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THE WITNESS

Retirement:
First Class or Steerage?
Peg Ferry

Idolatry and Promise
of the Church
George McClain



Letters

to the

Editor

Diggers Interested

I read with interest the article by Dr. Dorothy Irvin, "Archaeology Supports Women's Ordination," in the February WITNESS.

A student brought it in, so I xeroxed it and sent a copy to Dr. Carol L. Meyers of the Religion Department, Duke University, who has also published on the role of Women in the Bible, Women in Ancient Israel, etc. She and I are both Associate Directors of the Meiron Excavation Project, which has been digging in the Galilee for the past 10 years.

James F. Strange
Tampa, Fla.

Wants Slide Show

Dr. Irvin's article aroused my curiosity and interest. It seems incredible that such information has never come to light, given the intense amount of heat which the issue of women's ordination has generated.

I am hoping Dr. Irvin might come to Texas in the future and share her findings with a wider audience. Several of my colleagues seem interested in having her speak and show her slides. I would hope that inquiries from other places would evolve into a feasible schedule for us all. Meanwhile, I am delighted to have her article.

The Rev. Canon Ray E. Wilson
Houston, Tex.

Questions Scholarship

The lack of scholarship in Dr. Dorothy Irvin's piece was rather surprising, given her background. Detailed study in the early Christian period has shown the impossibility of pin-pointing precisely dates, names and geographical

locations, even with the most reliable records existing. The most sophisticated means of dating relics now requires the total destruction of fragments of the object and then they can't come within a century.

Such stylized pieces as frescoes, which we know have been partly destroyed and often altered a great deal can't be used to support much of any fact.

Ms. Irvin's doctoral field, I believe, can supply a much better answer to the question of lady priests and bishops. Of the three Theodoras recorded in Christian history, two were canonized, one by popular acclaim, and one by the Eastern Church. The earliest certainly had as much influence in Christendom in her day as any bishop, whether she acquired a mitre or not.

The theologians of our time can supply us, if they combine their efforts and forget some biases which divide modern Christians, with an answer as to whether we need lady priests and bishops and popes right now. History can't supply the answer. Neither can popular vote or papal decree.

John Winters
Muskegon, Mich.

Editor's Note: Reader Winters' skepticism was not shared by the Baltimore Sun and Toronto Star, which ran front page stories about Dr. Irvin's article in THE WITNESS. It was also picked up by several wire services and reported in other publications, with WITNESS credits. See details in Mary Lou Suhor's column, page 8.

Worth the Struggle

Thank you for your February issue focusing on women and the church. The process of standing straight—"standing

free" after lifetimes of being "bent double" is not always miraculously sudden as in the Bible story. More often, it is painfully slow—but it is well worth the struggle, for both women and men.

Thank you for helping to give us a vision and a theology for human liberation.

Nancy Van Scoyoc
Women In Transition
Washington, D.C.

Scripture for Women

I am forwarding several enclosures for you to send on to Dan Berrigan as support for his recognition that the bent-over woman is the scripture for women today "standing upright and praising God."

Among them is the fact that Jean Dementi, priest from the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska, used this theme at a Eucharist during Easter week, 1979 for the Roman Catholic Women's Ordination Committee. Her sermon concluded with these remarks:

"Mary Magdalene, in great sorrow and in utter despair, bent over to look into the tomb. The first word out of that empty tomb was 'WOMAN!' You can believe she didn't stay bent over very long. She met her risen Lord. He made her an apostle. . . he sent her to tell the Good News to the men. She did it! Now after hearing that story, how can any woman stay bent over?"

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, Cal.

Grave Injustice

This is a heartfelt thank you for the February issue of THE WITNESS, which highlighted the continuing oppression and repression of women, and the

Continued on page 19

THE WITNESS

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

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Proper Business of a Free People

Robert L. DeWitt

"Caesar had his Brutus — Charles I, his Cromwell — and George III. . . may profit by their example." So Patrick Henry spoke before the Virginia House of Burgesses on the eve of the War of Independence in the 1770s. Shouts of "Treason! Treason!" greeted his remarks. And treasonous they seemed to many of the colonists from Maine to Georgia in those confused times. But, "When, in the course of human events it becomes necessary" for a people to assess their political structures and make hard decisions about their future, it also becomes necessary to risk the charge of treason as a part of the price of seeking freedom.

Many of the most astute observers of the current scene agree that there is a growing "Tory" climate in our world today. The crises created by the way things are presently put together in our world, politically and economically, place a premium on loyalty to the status quo. Patrick Henry never heard the word "fascist," but he would have understood it. He, too, was aware of the pressures brought to bear by a threatened system as it sought to keep the dissidents in line, to mute dissent, to quiet any criticism, to punish those who rebel. From South Africa to El Salvador to Bolivia to the Philippines, to cite only some of the most newsworthy current examples, this is the plot of the tragic drama being enacted.

As Americans, heirs of the independence whose start was heralded by Patrick Henry, we usually assert strongly that it is different here. And so it is. What we are saying in this issue of THE WITNESS would be proscribed in many other countries today. But as Michael Harrington pointed out in the June 1978 WITNESS, freedom comes in different kinds. There is political freedom, and there is economic freedom. Political freedom we enjoy in this country in generous measure compared with most of the world. Economic freedom, however, is not so easy for us to come by. In this country a person is politically free to speak, write or demonstrate disapproval about being unemployed; but that person feels powerless to alter the economic fact of being without a job.

Then why does not that person use political freedom in order to deal with that powerlessness? Precisely. If there be any hope in the American system of government it will be because people actively seize the political freedom they have to change an economic governance they recognize as tyrannical. That was how the American system began. Committees of Correspondence, pamphlets, open debate, testing the traditional assumptions about colonial rule and taxation,

Continued on page 19

Retirement: First Class or Steerage?

by Peg Ferry

As the weekly countdown continues toward the mystical date of my 65th birthday, I keep asking myself the old question, "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you were?" How old, indeed!

Would I be as young as the optician and the dentist suggest? Or would I take my cues from my physician and from society? Am I my eyes and teeth, or am I my kidneys? Or am I a reflection of TV programmed learning?

"You're only as old as you feel!" Compared to what? Yesterday or fifty years ago? How am I supposed to feel?

Margaret E. Ferry is a health care consultant and a doctoral candidate in Health Education at Temple University. She is a member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and the Church and Society Network.

Why do I feel older than my college classmates but younger than many of my contemporaries? Luck plays a large part, I am sure.

But what is luck in the story of aging? Have I just been on the fortunate end of the status quo, the recipient of the goodies reserved for those born into upper middle-class families — good home, good nutrition, good health, and a good education?

How do most people experience aging? The United States spends time, talent and money studying aging today. We have become very conscious of the elderly, those people 65 and over who constitute an increasing proportion of our population. We talk about them and study them as if they were a homogeneous population, a class unto

themselves without roots deep in the past or a series of diverse experiences which has shaped each of them into a peculiarly unique individual.

We view the aging process as one of foreordained degeneration which is tied to a biological clock. Medically we sometimes distinguish between the young old (65-74), the old (75-84) and the old-old (85 and over). These are the statistical watersheds for the appearance of multiple chronic ailments, or terminal diseases. And we follow the progressive deterioration we see or hear about with a kind of macabre fascination. We institute services to help the elderly adjust to the psychological stages of disengagement, mourning, or impending death. Huge industries have emerged to care for the

expressed needs of the elderly and to create new needs which the elderly never knew they had. Who profits most from this new-found concern for the aging—the elderly or those who study, cater to, or care for them?

Gray Panther leader Maggie Kuhn is one of the few who have consistently challenged the stereotyped notion that the elderly population's lot in society is occasioned only by diminishing energy and loss of cognitive function, by "the normal aging process" whose automatic transmission shifts into low gear as the chronological cuckoo clock chirps "sixty-five!" She has worked to focus attention on the socioeconomic structures that create the problems of the elderly and on the interaction between the elderly and the total society.

David Brodsky, political economist from the University of Tennessee, has responded to Maggie's challenge to get off the victim's back and look elsewhere for the source of the problem, and to remember that a problem is only a condition so defined by the dominant members of a society. Brodsky is convinced that the elderly, as a group, experience hardship primarily as a result of the workings of the economic system. By the most conservative measures, approximately one in six older Americans lives in poverty as defined by established criteria. More than three out of four receive an income considered inadequate by the standards of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This

poor and near poor status is closely related to the exclusion of the aging from the labor market. In 1976 only 16% of the aged had jobs. Although recent legislation concerning age discrimination may affect this level of participation in the future, the elderly will continue to be discouraged from participation in the work force as long as unemployment and society's perception of the elderly continue unchanged.


Both Brodsky and Jim Ward, sociologist at the University of New South Wales, Australia, suggest that the economic problems encountered by the aging stem from economic and social structures which have defined the young and the old as "relative surplus populations." These populations are an embarrassment to an economic system in which one sector is devising ways to replace workers with machines while the other is busy trying to think of programs to take up the slack. Profits accrue to industry in the first instance, taxes to citizens in the second. Inclusion of college students and the elderly in the formula for calculating the unemployment rate would be unthinkable. On the other hand, a relative surplus population which is waiting in the wings can be a source of comfort to an industry which wants bargaining power or to a government that needs many hands in time of war. Remember how popular women became in industry during World War II?

Brodsky makes another key point. He says,

Analytical perspective suggests that public officials will attempt to resolve such diverse situations as the depression and the problems facing older Americans today with programs or policies intended first to protect the economic system and then to meet the other ends.

This is illustrated regularly in programs purportedly designed to meet the needs of the elderly. These programs have provided employment for thousands of middle-income workers who assist the elderly to adjust to their devalued status. They subsidize bus companies to carry the elderly at reduced rates during hours of low utilization, and assume it is the elderly who are the primary recipients of benefits. They purchase surplus food to feed the elderly in nutrition centers; this is construed as a reward to the elderly, not a subsidy to agribusiness. Medicare will pay the physician and the hospital, after the aged have paid their yearly premiums and the initial yearly "down payment" on health care. Physicians have fared well under Medicare; their incomes have risen. So have the premiums and down payments of the elderly. "Eat, heat or see the physician" has become an increasingly difficult choice to make as medical costs and food and utility bills continue to rise.

It is not my intent to denigrate the many worthwhile efforts which have

our lives shall not be sweated from
birth until life closes;
 HEARTS STARVE
AS WELL AS BODIES;
BREAD & ROSES!
BREAD&ROSES!

been made to help the elderly. It is, instead, an attempt to underline the palliative effect of remedies which treat the symptoms presented by the aging but fail to examine the causes. No attempt has been reported which examines an economic system that rewards the citizens who have built it with poverty or near poverty existence and exclusion from the U.S. symbol of identity — a job.

Age does not determine class in this country. Frequently the reverse is true; class determines age insofar as it relates to health, income, and activity. Working class people, stripped of their pay check, can no longer take comfort in the great American myth of upward mobility. The myth is certainly not true for the aged. Workers have reached the end of their usefulness to the capitalist system; they are indeed a surplus population, except insofar as they are able to consume. Workers have reached the end of the rainbow, and neither Social Security nor the company pension has proved to be a pot of gold. They are dependent on Social Security and/or a pension, both of which they have earned, but rumblings suggest that either or both sources of income have

been built upon sand. Although welfare measures have helped to keep many working class people above the level of poverty, that is no reason to ignore the tremendous gap which exists between the rich and few and the poor and numerous among the elderly.

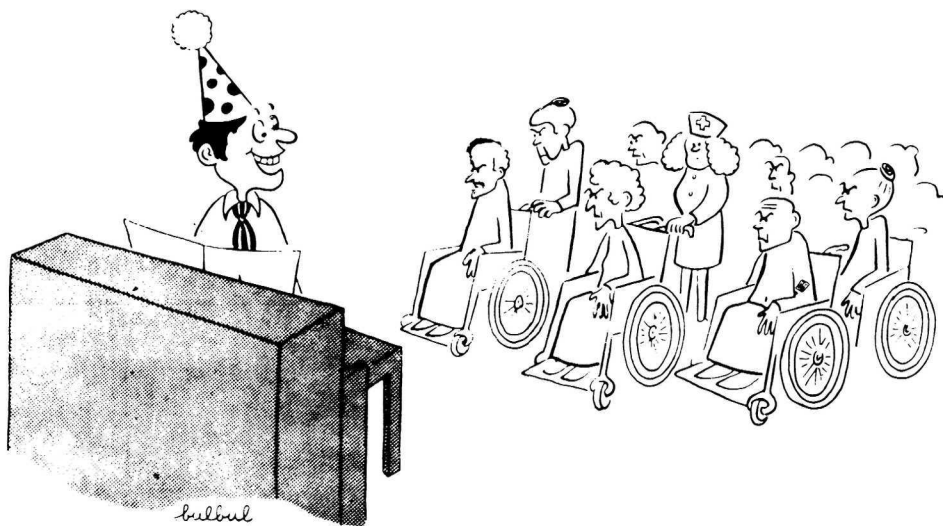
For those elderly who are among the privileged few in American society, and for those who serve the immediate interests of the few and share in the distribution of corporate profits, aging policy in the United States operates effectively. In case of illness, Medicare bears the major share of the expenses incurred after an initial down payment, which is no hardship. The privileged elderly can supplement Medicare with Medi-Gap and catastrophic health insurance. Research monies have encouraged the development of exquisite techniques in tertiary care. Such persons can afford them. Social Security provides pin money, so to speak.

Well-nourished, well-educated and housed over a lifetime, well-to-do elderly people have many options. The owner of a profitable business may work or retire as he chooses. A highly placed professional can continue his

work indefinitely. (The use of the masculine pronoun in this context is deliberate — and usually accurate.) The principal stockholder can exert power until his death. Even then, he can die complacent because he knows that his will will be done. He has selected the recipient of his inheritance carefully, and class remains entrenched. He has chosen that it will be so.

Aged wealthy women can tour the world, or have their faces lifted. They can patronize the arts (a worthy cause, to be sure, but a telling verb), and support good works. In turn, these good works are usually very supportive of the system. These women are unlikely to suffer hunger, cold, or a lack of adequate medical care. Those who see the aged as a homogenous class remind us that the wealthy, too, have their personal sorrows and problems that are rooted in their age. Of course they do. So do the children of the wealthy have their sorrows and problems which are related to *their* age, but this does not negate their membership in the class of the wealthy. It only certifies their common membership in the larger class of humankind. And within that class the poor experience trouble in a qualitatively different way. Money, not age, determines class.

In a curious way the American myth of reward for hard work is destroyed in old age. If someone whose Social Security is minimal persists in working to have a decent standard of living, half of all those earnings over \$5,000 (a more generous limit than previously imposed) will be Uncle Sam's. If, on the other hand, one's Social Security is at the maximum and one enjoys an inherited fortune as well, any income from tax exempt bonds is without limits. Work not, want not! One can understand the peculiar economic logic behind all this as it relates to the good of the system. It is baffling, however, why we cherish a system whose needs take precedence over those of people. Was



Alright, boys and girls—all together now. See how loud you can sing—
“There’s a Long Long Trail a-Winding into the Land of My Dreams. . .”

Old Isn't a Problem

Concern for the elderly has resulted in an increasing professionalization of those who care for the old. This professional concern was expressed by the title of a recent conference convened by a major midwestern university: "Frontiers In Aging: Life Extension." The 700 participants were caring professionals from all the disciplines that help the aging.

Having been asked to speak to this group, I immediately consulted my mother-in-law. She is 81 years of age, comes from a Lithuanian background and lives in an apartment near our home.

We call my mother-in-law Old Grandma. She likes that because she believes it makes her an authority.

When I told her that a

John McKnight is Associate Director for Urban Affairs at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. The above is excerpted from an article in *Co-Evolution Quarterly*; reprinted with permission.

conference called "Frontiers in Aging: Life Extension" was about her, she shook her head. She couldn't imagine they were talking about her because their language is of a different order than the words Old Grandma knows.

Words like "frontier," "aging," and "extension" are about *going, becoming* and *moving forward*. Old Grandma doesn't think those words relate to her life. To her, old is *being*. When Old Grandma says "old," it isn't good or bad. "Old" is like saying she's a woman. It is a condition, a state. To her, old is something that is not associated with problems. A problem is how to get the janitor to get the steam heat up to the right temperature. But old isn't a problem.

For Old Grandma, old is:

- finally knowing what is important
- when you are, rather than when you are becoming
- knowing about pain, rather

by John L. McKnight

- than fearing it
- being able to gain more pleasure from memory than from prospect
- when doctors become impotent and powerless
- when satisfaction depends less and less on consumption
- using the strength that a good life has stored for you
- enjoying the deference
- worrying about irrelevance.

Old Grandma's "old" cannot be counted. Therefore, people who count things will never know about her old. They are trapped by the tools of counting. The economists, social scientists, census takers and actuaries are closed out of her world because they don't count what counts to her.

Old Grandma wonders about the problem of people who have a conference on "old." She thinks there is a problem with people who think old is a problem.

not the system, like Sunday, made for people?

Perhaps the problems of the elderly will clarify for all of us just how the system works. The elderly way of life caricatures our system as a whole. The rich are richer, the poor are poorer; and scholars spin theories about the normal aging process and social disengagement. To repeat, how old would you be if you didn't know how old you were. It depends largely on your class status. You are only as old as you feel. True, perhaps, but it is probable that you will feel younger if you are upper class, and your going will be more comfortable.

Resources

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Kuhn, M. "Open Letter," *Gerontologist*, 18, 422-424, 1978.

Schiller, B.R., *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall 1976.

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Tooting Our Own Horn

THE WITNESS scored a journalistic coup with Dorothy Irvin's article in the February issue. "Archaeology Supports Women's Ordination" has caused a stir in circles ranging from the *National Catholic Reporter* to the *National Enquirer* (yes, the latter is the tabloid in your local supermarket).

To refresh your memory, Dr. Irvin, a theologian and former photographer for the Tübingen Biblical Archaeological Institute, said that she had photos of ancient mosaics, frescoes and inscriptions that show female priests and bishops were in the early Christian church. Three of Dr. Irvin's photos accompanied our article.

Shortly after our article came out, Patty Edmonds, news editor of the *National Catholic Reporter*, called to ask permission to reprint it in their March 21 issue. Then Frank Somerville, religion editor of the *Baltimore Sun*, spotted Irvin's claim in THE WITNESS and called our office. He did a front page story, which was seen by Tom Harpur, religion editor of the *Toronto Star*, who called us and also ran a front page story.

Meanwhile, Jerry Renner of *Religious News Service* told us he would circulate the story, and *Canadian Churchman* phoned for a copy, having seen the *Toronto Star*. A reporter from the *National Enquirer* telephoned, saying she was going to interview Dorothy Irvin and wanted the February issue. Is this beginning to sound like the biblical "begats?"

At the end of March, George Cornell, Associated Press religion writer,

circulated the story on the AP wire. And we have seen references to it in *The Christian Century* and *The Living Church*, both citing THE WITNESS as source. We wouldn't be at all surprised to see Bishop Theodora staring at us from the *Enquirer* on our next trip through the express checkout counter. Just remember, you read it first in THE WITNESS!

We are still getting clippings in the mail (for example, from George McClain, who sent us the story in the *Staten Island Advocate*; Becky Kershner, from the *Schenectady Gazette*, and Gini MacDonald, the *Bangor Daily News*). Has anyone else out there seen it?

Headed from that success, we happily moved into production of our special April issue on the Black Church and Social Change, but our pride was punctured by the typo in the title of the story on page 4, "Civil Rights Movement: How It Succeeded, (*sic*), How It Failed." It was good for our humility and goes to show that we at THE WITNESS, who write so frequently about the poor and oppressed, have a lot of trouble dealing with "success."

★ ★ ★

Requiescat in Pacem

Bill Stringfellow told us in our last telephone conversation that he was waiting for the Spring thaw so he could bury the ashes of his friend, Anthony Towne, in the garden at Eschaton, a home they shared for many years.

Anthony, a poet whose work has appeared in THE WITNESS, died January 28 at Westerly Hospital, at the age of 51. As part of the requiem service, his friends from the Block Island Writers Workshop read several of Anthony's recent writings.

Seneca once said that "*we are mistaken when we look forward to death; the major portion of death has already passed. Whatever years lie behind us are in death's hands.*"

Perhaps something like that was in Anthony Towne's creative imagination when he wrote his own mock obituary, read as part of the celebration of his life. He also wrote "A Short History of Anthony Towne," from which we quote below, picking up where Anthony has just finished describing his boarding school days at Andover.

"One thing leads to another, and Andover leads to Yale. At Yale, Towne discovered God. He had been raised as something called a Universalist (because his father shared with the minister a conviction that the Republican Party was God's gift to mankind) but he had never associated religion with God, and from Sunday school had developed the notion that Jesus was a guy who had everything going for him and blew it.

"One Christmas vacation from Yale, Towne informed his father that he had decided to become a Roman Catholic. Edwin G. (for

by Mary Lou Suhor

God-Almighty) Towne, Jr. replied that so long as he was paying the bills at Yale his son would become neither a Catholic nor a Communist. The poet-to-be thought this over carefully and elected to become an Episcopalian. He has been an Episcopalian ever since (and an admirer of what somebody has called 'the Anglican genius for compromise'), although his enthusiasm has waned as he has gradually discovered that whatever Jesus may be said to have been he certainly was no Episcopalian. Towne's discovery of God at Yale was interrupted by another discovery: military service. He enlisted in the army where he would rise to the high office of corporal. . .

"When he finally outgrew Yale, Towne found himself with funds sufficient for a year or so of frugal wandering in Europe. At the passport office a young lady inquired what might be his occupation? The thought had never before entered his mind. He replied that he was a poet. Shortly after that he wrote a poem. He has been a poet ever since. . ."

THE WITNESS staff offers prayers and condolences to Anthony's mother, Margaret, his sister, Joan, and to his—and our—beloved friend, Bill Stringfellow.

*Copyright, The Block Island Writers' Workshop, 1979.

Scapegoats or Culprits?

by Jack Woodard

Bruce Griffith was a dope pusher who killed policeman Arthur Snyder, who was trying to arrest him after a "buy" a few blocks from St. Stephen's. Griffith happened to be black and Snyder white. Two to three thousand people showed up for Griffith's wake. This has led to much speculation in the media and on the street about whether the crowd was a sign of worsening inter-race relations and/or police hassle on 14th St.

Let's get a few things straight:

Dope: Nobody in the inner city wants dope around except the vultures who profit from it. A guy of any race who starts pushing dope has gone to war against the neighborhood. He's nobody's hero. But it may well have been the only way he could make a living.

Police: I've worked in other city areas where I dared not call the police because the odds of brutality were too high. That's not true in this neighborhood. The police are no angels (who is?), but they're highly professional, quick to respond, and in many situations I have yet to see hassle or unnecessary force. A cop locking up a pusher is doing the neighborhood a big favor and obviously at some personal risk.

Race: I do *not* believe inter-race relations on the urban scene are seriously deteriorating. Recently, nearly as many people turned out at St. Stephen's for the wake of a black football coach as were present at Bruce Griffith's wake. But it was not

sensational, so it received little attention, though it was a black funeral conducted by a white minister.

I *do* believe class relationships are close to disruption and disorder. The culprit is not race nor the police. It's not even dope. The real culprit in the Griffith/Snyder tragedy is *increasing economic injustice*.

I mean money for basic human needs slashed to provide increased budgets for the Pentagon; energy profiteering and real estate speculation causing thousands of poor and middle class people to be evicted or otherwise lose their homes; runaway inflation beginning to make pension and welfare checks run out long before the end of the month; inequitable tax laws building a rage within the middle class.

If Griffith, black or white, had been able to find a job and to hope for a future, both he and Snyder would likely be alive today.

A new underclass may be forming out of the poor and middle classes. If the real culprit is finally identified in the public consciousness and a new alliance forged against the wealthy and the business and political structures of the country, there will be drastic changes.

There is little reason for optimism that any political leadership presently in the picture will try or be able to act upon these opinions of mine.

But certainly as long as you and I make scapegoats out of each other racially, or out of either Griffith or Snyder, the injustices will continue—and more Griffiths and more Snyders will bite the dust.

The Rev. Jack Woodard is rector of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church in Washington, D.C. The above vignette appeared in the parish newsletter, *Bread*.

Picheta



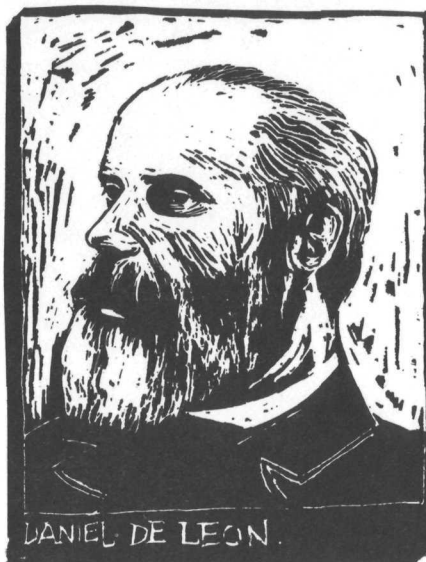
W.E.B. DU BOIS



MOTHER JONES



EUGENE V. DEBS



DANIEL DE LEON



WILLIAM D. HAYWOOD

Which Side Are We On?

Some 8,000 copies of Must We Choose Sides?—the new Study/Action Guide introduced at the Episcopal General Convention—have been sold by the Inter-Religious Task Force for Social Analysis, leaving only 2,000 residuals from the initial press run after only seven months of sales.

A companion piece, which answers the first with another question, Which Side Are We On?, will be available for distribution this month. Designed as tools for social analysis under the general rubric, "Christian Commitment for the '80s," Volume 1 has proved useful in parishes, religious orders, and schools. The second volume, 200 pages, moves into a deeper understanding of inflation, unemployment, the danger of war, and explores alternatives other than capitalism.

As with the first volume, we are sharing a brief description of the contents of Which Side Are We On? with WITNESS readers, since the Episcopal Church Publishing Company played a vital role in its production. We have reproduced the introduction, orientation and overview directly from the book.

Orientation and Overview

During the early waves of migration to the United States, as the Statue of Liberty beckoned to the oppressed, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free," this country was referred to by some as a melting pot of hardworking people seeking to fulfill the "American dream." As we enter the 1980s, that "melting pot" is more like a seething cauldron.

In the intervening years, many people have participated in an historic and intensifying struggle between capitalism and socialism. As capitalism gained hegemony over the world in protracted imperialistic lunges, the economic crises at home and abroad deepened and resistance took many forms. The world has seen tremendous upheaval and momentous events; nation after nation has sought revolution.

Over this period of time, the people in the United States have seen their dreams deferred as the economic system of capitalism in which they worked treated them, in the words of Carl Sandburg, "as a child, to be pleased or fed; or again, a hoodlum you have to get tough with," but seldom as though they were "a cauldron and a reservoir of the human reserves that shape history."

In recent times, people felt they had burst into a new era. Freed from the restrictive atmosphere and loyalty oaths of the McCarthy period of the '50s, they participated in shaping the politics of the '60s. Riding the crests of waves made in struggles of Civil Rights, Anti-War, Poor People's and Feminist Movements, the people saw themselves on the move.

But the sobering '70s were a setback as working people, without strong leadership and organization, stood defenseless as the gains they had won were taken back again. The capitalist system proved a resilient and powerful opponent. Equal rights for women and affirmative action programs gave way as workers lost ground to inflation; right-to-work laws, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, anti-busing, red-lining and runaway shops all took their toll. The people were numbed.

Negativism set in, exacerbated by the fact that the two-party system offered no real choices. Elections were determined by the

amount of money candidates could pour into them, how they could influence opinion polls, and how they could impress audiences by their "TV images" as created by public relations firms. In a Nevada election, people's cynicism reached its zenith when the slot, "None of the above," received more votes than the candidates listed.

During the '70s it seemed as though people stopped to regroup — minds reeling after the decade of the '60s with its frenetic politics, marked by murder and assassinations — the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Jr., Fred Hampton, Viola Liuzzo, the students of Jackson and Kent State, among them. And so it appeared that in the '70s the people were immobilized. "The mammoth," as Sandburg termed them, "rested between cyclonic dramas."

As we enter the decade of the '80s, the mass media has recorded a dramatic shift to the Right, but that is only half the story. Concomitant with that has been a dramatic, though unheralded, movement to the Left as well. People not only "rested" but also looked inward to draw upon a new reserve of strength. They analyzed and evaluated past experiences. They studied Marxism, as a method of analysis, and they reclaimed a proud history of Left tradition in this country once lost to public memory because of fear and '50s Cold War repression.

Today there is a simmering, growing, renewed readiness for activism. Movement is building slowly and subtly nationwide. It is not marked by the romantic fervor and heady idealism that characterized protest in the '60s. The movement of the '80s is rooted in a more deliberate and less spontaneous activism. The *ardor and the short-fused anger of the '60s* have been channeled into a deep commitment to long-term struggle.

Those experienced activists from previous decades who carry many physical and mental scars from the struggles against racism, sexism and imperialism have, upon reflection, come to a number of conclusions. One is that a system based on profit and greed cannot solve our major social problems. Secondly, attacking that system by focusing on single issues is not effective. The pervasive powerlessness now felt by racial minorities, women, gays, and others is the powerlessness resulting from fragmentation within a system which pits one division within the working class against another. Working people today have rediscovered the conviction that spurred previous generations of activists: Together we can take control of the forces that shape our lives.

As we enter a new "era of limits" and we recognize that U.S. influence in the world is on the decline, we can see that the middle ground is quickly eroding. People are moving off center to the Left, at the same time the Right is organizing a well-financed offensive. The nation is entering another period of worsening relations with the Soviet Union. SALT II is shelved. Detente is said to be dead. The armaments budget is skyrocketing while social services are declining. The Cold War is on again and threatening to become a hot one. A new imperial foreign policy, "the Carter Doctrine" has been formed. Draft registration is being reinstated. The military is making preparations to war over our oil addiction under the guise of "national security." The Soviets have invaded Afghanistan and paranoia shows signs of setting in for another long run. In part, this is the kind of environment that spawned McCarthyism 30 years ago. These dangerous times require courage and clear thinking. Strategy becomes very important and it can only be developed based on sound analysis. It

is that fact, above all others, which motivated the formation of the Inter-Religious Task Force for Social Analysis and the production of this study guide, *Which Side Are We On?*

Equally motivating was the fact that the editors believed that for Christians, political consciousness-raising and ideological struggle within the churches go hand in hand. An analysis, therefore, which links the radical salvation history of the people of God to an understanding of the primacy of the economic system in determining the social health of the whole human family is essential.

A companion publication entitled, *Must We Choose Sides?*, is available from the address listed on the back cover (\$5.95 plus \$1 postage and handling) for those who find these readings and exercises too advanced for their constituencies, or who have not bought these two volumes as a set. That earlier edition tackles subjects at a more basic level, gives suggestions on how to form a study group, and provides details about the origin of this task force.

Let us merely repeat here that we initiated a collective editorial process, and our editorial working group consists of six women and seven men — people who are lay, ordained, or members of religious orders. Our religious affiliations are Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopal, Reformed Church of America and Disciples of Christ.

Readers of this guide will find no blueprint for revolution. As with the attempts to scale the heights of mountains, the trails leading to a better society are punctuated with the record of tragic failures. History is replete with accounts of counter-revolutions, coups, conquests and utopian experiments, many of which are recalled in this book. Some have been cynically cruel, some merely romantic, others hopelessly idealistic. Some, however, have been cogent, careful, constructive.

Some have plunged humankind into decades of decadence, others have opened new windows of hope for millions. But the quest goes on, as it must, because the unquenchable human spirit, reflecting its divine source, refuses to be daunted in its search for a society that is just and humane.

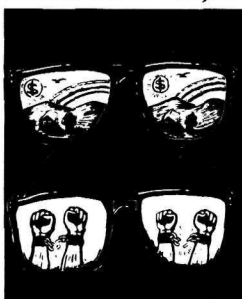
As editors of this book, we are not of one mind on the particulars of what that new society will look like, nor are we of one mind on the

point of view expressed by all the readings in this book. We are, however, unified in the endorsement of the contents of this volume as a serious and considered effort to make a contribution to the struggle for our future.

We also feel it important to stress that we have been taught to resist socialist ideas in this country, especially by the class-controlled media. This book is an attempt to shake us loose from the one-sided information we have been given since youth, into a liberating experience of discovery of both our radical heritage and an understanding of the present forces that will shape our future. Into that search we are drawn by the fact that our existence is inescapably, and crucially, a social existence. The texture of our economic life with others and the quality of our society determines our humanity, as the pages of this book seek to make clear.

Session 1: Understanding Political & Religious Ideology

In this first session we are invited to examine the fact that theology has never been neutral nor have ideologies ever been "objective." As theologian Juan Luis Segundo explains it, any attempt to put through a radical change in the existing structures must present itself as an ideology. But, any attempt to support the status quo reflects an ideology as well. In this way, theology and ideology have always taken sides in class struggle.



Along these lines, we have heard, perhaps, of "Christians for Socialism," but not of "Christians for Capitalism." While people do not organize under that rubric, many are wittingly and unwittingly joined to carry out a strategy of exploitation against the workers and the poor. The exercise in this session helps us to "unmask" our own political and religious ideology,

Session 2: Capitalism in Crisis

Working people — or the eight million unemployed — do not need a long litany of facts

and figures to prove to them that capitalism is in crisis. They awake every morning to news of rising costs and shortages, and experience the consequences in sacrifice and suffering. But key to proposing solutions for change is the way we analyze the crisis, which, in turn, is influenced by the ideological perspective from which we approach it.



This session employs an ideology committed to the interests of the working class and the poor. Its purpose is not only to understand the crisis, but to change the economic system which spawns it. The exercise asks us to analyze the role of the media in undergirding the capitalist ideology and fragmenting our view of the news.

Session 3: Class Struggle in Our Times

We live in a society that is divided into classes. That observation seems simple enough. But when we try to analyze the concept of class struggle, our task becomes far more complicated. The struggle is not so simplistic as the workers and the poor vs. the owners and the rich. Contradictions abound among the workers themselves, and the owners as well, as each class tries to organize in its own interest.



And, of course, it is always to the advantage of the capitalist class to exacerbate conflict amongst the workers, to keep them off balance and disorganized in ethnic and sexist disputes; so much so that capitalists have financed a right-wing offensive against workers. This session initiates exploration of all the above aspects of the class struggle.

Session 4: Exploring the Alternatives

First, we test the validity of a number of myths we have heard all our lives about socialism — myths mostly propagated by that class

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which controls the educational institutions and dominates the media. Then, on a positive note, we take on a study of the political economy of socialism, examining four components: Social ownership, working people's power, laws of socialist economy, and socialist values in everyday life.



Finally, this session provides an ambitious overview of illusionary alternatives to capitalism. Included is a critique of various individualistic, incremental, and structural change alternatives (pietistic religion, human potential movements, pacifism, liberal reform, populist and social democratic movements, and fascism).

Session 5: The Socialist Movement in U.S. History

History as written from the "top" — or dominating class — is quite different from history as lived from the "bottom" — or the exploited. This session recaptures for us those lost moments of a proud history which we must know to strategize for the future. We live through workers struggles as seen through the eyes of Mother Jones, and striking dockworkers in San Francisco.



Mother Jones

Ironically, many U.S. citizens know more about the history of the Left in other countries such as the Soviet Union or China than they do about the Left in their own. Further, as this book is written, no one party has emerged to attract the imagination of the masses here. Since real success for such an organization depends on an analysis of why past attempts have failed, this session is crucial to our political future.

Session 6: Christians and the Socialist Option

In this session we become acquainted with a number of Christians whose lives reflected

that they had successfully dealt with the relationship between faith and politics. As theologian Gustavo Gutierrez points out, "human reason has become political reason. For the contemporary historical consciousness, things political are not only those which one attends to during the free time afforded by one's private life; nor are they a well-defined area of human existence. It is the sphere for the exercise of a critical freedom which is won through history. It is the universal determinant and the collective arena for human fulfillment. Nothing lies outside the political sphere understood in this way."



In a world where politics is the fundamental human dimension, then, Christian love can hardly be apolitical, as proven in the lives of those described in this session. Needless to say, socialist Christian history has been ignored, as has socialist history, in this country, especially in the wake of the McCarthy period. In that regard, we are also reminded that "the cross" will always be part of class struggle.

Session 7: How Do We Organize?

Now comes the hard part. Having taken a class stand, where do we go, what political entity will guarantee the rule of the working class majority, who are our allies, where are the resources, what is the strategy? Hard questions, these, only some of which we can help to answer in this book. To offer a blueprint would be naive and utopian. But there are some vital steps we can take at this point.



This session helps us to develop a method for evaluating our own political action, to distinguish between substantive reform and reformism, and to build upon our strengths. The appendix that completes this book lists extensive resources for continued study and action.

The Idolatry and Promise of the Church

by George McClain

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because God has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

(Luke 4:18-19)

The above passage is key to understanding the social mandate of the Christian Gospel, for with these words Jesus announced his ministry, and therefore shaped the nature of the ministry we carry on in his name.

The meaning seems quite straightforward and, in fact, radical in its implications, placing the Christian message implacably in opposition to economic poverty and political oppression. Yet we repeatedly encounter interpretations, among both liberals and conservatives, which would divest the Gospel of all that is radical.

The Rev. George D. McClain is Executive Secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Action and editor of the MSFA bimonthly publication, *Social Questions Bulletin*. This article first appeared in Vol. 69, Nos. 5 and 6 of the SQB, and is in Vol. 2, *Which Side Are We On?*

For instance, the author of the Moffatt Bible Commentary writes:

On Jesus' lips the "good news" has a purely religious import. . . The term the poor is to be taken in its inward spiritual sense. . . and similarly the expressions captive, blind, oppressed indicate not primarily the downtrodden victims of material force, such as Rome's, but the victims of inward repressions, neuroses, and other spiritual ills due to misdirection and failure of life's energies and purposes.

This sort of "spiritualizing" of the Bible and Christian message permeates all North American church life. How is it to be explained?

Christians today who work among victims of economic poverty and political oppression, both in the United States and Third World countries, immediately challenge the Moffatt commentary as a serious distortion. In seeking to uncover the reasons for this type of interpreting, these Christians are discovering the usefulness of Karl Marx's understanding of how ideas are rooted in economic reality.

Marx's analysis is predicated upon the importance of "material" life, the

basic and essential day-to-day tasks of meeting human needs. This philosophical outlook of *materialism* (not to be confused with the notion of consumerism and a desire for more and more "things") recognizes that our consciousness and our ideas are decisively shaped by the experiences we have in the course of living and working in order to survive as human beings. Materialism differs from the philosophical outlook of *idealism* (not to be confused with commitment to high principles) which contends that people's consciousness and ideas are primarily shaped by exposure to ideas themselves and by mysterious forces beyond our control. Gracie Lyons, in *Constructive Criticism* gives the following explanation of the difference:

Suppose we're trying to explain the fact that many of the older white women in our community organizations don't speak out at neighborhood meetings. An idealist approach might yield explanations such as "Women are just naturally more passive," or "It's just women's instinct to be receptive rather than aggressive." A materialist approach, on the other hand, would focus its



attention on the concrete work experiences of women, experiences determined by the way labor in our society has been divided along sex lines. If a woman's daily life experiences consist mostly of doing unpaid housework, and raising children in the isolation of the home, we can easily see the material basis for her quiet behavior.

In our society ideas are usually accounted for by idealist explanations. These tend to obscure the down-to-earth struggles by certain groups and assure that idealism, not materialism, dominates the cultural and religious scene.

While Christians would not go all the way with some versions of Marxism which account for mental or spiritual phenomena solely on the basis of philosophical materialism, our long-standing idealistic bent desperately needs to be corrected by the materialist perspective.

Marxism asserts that the trends in intellectual history depend upon who controls the economic base by which a society meets its material needs, by who controls the means of production. The capitalist class in our system controls not only the economic base through which are created the essential elements for human survival (food, shelter,

clothing, etc.). It also dominates the political, cultural, legal and governmental institutions which tend to perpetuate the economic system and the interests of the ruling class, who are its chief beneficiaries. For instance, the legal system in a capitalist society always protects the supposed "right" to accumulate wealth and to own unlimited amounts of "private" property. Were this not the case, capitalism could not exist.

Thus, through control of the economic base, the capitalist class is able strongly to influence political and cultural institutions and the ideas and images which they continually market. Marxism contends quite convincingly that the dominant ideas of a society tend to be those which are for the most part compatible with the continued control of the ruling class through the dominant economic system. The current spate of narcissistic and self-centered pop psychology books, such as *Looking Out for #1* and *How To Be Your Own Best Friend*, embody in a crass way the individualism and selfishness which capitalist institutions foster. This perspective on the source of dominant ideas provides us with a powerful tool for understanding why the church as an institution has tended to give support, first to feudalism and then later to capitalism and now even to monopoly

capitalism and its transnational corporations.

Given the constant pressure upon religious, cultural and educational institutions to provide ideological support for capitalism, it is not surprising that religious thought tends to take place within certain limits that appear to be self-imposed but are in fact imposed by the exigencies of the system. This means that the institutional church is constantly under pressure to interpret the Scriptures, celebrate the sacraments, and preach the Word of God in a manner acceptable to the capitalist view of life—often called the "American way." As a result, clergy who have spoken out against racism, sexism, capitalism and imperialism often bear significant scars—such as the loss of their pastorates.

Most of the time these limits are imposed, not through overt coercion, but rather through the internalization by church leaders and followers of the prevailing cultural ideology, which includes a stress on individualism, self-sufficiency, personal responsibility for one's lot in society, the supremacy of "free enterprise," and a visceral and unquestioned anti-communism.

While normally the limits on the church's social thought are indirect and self-imposed, these limits could become overt and direct, if necessary. Imagine for a moment what would happen if the church in North America suddenly were to put its whole institutional weight behind a movement to reject capitalism. Corporations would begin to threaten the financial livelihood of churches and their vast array of institutions by cutting off direct and indirect corporate and foundation contributions, as well as the large personal gifts that enable the churches to command such vast resources. Significant membership losses would follow, not only among the capitalist class, but also among those in the middle and working class who rightly or wrongly identify their

personal well-being with the existence of capitalism. In recent years, even the few and generally mild questions raised about aspects of capitalism by the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches have been met with threats by the wealthy to withhold contributions or leave member denominations. Further down the line, we could expect governmental authorities to use their powers to curb the privileges the churches enjoy, such as tax-free status, and to find ways, probably "legal" ways, to harass the church.

Sometimes the assumption is made that while right-wing fundamentalist Christianity clearly plays the role of defending prejudice and free enterprise while countering alleged communism, middle-of-the-road or "liberal" denominations do not participate in this defense of the status quo. This is not true. Although explicitly right-wing religious lobbies and churches may act as the "shock troops" against any deviation from the tacit Christian-capitalist alliance, so-called moderate and liberal churches and their leaders are perhaps more effective in providing religious support for capitalism.

In fact, as the North American peoples have become educated and secularized, the unsophisticated forms

of other-worldly religion (biblical literalism with an emphasis on the fear of hell and escape to heaven) have been increasingly less useful in providing the individualistic and spiritualized interpretation of Christianity required by capitalism. Thus, liberal churches have developed theologies which do not conflict with natural science and literary criticism of the Bible. They have also specialized in providing for every age level a sense of community (something very lacking in a competitive society). Finally, rather than address the underlying causes, they have developed various forms of outreach, mostly of a charitable nature, that meet gaps in the delivery of social services—such as providing meals for senior citizens, hosting child care facilities and sponsoring government funded non-profit housing. The Advertising Council of America even encourages this religion-in-life approach.

Several mechanisms are employed to proscribe church life in such a way as to render it safe for capitalism. One is to stress individual concerns, basically in isolation from social realities. Here the emphasis is on a "pastoral" orientation which provides personal and religious support for the inevitable crises of life. Generally speaking, these crises are not interpreted in the counseling situation

as possible openings through which God may be calling a person to move toward a new, broader and more biblical and political understanding of life. How many times, for instance, have women counseled with pastors about a basic dissatisfaction with their lot in life, only to have their socialization as traditional subservient housewives and full-time mothers be reinforced rather than challenged? How seldom has any pastor ever told a dissatisfied worker, "Well, you know, to work for somebody else's personal gain is by definition to be ripped off—no matter how well they pay you!"

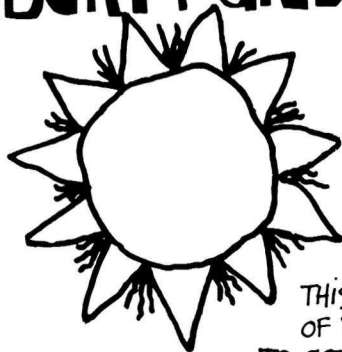
Another technique is that of interpreting every biblical passage so that only psychological and "spiritual" realities are taken seriously. The principalities and powers which oppress are here limited to spiritual, interior ones—personal sin, the temptation to dishonesty, low self-esteem, etc. As in the earlier example regarding Jesus' announcement of his ministry, to free the oppressed applies only to the *spiritually* oppressed; to liberate the captives means to free only the *spiritually* bound.

Finally, to the extent that social issues are confronted, the technique is to treat the victims as objects of charity (as do most hunger projects) rather than

"WE MUST PRESERVE ABOVE ALL
THE LIBERATION PROCESS
OF ✕ OUR PEOPLE..."
-Mons. ROMERO, ARCHBISHOP OF SAN SALVADOR-

Archbishop Oscar A. Romero, El Salvador's most liberal Roman Catholic Bishop, was assassinated March 24 as he celebrated Mass.

LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL



THIS IS WHAT YAHWEH ASKS
OF YOU: ONLY THIS,
TO ACT JUSTLY, TO LOVE TENDERLY
AND TO WALK
HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD.
MICAH 6:8

as persons to be empowered to change the system which created the hunger and oppression. Where specific divisive issues do emerge and the church cannot avoid a choice, a frequent tactic is to treat the issue as one to be debated or studied, so that "both sides may be heard." If a side is taken, then care is taken to limit the matter to a harmless resolution and avoid, if possible, actually engaging in any action that confronts an evil and demands a change. "Politics is really for the politician." "We don't know enough about the issue to get involved." "The church's job is to be involved not in conflict but in reconciliation." These are frequently used rationalizations for passivity. If some action is taken, it may well be offering the church's "good offices" to both sides in the dispute, a thoroughly non-controversial role which in most cases serves to maintain the status quo.

When Marx stated that religion was the opiate of the people, he was commenting on the role of organized Christianity in his day. Whether one looks at Christianity past or present, the churches, with some notable exceptions, do play this role of opiate, justifying the existing order and keeping

people unclear about the cause of so much human suffering—suffering which could be radically diminished if the profit motive were not the final arbiter of life in our society.

Given this pessimistic analysis of the alliance between the church and capitalism, we may wonder if there are any possibilities for the church to cross the boundaries informally set for it and respond to the Gospel.

Marxist criticism of religion, as generally interpreted, would assert that religion ultimately is based on an illusion and can make no lasting contribution to the building of a new, non-capitalist society.

Before rushing to reject this possibility, we should acknowledge how helpful Marxist criticism of religion is in revealing how religion becomes permeated with a capitalist ideology and how religious institutions, even "liberal" ones, tend to play a reactionary role. Religion under capitalism has served as an opiate of the people, a mystifier of the actual realities of society, and for this we in the church must repent in the full biblical sense of turning away from serious wrongdoing toward a radically new life.

Marx serves the function of the

modern day prophet to the church in our era, indicting it for its idolatry and enabling Christians again to take seriously Jesus' teaching, "No servant can serve two masters. . . You cannot serve God and mammon (money)."

As Christians seeking to be faithful, we know the basic stance of capitalism is anti-Christian, for it is built upon the maximizing of personal profit, the nurturing of an impulse to be grasping, the promotion of individualism instead of community, the exaltation of the strong over the weak, and the subordination of human life to economic gain. As biblical people, we know the judgment of God in calling the church away from idolatry and back to faithful obedience. We also know of significant instances of the church throwing its support behind revolutionary efforts, as in the role of the black church in the United States in the struggle against racism, and in the current involvement of countless Latin American laity, religious and priests in the struggle against capitalism on their continent. In some smaller or larger way, most of us know of circles of Christians who have broken through the limits imposed upon the church, and have become active and uncompromising agents of radical change.

We, therefore, may proclaim the hope that the church—or at least a saving remnant of it—can be the courageous and effective bearer of the Gospel message that the will of God is opposed to capitalism and to the church's alliance with capitalism; further, that the way of obedience in our time is to call for a new social and economic order built not on exploitation, but on the sharing of God's gifts among all the people. Early in this century Karl Barth wrote, "Real socialism is real Christianity in our time." Perhaps now is the time when such words will fall on fertile soil and, by the grace of God, bring forth a hundredfold yield. ■

Continued from page 2

struggle against these evils.

I would like to point out a group of oppressed women not mentioned in any case of the articles: the women of the Episcopal Church in dioceses whose bishops will not or have not ordained women. The General Convention which approved the ordination of women to the priesthood did so by approving Title III Canon 9 Sec. 1: "The provisions of these Canons for the admission of Candidates to the Ordination to the three Orders, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, shall be equally applicable to men and women." The House of Bishops met a month later, Sept. 30-Oct. 5, 1977 in Port St. Lucie, Fla., and adopted "A Statement of Conscience" to qualify their position on the ordination of women. The concluding section reads:

In the light of all this and in keeping with our intention at Minneapolis, we affirm that no Bishop, Priest or Deacon or Lay Person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disabilities as a result of his or her conscientious objection to or support of the 65th General Convention's action with regard to the ordination of women to the priesthood or episcopate.

The fact is, numerous women are

penalized and do suffer "canonical disabilities" because they act on their belief that the ordination canons do apply equally to them. For there are bishops, standing committees, commissions on ministry, dioceses that have arrogated to themselves the right *not* to consider the canons as applying equally to women and men by denying women access to "due process" under the ordination canons.

I believe there is grave injustice being done. The Episcopal Church is behaving irresponsibly and unethically in not addressing this issue as a church. It is not just our problem as women, or that certain dioceses are a "problem"; it is the whole church that is and has the problem, although I have yet to hear anyone publicly address it.

**Wendy Williams
Sewanee, Tenn.**

All Under Judgment

I must speak out on two subjects: the urban caucus meetings and the ordination of women. The support you have given the Episcopal Urban Caucus is fine except that I wonder if you know how "set up to fail" the whole event is?

First of all, with the price of registration, hotel rooms and transportation, who but the wealthy bishops and priests involved can

attend? The really involved people are certainly not in a position, with inflation choking us, to attend. The really affected Episcopalians are either burned out by now, or have been forced underground by what Bill Stringfellow calls "the priorities of bishops" in refusing candidacy to social activists and other deviant seminarians! Stringfellow himself is a valid model of inner city ministry, but is he ever listened to, really?

On women's ordination: you have consistently spoken out and let the voices of women be heard. The appalling lack of response, or brutal response as a result isn't surprising. I have known several of the women personally, and just want to ask others to lay off the backs of these people. These women are not our whipping posts, for God's sake. No one has given the Episcopal Church an excuse to destroy itself through in-fighting. Until the millenium arrives, we all are under judgment, not only the few we have singled out as controversial.

**Dorothy McMillan, M.Div.
Geneseo, N.Y.**

CREDITS

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Continued from page 3

provided the access to a freedom they felt was an inalienable right of which they were being deprived. And basic to that process was a lot of hard and clear deliberation by a remarkable group of thinkers, many of them self-taught. Jefferson, Madison, Adams, Franklin and the others studied and argued about Rousseau, Locke, the classical Greek democracy, looking for clues as to how to create in the new world a government which would be of the people, by the people and for the people. Whether the governance which resulted from their efforts proves viable in our time depends in large measure on whether we have the same dedication to freedom in our time as they did in theirs.

The people who publish THE WITNESS have collaborated with an inter-religious task force to create tools for helping people make a critical analysis of our society, how it functions, and why it so often works poorly. It will indeed be surprising if there are not cries of "Treason!" The forces of a threatened system, now as always, will seek to discredit and denounce such criticism of the status quo. This is our heritage, to pay that kind of price for the search for freedom. We invite you to join this search with us. For it is not just thirteen small colonies, but an entire world bound together in one economic unit that is desperate for its full measure of freedom, politically and economically. ■

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