital fund that is left over to the managements of all U.S. corporations after they have paid taxes. To say the whole thing differently, every year since 1951, the net profits of U.S. corporations, including the military-serving ones, are less, all together, than the big block of fresh resources made available to the Department of Defense.

The first person to announce this was Dwight Eisenhower, in his last address before he left Washington. A sentence in that address says this plainly. It was as though never heard, and if heard, not understood. So in terms of capital there had been a great transformation in the American economy; namely, there is a sector of control no longer in Wall Street, no longer in the banks. The control of capital has shifted rather to the Federal Government. That is not to say that private capitalism is not there. It is still there, but as far as control is concerned it has been superseded by state capitalism. The Federal Government utterly dominates in the control of resources for technical research and development. There's no

question we turn out the flashiest nuclear submarines and B-1 Bombers of an intricacy that stagger the imagination.

But there is no free lunch. Resources used in one place are not available in another. The manhours and the brains, the material wealth, used up in the military enterprise in the form of capital and technology are not available elsewhere. And the consequence has been that the century long capability of U.S. industrial firms to offset cost increases came to a halt just about 1965. Until 1965 the average annual rate of industrial productivity averaged about 3% a year and that 3% compounded year after year made this country the place of riches that it is. This offset production-cost increases and put a brake on rising prices. But from 1965 to 1970 the average annual productivity growth rate in the U.S. dropped to 2.1%. From 1970 to 1975 it dropped to 1.8% — lower than any other industrialized country. As this rate of growth diminished, the ability of U.S. firms to offset cost increases diminished. U.S. firms thereby proceeded to pass cost increases along to the consumer. As cost increases were passed along, prices rose to an



# National Budget by Seymour Melman

inflationary rate. As price increases proceeded in the United States, goods produced abroad became increasingly competitive with those produced here, and there was a process of displacement.

Here then is the duality. An inflation mechanism is set in motion which renders important parts of industrial and other firms non-competitive, compelling the closing of factories and firms. So the twin effect of inflation and unemployment is explicable only in terms of understanding the role and the effects of a permanent war economy and the maintenance of this system.

A war economy has a second effect that is crucial today. It has the effect of transferring the location of wealth in the nation. It does not do this through market mechanisms by which private capital accumulates wealth and organized capital for reinvestment. Under state capitalism, the method of capital accumulation is through the tax process. And the tax process has been operated so as to produce a sustained effect now for more than a decade. It was identified in the late 1960s, and proceeds to the present day. The mechanism is this: The states that

include the heartland of the U.S. industrial system, those of the Midwest and the Northeast, tend to pay into the Federal Government much more in taxes than the Federal Government returns to them. In 1965 the Federal Government was extracting from New York state \$7.4 billion more than it spent there for all purposes. The differential has increased, by the way, since that time. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, becoming concerned with the economy of New York, produced a statement on June 27, 1977 which essentially affirmed and restated this same mechanism. Moynihan's response was the conventional one; namely, build the military bases in New York state of in Texas. This in fact would do something for reversing the flow of purchasing power within the economy which had been set in motion towards the Sunbelt for 15 years, but which would do nothing at all to restore productive competence in U.S. industry. Missiles, bombers and nuclear submarines do not contribute to the standard of living. Urban decline cannot be reversed so long as the Federal Government uses its tax system to feed its military enterprise and starve the

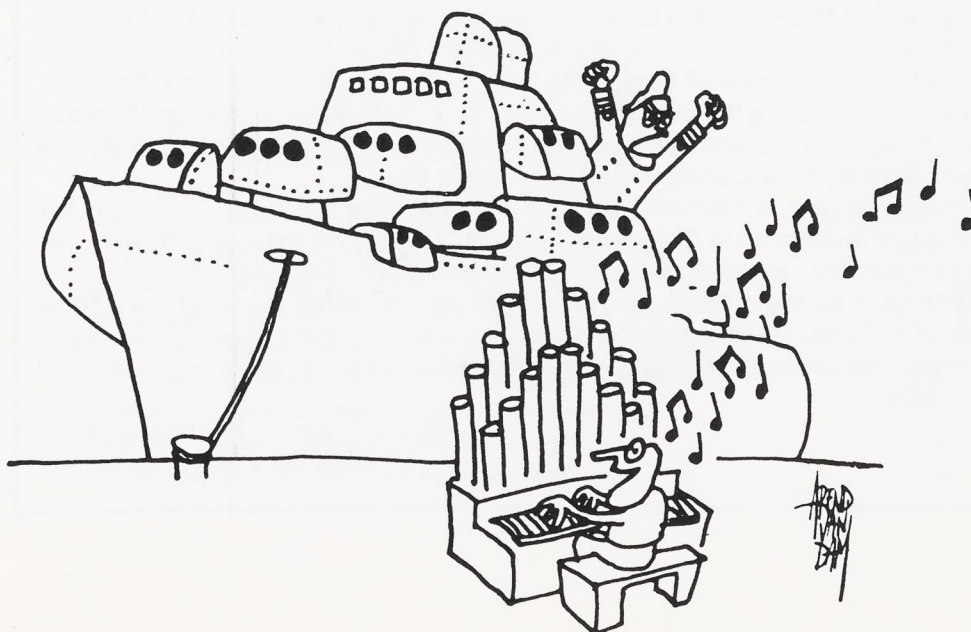
urban economy.

Accordingly it is of crucial importance to address the issue of conversion from military to civilian economy. But I can't identify a single person in Federal Government who is concerned with the reversal of the arms race and the possible release of resources that might be attempted thereupon. Nor do I know how to identify in the entire executive branch any person who's concerned with the problem of conversion from military to civilian economy.

Now I want to suggest three kinds of political-economic moves we could initiate with respect to these problems. The first is to set up in every metropolitan center a planning group for the future of the city. The future of Cleveland; the future of Denver; the future of New York — you name it. It would be the task of every one of these groups to lay out a concrete set of economic, architectural, planning specifications for the revitalization of these cities.

I think such plans have to have two characteristics: One, they have to be serious, that is they all must have price tags and timetables. Second, the plan

*Continued on page 17*





## Liberation Theologian Meditates on 'Exodus'

A renewed interest in studying the Bible has been one of the characteristics of Latin America's theologians of liberation. Concerned as they are with the political, economic and social conditions of Latin America's workers, peasants and marginals, these theologians have found new meaning in Jesus' words of Good News to the poor and liberty to the captives. The families of disappeared prisoners in Argentina, Chile, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Mexico, the unemployed and the politically repressed throughout Latin America have found new hope and direction in realizing that the Bible unconditionally gives priority to the poor and oppressed.

The Exodus story is read with special interest. It is an epic account of the liberation of the Hebrew people and of their struggle against the oppressive power of the Egyptian Pharaoh. Pablo Richard, a Chilean theologian now in exile from his homeland, has captured the spirit of this approach to the Scriptures within the context of the struggle of Latin Americans. Latin Americans are seeking liberation from an international political and economic system based on an unequal distribution of goods, with the power for decision making concentrated in the hands of a few owners generally located in the First World.

Richard's reading of the Exodus, as reproduced in THE WITNESS, covers only the first 15 chapters of Exodus. Basically he follows the text of the Yahwist tradition considered to be the oldest. Richard shows how the Hebrew people placed the experience of God at the heart of their political struggle. For Latin Americans resisting the military dictatorships which threaten the very fibers of their social and cultural systems, spirituality and the experience of God have also become more closely linked to political praxis.

Pablo Richard, a Catholic, was the national director of the Christians for Socialism movement in Chile from 1970-1973. Since his exile, shortly after the democratically elected Marxist government of Salvador Allende was overthrown by the military, he has served as a research fellow at the Centre Lebreton in Paris. He is currently doing research in Costa Rica. His works in Spanish include a history of Christians for Socialism in Chile between 1970 and 1973.

*David J. Kalke, Secretariat Staff  
Theology in the Americas*

# Searching for God in the Struggle for Liberation

by Pablo Richard

In the 13th century B.C. the Israelites are in Egypt as a working people. The king of Egypt is afraid of this labor force. It is so large that its members might rise up against his interests. A war would put the system of domination in crisis and the slaves would be able to take advantage of this to rebel. To hinder all possible subversion, Pharaoh decides to exploit this enslaved people:

*And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war befall us, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens; and they built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. So they made the people of Israel serve with rigor, and made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and brick, and in all kinds of work in the field; in all their work they made them serve with rigor. (EXODUS 1:9-14)*

There is only one step between the exploitation of labor and genocide. The king takes that step and orders all newborn males to be killed. This order exposes the crimes carried out every day by exploitation (EXODUS 1:15-22).

When a people's slavery becomes intolerable the leaders appear whom the people need in order to become free:

*One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens; and*

*he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand . . . When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. (EXODUS 2:11-12,15)*

Moses is not a slave; by adoption he belongs to the king's family. Frequently in history the leaders of an exploited people belong to a different class. But they do not become leaders of the people until they make a radical definitive break with their own class.

Moses begins to discover the situation of slavery of his brothers, but he does not commit himself to them or break off definitively with his class until he goes into action and kills an Egyptian. The act doesn't mean anything to the people; in fact, it causes a negative reaction. But for Moses personally it has great importance. No leader can demand that the people understand his personal situation, however important it may be.

*And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage, and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered the covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the people of Israel, and God knew their condition. (EXODUS 2:23-25)*

The cry of exploited people, because of their exploitation, is something that hurts, something we never want to hear. The cries are curses, insults, blasphemies and unbearable groans. When exploitation degrades a person he or she protests like a degraded being, not the way a "decent" person would. The slave people experience the nearness of God. God hears their protest. He is not scandalized by the anger or indignation of the exploited people.

This discovery of the God-who-hears-rebellion expresses a first becoming aware, a first hope: if God hears, liberation is possible. And vice versa, if liberation is possible, it is because there is a God who hears us.

Moses, the leader, also hears the cry of the slaves and this desperate cry leads him to God. But the leader, out ahead of the people, discovers a God who not only hears but who has a strategy of liberation for his people. A higher degree of awareness leads him to a deeper experience of God:

*Then the Lord said, "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land, a land flowing with milk and honey, . . . Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that*

*you may bring forth my people out of Egypt.”*  
(EXODUS 3:7-8,10)

It is impossible for a rich person to hear the God of the Exodus unless he gives up his riches. The mighty of this world will not discover this God who listens to the “rabble” and makes subversive plans against the established order. Only exploited people can discover the God of the Exodus. Nor is it easy to be a leader. In the struggle for liberation a person triumphs or dies. Before leading his people, Moses has to settle accounts with himself.

No leader is worthy of carrying out liberating violence unless he or she has first done liberating violence in their own hearts. Within himself Moses has to subdue the coward, the deserter, the hidden accomplice of exploitation which dwells within him. The more Moses tries to master himself the better he comes to know this intransigent God whose liberating disposition cannot be detained. The better Moses knows this intransigent God the more willing he is to struggle:

*But Moses said to the Lord, “Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either heretofore or since thou has spoken to thy servant; but I am slow of speech and of tongue.” Then the Lord said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Who makes him dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.”*  
(EXODUS 4:10-12)

Moses can no longer look back. The impatience of the people shows him the impatience of God. When he manages to dominate his personal insecurity, Moses discovers the liberating design of God. The divine experience can only be, Go Forward! Having passed through the crisis of leadership Moses becomes an “agitator for subversion.” He acts in an orderly, planned way, adapting to the social structure of the Hebrew people at that time:

*And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord with which he had sent him, and all the signs which he had charged him to do. Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. And Aaron spoke all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed; and when they heard that the Lord had visited the people of Israel and had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshipped. (EXODUS 4:28-30)*

The struggle begins: An escape plan is drawn up and peaceful conversations take place at a high level. The peaceful dialogue is a useless but necessary gesture. When the time of violence comes, there might be doubt of not

having exhausted first all possible means of avoiding it. Unfortunately, exploited people learn more slowly than the exploiters:

*Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.’” But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should heed this voice and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and moreover I will not let Israel go.” Then they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us; let us go, we pray, a three days’ journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord, lest God fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get to your burdens.” And Pharaoh said, “Behold the people of the land are now many and you make them rest from their burdens!”*  
(EXODUS 5:1-5)

The three-day feast in the desert could be a religious coverup for a political liberation tactic. It could also be an attempt to recover, in a religious environment, the people’s identity and thus prepare them for liberation. In any case, the religious feast is clearly linked to a plan of escape and the biblical author has no problem with seeing God mixed up in political tactical maneuvers.

The king’s reaction has to be one of refusal. He is incapable of knowing the God of Israel because he has never heard the cries of the people and the groaning of his slaves. For him to know God would mean that he would have to disappear as an exploiter. An exploiter cannot believe in a God-who-frees slaves.

For the king of Egypt, people and their personal interests or popular beliefs are of no use at all if they do not serve to increase productive capacity. Besides, the king is perfectly conscious that something is being hatched against him. It is dangerous for slaves to have any ideas about life different from their actual condition. The king’s response to the first peaceful dialogue is an order to increase the exploitation. This is the normal way to subdue the minds of slaves:

*The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, “You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks which they made heretofore you shall lay upon them, you shall by no means lessen it; for they are idle; therefore they cry, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to our God.’ Let heavier work be laid upon the men that they may labor at it and pay*

*no regard to lying words." So the taskmasters and the foremen of the people went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get your straw wherever you can find it; but your work will not be lessened in the least'."*

*Then the foreman of the people of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, "Why do you deal thus with your servants? No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, 'Make bricks!' And behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is your own people." But he said, "You are idle, you are idle; therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.' Go now, and work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the same number of bricks." (EXODUS 5:6-11, 15-18)*

The plan of liberation, which is the first sign of a new awareness, unleashes more repression. The repression seeks a brutalization of the people sufficient to assure the necessary productivity from their work. The exploiter justifies his action by classifying the desire for liberation as a moral vice — laziness. The people's freedom always means a loss of profits for exploiters; and the freedom to exploit is maintained by trampling down the working people.

Oppression and repression always attempt to demobilize the people, discourage their leaders and produce a confrontation between the masses and their chiefs:

*The foremen of the people of Israel saw that they were in evil plight, when they said, "You shall by no means lessen your daily number of bricks." They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them, "The Lord look upon you and judge, because you have made us offensive in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."*

*Then Moses turned again to the Lord and said, "Lord, why didst thou ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he has done evil to this people, and thou hast not delivered thy people at all." (EXODUS 5:19-23)*

What has failed is one form of struggle, not the liberation project itself. When exploiters, by their hardness, exclude peaceful means of liberation, they oblige the people to shift to a higher level of struggle. The people also understand that they cannot show weakness or vacillation in the struggle. Weakness on their part only makes the exploiter more cruel.

The first stage of the struggle is over and Moses learns from the experience. Having gone through the peaceful dialogue stage he moves on to the next level and, at the same time, to a deeper experience with the liberating God.

Now violent acts take place which the biblical author presents as miracles. They are the "ten plagues of Egypt." We might ask whether in actual history the events were miracles or actions by the people against the Egyptians, "guerrilla actions" — destruction of the irrigation system, sabotage in the fields, etc.

We might also think of forces of nature used by the Israelites against their oppressors. The biblical author, in the literary language of the time, tries to exalt divine liberating action and the people almost disappear from the scene. Whatever the real story, one thing is clear. The people's liberating struggle has a violent nature. The biblical message is plain: The people must be liberated at any price. If there is violence, it is due to the hardness of the oppressors.

God appears struggling with his people, involved in the violence of the oppressed people, to overcome the violence of the exploiters and lead the people to final victory. God takes part in the struggle and the will to victory is unbreakable. Persevering in the struggle, the people discover the true countenance of God and their faith impels them to go on. Let us look at some of the events of that liberating struggle and the experience of God which the people of God had in it.

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuses to let the people go. Go to Pharaoh in the morning, as he is going out to the water; wait for him by the river's bank, and take in your hand the rod which was turned into a serpent. And you shall say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you, saying, let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness; and behold, you have not yet obeyed. Thus says the Lord, by this you shall know that I am the Lord: behold, I will strike the water that is in the Nile with the rod that is in my hand, and it shall be turned to blood, and the fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile shall become foul, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink water from the Nile'."*

*Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded; in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, he lifted up the rod and struck the water that was in the Nile, and all the water that was in the Nile turned to blood . . . But the magicians of Egypt did the same by their secret arts; so Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them; as the Lord had said. (EXODUS 7:14-18, 20-22)*

If Pharaoh maintains violence by enslaving a whole

people the people are going to continue the struggle with as much violence as necessary, in order to destroy all violence. The violence of the oppressor generates violence. The violence of the oppressed seeks to destroy all violence; it leads to liberation.

The king will seek recourse in the deceit of false promises in order to stop the people's struggle. The people will fall into the trap, but the experience will teach them never to believe in the promises of exploiters. Read in this sense Exodus 8-10. The king will then try to divide the people, or deprive them of food. The people do not give up; they have the conviction that God will lead them to final victory, cost what it may.

The hardness of the king reached its height when he cut off all dialogue. Normally, the exploiters learn more quickly than the exploited that dialogue is impossible.

*Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me; take heed to yourself; never see my face again; for in the day you see my face you shall die."  
Moses said, "As you say! I will not see your face again." (EXODUS 10:28-29)*

The people, and God with them, do not give up their determination for liberation; neither does Pharaoh give up his will to exploitation. The history of liberation cannot be held back and the violence of Pharaoh will unleash the worst violence anyone could imagine.

*The Lord said to Moses, "Yet one more plague I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence; when he lets you go, he will drive you away completely . . ."*

*At midnight the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where one was not dead. And he summoned Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, go forth from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!" (EXODUS 11:1, 12:29-32)*

The oppressors — destroyers of freedom and justice — acted in such a way that the struggle of the oppressed people led to the oppressors' destruction.

The Israelites left Egypt and won their freedom. However,

the oppressor is unable to renounce his disposition to exploit, and this leads him to his own destruction:

*When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, and took 600 picked chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the people of Israel as they went forth defiantly . . .*

*When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were in great fear. And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord; and they said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."*

It is a difficult time; the confrontation of exploiters and exploited is one of life or death for everyone involved. The least aware among the people saw distrust and disunity among the slaves. They have still not learned anything after such a long fight. But Moses the leader has already had long experience and the struggle has revealed to him the will of God. He has to win the confidence of his people and hope against hope. Moses' attitude reminds us of that of many leaders of the people in situations where everything seems lost.

*And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be still." (EXODUS 14:13-14)*

The confidence of winning achieves the impossible and God completes the liberation by destroying the army of the exploiters. The destruction of the army is always the final moment in any liberation process. A people which is conscious and certain of final victory is more powerful than weapons. Once liberated, the people sing about the saving power of their God. ■

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has to corral all kinds of people with common interests — banks, real estate types, department store owners, trade unions, local community groups — everybody who has a stake in economic development. And the formulation and the presentation of such a plan must be in the nature of a political demand: "This is what we want." And obviously, in saying "This is what we want," a series of demands must be made on the local government, on the state government, on the Federal Government, on private sources of capital. So my first proposal is to set in motion economic development planning in every city.

The second proposal is that we set up economic conversion groups for the revitalization of enterprises that are or are about to become decayed and economically incompetent. What is crucial is the establishment of three-part committees there. One, of management; a second, of employees; and the third, of representatives of the local community. It is important to contemplate alternative plans for the development of enterprises that are on the skids. And each one of these three parties can have something to say not only in planning but also in

providing capital. Management has its conventional sources. Unions have sources in their hands or in ready reach in the form of pension funds. And community representatives can tap public budgets.

The third group that needs to be formed is for the economic conversion of military enterprises. When the big B-1 Bomber program was called off, 14,000 people were working in the B-1 division of Rockwell International: 5000 production workers, 5000 engineers, 4000 administrators. Within two months

half of them were fired. There was no idea of a plan, no procedure whatsoever by the management, by the union, by the engineers, by the local government, by the Federal Government. The assumption was that the free market would readjust to the work of these people. But free markets don't cope with the shock effect of thousands of people being dumped in a particular locale. So what is desperately needed is the beginning of alternative use committees for these plants. Senators McGovern and Mathias have co-sponsored a bill (S-2279) that requires the establishment of such committees in every military industry, plant, and military base.

Therefore it is of critical importance to organize planning groups that have these three purposes in view. The goal is not simply to pad another library shelf, but to mobilize people to make political demands. ■

## New WITNESS Readers

**New to our WITNESS forum this month are 377 members of the Catholic Women's Ordination Conference (see January WITNESS) and 176 clergy and lay persons from the Episcopal Diocese of New York.**

**Welcome, and let us hear from you!**

**Dr. Seymour Melman** is Professor of Industrial Engineering at Columbia University. The above article is excerpted from his talk last year before a Joint Session of the Urban Bishops' Coalition and the Church and City Conference.

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The Episcopal Church has recurrently seen the emergence of such groups when circumstances called for a special initiative. The religious doldrums of the church in the post-World War I era were significantly spoken to by the Forward Movement, an effort of renewal spearheaded by courageous spirits such as Henry Hobson. The "task of bringing Christ to an industrialized society" was taken on by the Church League for Industrial Democracy, with Vida Scudder as chair of the executive committee. In the '30s, college and university campuses, regarded by many as a wasteland, were seen as a fertile field for mission by the founders of the Church Society for College Work. The isolationism of the nation and the church in the '40s was addressed by the Overseas Mission Society. The racism of the '50s was challenged by the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity.

The Vietnam War and the growing threat of

monopolistic capitalism gave rise to ecumenical efforts like Clergy and Laity Concerned, and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility. The radical deterioration of American urban centers may yet be addressed by the Urban Bishops' Coalition, the Catholic Commission on Urban Ministry, the Youngstown Ecumenical Coalition and other concerned groups.

In each instance alluded to above, an alienated and fallen world was demonstrating its power to oppress and to cheapen the meaning of human life. But in each instance interventions contradicted that power. These interventions are more than just intimations of the resurrection. They are earnest of the continuing presence in human affairs of the spirit of a creating God, a suffering God, a living and redeeming God who will not abandon people, and a people who would be faithful to their God. ■

# Letters to the Editor

*Continued from page 2*

clear of politics in the local parish, to remain neutral on community issues. Some also expect me never to take the lead in any part of parish life unless absolutely no one else wants it. In all, I'm always to sit in the back of the bus, except when work is handed out, and then I should be first in line.

So much for the parish. How about the diocese? Now, as far as I can tell (at least in our diocese), there's a sign on the door, saying "No Clergy Wives Wanted Here." Mind you, the sign is elegantly printed in gold leaf Old English script, so as not to offend, but the message comes through loud and clear in left-handed invitations that say, at best, "come, if you must, but you really aren't essential and you're a burden."

It isn't that our diocese wants celibate clergy. It is simply a matter that there isn't time or concern for clergy wives.

Surely the most difficult feature of my life as clergywife is finding myself without a pastor. Not having a counselor to turn to when my mother died or during post partum blues or marital strain — that is lonely terrain. I have tried to seek counseling, but where does one find a pastor if the local clergyman is your husband?

Beyond the fact that there are no

clergymen closer than 35 miles, there are other hindrances. For example, to talk out temporary marital difficulties with another clergyman means discussing very personal material about your husband and yourself with one of his peers. Any loyal wife would be reticent about that, but, predictably, there is a corresponding reluctance on the part of some clergy to counsel another priest's wife. One clergywife I know was told by a clergyman that he would have to discuss her counseling request with her husband before he'd agree to counsel her in a crisis period.

How about the bishop? Isn't he the chief pastor? By his consecration vows, he is, but I'm not sure there is much awareness on the part of bishops that this means serving as pastor to clergy wives, among others. The pattern usually is that the bishop comes for his annual visit; the clergywife is expected to provide the bishop with a cheerful reception, a clean bed, and a fine meal. The bishop in turn is freed to visit sick parishioners, conduct services; and, there generally are a few minutes with the malcontents of the parish and time to check out the clergyman's concerns. How many bishops think of having a pastoral moment with the clergyman's wife?

It is, I believe, simply a matter of being aware that there is a need. Our bishop, who is an open, compassionate man, sees the need for nurturing clergy in a pastoral sense as well as a professional sense. For that reason, he gathers them to his side quarterly in each geographical entity of the diocese. Most of the day is spent discussing pro-

fessional matters, but time always is allowed for pastoral appointments. Yet, never has the invitation been opened to clergy wives to gather collectively at the same time, and also to seek counsel from the bishop, if necessary. Don't get me wrong. I'm not trying to hog in on the clergy's professional time; I'm only trying to suggest that there is a need for bishops to recognize that clergy wives too need access to pastoral counseling.

My husband says I sound like a sore puppy. Maybe so, but am I alone? Are there other clergy wives who feel left out of the community of the church, cut off from priestly counsel and from the opportunity to exercise *all* of their talents in the church? I keep going, being loving and submissive in the local parish, by the knowledge that it is Faith that is important. But, sometimes, I find it hard to keep a balance and to remember that Jesus Christ doesn't share the insensitivity of the church, and that, with Him, there are no limitations. Sometimes I feel like I'm crying out in the wilderness, whether I'm a sore puppy or not.

I would be interested in corresponding with other clergy wives, in the hope of creating a support system for each other and devising non-threatening ways of bringing ourselves into the mainstream of the church.

**"Carolyn Taylor"**

**(Address withheld upon request)**

*(Editor's Note: Anyone wishing to correspond with "Carolyn Taylor" can do so through THE WITNESS, Box 359 Ambler, PA 19002. Mark envelope "Attention Carolyn Taylor," and we will forward.)*

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elites not masses allocate values for society; changes in public policy are incremental rather than revolutionary; mass governance is neither feasible nor desirable; that the responsibility for survival of democratic values rests with the elites; that elite reactions to mass movements may also result in the loss of democratic values."

For the collapse of poor communities Dr. Piven has described one specific (disease) and prescribed one specific (remedy). The specificity of locale and circumstance, I trust, does not foreclose a fruitful examination of a general institutional malaise which in many churches prevents the "transforming power of the gospel into a nourishing

and vigorous political mission" for which Dr. Piven wistfully opines, "there comes a time."

The "buzz" word, of course, is political. Dares THE WITNESS put this scary word on their editorial dissecting table and separate the mythology and pathology of politics from its important saving functions? "Politics", says Arthur

Walmsley (WITNESS November of 1977), "understood as the maintenance of a good society, is an art that is the heart of being Christian." When, I ask, have churches *not* been a massive political force — even in their massive neutrality and acquiescence — thunderous in their silence, massively scrupulous in their fear of becoming "factious" or otherwise offensive to the status quo?

The Founding Fathers, our first elite, shared a consensus that the fundamental role of government was the protection of liberty and property. They believed (even Jefferson) in a republican government by men of principle *and* property — and opposed mass democracy with direct participation by the people in decision making. We have no evidence that this idea does not persist today among contemporary elite and much that it does. Perhaps as the population burgeons geometrically, and the powerful few, gain (if at all) arithmetically, more and more churchgoers will find themselves lumped among the power-deprived millions individually impotent to "maintain a good society."

"One thing is clear," pronounced Richard Barnett (Director of the Institute for Policy Studies, WITNESS, Sept., 1977). "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 that it has to be the other way around."

He also told the urban Episcopal bishops: "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 much more democracy in the next quarter — or much, much less."

Will the millions of pew warmers in the next 20 years shed their suffocating sub-

elitism and see themselves as also threatened Christian brothers of the urban poor? Or will they opt for less democracy? Much, much less?

**Robert P. Moore**  
Sewanee, Tenn.

## Heyward Saved Sub

I was not going to renew my subscription to THE WITNESS. Not that I don't "approve" of the articles, as certainly the inner city life and its problems need airing, being so unending and multitudinous. But they just don't speak directly enough to me — a nurse in a small New England town — yet somewhat in the world in that I have a full time job and read! And listen.

I was wishing for some clerical rebuttal to the Jonestown "mess" and Carter Heyward did it so eloquently! I have asked to have it reprinted in our diocesan monthly newspaper.

So here is my nine bucks! Is it possible to have more comments regarding what is currently going on in the world from a Christian perspective about Africa . . . hospices . . . criminal justice . . . UN . . . current events?

**Solveig LeBlanc**  
Portsmouth, N.H.

## Everyone Should Read

"Looking in the Mirror" by Carter Heyward in the January issue of THE WITNESS is wonderful — something everyone should read. But all too often it never reaches the right people.

**Charles L. Rolfe, D.D.S.**  
Petasky, Mich.

## Speaking With Insight

I am ordering Carter Heyward's magnificent meditation on "The Enigmatic God" (April WITNESS) and your issue on authority (July) to be sent to a friend. Your publication is the only voice speaking with insight and perceptive intelligence on the church today.

**Shirley Hatch**  
Dudley, Me.

*Continued from page 9*

economic impact of undocumented workers in the Los Angeles area. It does seem clear that there is no real competition for the low-paying, less attractive jobs usually taken by the undocumented. It would be very interesting to know how big the jump in our cost of living would be if competitive, adequate wages were paid for all such jobs. As an example, my guess is that that the \$50 rate for two nights at diocesan clergy conference would go up about one-third. Although appearances are not proof, my suspicion is that the physical labor at the Miramar in Santa Barbara is mostly done by undocumented workers.

Living in the barrio with undocumented workers as an integral part of community life and one's pastoral ministry does not in itself impart any special wisdom. The phenomenon of the presence of large numbers of undocumented workers obviously must raise many social, economic and political questions, both domestic and international. I do not have any easy answers or recommendations. I also do not know who does. The jury is definitely still out. It makes good sense for the administration in Washington to back off from specific proposals at this time. More factual information is needed, and just as important is the need to explore new policies and strategies.

In the meantime, as Christians we have a mandate to minister to human needs, both sacramental and social, to the whole community — without asking too many questions. Such pastoral ministry also includes the possibility of defending and advocating human rights with regard to undocumented persons when those rights are threatened or violated by public agencies or private enterprise. ■

### CREDITS

Cover, Gina Clement; p. 7, Bonnie Acker, courtesy WIN; photo p. 9, courtesy *The Episcopal News*, Los Angeles; pp. 10-11, Arend van Dam, courtesy Fellowship of Reconciliation; p. 12, poster, Christians for Socialism, Chile.

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company  
P.O. Box 359  
Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002  
Address Correction Requested

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North Wales, Pa.  
Permit No. 121

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