THE WITNESS

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Urban Mission: Church on the Move

Janette Pierce
Stanley Hallett
Coleman McGehee
Edward W. Rodman

Stringfellow, No!

For years I have thought of William Stringfellow as a major prophet of our time. After reading his "Let the Dead Bury the Dead" in the June WITNESS I have my doubts. His diatribe against Venture in Mission leaves me wondering if there are two VIM's, for I don't recognize his. I resent his language — "foisted on the church" and "sham" — as being wildly inaccurate. Granted that he is an important somebody and I'm an unimportant nobody, I see nothing sham about VIM as we are working at it in the Diocese of Kansas. If it was foisted on the church, so was the Proposed Book of Common Prayer (and I indeed do not think that was). If he (a theologian) doesn't know what "spiritual" means *vis a vis* VIM, tell him to come to Kansas and we'll patiently explain it to him, or we'll let our diocesan VIM educational coordinator, Dr. Alice Cochran, do it for him.

We find VIM to be a rewarding response to Christ's call to be the church. Nothing really new, granted, but a renewed churchwide emphasis on Bible study, prayer and commitment without any partisan gimmicks. Has he examined the many projects offered as ways in which we can put our prayers to work around the world? Not to mention grass-roots diocesan and parochial projects which may result. I cannot see them as sinister attempts to "endow the ecclesiastical status quo." I fear his zeal for the church (genuine, I'm sure) has "eaten him up" to the point of imbalance and anarchy. And I'm very sorry — for I really did admire him.

Howard R. Kunkle
Sedan, Kans.

Stringfellow, Si!

I want to thank William Stringfellow for the articulate expression of so much of what I have been feeling. It is so hard to remain an Episcopalian; VIM was, for us, almost the last straw. (The only way we could think of to deal with it was to send in our pledge card with a commitment to a major gift, but stating that it would be going directly to the ministries we saw as important, such as the local Catholic Worker House.)

Even though I am "privileged" to be in what is perceived to be a position of influence in our diocese, as a member of the Standing Committee, I find it almost impossible to shape the decisions of the church towards the issues and foci that my faith tells me is where we ought to be. Land banking in the West County, adding tennis courts to the conference center, safely undesignated funds for "community ministry;" our VIM focus was so safe, so non-controversial, as to be totally meaningless. It is increasingly difficult to be in the role of the prophet/persuader; those in positions of power, affluence and influence are increasingly defensive about their own positions, and less and less willing to even *look* at the issues that are challenging to the church.

Is the answer for us to leave? That would make *us* feel better. To live and serve among the poor sounds a romantic and fulfilling way to go. But then who is left to raise these issues within the Episcopal Church, which is the repository of so much of this nation's power?

I am just grateful for spokespersons such as Stringfellow. Perhaps our mission is to see that THE WITNESS sits on the coffee table of as many people as possible.

Perhaps it is time for those of us who struggle to invest more energy in prayer, for after all, it is only our Lord who can open deaf ears and blind eyes.

Mary Webber
St. Louis, Mo.

EPF Endorses SALT

Bishop Thomas Gumbleton's reasons for opposing SALT II are sound enough (June WITNESS). The nuclear arsenals, the disproportionate investments in weapons, and the arms race itself are all utterly immoral.

However, what is not fully appreciated in the Bishop's analysis are the consequences of *not* ratifying SALT II. I refer specifically to a victory for the militarists and right wingers who oppose the treaty thereby strengthening their position in our government, the inevitability of an even larger U.S. arms budget (our protestations notwithstanding), and the complete breakdown of the negotiating process on this subject.

Surely it is possible to support SALT II *and* demand more progress towards disarmament, raise questions about nuclear bomb morality, and seek unilateral steps from our government towards disarmament.

To be sure, ratifying SALT II will not be as much of a victory as we would like to see, but failure to ratify it will be a far greater defeat than we can afford.

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship urges all Episcopalians to support ratification of SALT II.

The Rev. Nathaniel W. Pierce, Chair
EPF Executive Committee
Nampa, Idaho

Bravo for Maria, Raisa

As a member of the National Council of Churches' Special Commission on First Amendment Issues which worked for the release from prison of Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin, I want to offer my warm congratulations to the church and to Ms. Cueto and Ms. Nemikin upon their being named to receive the Vida Scudder Award, as announced in the June WITNESS.

I'd like to share my recollections of the two most dramatic meetings of the Special Commission's existence from

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Focus on the Cities of God

Robert L. DeWitt

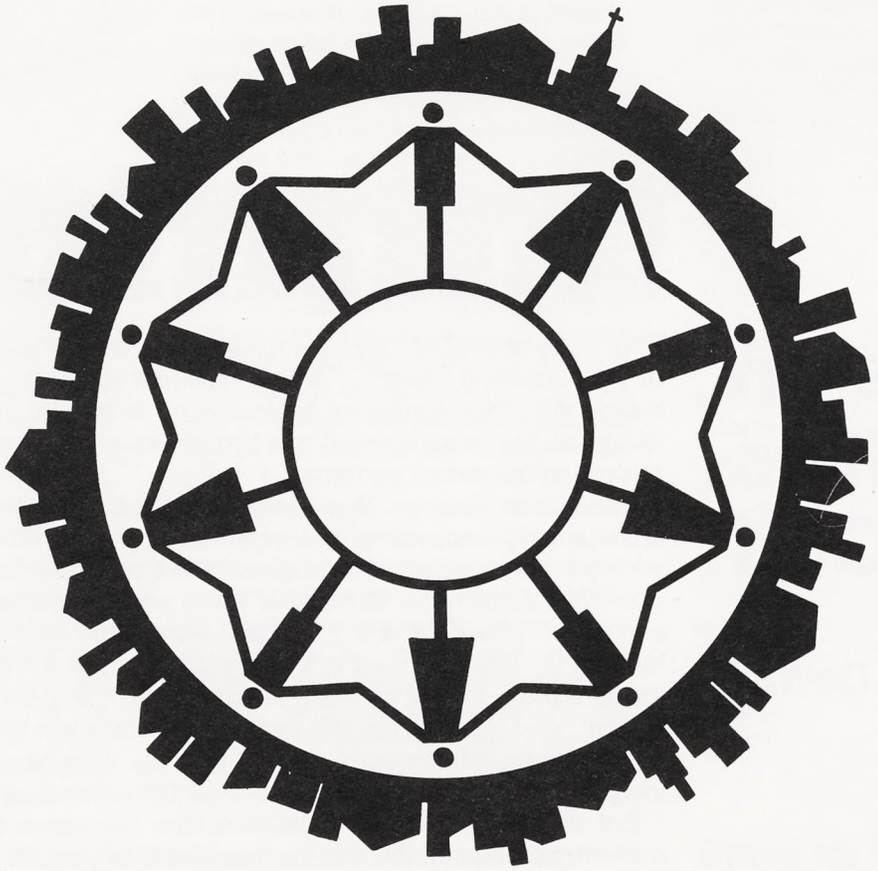
This issue of THE WITNESS appears at the time of the 66th General Convention of the Episcopal Church. For that reason it seems appropriate to focus on what seems the most significant topic stirring in the life of that body. To many that would be the re-awakening of a broad-based concern about the mission of the church to our urban centers.

The Urban Bishops' Coalition has recently attracted much attention in this arena, partly because of the newness of the Coalition, partly because of the widely felt appreciation throughout the church for this leadership being taken, currently, by bishops. But earlier years witnessed efforts by others. The Church and City Conference is a group of urban clergy who for years have studied and lobbied for this emphasis in the church's program. The Joint Urban Program of the '60s brought this concern centrally into the national church's program and budget. And from the earliest years of the church in the United States there have been unsung missionaries, clergy and lay, who have ministered faithfully and imaginatively on the parochial level to the cities in which they dwelt.

But ministry is always related to the mundane but essential chores and nurturing of the members of the household of God. So it is that the urban mission of the church is perforce concerned about the meeting of material needs, the correcting of injustices to individuals and groups, the political processes whereby the life of a city is ordered, the persons elected to assume administrative responsibilities. The manner in which such "chores" are handled is a spiritual concern, for it finally determines the disposition of divine judgment, as we are forcefully reminded in the parable of the Last Judgment in the 25th chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. Thus, the concerns and objectives of the Black United Fund, the ways in which cash flow in a community in Chicago can become a force in people's lives, the strategies of a political campaign in Hartford — these are all crucially pertinent to the urban mission of the church.

THE WITNESS is grateful to Janette Pierce of the staff of *The Episcopalian,* who also serves as a member of the Steering Committee of the Urban Bishops' Coalition, for serving as guest editor for this issue of THE WITNESS. ■

The Church in Motion Again



by Janette Pierce

In the 1950s the Episcopal Church looked at the cities and thought that by treating the symptoms the urban illness might be cured. Even in the ugly convulsions of the 1960s, the church, through the eyes of bishops like John Hines and Daniel Corrigan on the national level, and priests like Paul Washington, Arthur Walmsley, and a host of others on the local level, saw the pain and tried to respond.

But times change. The church's attention span is notoriously brief.

The 1970s brought the shock of Watergate and President Nixon's resignation. The Vietnam War drew to a close and U.S. troops came home: for the first time in history without the laurels of victory.

The nation was tired. Tired of the importuning of ethnic minorities, tired of women seeking fuller participation in

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economic life, discomfited by the pleas of the gay community, bored by the warnings of environmentalists; tired and suspicious of causes, no matter how worthy.

As the United States turned its back on the memory of the Vietnam episode by ignoring its returning veterans, so the church turned away from its programs for the poor and from the cities where its high purposes had been defeated.

The attention of the Episcopal Church turned inward to the issues of ordination of women and the revision of the Prayer Book.

At the 1973 General Convention, the Church and City Conference — a group of urban-based clergy — were almost alone in lobbying for a Joint Commission on Urban Affairs. Even the support of Connecticut's Bishop Morgan Porteus failed to get the worsening plight of the cities on the agenda of the House of Bishops' meeting in 1975 in Maine.

But in the Church and City Conference, clergy like Craig Biddle, St. Julian Simpkins, and Michael Kendall began working on a new agenda for action. These priests and others like them, served city parishes and saw firsthand the decline in the quality of life for many residents of cities both large and small. They struggled to respond effectively to the social issues that confronted them daily. As priests they celebrated and affirmed the life of their congregations, but often fought private battles with despair and loneliness occasioned by diminished support both in terms of money and of interest from a church which appeared both unaware and unconcerned.

Those appearances were somewhat deceiving. Many bishops, laity, and priests were concerned, but the urban network of the 1960s had largely broken apart so that individuals felt isolated and alone.

The Rev. Franklin Turner, officer for black ministries at the Episcopal Church Center, and a member of the Church and City Conference, was particularly aware of the rapid deterioration of the cities which surrounded so many of the parishes with which he worked. By the summer of 1976 he became convinced that decisive action was necessary to bring the crisis of the cities to the attention of the fall meeting of the General Convention in Minneapolis. The meeting was expected to focus mainly on the votes on ordination of women and acceptance of the revised Prayer Book.

Turner took his concern to New York's Bishop Paul Moore and Washington's Bishop John Walker. He found them equally concerned and out of these conversations came the plan to call a meeting of "urban bishops" at the Convention.

When the bishops arrived in Minneapolis they found a ready-made vehicle for expressing their concern about the U.S. urban scene: the $100 million Venture in Mission program.

After two breakfast meetings attended by 20 or 25 bishops from dioceses that included major urban areas, these bishops held a press conference at which they called for renewed engagement by the church in the issues facing the cities and for the commitment of at least one half of all monies raised by VIM to urban programs.

The bishops also agreed to continue meeting together and to form a coalition. In fact the bishops did meet again in Chicago in January, 1977.

That same month, in Washington, D.C., Church and City heard its immediate past president, Craig Biddle, present a plan of action for a renewed urban program.

Biddle suggested rebuilding the urban network through regional meetings and a newsletter, a re-allocation of the church's financial resources and of personnel to urban work, establishment of training centers for urban workers, sponsorship of innovative programs in city settings, and a renewed attack on racism in both the church and society. The Church and City members endorsed this program and set about planning for regional meetings and network building.

Urban awareness was rising. In June the bishops, now formed as the Urban Bishops Coalition with Walker as chairman and Bishop John Burt of Ohio as vice-chairman, met again in Chicago. They heard more about Venture in Mission from Presiding Bishop John Allin and participated in a "think tank" experience with global economist Richard Barnet and theologian John Bennett.

The bishops had said early on that they wanted to become more knowledgeable about the underlying causes contributing to the present urban situation so that they might avoid mistakes that earlier urban programs had made. The educational component was built into many of the bishops' subsequent meetings.

Later that same summer, Church and City held a special meeting in Rehobeth Beach, Del. for self-education and planning purposes.

In October, when the House of Bishops met in Port St. Lucie, Fla., the Urban Bishops' report was one of the few which addressed an issue other than internal dissension caused by ordination of women, homosexuals in Holy Orders, and the formation of a schismatic church body.

During the report, Walker announced that the Coalition would sponsor a series of public hearings in the United States on the urban situation. The five hearings would provide fresh and authentic information to aid the church in planning appropriate programs in urban America in the 1980s and 1990s. The hearings would be financed by funds which the bishops could raise from their own resources.

At the Florida meeting, the bishops from Province IX — the Caribbean and Central America — asked that the

Coalition consider holding a hearing in that area. Subsequently additional funds were raised for a hearing in Colon, Panama, in addition to the ones in Chicago, Birmingham, Newark, Seattle, and a national hearing in Washington, D.C.

The bishops also planned three public policy institutes on social and economic issues for lay and clergy leaders. These were held in Washington in conjunction with the Washington-based Institute for Policy Studies and attracted nearly 200 participants.

Both the Coalition and the Church and City Conference met again in January, 1978 and shared a one-day educational program at which nationally-known speakers presented views on poverty, the arms race, racism, and economics. They dealt with global issues but tied them to the every-day experiences of those who worked in the cities.

During small group discussions members of both the Church and City Conference and the Coalition saw the need to reestablish an urban support-action network. While agreement was reached then, it took another 15 months before work on organizing an action network-caucus actually got under way.

During the winter of 1978, the hearings were completed. In March the bishops, representatives of Church and City, and invited participants met in Chicago to consider the findings. The testimony of 156 representatives of secular and church agencies involved in urban programs was collated and evaluated by the Rev. Joseph Pelham of Rochester, N.Y.

Pelham presented his report, and recommendations for action based on the testimony, to the meeting which discussed them in small groups before amending and approving the report in final form.

Perhaps one of the most unexpected findings was that most urban agencies did not look to the church for financial support, but asked only that the church be present in the struggle and act as an advocate in matters of social and economic justice.

The findings and the action recommendations were published in a booklet, *To Hear and To Heed,* which has been widely read throughout the church and by many non-church persons as well. The first printing sold out and sales continue for the second edition.

The hearings also sparked a number of other hearings — 20 at latest count — around the country. Some followed the general pattern of the original hearings, focusing on the myriad problems of a city, while others concentrated on one particular aspect, such as housing or infant mortality. At least two places, the Dioceses of Maryland and Massachusetts, held multiple hearings in various parts of those dioceses.

The hearings and the report booklet were comparatively small projects, but have created a ripple effect that continues throughout the church.

In January, 1979, Church and City and the Coalition again met jointly in Washington. This time the program included a discussion of the central role of the parish in the church's urban mission and a briefing by government aides at the White House.

It also included in-depth discussion of a concrete proposal for the organization of an Episcopal Urban Caucus. This was prepared by Church and City members and included their commitment of both time and money to the effort. The previous fall when the bishops met in a brief post-Lambeth session in Kansas City, Mo. they had approved the hiring of staff to enable just such programs. In Washington they endorsed Church and City's proposal and increased their 1979 budget so that the organization of a caucus could move ahead. Bishop Brooke Mosley, chairman of the Coalition's Policy and Action Committee, was charged with hiring staff.

The search was long, but by late spring, the staff was in place and plans for the formation of an Episcopal Urban Caucus were taking shape.

The staff is headed by the Rev. Hugh White, on a leave of absence from the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. He is one of the few full-time members. Other staff come on released time from their dioceses, several work part-time for the Coalition, and several others are retained as consultants because of specific skills. Every other month, the group meets for an intense three-day session of planning and assignment of tasks. As the staff meets around the country, built into its agenda is a time to talk with Episcopalians and other interested persons from the local area.

No matter what their other duties are, when they come together they focus on the task of bringing an Episcopal Urban Caucus into being. This involves setting up an information booth at the General Convention, planning a series of informative, update seminars on urban mission for Convention deputies and guests, and organizing regional institutes for the late fall that will help prepare people for the Organizing Assembly of the proposed Caucus which has been called by the presidents of the parent organizations, John Walker and Michael Kendall. The Assembly will be held February 13-16, 1980 in Indianapolis.

All persons interested in urban issues and action are eligible to become members of the Organizing Assembly, with voice and vote on preparing and approving the Caucus' action agenda for the 1980s.

So once again the church turns to look at the cities. But perhaps this time the sight is a little clearer and not so dazzled by the hope that just one more good program will bring quick success. This time the commitment is for the long haul. ■

Civil Rights Movement's New Kid on the Block

by Edward W. Rodman

The Black United Fund Movement was organized as a potential leadership group for black Americans in 1974. Founded on the twin principles of volunteerism and self-help, the Fund directly challenged the United Way's monopoly of public solicitation for the general welfare. Based on the grassroots experience of the Brotherhood Crusade in Los Angeles and the Black United Front Foundation in Boston, the National Black United Fund has spawned some 15 affiliates around the country since its quiet incorporation in New York City five years ago.

The Fund's purpose is to provide a mechanism whereby the resources of the U.S. black community can be effectively channelled to support institutions for which blacks must bear major responsibility. The black community's $86 billion annual share of the gross national product would rank as the seventh largest nation in the free world if it were an independent entity.

The Fund's first two presidents were James Joseph, now Under-Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior and, currently, Dr. Carleton P. Goodlett, owner and publisher of many black newspapers and a former president of the National Newspaper Publishers' Association. Walter Bremond, executive director, is Fund spokesman. Based in Los Angeles, the organization defies all political labels. In its development it has raised critical issues regarding the state of philanthropy in the late 20th Century, especially regarding the social policies of giving and their effect on the black community. In addition to its fund-raising efforts, the organization has filed a court suit challenging the right of United Way to monopolize the combined Federal Campaign which solicits contributions from government workers. It has also done preliminary work on the notion that economic development can be spurred within black America via a partnership with West African countries. Moreover, it has sponsored three Public Policy Conferences on themes relevant to the survival of black people.

The Fund has not been universally accepted in the national black community, principally because it seeks to synthesize two historically antagonistic concerns. On one hand the Fund stands in the tradition of Booker T. Washington, whose "pull yourself up by your own bootstraps" mentality was discredited in the 1960s by black power advocates. On the other hand, the Fund seeks to embody the praxis of W. E. B. DuBois, a champion of a socialistic Pan-African state. The breadth of these concerns was clearly visible at the recent Third Annual Public Policy Conference where the entire spectrum of thought on economic and social issues related to the survival of the black masses of the African Diaspora was explored.

A key ingredient in the call to this conference was the question, "Will the

The Rev. Edward W. Rodman is Missioner to Minority Communities for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. He has also served as Hearings Coordinator for the Urban Bishops' Coalition and is presently President of the Boston Black United Fund.

Black Masses of the African Diaspora survive?" The call's introduction cited American society — where 6% if the world's population consumes better than 33% of the world's resources — and pointed out that the 300 million people of color who trace their ancestry to, or live in, Africa have a unique role to play in addressing this imbalance and the economic system that supports it. In concluding the call, the following prolegomenon focused the issue:

> *"For it is clear that new forms of economic and political organizations that are structurally and philosophically cooperative rather than competitive must be forged. These new forms must incorporate the very principles of democracy that operate within groups as well as between them. The creation of a true economic democracy is the only realistic alternative to suspicion, distrust, and fear. For if those characteristics define the late 20th century, the world may have lost its last chance to achieve the humanistic quality that is the key to its survival."*

That is the Fund's style. Revolutionary notions in conservative language; progressive thoughts rooted in the reality of oppressed experience.

Key to the development of the concept of the Fund was the recognition that a concern for the black underclass plus a realistic analysis of detrimental social policy in America was not enough to understand what was happening to people of color here and abroad. Hence this third Conference on the one hand broadened its focus to the African Diaspora and on the other narrowed its focus to a specific discussion of economic democracy and social policy; attempting a most difficult task for any organization: to tighten its ideological understanding while broadening its base of concern. This task was not successfully accomplished either by Martin Luther King, Jr. or Malcolm X. Equally important no other civil rights group is seeking to wrestle with these basic questions in an open forum with an eye toward pulling all blacks into the conversation.

It might be useful to describe the breadth of concern of blacks in the United States and to point out the pitfalls and constraints that have kept us from fully articulating it.

The late W.E.B. DuBois, in *Soul of Black Folks,* first stated that "the problem of the 20th century would be the problem of the color line." Since 1902 ideologues of many persuasions have attempted to avoid the insightfulness of DuBois' comment, but the practical experience of the majority of people — those who are abw's, that is *a*nything *b*ut *w*hite — attest to DuBois' sagacity. The problem has been that the concern has had to be articulated within a Euro-American framework, or to use a more arcane phrase, a colonialistic framework.

In fact the initial constraint against black people coming to terms with the agenda of liberation and reordering the world economic order has been the disparate nature of the self-interest of blacks as they have been organized geographically and culturally. West Indian blacks, American blacks, and Africans each have different cultural, political, and social histories. Even within North America, more often than not, free Negros and slaves saw their self-interest in different economic or social terms.

The myriad black denominations within Christianity or the incredible number of black social, fraternal, and civil rights organizations attest to the variety of forms in which black people seek to gain a sense of identity and power within a hostile Euro-American environment. The problem has been deepened recently by the growing separation between the black middle-class and black under-class.

The liberation of African states in the 1960s, though a source of distant pride for American blacks, did not provide the unity many thought it might. The ideological conflict has never been overcome.

Beyond these obvious differences and problems there lurks the more basic and invidious concern: In no time or place have people of color been in a position to influence the U.S. or multi-national corporations which determine where and how the resources of the world are divided. What this has meant in practice is that blacks throughout the world have had always to choose the lesser of two evils. One evil is to support a capitalistic system which exploits the labor and natural resources of the Third World; the other is to join the socialistic camp which sustains and maintains centers of power in China and Russia.

Neither alternative has been particularly attractive, although each has been chosen by varying sectors of the Diaspora. No one has succeeded in showing a better way.

The dilemma is most clearly seen in the inability to create the kind of united front which would force the Western nations to cease supporting South Africa with its apartheid and exploitative economic policies. A nearer example is the failure of U.S. blacks to come together on a common ground for either the liberation struggles in Africa or for themselves. The competition between the NAACP, PUSH, the Urban League, SCLC, and now the National Black United Fund has a greater affinity to the tribalism of the pre-colonial era than it does to 20th Century real politics.

To put it another way, the choice for blacks has never been whether they should be liberated, or even how they should be liberated, but, in fact, what is liberation? Is it nationalism? Is it integration? Is it Pan Africanism? Is it socialism? Is it electing a black mayor or senator or even a black President?

The answer to all these questions has been "not quite."

The economic reality of the continued suffering of the vast majority of black people throughout the world has increasingly impelled people of each persuasion to recognize the failure of their own ideological perspective and how it has failed to bring about the kind of social change that true economic democracy and pluralism require if all people are to survive with justice and dignity.

It was with this background that the Conference opened in Boston. And Boston, since 1973, has experienced the greatest escalation in racial violence, polarization, and dysfunctional social intercourse of any U.S. city. In fact, it was suggested that Boston and its racial situation is a paradigm for the nation: The ratio of black to white in Boston is about the same as the black-white ratio in the total U.S. population.

The Conference opened with talks by President Goodlett and Dr. Barbara Sizemore, a former superintendent of schools in Washington, D.C. Goodlett offered the idea of cooperative economic development between West African and American blacks in the form of a Nigerian/American bank and a Bonds-for-Africa program. He also discussed blacks' inability to work together or to recognize that their destiny is tied up with every whore, pimp, prisoner and drug addict, and not just with the middle class. He said that to forget that is to forget who we are as a people.

Before the excitement of that address wore off, Sizemore electrified the crowd with her analysis of the Weber decision decision, a decision that recognizes the legitimacy of quotas for voluntary affirmative action programs. Her remarks opened up one of the great issues in affirmative action efforts: the split in the historic alliance between blacks and Jews which had been so successful in the Civil Rights movement. Indeed, when the twin evils of organized labor's continued racism and the Jews' abhorrence of quotas are coupled with the aspirations of white women and Hispanic people, affirmative action prospects for blacks appear meager at best.

Sizemore also pointed to the increasing capacity of all American society to adopt what used to be stereotyped as dysfunctional family behavior. When ascribed to blacks such behavior was called immoral or perverted, even though it was born out of economic necessity. But now such activities as co-habitation and living in extended families have become fashionable among whites who have finally encountered the economic necessity of having various members of the family work.

Sizemore posed the question, where do blacks fit into this cultural revolution? She answered it: we don't. But our skills of survival in hard economic times will stand us in good stead.

The conference seminars related to four major categories: International Coalitions, Urban Organizing Principles, New Coalitions, and Cultural Development. The more than 20 seminars held during the two day meeting heard speakers and leaders as prestigious as the principle Conference participants and led to thorough and in-depth analysis of the conditions of blacks throughout the world.

A further highlight of the seminars was the active participation of progressive whites for the first time in 10 years. Persons such as Tom Hayden, Gloria Steinem, and Barry Commoner offered their insights in the black-white dialogue toward a new economic order.

Louis Farrakhan

The principal luncheon speaker, U.S. Representative Parren Mitchell, former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, spelled out in no uncertain terms what the national political scene portended for blacks. He also spoke about the rise of the Ku Klux Klan and the real struggle U.S. blacks will have to make to resist the growing racism and conservatism.

The highlight of the evening's Award Banquet was the presentation by United Nations Ambassador Thomas Tlou of Botswana. He gave a clear analysis and denunciation of the present Rhodesian government and called for disassociation from this effort. He also called for removal of capital from companies operating in Southern Africa and showed the real power that the South African government continues to exercise because of continued support from the West.

Ambassador Tlou also denounced the vacillation of U.S. blacks and their failure to understand the genuine humanitarian needs that refugees from Zimbabwe and Namibia represent to the front line states of Southern Africa. He said that as the wars of liberation continue, it is important to support these displaced persons.

Subsequently Conference participants raised a modest sum to respond immediately to the representatives of the African National Congress and the Liberation Front of Zimbabwe present at the Conference.

Saturday morning was illuminated by the stirring presentation of Minister Louis Farrakhan of the Reborn Nation of Islam. Farrakhan delivered a message of self-help and self-realization beyond summary description. The core of his message was the clear intent of the Nation to confront organized crime in the black community and to eradicate

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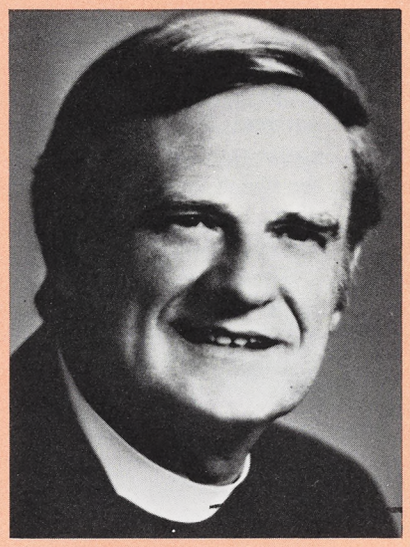

The Rt. Rev. H. Coleman McGehee, Jr.
is Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan.

A Bishop Looks at the Bible and the Poor

Today, what we need more than the wisdom to discern the causes of church growth and decline are the grace and courage to be faithful. I see God calling us to be faithful to the mission of the church in the city.

I want to be very clear about one thing. Nothing I say is intended in any way to deny or to detract from the importance of the ministry of the church in the suburbs, in town and country areas, on the campuses of our colleges or universities, or overseas. The mission of the church is everywhere and is vitally important. But at this particular time it seems to me that it is urgent that we be faithful to the cities of our dioceses and that means all of us, even those who do not live in the cities. We all have a responsibility — lay and clergy alike — for the work of the church in our cities, especially in the light of the catastrophes which have happened there.

Although I now live in a well-heeled community, my heart is still in the cities where so much suffering and agony takes place, where the majority of the people of this country still live, and where 70% of Anglicans all over the world live. There are 65 million Anglicans in this world, and 70% of them live in the cities.

This is where I believe that God is calling us to a more effective and committed ministry.

First, it doesn't take a student of Holy Scripture to know that the Bible teaches quite clearly that God identifies with, or to put it bluntly, is on the side of, the poor, the hungry and the oppressed.

There are three central parts in Holy Scripture where God reveals what God is like, what God's concerns are, and what God expects from us: first, the events of the exodus; second, the fall of the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel; third, the coming of God in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

In the event of the exodus, we read where God looked down upon the people and saw that they were oppressed and hungry, and God acted. The liberation of the poor, the hungry and the oppressed was at the center of the event of the exodus. In the fall of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. and the southern kingdom in 586 B.C., the prophets tell us that one of the main reasons that God let those nations be destroyed was because they had mistreated the poor. The

coming of God into human life in the person of Jesus was identified with symbols of poverty.

At the beginning of Jesus' ministry we read that He enters the synagogue and proclaims that He has been chosen to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to set free the oppressed.

In other places in Holy Scripture God's identification with poor, hungry and oppressed people is made clear, but nowhere more powerfully than in the Gospel where the Lord reminds us that at the Last Judgment, we shall not so much be judged for what we have said, but for what we did: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, naked and you clothed me, thirsty and you gave me drink, in prison and you visited me. Truly, truly, I say unto you, inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these your brothers and sisters, you have done it unto me."

That means, of course, that when we feed a hungry person or clothe a naked person, or visit a person in prison, we somehow do it to Jesus. Somehow the Lord of the Universe is so identified with the poor, the hungry and the oppressed that when we do something for them, we are doing it for God.

As Ronald J. Sider puts it in his book, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger,* perhaps the most disturbing thing that Holy Scripture has to say about God being on the side of the poor, the hungry, and the oppressed is that the people of God also are supposed to be on their side. And when the people who claim to be the people of God are no longer on their side, then they are no longer the people of God. This is the clear teaching of Matthew 25. It is the teaching of James and John: "If we say we love God and do not share with our needy neighbors, we are liars."

That's the first point.

The second and last point is that the Bible shows us also that God wills among the people a greater equality of economic goods than we now have. This, too, is a clear preaching of Holy Scripture. God is opposed to extremes of poverty and wealth. This is not just the teaching of three or four isolated texts from Holy Scripture; from the Old Testament through the New Testament this is the central emphasis.

The Book of Leviticus describes the year of jubilee, whereby every 50 years all land is to revert back to its original owner with no compensation. Why? Because God wanted to establish a mechanism which would prevent extremes of wealth and poverty. It was automatic. It happened to everyone. The same impact is seen in the concept of the seventh year debt release. Every seven years all debts were to be forgiven.

Then as we move into the New Testament, we discover that Jesus and His disciples shared a common purse. They were beginning to live together in a way that demonstrated the values that Jesus was teaching. We see this in the Book of Acts: "And all whose faith had drawn them together held everything in common. They would sell their property and possessions and make a general distribution as the need of each required." And again: "The whole body of believers was united in heart and soul. Not a man of them claimed any of his possessions as his own, but everything was held in common while the apostles bore witness with great power to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

They were all held in high esteem and they never had a needy person among them. All who had property and land and houses sold them, brought the proceeds of the sale to lay at the feet of the apostles. The monies were then distributed to any who stood in need. So if one's neighbors were in need, one didn't just pray for them, but dug into pockets and gave of money and material possessions as well. Then the money and material possessions no longer belonged to the donor, but were given to the community. So the Biblical principle of economic relations among the people of God is something approaching economic equality.

This is the Biblical basis, or Biblical justification if you will, for our work in the cities, where we find a large majority of the poor, the hungry and the oppressed. We all know that proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ by word and deed in the cities of our dioceses can be a complicated and complex process — one for which, unfortunately, there are few ready models. But we should also note in our heart that whatever happens in the cities, Christians ought to be out there in the vanguard. ■

Continued from page 9

prostitution, drug addiction, and gambling. The speech was an historic one from the point of view of the nationalistic model.

Saturday's luncheon speaker was Arnold Bertram, Jamaica's Minister for Culture and Information, who gave a scholarly analysis of the dual evolution of Pan-African thought and socialism as it relates to black people. Bertram ended with the declaration that not only did Jamaica support the existence of Cuban troops in Africa, but regretted that it did not have a standing army to join them.

Sunday morning speakers were Marcia Gillespie, editor and publisher of *Essence* magazine, and Dick Gregory, renowned social critic and comedian. Gillespie has successfully cracked the mass media market with a black women's magazine and it was fascinating to hear her criticize the cultural context in which her magazine has to function. Her pointed comments corrected the illusion that middle class blacks have "made it" in American society.

Gregory used humor to make his points, but the essence of his remarks was that the country is in trouble. Gregory is a humorist, but also a true humanitarian. He raised the spiritual consciousness of the group by pointing out that survival of blacks begins from within: the consciousness not only of the self but of the self's relationship to the source of universal power. He ended his comments in his irrespressible fashion by pointing out that "Recess is over . . . the time to be serious has begun."

The Conference concluded on a sombre and realistic note. The synthesis that the National Black United Fund seeks to build was certainly present in the Conference; in the camaraderie that emerged and in the recognition of the need for new coalitions both within the U.S. and beyond. The Fund's basic concept of pooling the resources and talents of U.S. blacks to support the struggles of blacks throughout the world was enhanced. In fact, this may become the wave of the future.

Only history will tell whether the event was a turning point in the way black America seeks to relate to itself and the world. History will also tell whether or not the Fund and its affiliates will become the new organizing principle for black liberation.

As we wait for history's verdict, we should remember the theological premise upon which the whole effort is based. It is one that suggests it is more important to be loving and concerned about the welfare of your sisters and brothers than it is to be right.

No matter what the political-corporate world of the future brings in terms of nuclear destruction, hunger, or fascism, the conference made clear that there is another way. This other way involves the human spirit rooted in the African experience, tempered by a Christian perspective, and open to the interaction of peoples of color who are in a unique position to provide leadership for a world which faces diminishing resources and increasing competition for what is left.

It would be my prayer that this other way — mutual cooperation, recognition of interdependence, concern for the enhancement rather than the destruction of humankind — will be accepted. ■

(Tapes of the principal addresses and several of the seminars referred to above are available. For information write to the Rev. Edward Rodman, The Boston Black United Fund, 483 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02134.)

Bank Gives Credit Where Credit Is Due

by Stanley J. Hallett

Some of the words bankers use have meanings that are instructive. The word *credit* means to believe. It is to believe in people, to believe in communities, to believe in the future. *To invest,* the dictionary says, is to clothe with authority, resources, and power to shape the future. *To discredit* is to say that one has no future. *To disinvest* is to strip away authority, resources and power to shape the future.

And bankers have a "prudent man rule" that applies to management of resources. To be prudent is to take part in the future; to manage resources with care for the future.

So some very basic banking language has meanings that are common to us all and can be points of entry in our thinking about how to get credit flowing into city neighborhoods.

Over the years we've tried to come to grips with the problems of city neighborhoods in a variety of ways. There was a period when we thought we could renew neighborhoods. But urban renewal tended to be like the Vietnam War; we had to destroy the neighborhood in order to save it. It was essentially a real estate operation since redevelopment primarily meant a growth in real estate value.

Then we went through the period when we thought we could solve the problem by simply throwing large buckets of money into neighborhoods. Then came the Model Cities programs in which we were trying to put together a combination of social services and physical development. Next we moved into the late 1960s and the Great Society programs. Those were primarily designed to expand services aimed at neighborhood deficiences.

We talked about neighborhoods in terms of their housing problems, their buying problems, their mental and/or physical health problems, their educational problems and their family problems. Then we built a whole set of bureaucracies aimed at responding to each of these areas. The logic was: Discover the needs; the needs are deficiencies; the deficiences are in the people; and the deficiences require professional response. Implictly it was assumed that the people could not really define their needs, their needs had to be defined by professionals.

The service bureaucracies became dependent upon defining the neighborhood in terms of its deficiencies. They built a structure in which a whole range of people had jobs which depended upon things being bad and getting worse.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Center for Urban Affairs at Northwestern University tried to figure out what was going wrong. We found that almost nothing one could think of doing within the service bureaucracies — schools, police, hospitals — would affect in any measurable way the life of the neighborhoods.

Even though more and more money was being pumped into those service institutions, the performance levels continued to fall: Health was getting worse, educational attainment was dropping, insecurity was increasing. So we began to get skeptical about that way of attacking the problem.

We started to think about what could happen if we looked at the capacities, not the deficiencies, of a neighborhood. What is there to work with, what has the capacity to grow, to develop, to achieve? This is the way we began to work with Chicago neighborhoods, partly through churches and community organization efforts.

We tried to figure out how we might create a self-sustaining neighborhood development institution. We didn't want one which would draw more and more resources, require more and more subsidies, and make more and more people dependent upon next year's grant. We wanted one that would start to generate resources and

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Stanley J. Hallett, of the Center for Urban Affairs at Northwestern Univeristy, testified at the Urban Bishops' hearing in Chicago recently.

would have a principle of growth instead of a principle of limitations.

We spent a year looking at a variety of programs: Banking, housing, venture capital, commercial development, health education, and legal services. It came back to housing and banking.

One of the problems with housing is that if things are done with housing that don't affect the neighborhood, it won't make any difference. Also housing is dependent upon shifting government programs which might result in displacing people.

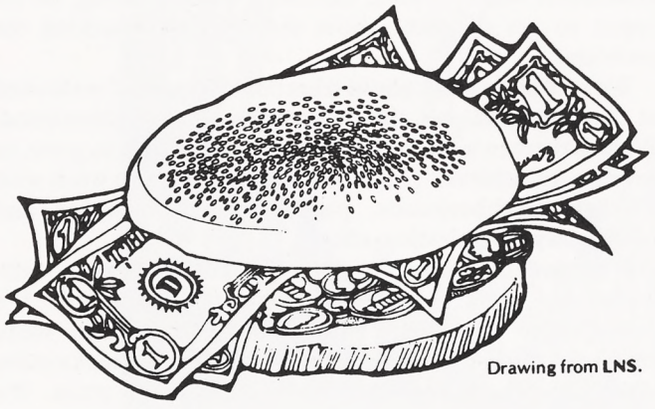
That left banking. But banking tends to be passive. Bankers are, by and large, trained to sit back behind a big oak desk and say "no." A bank seldom gets in trouble for a loan it didn't make.

But about this time, the Federal Reserve Board ruled that bank holding companies could form six different kinds of subsidiaries. While five were closely related to traditional banking functions, one was a community development corporation designed to finance the improvement of the local community and immediate service area. This gave the bank a structure that could combine credit resources with some initiative to work at neighborhood development.

We stopped studying and started trying to raise enough money to buy an existing bank in an unknown, deteriorating nieghborhood in Chicago. We asked a variety of potential investors to put in $160,000 each. Needless to say we met with a certain amount of skepticism, but some churches, foundations, and individuals who had tried a lot of things that hadn't worked, were willing to take the chance.

The leverage on investment is formidable. For $1.3 million we bought a bank with $40 million in deposits. This gave us lending resources of $20 million, with a normal profitability of $300,000/$400,000 a year.

So after a year's work we bought the South Shore National Bank in a neighborhood that had undergone racial change in the late 1960s and 1970s. The bank had stopped lending in the neighborhood three years before we bought it in 1973. At that time no financial institutions were lending money in that neighborhood of 80,000 people. The area was totally red-lined. We bought the bank and began trying to turn the neighborhood's credit faucet back on.



Drawing from LNS.

The banking system is quite like the plumbing system of a house. It provides the water to sustain life, make the grass green and the garden grow. It also is the sewer system that takes away deposits. If it doesn't work in a circular way and only takes away, then everything dries up. If the bank's deposits keep going out, then the neighborhood goes down the drain. How to get the cycle going was the challenge.

One of the first steps was to get the bank connected with the neighborhood's people. This meant meeting people at coffee brunches, block groups, in church basements, wherever there was a group interested in talking. We had to find out what they wanted in their neighborhood, what had happened there, and how we could help.

Then we invited community organizations to elect representatives to an advisory board of the bank. We met over how to get credit working in the neighborhoods and what was needed to improve banking service. The attendance at those meetings ran about 90-95% and still does.

They soon began to get a sense that a pool of resources was untapped and we needed to devise efforts to make the neighborhoods work again. This meant looking at housing, the commercial areas, and the community institutions.

We started a housing study, using graduate students and professors. They searched the titles of property on 30 blocks and studied the tax delinquencies. We wanted an early warning system about tax delinquencies and mortgage foreclosures and where they were occurring. It turned out that the problems were distributed in a different way among single family housing, 2-6 unit buildings, 6-15 unit buildings and those 15 units or over.

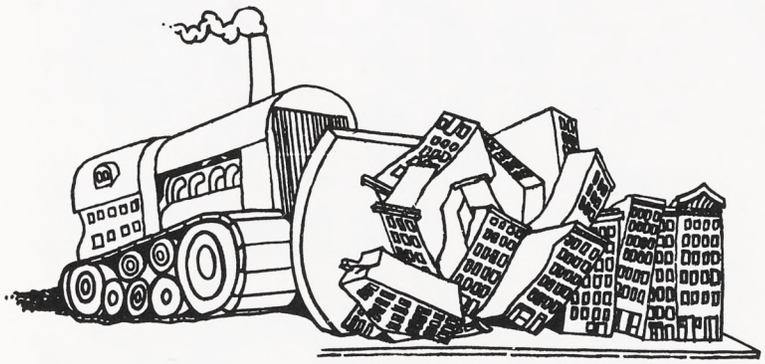
Single homes had a fair amount of mortgage foreclosures and abandonment even though they were good homes and the market was essentially strong. Government policies said housing had to sit empty for a year before it could be sold, but given three boarded up houses on a block, nothing will sell. The whole market becomes depressed in that area. It was fairly easy to put the squeeze on the bureaucracy to get those properties sold or occupied.

The 2-6 flats were a different story. These buildings only work if they are owner-occupied, with someone taking care of them, doing a little extra work on them, building up some equity. Once they are absentee-owned they go downhill. The problem was that when an owner moved out a prospective owner couldn't get the credit to buy. Buildings that had stood for 30 or 40 years were now in trouble because the

families that moved out couldn't sell them so they just milked them and let them go.

That again was a comparatively easy problem to solve because it just meant finding families that wanted to buy and granting mortgage loans to enable them to move in. And many neighborhood families were perfectly credit-worthy.

The larger buildings were yet a different story; they were being managed towards demolition. The Chicago style is that a building gets into trouble and is sold for 20¢ on the dollar. These are purchased for about 1 to 1.3 times gross annual rental. Taxes run about 30-35% of gross annual rent so if the owner stops paying taxes and keeps the building three years, he gets a 100% return on his money just by not paying taxes. In five years he really makes money, and in Illinois he can hang on to a property for 10 years if nobody else pays the taxes. So then he cuts back on maintenance, gets whatever tenants he can, and at the end of five to seven years he puts it to the match and collects the fire insurance!



There is a whole industry in the city doing this. It is currently destroying 25,000 units a year. More buildings were burned down in the past three years than were destroyed in the Chicago fire.

When we got underway we were able to identify the buildings that were being managed to destruction. When those buildings go down they take down everything around them so we identified what we called the "Big, Bad 100." We had to deal with them or all our loans in the area would be in trouble.

One thing evident in the operating statements of these larger buildings was that the cost of energy was a major factor in the price squeeze that was creating operating problems. Energy costs had risen from 11.2% of gross annual rental in 1968 to 23.9% of gross annual rental in 1975. So the question of energy conservation had to be considered.

In looking at how to reduce energy costs, we noted that while energy production is primarily centralized, energy conservation is localized. Furthermore, the technology isn't that sophisticated. Fixing a boiler is a fairly complicated job, but almost anyone can put up a storm window.

We set up a performance guarantee fund that guaranteed that anybody who invested in energy conservation would get a refund from the savings on the utility bill in three to five years. A family didn't have to say "We can't afford this and we don't know where to get the money," because they could get a home improvement loan that guaranteed it would pay for itself out of energy savings.

Another real problem for people in the low income spectrum is food — both quantity and quality — leading to health problems. Well, the alternative to $1 a head for lettuce is to figure out how to grow some in the neighborhood. Vacant land is a big problem in a neighborhood with abandoned and demolished buildings but it can be an important resource if converted to food production. Instead of an eyesore, it can be green with nut trees, an orchard, a garden or greenhouse. Food and jobs can be provided in the neighborhood. In one neighborhood we have a roof-top greenhouse that the elderly people love. It's not just a gathering place, but a place where they can see something happening as the result of their efforts.

The task, then, is to look at the fundamental needs — food, energy, shelter, and health care — and try to find some sensible answers.

One neighborhood in Chicago was spending $38 per capita per month on health care. We tried to find out why people were using the local hospital, and found that the primary reason was traffic accidents. We also found ten times as many dog bites as in the average neighborhood because packs of wild dogs were running around. The simplest resolution was to offer $5 a head for those dogs. Within three weeks the kids had brought in 148 of them. So another way to deal with health problems is not by providing expensive treatments, but by figuring out what can be done to reduce them.

I think similar things can be said about education. It makes a lot of sense to discuss education in terms of what the potentialities are in the neighborhood and how education can develop them. Similarly with security. It is the fabric of the community that makes the difference, more than additional police protection.

In sum, if one is trying to figure out how to get credit faucets turned on one needs to look at both the tools and the techniques. And one needs to create opportunities that enable people with potential to develop a more human existence.

To give credit to a neighborhood is to invest in a neighborhood; to make a commitment along with the people that there is a future, and to bet on that future together. ■

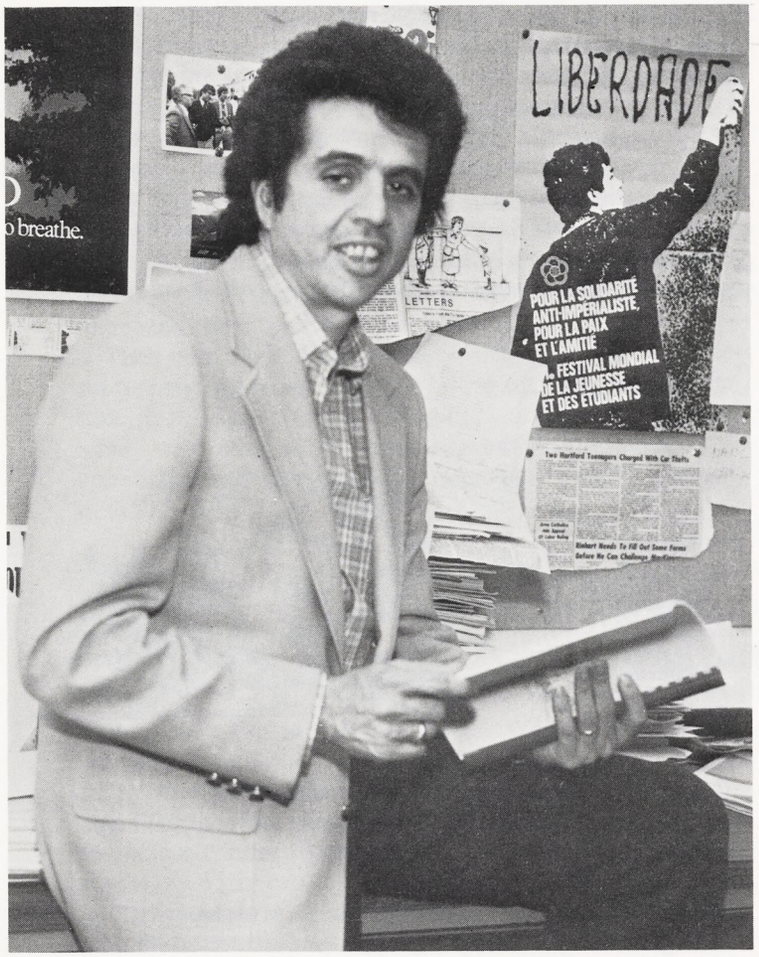
Student of City Faces Political Test

by Robert L. DeWitt

"When I became a Councilman, I was a relatively inexperienced 32-year-old community activist from the South End of Hartford. I was going to be a can-do Councilman, a take-charge maverick who was going to shake up City Hall, make it more responsive, and solve all of Hartford's problems. I gradually learned it wouldn't be quite that easy.

I thought, for example, that if we could rehabilitate housing we could save a badly-blighted neighborhood. I hadn't made the connection that the real cause of that blight was the inability of the residents of that neighborhood to find decent jobs. I came to understand that without jobs for people, rehabbing alone would not save a neighborhood.

"During my first four years on the City Council, I gradually came to the realization that many of our urban problems are mere symptoms of a complex series of interlocking forces at the regional state, national and even international levels of government. That was a humbling moment, to realize that most of those forces were out of the control of a well-intentioned, can-do Councilman from South Hartford . . ."



Nicholas Carbone

With the above words, Nicholas Carbone threw his hat into the ring as a candidate for Mayor of Hartford, in a race to be decided in the Fall. What does he hope to accomplish in that ambiguous arena, and in the face of those "interlocking forces" he alludes to in his candidacy statement?

Interestingly, he sees his problems as similar to those uncovered in *To Hear and To Heed,* the report on the six public hearings conducted by the Urban Bishops Coalition. In an interview in his office in Hartford City Council Chamber, Carbone reviewed for THE WITNESS how he had come into contact with *To Hear and to Heed,* and how he sees the problems of the cities.

There is no question that Carbone has "gone to school" around the issues. His office bristles with studies and reports — some of which he helped to prepare — from which he quotes freely. Two random titles: *The State and Local Tax System in Connecticut: Basic Facts and Proposals for Change; The Influence of a Regional Economy on Hartford's Population: A Study of Migration, Housing and Employment Trends.* Recently he spent some time as a Fellow at the Cambridge-based Kennedy Institute on Politics. It was there that he came across a copy of *To Hear*

and to Heed. He was grateful to find in it additional documentation for many of the stubborn problems he was confronting in Hartford.

One of Carbone's primary concerns is the competition among urban minority groups and the "divide and conquer forces" which prevent them from seeing the stakes they have in common. What, then, is their political access to getting action around the problems of urban centers?

"My answer, which is talked about in *To Hear and To Heed,* is community-based organizations, and my favorite illustration is the Hartford Citizens' Lobby."

"An elected official has a responsibility to educate, to speak out and tell the truth, to share information, to get people to see the real picture — not to deal with the symptoms, but to get to root causes. I think that it is as much the job of an elected official or politician to educate as it is of a minister. Without education, without public awareness, democracy is a farce; it doesn't work. And the Citizens' Lobby and its seminars are one way we have tried to educate around the issues."

Back in 1976, on Carbone's initiative, all community-based organizations were invited to send representatives to a meeting at City Hall. The Alinsky community-organizing methods were consciously in mind. The city offered staffing and support services for the Lobby. Today it numbers some 150 people from across Hartford, who are active in pressing for issues the Lobby has selected. Chief among these have been tax reform, welfare reform, and economic development. City-sponsored seminars of considerable sophistication on these issues have been held for members of the Lobby. Recently a tax bill under consideration by the State legislature would have shifted a heavier tax load to the residential community. Carbone tells how members of the Citizens' Lobby, sure of their facts, visited the chief executive officer of every business in Hartford. Result — a bill favorable to the city's residents was passed by the legislature.

Further, he sees the Lobby as a practical approach to the dilemma of minority groups being pitted against each other by the dynamics of urban life. He reminisces about a state legislature hearing on welfare, not unlike the public hearings sponsored by the Urban Bishops.

"Two thousand people were brought out by the Lobby for the hearing, forcing it from the State Capitol to a larger location. And 250 people testified for an increase in welfare benefits. Kids told how they stole because they needed clothing, how they would come back and walk into their housing project with the stolen goods. They testified: 'I felt good, and my brothers and sisters felt good because we all had new clothes. But that is what you are making us do.' One black woman got up and said, 'I was forced to cross a picket line this morning. I don't want to take their jobs away but I had no alternative. I crossed the goddam picket line to get a job, for the sake of my children. That's what you are doing, you are turning people against each other, making them fight over the crumbs.'

"Even members of the police department testified. When a cop gets up before a hearing, with his badge and gun, and states, 'You've created a welfare system that forces people to break the law and forces people to become thieves' — that is pretty powerful testimony.

"What has happened, as we have specialized on issues, is that the environmentalists are over here, the full-employment advocates over there, the social agencies somewhere else. We haven't found their common denominator, so we have allowed them to be divided and conquered. A key to my political strategy has been to try to take those different coalitions and bring them all to a common agenda."

This principle was tested in a recent struggle in Hartford over civil rights for homophiles. Carbone had promised the gay community that he would seek a gay rights ordinance. The first time, it failed. Moreover, the incumbent mayor was expected to veto any such ordinance which did get through City Council. So Carbone built a coalition. He brought together people who were concerned about civil rights for ex-offenders, for the mentally retarded, for the handicapped, *and* for homosexuals. This combined constituency provided enough strength to override the mayor's expected veto.

Nick Carbone was a high school dropout. When he enlisted in the Air Force, an important part of his education began. He encountered blatant racial segregation in Mobile, and a tour of duty in Japan afforded social contacts with Orientals which repudiated the stereotypes on which he had been brought up. He began to question many of his cultural presuppositions, his values.

"I was once sent on a special mission as a radio technician, destination unknown except that it was 'a trouble spot in the Far East'. I was huddled in a transport plane, radio equipment in one hand, carbine in the other. I didn't want to get shot, and I didn't want to shoot anyone else, least of all someone I didn't know and for reasons that were unclear to me. The whole structure of national security took on a different meaning."

Through these experiences came the realization that what he was "discovering" on his own was nothing more than the values his church had been teaching him all his life, but apart from or unrelated to the connections he was now making. His religious training, his experience in the service, and his subsequent studies have led to the conviction that city government has a responsibility to structure life in a city in accordance with fundamental human values. That is what he feels he is trying to do. "I know we're not always

successful, and I share the anger, frustration and disillusionment of many Hartford residents over things that are not getting better — the working people who can't keep up with inflation, the men and women who want jobs and can't find them, the large families who can't find decent, affordable housing, the retired individual who is being forced to choose between heating and eating. Many of these people have come to believe that the system doesn't work for them and that they have been excluded. I want to change that," he says.

What does he see as the role of the church in the crisis of U.S. cities?

"As pointed out in *To Hear and to Heed,* the church, like the politician, has been co-opted by the economic system. The church is a voluntary organization relying on voluntary contributions. It is like the politician who has to go to people of means for the money to finance his campaign.

"In the same way, the church is afraid to criticize people when it is asking them for money. It becomes cautious, it finesses the issues. And I understand that, because as a politician I have to live with that, too."

With regard to the prospects for urban centers he takes a sober reading, especially considering the coupling of inflation with the energy shortage, and the resultant impact on housing. Carbone sees the "re-gentrification" of the city as leading to the "ghettoization" of the suburbs.

"They are going to take those large suburban ranch houses and they'll subdivide them, and they will become rooming houses owned by absentee landlords, as happened with the former large city dwellings that were no longer economically feasible or desirable to the people with means, and were converted into slum dwellings to maximize profits.

"So the poor will live in the suburbs, but with no mass transportation. As always, they will live where they are pushed to, where the haves don't want to live. I think we have a major structural problem coming down on us, and I think it is worse than anyone has been willing to admit."

Carbone is pushing for a strong-mayor form of government in Hartford. "If you are going to move on changing social policy," he says, "you can't do it with accurate information and technical competence alone. You have to come at it from a sense of commitment, or else you will not be willing to take the flack, be criticized, or be unpopular."

Carbone's view is shared by other urban-watchers, such as political economist Gar Alperovitz, Co-director of the Washington-based National Institute for Economic Alternatives. "When there are no strident issues, no major debates over questions of urban values and objectives, the governance of a city can indeed be seen as a technocratic problem, an assignment for a competent city manager," he said. "But Cleveland's Mayor Kucinich, and Carbone in Hartford, are finding there are a number of critical issues, and are raising them. Such issues require a strong voice and a firm hand in the mayor's office."

Carbone also feels that life-style is important to a politician. He speaks warmly of Auxiliary Bishop Peter Rozzaza of Hartford, who when appointed bishop continued to live in the poor Hispanic parish which he had been serving.

"Part of my strategy has been to stay where the problems are, like the bishop. I'm afraid that if I left and lived in luxury I would forget what the hell the real world is all about. I don't want to become isolated. It is absolutely essential that a politician not forget whom he represents."

Major structural change is not usually a helpful plank to have in a campaign platform. While it is not the *dominant* note in Carbone's campaign, it does identify certain undertones in his political efforts which set him apart. Consequently he has created both friends and enemies.

The Hartford *Courant* has been less than enthusiastic about his candidacy, and one senses that many in the business community are watching to see whether he is "safe." On the other hand, Worth Loomis, President of the Dexter Corp., commented to THE WITNESS, "Nick Carbone is a principled and unusual politician who has a genuine concern for people, especially the oppressed, and has displayed imagination and competence in getting the city to meet their needs."

Carbone faces his mayoralty campaign with seriousness but with a sense of humor. He is acutely aware of voter cynicism, a by-product of the tragic dilemmas of urban America and the resultant failure of elected officials to be responsive to people's needs. He reminds himself of that by a large placard on the wall over his desk on which is printed in capital letters: DON'T VOTE. IT ONLY ENCOURAGES THEM. ■

Continued from page 2

May, 1977 to May, 1978. One was at the Episcopal headquarters and the other, at the jail where Maria and Raisa were incarcerated.

The NCC Special Commission had been established at the May, 1977 meeting of the Governing Board and consisted of five Board members, including William Thompson, then President; James Hamilton, Associate General Secretary; and Dean Kelley, Religious and Civil Liberties expert of the NCC staff. Representing the Episcopal Church at the meeting at Episcopal Church Center were Bishop Milton Wood, Bishop Richard Martin, and Matthew Costigan, treasurer of the church. Presiding Bishop John Allin did not meet with us. We sat around a large gleaming table in a handsome boardroom, nine men — and me — plus one other woman who entered briefly to ask if we wanted coffee.

I paint this picture because it reflected for me the issues of the case. Around that table we were, overwhelmingly, male, white, clergy, church bureaucrats, affluent — meeting in the executive boardroom of a powerful denomination. What we were talking about was two women, lay persons, Hispanics, whose job and mission was ministry with poor, non-English speaking, immigrant, alienated and marginal persons, especially from Puerto Rico, some few of whom are struggling for the right to self-determination as a Puerto Rican people. And these two Hispanic women, formerly engaged in this ministry, were now without the support of the church bureaucrats who had hired them and were in jail for refusing to compromise the church's mission, the powerless minority constituents of that mission, or religious liberty.

When we met with Maria and Raisa, the setting was a small attorney's room in the jail where we four women (Maria, Raisa, their attorney Elizabeth Fink, and myself) and six men crowded together and talked, first hesitantly — the commission unsure of how Maria and Raisa would regard our efforts to help — and then earnestly as they shared their clear sense of mission with us, their unshakable determination not to testify before the Grand Jury, their sadness at their "superiors" lack of vision of mission and lack of support for them except in an expression of pastoral concern for their physical well-being. They accepted NCC help in their behalf and asked the Special Commission to intervene in their court case.

Their costly commitment, and the NCC's work, contributed to deeper searching by the church and development of new legal arguments in the areas of religious liberty and Grand Jury abuse. The argument is now being made that the priest-penitent privilege does not exhaust the protection which the guarantee of religious liberty in the First Amendment affords the community of believers against the compulsory process of the state, but rather that this privilege should be extended to encompass *social ministries* of the church and ministry by the *laity*. Both these points were at issue in Maria and Raisa's case. This new argument has not yet prevailed, but meanwhile we need to ask, "Who is vulnerable (to Grand Jury abuse)?" Would Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin have been jailed had they not been women — lay persons — Hispanics? The NCC Governing Board developed guidelines for churches to consider in relation to social ministries with oppressed groups and Grand Jury cases. I commend these guidelines to readers (available from THE WITNESS) as a part of our celebration of the presentation of the Vida Scudder Award to these two laywomen for their dedicated social ministry.

Jane Carey Peck
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'Girls' Blew It?

On page 18 of the July issue, Helen Klauk says that she has great problems with the use of the term "clergyman." May I comment on so-called nonsexist language, which is, in reality, highly sexist as are numerous aspects of the feminist movement. Mind you, I have been in the work force since the 1920s and I was at the ordinations at Advocate, Philadelphia, at the invitation of one of the ordaining bishops and one of the women who were ordained. Moreover, I'm a philologist by training. Therefore I probably have the prerequisites for commenting on sexist language.

Most of this difficulty arises from the fact that many people, otherwise well educated, confuse gender with sex. We see many, even who seem to consider *gender* a nice word for *sex*. It is true that females are put into the feminine gender and males in the masculine, but that doesn't mean that tables, machines, highnesses, fatherlands, churches, and other nouns of feminine gender are female or that canoes, books, etc. are male just because they are masculine gender.

The concept of gender has fairly well dropped out of the English language, though we still hear people say of a balky machine that "she" won't go, because *machine* is feminine (not female).

Moreover, the girls really blew it when they started all this business about nonsexist language. There was nothing in the Prayer Book or the canons to prohibit ordination of women if they had just considered themselves part of the human race. *'Man* has always referred to males and females.' *He* is both masculine and feminine in collective uses. Women open up all kinds of difficulties for themselves when they forget this.

What the church needs is some instruction on particularity and hermeneutics, not to cave in to the ill-informed demands for "nonsexist" language. Heaven help anyone who calls me "chairperson" or "Ms." I wish reliable statistics were available on how many women strongly object to "nonsexist" language. I believe the church would be amazed at their numbers.

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CREDITS

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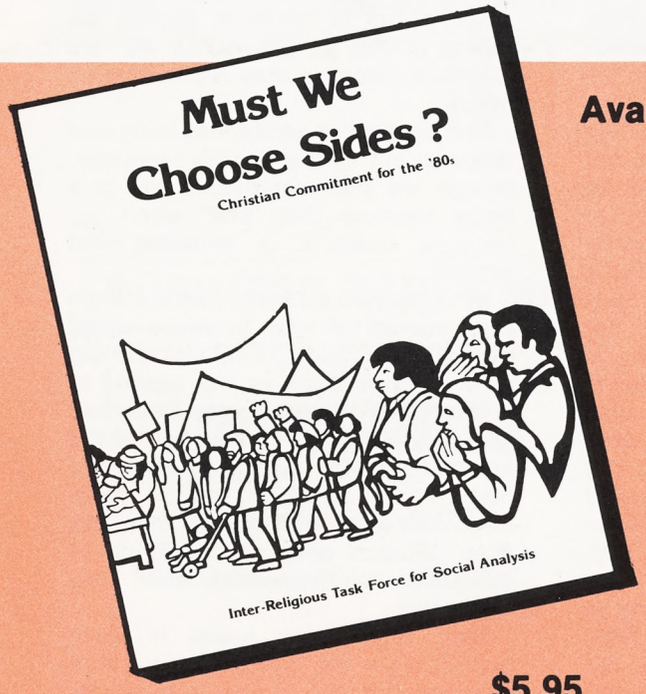

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