

Palestine: Issues and Questions

Mark Harris

Urban Apocalypse Responses:

James Lewis

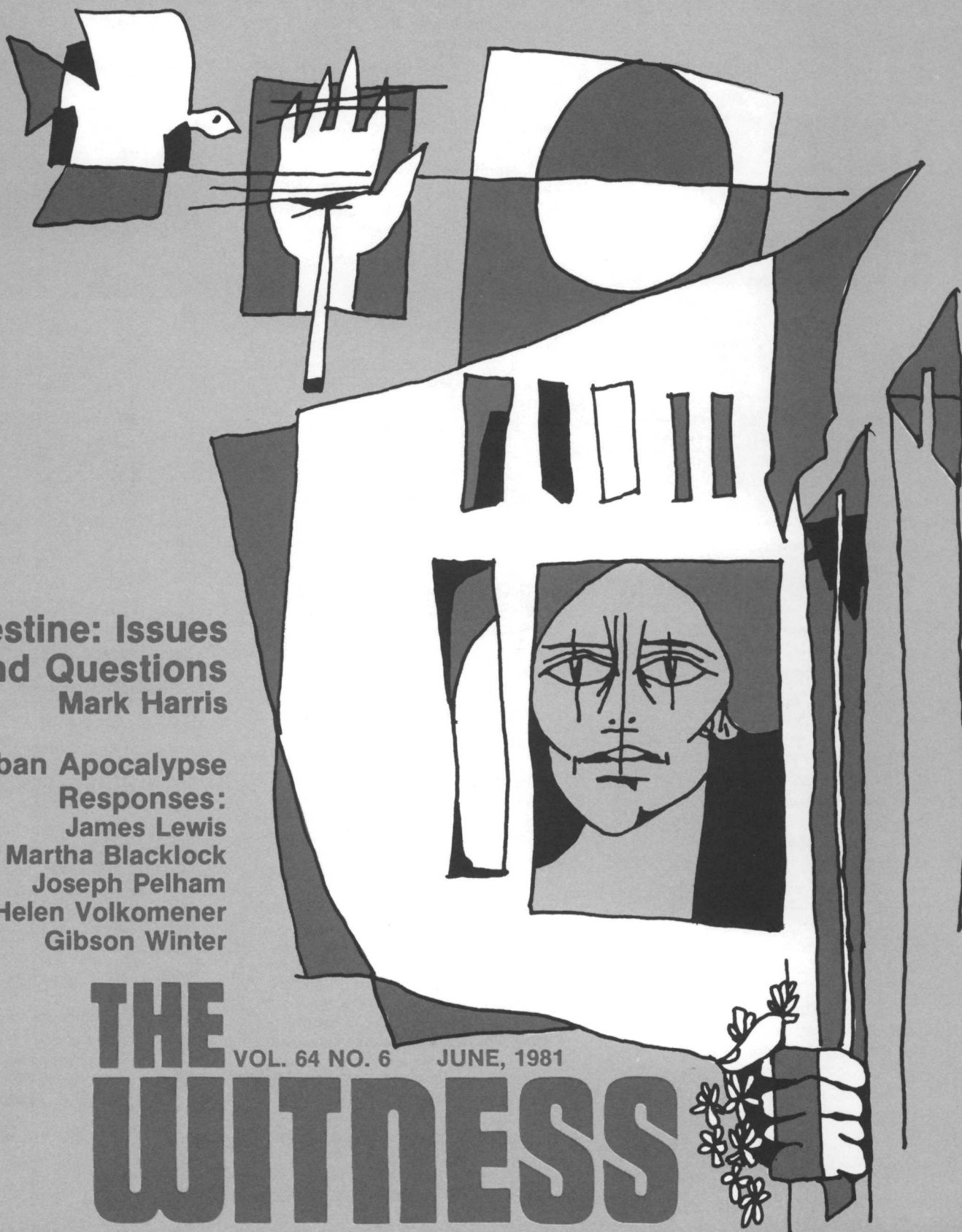
Martha Blacklock

Joseph Pelham

Helen Volkomener

Gibson Winter

THE VOL. 64 NO. 6 JUNE, 1981 WITNESS



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Praise From a Bishop

The February 1981 edition of THE WITNESS is a magnificent job of expressing the Christian Faith, Hope, Forgiveness, Sensitivity and Decision. I praise you for leadership in the church and in the world. Some of us cry for this prophetic witness and praise you for your Christian commitment.

The Rt. Rev. Robert B. Appleyard
Bishop of Pittsburgh

Dementi Corrects

The article about me, "How to Win While Losing," in the February issue of THE WITNESS, contained one serious error which I would like to correct.

I was not reconsidered as a candidate for Bishop of Alaska before Diocesan Convention. I became a candidate only by filing all the necessary papers at the time Convention convened. At that point a nominating speech was not needed, although my nominator did state briefly that I was not only being nominated by our congregation but also by many persons in other places. In other words, I became a candidate by fulfilling the canons which pertain to nominations from the floor.

When I withdrew my name the great show of affirmation was the *murmuring* of "I love you" from persons around me. Now, when Mary Eunice Oliver, God love her, believes something, she *yells*! My supporters in Anchorage were quieter.

Finally, I do not judge Bishop Cochran for what he did or did not do. He has been supportive of me and my ministry in his years as our bishop. He is his own and God's man, not swayed by factions within the Alaskan Diocese. There are those who are convinced that he should never have let this uppity woman leave the bush. He took that chance, and I love him for it.

The Rev. Jean Dementi
North Pole, Alaska

Oliver Responds

I am sorry that I recorded that shift from exclusion to inclusion incorrectly. Would that my epistles were perfect, but then, neither are St. Paul's.

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, Cal.

Christ Our Brother

It is precisely because of original and forward-looking articles like "Popularizing Non-Sexist Liturgies," by Martha Blacklock, that I read, enjoy, am challenged and stimulated by THE WITNESS. My ears, too, have "popped" and there is no returning to my former world view. I favor Rite II over Rite I partly because it largely avoids referring to humanity as a group of men.

I wish to congratulate Ms. Blacklock on her article and her pioneering work with the Mother Thunder Mission. However, I do take exception to her reluctance to refer to Jesus as God's Son. (I understood "O Jesus Christ, firstborn of creation" in the revised Gloria as evidence of that reluctance.) In

the Incarnation, God entered our world and accepted freely the limitations imposed by that world. One of those limitations entails being either female or male, one of the two. God chose to become fully present in one fully human who happened to be male. This is not theology, but fact. In so doing God surely was not acting out of any exclusive bent, but rather out of the recognition of human limitations. Jesus was fully human (as opposed to fully male) and embraced all people everywhere. Just because he wasn't black doesn't mean he is not the Savior of all darker skinned people. In Jesus' maleness I perceive no statement of male superiority, but rather a statement about the limited nature of human existence.

I hope that Ms. Blacklock is able to accept and proclaim the salvation offered in Christ our brother in the same way she could were he Christ our sister. Who knows, when Christ returns to complete God's work he may well be a she!

The Rev. Brooke Myers
Gridley, Cal.

Projecting Prejudice

"Popularizing Non-Sexist Liturgies," by Martha Blackman (*sic*) does not excite me; being a child of God through Christ, now that excites me.

For a long time I have known my kinship to God. I am delighted to be the daughter of God, made in the image of His Holy Spirit. When I read the creation poem about Eve coming from the side of Adam, I feel honored. God is showing me how His Spirit was set free to be a separate person of the Three in One. What more could a female want than to be formed after that One of God which gives comfort, nurture, grace, insight and birth?

Reading scripture, one sees that the Holy Spirit never calls attention to Herself, but draws honor to Christ and the father. To sexist women projecting their prejudice on others, I would say,

COVER

This month's cover was adapted by Beth Seka from a graphic by Kamal Boullata, whose art appears on p. 4 and p. 6. Boullata was born in Jerusalem and has exhibited paintings in major Arab capitals, Rome, Florence, Paris, London and Copenhagen. Presently he lives and paints in Washington, D.C.

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THE WITNESS

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THE WITNESS EDITORIAL

New SST: Threat to Freedom?

Theologian Jon Sobrino noted in THE WITNESS recently that the National Security State in Latin America is an idol which demands victims. "That is the ultimate reason why people get killed," he said.

Commenting on this reality, liberation theologians in Central America have predicted that while South Americans are paying for liberation struggles by undergoing torture and death as well as imprisonment, repression in North America would likely escalate on a more "intellectual" ideological level.

In that context, it appears that a dangerous legal apparatus has been set up in the United States which may soon begin demanding ideological victims — the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism (SST). According to the *Washington Post*, the Senate Subcommittee would "keep watch over Communist activities in the United States and would have added jurisdiction over terrorism."

Headed by Jeremiah Denton (R-S.C.), who was elected with the aid of the Moral Majority, it is comprised of three Republicans and two Democrats, the latter being Joseph Biden of Delaware and Patrick Leahy of Vermont. Other Republican members include John East of North Carolina, elected with the support of Jesse Helms (who sees creeping Communism as the greatest threat to this country and heads the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Hemispheric Affairs); and Orrin Hatch of Utah. From Hatch's office, rumors have emanated that the SST would investigate the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) and the Institute for Policy Studies, two progressive research centers, and *Mother Jones* magazine.

One of the forces behind the new Subcommittee is the Heritage Foundation, a New Right think tank. A Heritage Foundation report to the Reagan Administration suggested that the targets of domestic security investigations be not only "the several Communist parties" but also "clergymen, students, businessmen, entertainers, labor officials, journalists

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Palestine: Issues and Questions

Shall we extend the hand of friendship
to this people, as a people with a voice?

What is the PLO?

What do Palestinians ask of the world community?

by Mark Harris

It is almost impossible to write about Palestine without making someone angry or defensive or accusatory. On the other hand, to defend the State of Israel not only makes most Arabs angry, it makes many Third World peoples suspicious, for there are elements in the birth of the *modern* State of Israel that smack of good old Western colonialism. There is a lot to be angry about.

The focus of the anger of Arabs and other Third World peoples is the charge of European colonial expansion. The focus of the anger of Israel, many Jews throughout the world, and others who support the State of Israel, is the charge of anti-Semitism. Admittedly, Jews throughout the world have been shamefully treated, subjected to genocidal policies, and made the content of myths of darkness and evil power. And to risk even the touch of a label such as "anti-Semitic" is frightening. We of the Christian community know how dark that charge can be, for deep inside we know that we also have been the source of such prejudices. Almost in reaction to our own sin, we are in danger of judging *any* criticism of Israel to be anti-Semitic — a reaction not missed by those who would like all criticism of the State of Israel to be muted.

The Rev. Mark Harris, interim rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Newark, Del., and editor of *Plumblin'*, traveled in the Middle East recently.

Let me be clear then from the outset. This article *is* critical of the actions taken by Europeans, by First World powers, by the government of the State of Israel, by persons who identify themselves as modern Zionists (persons who believe that the modern State of Israel has a special right to exist, a right not of nations and human law, but a right of special sourcing). It is *not* critical of Jews, of Semites, of the religious and cultural and social fabric of Judaism. Indeed I hope that what is written here will be seen as pro-Semitic, supportive of the need to protect Judaism from the excesses of a secular and European movement that has simply excused itself from the need to listen to the cries of people of the land now dispossessed by colonial attitudes which are not native to Judaism or Semites.

In early November 1980, in the backwash of the election, two Associated Press articles appeared together. The headlines read, *Israeli Planes Bomb Lebanon in Retaliation*, and *Churches Urge PLO Recognition*. There they were: the essence of two concerns that have followed me since I visited Palestinians in Lebanon this past year.

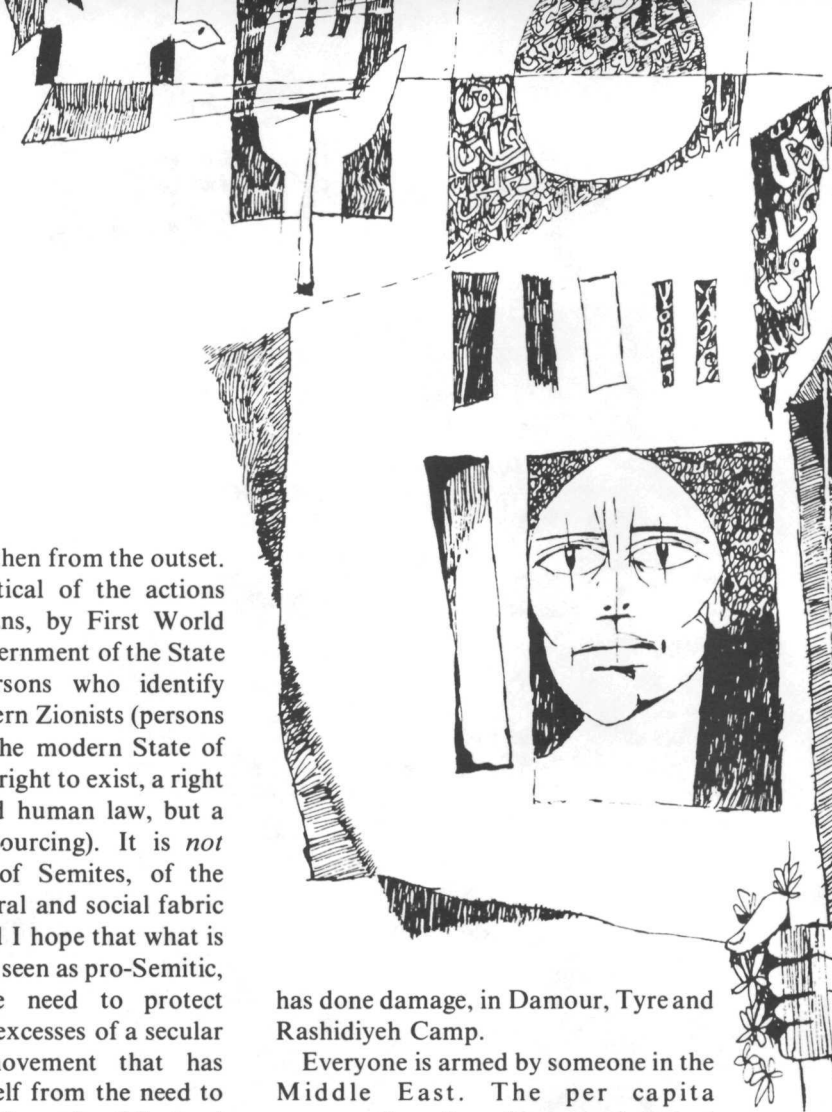
I don't know the details of the raid by the Israeli Armed Forces. I do know that they have used in the past and continue to use American-made weapons. I have seen places where the bombs have dropped, where the shelling

has done damage, in Damour, Tyre and Rashidiyeh Camp.

Everyone is armed by someone in the Middle East. The per capita consumption of machine guns in Beirut alone must be appalling. We sell weapons to the Israelis, and when we don't do that we support their defense needs with funds. We share then some of the responsibility for the use of these weapons in the protracted conflicts of the Middle East.

It is necessary to ask a first question: Why are we selling weapons to those whose enemies are people they have pushed from the land on which they lived?

The National Council of Churches of Christ have stated that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the "only organized voice of the Palestinian people and should be a party to peace negotiations in the Middle East." I believe that is true. The real



breakthrough, however, is the underlying recognition that Palestinians *are* a people, and if a people, then justified in seeking redress of grievances, justice, and a hearing before the other nations of the world.

Given the fact that Palestinians are a people, that they are organized, and that the PLO is the voice of that people, a second question arises: Shall we extend the hand of friendship to this people, as a people with voice?

I.

Palestinians exist. Despite massive efforts to make them nameless, homeless persons, they do not go away. Theorists of the Zionist movement have historically wished they did not exist, for Palestinians have been the *de facto* occupants of the land of Palestine. When this land was designated as the location for the modern State of Israel, Zionists needed, and needed us, to believe that Palestine was a land without a people for a people without a land.

Western nations have supported the establishment of the State of Israel. This support grew as successive waves of anti-Semitism, crisis, war and guilt swept the Western world. Each wave added to the desire to see Jews go somewhere else. That Palestine was the place grew in favor, and with it the notion that the people of the land, the Palestinians, were of no account and were to be ignored.

Western nations have practiced colonialism for a long time. Here was a new chance, one with a twist: the support of a Western state in the Middle East and at the same time a "solution" for all the guilt and residual anti-Semitism in Western culture. We could "send them home."

The defenders of Jewish settlements in Palestine have well used colonial attitudes to justify their actions, playing on the feelings and conscience of the West. And finally, they have used the

most secular of Western criteria for legitimacy — success. The story grew: where there was nothing, something was made; where there was desert, the flowers bloomed. A primitive land was made modern, a rich land weaned from the dry desert of poverty. The justification by better works arose.

Palestinians, victims of centuries of occupation, suzerainty and conquest, often saw themselves as a subject people, washed up on the coastal plains and interior valleys of the routes between great powers. Their self-image, reflected in the mirrored reports of others, was seen darkly, waveringly. It was hard for them to understand or value themselves, as it is for any oppressed people. Sometimes they too seemed to want to see themselves go away. No matter how much Zionists or Western nations wished Palestinians did not exist or would go away, the fact is that *Palestinians do exist as a people*. They are therefore capable of being wronged not just as individuals, but as a people.

The NCC statement confirms a position already taken by the United Nations, in which the PLO has special Observer Status. The Palestinians are now recognized by many nations as a people organized to present their case before the nations of the world.

II.

The question of friendship with the Palestinian people is not an easy one. The experience of occupation, conquest, and exile have historically and currently caused the Palestinians to look to larger realities for hope. Tenacious love of the land, a love witnessed by generations of steadfastness in the face of foreign domination, a sense of unity with Arab peoples, and a mixture of nomadic, agricultural and urban values, have provided a rich and particular cultural backdrop for the character of the Palestinian people. Because their

history is quite unlike our own, they are very unlike us on many levels.

Perhaps for Americans, and particularly the U.S. Christian community, the most difficult single barrier to empathy with the Palestinian people is their use of arms in the struggle against the State of Israel. It does not sit well with us. Palestinians view this armed struggle as justified resistance to the idea that they ought to assimilate or evaporate into the countries where they have moved as refugees, or become the acquiescent underclass in Israel. For a variety of reasons this resistance has most often been characterized as terrorism by the U.S. press, which curiously, rarely labels Israeli actions as "terrorist."

So strong is the aversion to terrorism that calling Palestinians terrorists skews our perceptions of the struggle in which they are engaged. It is difficult for Americans even to begin to examine the tactics used by the Palestinians, their organization, or the ends they seek. Having labeled them as terrorists, the issue is settled. No real examination takes place, and the State of Israel benefits from our uncritical support.

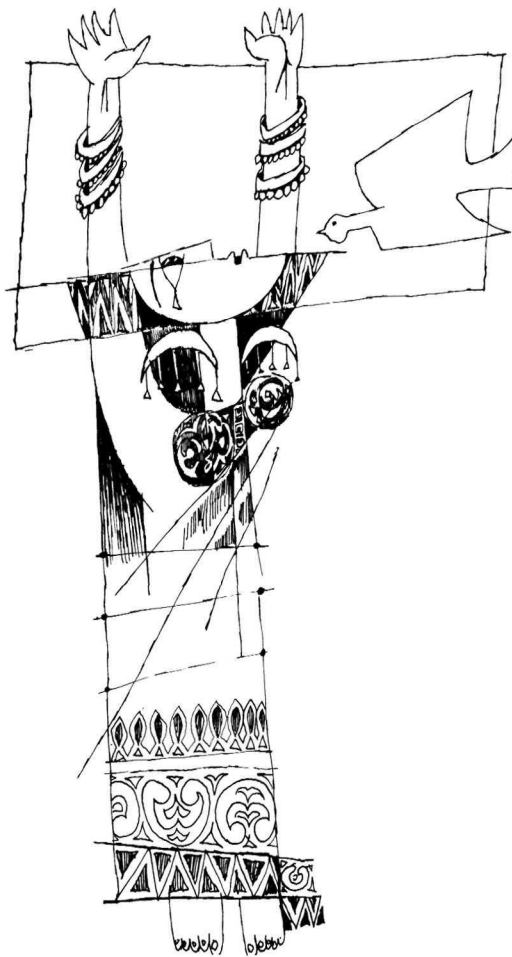
It is part of the tragedy of our relationship with the Palestinian people that the use of arms, by which they both became organized and found a means of forcing their claims to be taken seriously, has become the basis on which to reject them as a people and charge them as international criminals. It is difficult for us to examine the Palestinian use of arms, to distinguish between the various forms and tactics of resistance used, and to consider the extent to which Palestinians have made legitimate use of arms. In this we have not been helped by the standard charge by the State of Israel that each and every armed attack by Palestinians is an act of terrorism. It is much easier to dismiss the Palestinian claims for redress if they

are viewed only as terrorists.

Terrorism is a tactical matter. It serves political or ideological ends as part of a general strategy. Its object is to terrify people, particularly civilians, and to force into public view concerns that otherwise will not be heard. Terrorist actions fly in the face of several dictates of Christian morals, not the least of which is that body of thought concerning the conduct of a just war and the protection of civilian populations in war.

We must remember, however, that at one time or another almost all nations have used such tactics. The birth of modern Israel was accompanied and supported by terrorist actions against the Palestinian inhabitants. Prime Minister Menachem Begin was himself a terrorist.

The United States has engaged in tactics in Viet Nam which were terrorist in all but name, by cooperating in actions with the South Vietnamese which involved control by terror. But perhaps the most important use of terrorism in the world is by the nuclear powers. The United States and the Soviet Union are without doubt



involved in terror tactics in amassing large nuclear weapons systems. Indeed,

we call this the "balance of terror." This tactic exists primarily to put fear in the enemy but is growing as a tactic to control national populations; witness the extent to which scare tactics are used to justify larger and larger military expenditures by the United States. The point that nuclear weapons systems are terrorist does not escape peoples of the world, and we are often accused of terrorism as a result.

The armed force of the Palestinians is a guerrilla army, without the legitimacy of established government behind it; but it is not a mere collection of small "terrorist groups." Particularly in Lebanon, where the armed presence of the PLO is so very evident, that presence functions not only as an attack force, but also provides protection to a country torn by civil war, one in which Palestinians have much at stake. The same PLO that acts as the central governing authority for the armed force also fulfills other functions of government, making provisions for the ill and wounded, for health clinics, and for worker cooperatives. The PLO is extensively involved in political and social matters. It has become the voice

What Is the PLO? by Ibrahim Abu-Lughod

More than 400 representatives of the dispersed Palestinian people convened in the first Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting in May 1964. That Council meeting committed the Palestinian people to liberating their homeland, and there the Council decided to create the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to represent and to express the will of the Palestinian people in that liberation process.

In the structure of the PLO, the Palestine National Council is the highest representative body of the Palestinian people.

Dr. Abu-Lughod, a professor at Northwestern University, is a member of the Palestine National Council. Reprinted from *Afro-Americans Stand Up for Middle East Peace*, edited by James Zogby and Jack O'Dell.

The Council is the authoritative body that establishes and promulgates national goals and policies. In its ranks are representatives of the Palestinian people both inside and outside the occupied territories — including representatives of the General Unions of Palestinian Workers, Women, Students and Writers; the Palestine Red Crescent; the Palestinian Cinema and Arts Institution; and representatives of all the major Palestinian political and military organizations. In turn, the Council elects an Executive Committee which is equivalent to a government. The Executive Committee oversees different departments of the PLO that deal with health, welfare, education, arts and culture, diplomacy, and other affairs.

At present the Council has about 300 members representing broad sectors of the

Palestinian people; the Executive Committee (of which Yasser Arafat is Chairman) has 15 members.

The Palestine Liberation Organization has acquired the legitimacy of representing the Palestinian people. It acquired that legitimacy first from its own people; Palestinian associations, groups, and communities in the Arab world and the Israeli-occupied areas accept the formulation of their goals, the methods of achieving these goals, and the various edicts, rules, and regulations which the organization has issued as theirs.

Briefly, the primary goal which has been accepted is that of the liberation of Palestine, which entails the restoration of Palestinian national sovereignty. The ultimate goal of the Palestine Liberation Organization is to

of the Palestinian people in international arenas, particularly in pleading the case of the Palestinian people before the United States.

That Palestinians have engaged in terrorism cannot be denied. But they are not unique in this. The Israeli armed forces have conducted many operations into southern Lebanon that have served no purpose except to terrorize the inhabitants of camps and their Lebanese neighbors. Israel has given arms and aid to so-called Christian forces, who in turn have committed acts of terrorism. The infamy of terrorism is shared by those we call friend and enemy alike.

In part the issue of terrorism is a bogus one. Many actions taken by a "friendly" guerrilla or resistance movement are viewed as legitimate which if done by "unfriendly" people would be viewed as terrorism. If such actions are part of a legitimated struggle, they are placed under the rubric of warfare. If they are viewed as violent individual or small group actions, they are seen simply as the work of crazed terrorists. Of course, the concern about terrorism is vitally

important. Some of the actions claimed by the PLO as their own are without doubt terrorist. And here, at the crux of the matter, the question must be raised again: Shall we extend the hand of friendship to the Palestinian people, organized and voiced in the PLO, knowing that the organization has on this or that occasion used terror tactics?

III.

What is the claim that Palestinians make on the world community? What do they want that makes them take up arms and fight? What possible claim would they have on us for friendship?

One Palestinian of whom I asked these questions while in Lebanon responded, "Ours is an easily understood desire. It is not complicated by ideology or theology. It is not a matter for much discussion. We want to go home." Remember, for Palestinians "going home" is to a home of recent memory, no more than 33 years old. It is quite different from the Zionist desire to "go home" to a place as much ideological as real.

Israel has a Law of Return, which covers the right of Jews throughout the

world to return home. For most Jews that return is not to a place of personal memory, but to a place of promise. Palestinian refugees who wish to return to their homeland of only a few years ago, cannot easily do so.

Palestinians are demanding a redress of grievances; they were forced to leave Palestine and now, as from that first day, they want to go home. And, in an age of liberation struggles, for the first time they want to go home to a place that is really theirs, no longer subject to colonialism, occupation, or conquest.

So badly do they want to return home, with a sense of that place as their home, that negotiation and compromise can take place concerning the establishment of a separate Palestinian state whose relations with Israel might well include more and more interchange and commerce, with less friction and armed conflict. But for that to take place, indeed for anything to take place that gives integrity to the hopes of the Palestinian people, we must begin, as have the NCC and the UN to accept that: the Palestinian people are organized; they do have a voice; the

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establish a unitary, nonsectarian democratic state for all Palestinians irrespective of creed, national origin, or language. The Organization believes that such goals will be attained only through a national struggle patterned after the wars of national liberation waged by the formerly colonized.

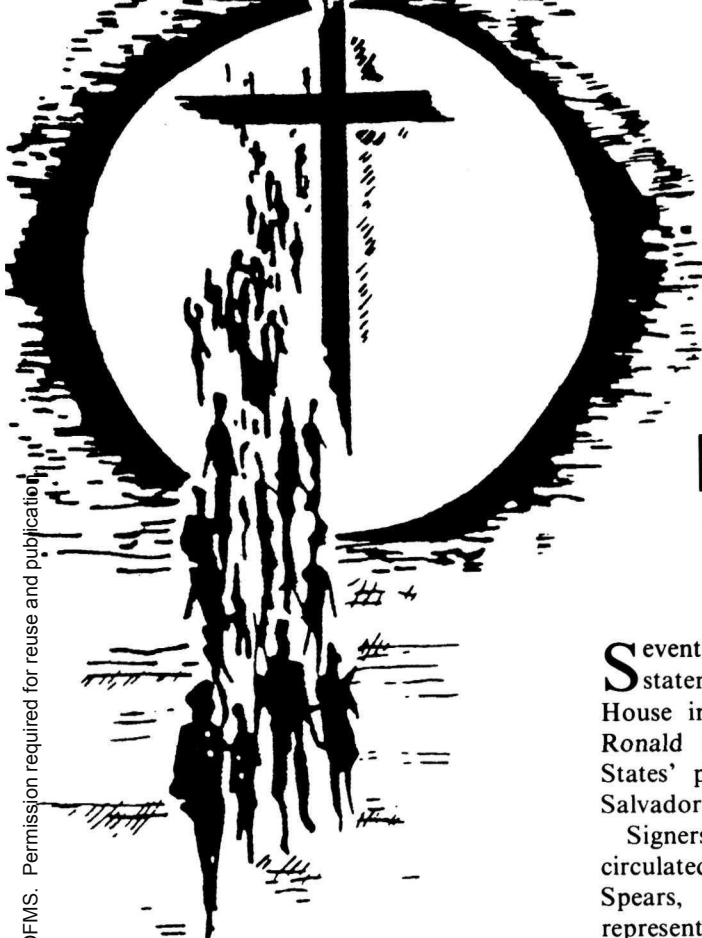
In the conduct of that struggle, the Palestine Liberation Organization has sought and obtained the assistance of oppressed peoples throughout the world and has further obtained considerable support from established states that view Israel as an agent of the West in the Arab world. Thus the socialist system of power has supported the PLO; the Afro-Asian states have supported the Palestinians' struggle; and African and Latin American movements of national liberation have supported them as well. Considerable sectors of societies in the United States and Western Europe also have extended support to the Palestinians, to the

chagrin of their governments.

As a consequence of this broad international support and the active political campaigns of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the international community as it is legally organized in the United Nations conferred legitimacy on the Palestinian struggle as well as on the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Initially the United Nations in 1948 recognized the rights of the Palestinian people to repatriation (Resolution 194); it has reaffirmed that right almost every subsequent year.

Beginning in 1969, as a direct consequence of the armed struggle of the Palestinian people and political support for the PLO from the socialist system of power and the Afro-Asian and some Euro-American powers, the General Assembly has recognized the status of the Palestinian people as a colonized

people entitled to independence. Several UN resolutions have affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to struggle by all means to attain independence. The culmination of steady recognition of the Palestinian struggle for independence and the legitimacy of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of the Palestinian people came in October and November 1974 when the UN General Assembly invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to attend the twenty-ninth session and address it on the aspirations of the Palestinian people. After the address delivered by Yasser Arafat, chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee, and the ensuing debate, the General Assembly passed two historic resolutions. One recognized the right of the Palestine people to independence and sovereignty in Palestine. The other conferred full Observer Status on the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. ■



El Salvador:

Bishops Ask Reagan To End Intervention

Seventy-eight Episcopal bishops, in a statement submitted to the White House in April, called on President Ronald Reagan to end the United States' policy of intervention in El Salvador.

Signers of the one-page statement, circulated by the Rt. Rev. Robert R. Spears, Jr., Bishop of Rochester, represent both conservative and liberal elements of the Episcopal Church. They called on the president to end all military assistance to El Salvador, to adopt a more humane refugee policy for fleeing Salvadorans and to push for a negotiated end to hostilities through international mediation.

Noting that a full year had passed since the assassination of San Salvador's Roman Catholic Archbishop, Oscar Romero, the bishops said that they wanted to express their solidarity with their "brother bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States and other religious leaders" and their "deepest concern and anguish" about deteriorating conditions in the Central American country and the escalation of brutal violence that has resulted in over 10,000 deaths since Romero's assassination, "many in martyrdom for their faith."

Describing the conflict as one of the "oppressed against the oppressor," the bishops praised Romero and many other Roman Catholics as champions

of the Salvadoran poor. The United States, in ignoring both Romero's condemnation of the repressive Salvadoran government and his warning to former President Carter to refrain from assisting the government militarily, heightened the conflict by "the increasing introduction of U.S. arms and advisors to El Salvador," the bishops said.

"We therefore call upon all outside parties, including the United States, to end immediately all forms of military aid, assistance or credits to El Salvador.

"We call upon the State Department to grant to all Salvadorans entering this country in flight from the violence in their homeland the status of extended voluntary departure, even as previously extended under similar conditions to refugees of Viet Nam, Laos, and the Khmer Republic."

The bishops also called for "immediate and sustained efforts" by the State Department to press for a negotiated end to the conflict through the mediation of "disinterested third parties."

In a letter mailed along with the statement to 200 active and retired bishops, Bishop Spears said the committee was "impressed by the strong support given the people of El Salvador by our brothers in the Roman Catholic hierarchy. We feel the need to add our voices to theirs."

Bishop Spears and the committee also asked signing bishops to urge their local parishes and clergy to adopt similar statements and send copies to President Reagan, Secretary of State Haig and members of Congress.

"If there are refugees from El Salvador in your area," he added, "seek ways in which the diocese and parishes might offer them assistance and protect them by all legal means from deportation back to their country."

The nine Episcopal bishops who composed the statement are from West Virginia, Ohio, Utah, Michigan, New York, Florida, Washington, D.C., and the southwest.

The bishops who signed the statement sent to the White House are:

John M. Allin, Presiding Bishop
John E. Hines, Retired Presiding Bishop
Francisco Reus-Froylan, Puerto Rico
Jose Antonio Ramos, Assistant, Puerto Rico
Duncan Montgomery Gray, Jr., Mississippi
Robert Shaw Kerr, Vermont
Frederic C. Lawrence, retired
Matthew Paul Bigliardi, Oregon
Francis William Lickfield, retired
Nelson M. Burroughs, retired
Brice Sidney Sanders, Coadjutor, East Carolina
Roger W. Blanchard, retired
Charles F. Hall, retired
George N. Hunt, Rhode Island
Jonathan G. Sherman, retired
Thomas A. Fraser, North Carolina
A. Heath Light, Southwestern Virginia
Lloyd Edward Gressle, Bethlehem
William C. Frey, Colorado
David Reed, Kentucky
Robert B. Appleyard, Pittsburgh
John Harris Burt, Ohio
Edward Randolph Welles, retired
H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., Michigan

Ned Cole, Central New York
C. Charles Vache, Southern Virginia
John T. Walker, Washington, D.C.
William B. Spofford, Assistant, Washington, D.C.
George Leslie Cadigan, retired
Charles T. Gaskell, Milwaukee
H. Irving Mayson, Suffragan, Michigan
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Philip A. Smith, New Hampshire
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Rustin R. Kimsey, Eastern Oregon
Robert H. Mize, Assistant Bishop, San Joaquin
Lyman C. Ogilby, Pennsylvania
Arthur A. Vogel, West Missouri
George E. Rath, retired
Harvey D. Butterfield, retired
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William C. Wantland, Eau Claire
Donald H. V. Hallock, retired
Frederick B. Wolf, Maine
William Louis Stevens, Fond du Lac
Walter D. Dennis, Suffragan Bishop, New York
Wesley Frensdorff, Nevada
G. Edward Haynsworth, El Salvador
Harold B. Robinson, Western New York
Alexander D. Stewart, Western Massachusetts
Wilbur E. Hogg, Albany

Vietnam II

The President sent 15 military advisers to El Salvador today, along with some decrepit, once automatic rifles and a few derelict trucks — little enough to crush a courageous rebellion by millions of too-long exploited people against a brutal and unjust regime. "We will never again send combat troops unless we intend to win," said our President . . .

The President sent 30 more military advisers to El Salvador today, assuring us that they won't fire unless first fired upon. Along with them went new helicopters equipped with the latest weapons for guerrilla warfare, including the infamous disfiguring and deadly napalm. "We will never again send combat troops unless we intend to win," said our President . . .

The President sent the Green Berets to El Salvador today. Along with them he promised \$25 million worth of the most modern military supplies, and suggested giving our nation's young men "a taste of the draft."

Meanwhile, at the President's request the CIA is gearing up in preparation for renewed domestic surveillance of those who cannot support the President in his strident march to war. In the name of "anti-terrorism" citizens will once again be subject to mail monitors and phone taps.

How much longer will it be until the President, our Lone Ranger of 1981, sends combat troops to El Salvador, composed of unemployed and minority youth who will be forced to fight once again an elusive army of the oppressed, in a war we cannot win?

— Mary Jane Brewster



‘Urban Apocalypse’ Response

THE WITNESS magazine in its March and April issues published the reflections of six Episcopal Bishops as they pondered their roles vis a vis the urban mission of the church during troubled times. Sitting in on conversations with Robert L. DeWitt, WITNESS editor, were Bishops John Burt of Ohio, Otis Charles of Utah, John Spong of Newark, Paul Moore of New York, John Krumm, Suffragan for American Congregations in Europe, and Archbishop Ted Scott of the Anglican Church of Canada.

THE WITNESS for this issue asked six respondents representing a variety of viewpoints to comment on the series. They are the Rev. James Lewis, pastor of St. John’s Episcopal Church, Charleston, W. Va.; the Rev. Martha Blacklock, vicar of St. Clement’s, New York City; the Rev. Joseph Pelham, Dean of Students, Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozier Theological Seminary; Sister Helen Volkomenner, Executive Director of the Catholic Committee on Urban Ministry (CCUM); the Rev. Gibson Winter, Professor of Christianity and Society at Princeton Theological Seminary; and Lydia Lopez who serves on the Board of the Episcopal Urban Caucus and as president of United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), Los Angeles. Their observations follow, except for that of Ms. Lopez. She was in an auto accident which precluded her meeting the deadline. At last report injuries were minor and she is well.

Ten Church Keys In Other Pockets

by James Lewis

It was like an ABC news report covering some great disaster — the urban apocalypse.

“And now to John Burt in Ohio . . .”

“And for a reaction to the latest events, here’s Paul Moore in New York and Otis Charles in Utah . . .”

“For an international response we hear from Ted Scott in Canada and John Krumm in Europe . . .”

What they finally said was that the cities are a mess and the church must become a new place:

- A place of urban strategy.
- A primary community where the real issues, the gut issues of life can be worked at, can be shared.
- Tough centers of redemption.
- Places where “band-aid ministry” can take place, where people who are wounded can be patched up.

— A place where the neighborhood can be aroused from apathy, do meaningful social analysis and be enabled to stand up to the powers which control their lives from outside their community.

— A place where people could see the connection between disintegrating cities and the arms race.

The concern then for those of us in the parish, on the battle lines, centers around just how that can happen *specifically*. For example, what will it mean for an Appalachian urban parish to be “a tough center of redemption.”

Let me hazard a few suggestions.

To be a place of urban strategy will mean that there are at least 10 church keys in pockets of people who aren’t members of your church. That means that a gay group, a black lung group, a narcotics anonymous group and a black mobilization group have access to your place — the church — whenever they wish to plan and work toward making their place in the city more livable. Free access to the property is basic.

To be a primary community dealing with gut issues will be to have a radioactive calendar in the church office.

Monday — noon — Black Lung Meeting

Wednesday — 7:30 p.m. — Auditorium — Mayor meets with Concerned Citizens Group (who, by the way, will be questioning government money being

spent on a civic center rather than housing for the poor)

Thursday — 6 p.m. — Pot-luck supper and Lay Enablement Committee Meeting to plan Lenten Lay Ministry Series

Friday — 8 p.m. — Food Cooperative meeting and Square Dance

Sunday — Adult Class — “Abortion: A Theological Case In Defense of The Pro-Choice Position”

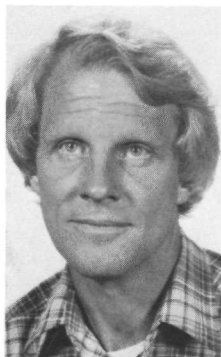
To be a tough center of redemption will mean to give space to a hospital union organizing meeting when two members of the church are on the hospital board. It will mean official church representation at a City Council Meeting with a group of women who are seeking a shelter for battered women but who can’t get zoning because prominent business leaders, some in the Episcopal Church, don’t want it in “our neighborhood.” It means saying on the radio or a TV interview that to be gay is not a sin and to see that proclamation as evangelism.

Band-aids? Since wounds smell, test the church by the way it smells. Does it smell like a refugee center? The church must claim its place as a refugee center, welcoming urban refugees, those who have been beaten out of their land and heritage by the system. Since the opening of the church soup kitchen, there are a variety of new odors which fill the halls and meeting rooms in the church. Chicken noodle soup, urine, cheap wine, and the smell of wet wool worn by an “urban camper” sleeping under a nearby bridge are familiar aromas in a refugee center church.

A place where people are aroused to fight the outside interests which control their lives will be gauged by how a church mimeograph machine is used. Has the local church given the newly formed Citizens for a Fair Tax Assessment access to the mimeograph machine? You see, they need it to challenge the coal companies (owned by outsiders) to pay tax on the mineral rights of the land so that the county can have decent schools, sewers and roads.

A place where the connection between decimated cities and the arms race can be seen might well take focus around church office space given to outside groups. On the second floor of St. John’s there are two such offices. One houses Operation Outreach, a counseling service for Vietnam vets. The other is a Committee Against Registration and the Draft (CARD). Between those offices is a meeting room where anti-war rallies are planned and where Vietnam vets are trying to salvage what’s left from America’s last colonial effort. The connections are being made, slowly and painfully.

In an Appalachian state where outsiders come for our coal to fuel the nation and our men to fight the wars, the



church will have to learn Harvey Cox's message; "Enough." The test of how well we've learned it will finally be registered over keys, church calendars, parish house smells, the use of mimeograph machines, and how much conflict over real issues we're willing to let in the door each day when the sexton opens up the church for Morning Prayer.

* * *

Apocalyptic Dilemma: Two-Shirt Rationalizing

by Martha Blacklock

"What are we to do, then?"

"Whoever has two shirts must give one to someone who has none . . ."

The urban apocalypse, like the nuclear apocalypse, is the problem of rich people — i.e., those of us with two shirts — just as white racism is white people's problem. People who say we follow Christ, who stand still to hear Christ's Gospel read, who believe that Christ's judgment reflects the true order of God — surely we understand about two shirts.

Yet we imagine we can effectively preach the good news in cities, while dropping off our third shirt for the rummage sale, while wearing our look-raggedy-so-you-won't-get-mugged clothes among people for whom looking fashionable is the only affordable sacrament of dignity, while rehearsing our guilt. ("Inner city women are the strongest people in the world," said someone who knows. "We have to be. And we don't need anybody else's problems, too.")



In our search for bigger band-aids we move from soup kitchens, to political maneuvering, to manipulating business, or trying to. "But we of the church," in Ted Scott's words, "are a part of that middle class that can be manipulated by being kept relatively comfortable."

"Can the church," he asks, "become a primary community where the real issues, the gut issues of life can be worked at?" Can we dare to choose to have one shirt in a social and economic order built on the Gospel that no one can have too many shirts — and they'd better have the right labels, too?

If not, I suspect we'll continue to fake rationalizations for our having shirts, and their having none — all those -isms that mutilate the body of Christ. And consequently, we'll be

sure to find ourselves, at our apocalypse, stammering out, "When did we see you without a shirt?"

In the meantime, let's walk to the mailbox. I'm expecting a box from Wippell's. My fine new shirts.

* * *

'No Alternatives' Great Hoax on U.S. Public

by Joseph Pelham

Last November, 28% of the electorate cast its ballots for Ronald Wilson Reagan. It can be speculated that a significant portion of the Reagan vote was a judgment on an administration which had not earned through performance the right to govern for another four years.

When that portion of the Reagan vote is joined with the vote for minor candidates and with the sizeable number of voters who once again stayed home on election day, it is clear that the issue of *alternatives* dominated the 1980 election. A strong dissatisfaction with the *status quo* led persons to seek the only alternatives they perceived to be available.



It is this same issue which is a central theme in the series on the urban apocalypse in THE WITNESS.

The absence of alternatives is suggested in the helplessness of the people of Utah, as noted by Otis Charles, in the face of the nuclear, economic and environmental insanity which the MX Missile System represents. John Burt chronicles ultimately futile efforts to implement alternatives to corporate and governmental policies destructive to the Youngstown community. Ted Scott describes the idolatrous commitment to the great god Technology which permits no rivals (*alternatives*) and entraps even those who manipulate the levers of power in corporate society.

Paul Moore, John Krumm and John Spong, each in his own way and out of his own situation, speak of alternatives and new perspectives. Despair and hand-wringing about the state of city parishes can be moderated by the evidence that, here and there, such parishes are engaged in significant ministries. If it can happen in one place, it can happen elsewhere. The definition of cities as places to which the "throw-away" underclass of society is consigned is not the only one. Despair, resignation and helplessness can be transformed by the tentative, small, but significant results

which occur when persons organize to achieve goals.

The testimony of these bishops may indicate that the greatest hoax which has been played on the U.S. public is that there are no alternatives. It may also indicate that the constriction of options has become so deeply engrained in the national psyche that attempts to pursue genuine alternative forms of political, economic, social, and even religious, life are doomed to failure.

This may suggest that a major task of those who work to create a just society is to break the conspiracy of silence about alternatives. In the 1980 election many persons who sought an alternative knew only limited options. They thought they must either disengage from the electoral process or endorse a return to the politics and economics of a royalist society. The "swing toward conservatism" proclaimed by the media may be less a studied embrace of conservative ideology than a deep desire for change. But in the face of the conspiracy of silence about genuine alternatives, the public can choose only from the possibilities about which it has been permitted to learn. The tragedy is that a sizeable portion of the electorate — the poor, certainly the working poor, and even, perhaps, members of the managerial class which Ted Scott describes — may have been forced to vote against their own best interests.

Breaking Silence Not Easy

Breaking the conspiracy of silence will not be easy. Those who try to suggest that the problems of a stagnant economy cannot be solved if the range of solutions is limited to what can occur within an economic system controlled by transnational corporations will not be heard by many. Those who suggest that excessive military expenditures cannot be reversed, nor the threat of nuclear holocaust removed if the drive for national self-determination in the Third and Fourth Worlds is seen as no more than an international game plan by the Soviet Union, will be met with incredulity. Those who suggest that the degeneration of the cities cannot be stopped if the "givens" of current economic policies and systems are the only options will encounter something less than universal agreement. Co-conspirators in the silence about alternatives are those who control the political, educational, and economic institutions of society, and the communications media. These forces move quickly to discredit alternatives which do not fit the straitjacket of options which serve their own self-interest.

Those who not only suggest that there are alternatives, but attempt also to create paradigms which embody them will find, as the people of the Mahoning Valley, the full force of contemporary principalities and powers arrayed against them.

The urban apocalypse can be averted only if the conspiracy of silence about alternatives is broken. The difficulty of that task cannot be exaggerated. We may be emboldened to undertake the task because Christians should know that the seeming finality of closed options represented by Good Friday can be shattered by the reality of unlimited possibilities represented by Easter. Perhaps if we but set out to give voice and substance to genuine alternatives, we will discover that not even the legions of Caesar can prevent the stone from being rolled away.

Hope Is for Today, Optimism, Tomorrow

by Helen Volkomener

I would always accept any invitation to respond to bishops pondering, but this particular group of bishops, pondering the urban apocalypse, brings a special honor and challenge. For several years I have followed the work of the Episcopal Urban Caucus and attended both National Assemblies. I salute these efforts and achievements.

Each of the bishops struggled with our contemporary dilemma: throw-away cities; the fall-outs from the national security program; the need for analysis of our technological structures; and the ways in which the church responds: as a whole to the society; through family education; or in the development of sturdy parish models. I found each one thought-provoking and reflective of deep pastoral concerns within the framework of our contemporary situation. What I have to say will only attempt to highlight what was actually said; what I read between the lines; or what I hope will appear as the discussion continues, as it must, because the crisis will not go away in the foreseeable future. Our cities are in trouble. Our people are in trouble. Our churches are in trouble.



The one phrase that continues to echo in my mind from the Puebla Conference of Latin American Bishops in 1979, was the recurrent phrase "*la realidad*." Its repetition gave stark evidence of anguish in the struggle to keep continually before the eyes of the participants *the reality* of the people of God in their countries: their oppressions, their potentials, their hopes, their despair. The bishops addressing themselves to the United States urban apocalypse have

called our attention to some pressure points which all too many church people talk about, lament, and then chalk up to some unpopular political personage, party, or era, with the unspoken expectation that it will all go away if we can wait it out. *Our reality* is one of manipulation, structural strangulation. Our people are being oppressed with fear and hopelessness in the cities while others of our church people are engrossed with the nostalgia-sellers — a veneer of religiosity which is frightening in its superficiality.

As never before in contemporary society, the church leaders must call out, point out, and in all ways assume the prophetic role which analyzes the social, economic structures which oppress, with hard, intelligent tools. The reality of the oppressions must be unmasked, so that all of the people of God can see themselves as both the oppressed and the oppressors. Our role is to find ways to equip our people with strategies which will help them to change those structures which render them powerless. It is our challenge to the alternative of guns, arsenals, hooded riders, and imprisonments — psychological and actual. The urban apocalypse bishops exemplified the calling-out, pointing-out, the prophetic role. We all have much work to do in order to implement the teaching role, and providing strategies for empowerment — the how-to's which will extend the voice of the church into the reality. Small, basic Christian community groups, which analyze a neighborhood and a community, and strategize how to make them livable, are a beginning. If the small group is a faith community, united to other like groups, all of which join in celebration in a larger community of a parish, then we are on our way.

All of the above I read between the lines, if not in the lines of the bishops. Optimism is for the future. Hope is for today.

★ ★ ★

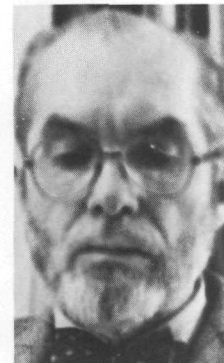
Masada, Jonestown Provoke Reflection

by Gibson Winter

The comments by the bishops on the "urban apocalypse" are an encouraging affirmation of human rights and dignity. There is little more to be said beyond some comments on the apocalyptic mood of our time. "Apocalypse" is being used, in these articles, in an historical sense rather than in its original meaning as a cataclysmic,

divine intervention.

Two apocalyptic stories have captured the public's imagination in recent years. The story of Masada, dramatized by the media this spring, recounts the struggle of Jewish men, women and children who chose death rather than enslavement or worse at Roman hands. Theirs is an heroic story of resistance. The other story is that of Jonestown, Guyana, a story of suicide and murder of men, women and children at the behest of a religious leader, Jim Jones. This is a tragic story of people hungering for justice and betrayed by paranoid leadership.



The Reagan Administration and Congress are creating an apocalyptic mood these days in attempting to reactivate the Cold War. (Perhaps this is why THE WITNESS phrased its interviews in terms of apocalypse.) They are demanding sacrifices from the poor, minority groups, the aging and other marginalized sectors of the population. They are escalating the arms race, projecting an expenditure of \$1.4 trillion in the next five years, more than half of the arms budget from 1945-1980. They are engaging in subversion of governments which challenge the hegemony of transnational, corporate capitalism anywhere in the world. They contemplate a nuclear holocaust in which they anticipate survival of 5% of the population who will be able to declare themselves victors from their bunkers.

They want the American people to think they are at Masada, choosing between slavery or mass suicide, yet they impose sacrifices only on the poor, not on the wealthy or the managerial and professional elites. Thus, they are fashioning another Jonestown, exploiting the weak and precipitating a holocaust out of their own paranoia.

Apocalyptic thought and action remove us from the terror of history and responsibility for our future. Even the words that I have written run this danger, referring to the Administration and Congress as "they." We are not at Masada. We are not yet at Jonestown. We are conspiring in a futile attempt to shore up an outmoded economic system which cannot provide the simple necessities of food, energy, housing and health care for all of our people.

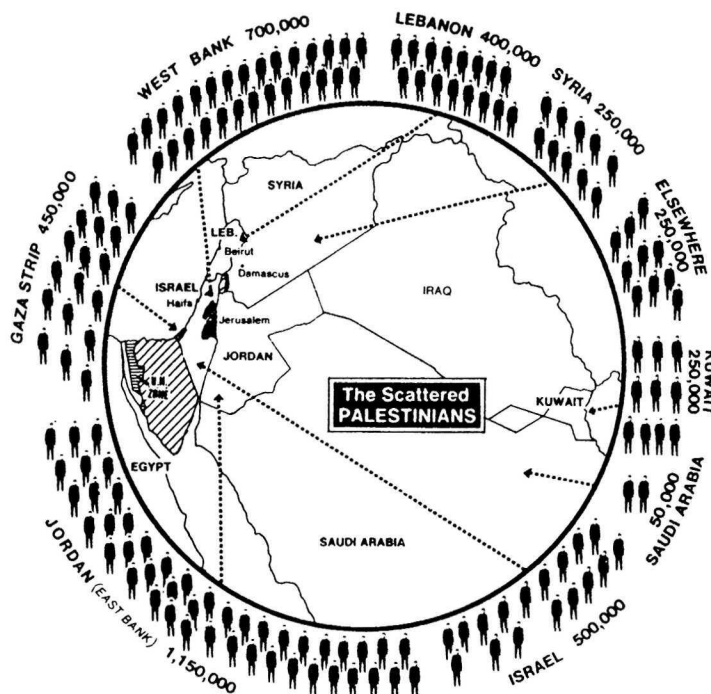
It is time we let the leadership know that the mandate which they invoked was not for a suicidal Jonestown, nor was it intended to make the poor suffer in order to enrich the powerful. The only valid mandate in this Republic is for justice, human rights and democracy. ■

Palestine . . . Continued from page 7

PLO is the legitimate organizing force among the people; and it presses claims which must be heard.

We have been long-term friends with the State of Israel. At times, that has not been easy. But on the whole, Israel is a country, Western in culture and thought, to which we can easily relate. And when that has been hard to do, we could at least relate to the place of Palestine and the plight of the world's Jews, persecuted *mostly by our kind*. What we need to take on is the beginnings of friendship with another people whose motives are equally easy to understand, some of whose actions are perhaps more difficult to justify.

But it is important for us, as U.S. Christians, to engage in the effort to move our country to a position where it can extend the hand of friendship to the Palestinians. We must do so not just because their claims on equality with regard to U.S. policy are appropriate. Rather, we must work for that friendship precisely because we as Christians, and we as a nation, have for too long ignored the effects of our



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uncritical support of the State of Israel. We have done a great wrong to the Palestinian people, and if we do not move to correct it, we have no right to criticize them for their actions. Indeed, there is good argument to support the notion that extending the hand of friendship to the Palestinian people and to the PLO is precisely the beginning of the end of the need for armed conflict.

Resources

Palestine Human Rights Campaign, P.O. Box 3033, Washington, D.C. 20010. Telephone (202) 296-5089. Source of information on Palestine, including the LaGrange Declaration, a document emanating from the conference on the Middle East in LaGrange, Ill., on "Human Rights and the Palestine-Israeli Conflict: Responsibilities for the Christian Church." Signers represent an ecumenical group of Christians — Evangelical, mainline Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox.

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009. Telephone (202) 797-7662. The ADC was founded by two men of Lebanese descent, former U.S. Sen. James Abourezk of South Dakota and James Zogby, a former professor of religion and executive director of the PHRC (above). The ADC is a non-political, non-profit group supported by "Arab-Americans who are responding to the insults to their culture and heritage." Today the Arab-American community exceeds 2½ million, with large representations in Detroit, Chicago, New York, and Boston and growing numbers in California, Texas and Ohio.

CREDITS

Cover, p. 4 and 6, see credits p. 2; p. 10, Robert McGovern; p. 12, Blacklock photo by D. P. Hawkes; Pelham by Varden; p. 15, *The Link*.

THE WITNESS

Back Issue Available:

• **HOPE:** A potpourri of articles which will lift up your heart: Noted artist Corita Kent reflects on what it means to hope in a world where grave events pull us down below hope; Mary Eunice Oliver describes how the Episcopal Church almost got a woman bishop; Fernando Chavez writes a tribute to his father, Cesar; Martha Blacklock discusses the popularizing of non-sexist liturgies, and more. \$1.00.

Payment must accompany order.

THE WITNESS,

Box 359, Ambler, PA. 19002

Puzzle:

Journalistic Ethics, Hostile Press

by Janette Pierce

I have an experience which I'd like to share with you. For me it raised some interesting questions of journalistic ethics. As background, let's start in Chattanooga last October when the Episcopal House of Bishops met. In the middle of an early session, a camera crew appeared in the meeting room and when the discussions started, so did the lights and the cameras. Presiding Bishop John Allin asked the TV crew to stop filming, which they did, and shortly thereafter they packed up and left not only the room, but the meeting itself.

Two things resulted. First, it became apparent that neither Sonia Francis, Walter Boyd, nor any of the staff of the Episcopal Church Center knew anything about the camera crew which had never touched base with the press room or inquired of anyone if the meeting was open to TV.

Second, Bishop Robert L. DeWitt, editor of *THE WITNESS*, made a personal statement from the floor of the House explaining how he had been misled by a TV interviewer the previous summer into granting an interview which later appeared on a show

produced by the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer. His statements were taken out of context and in some cases the meaning of what he had said was distorted, he reported. He thought the mystery TV crew might have been from the same company that had taped his interview.

Perhaps some of you have seen the show either on television (time purchased by the Society) or in a movie version shown in parishes and at SPBCP meetings. Both are often accompanied by large ads in local newspapers and in at least one instance by a full page ad in a zoned edition of *Time* magazine. The film does not simply represent a position on liturgics, but emphasizes the so-called Marxist infiltration of the Episcopal Church and its supposed financial support of armed terrorists. The show — of which I've seen only parts — is reported to be more reminiscent of 1950 (remember Joe McCarthy?) than 1928.

Now to my story. I've been doing some consulting work for the new Episcopal Urban Caucus and in that capacity was at its recent Assembly in Louisville. At the end of an early session, Bishop John Walker of

Washington stopped me and asked with some agitation, "Who are those TV people in that hotel room?" I didn't know, but my curiosity was aroused and I went with him to a hotel room which was set up for taping, with TV cameras and lights beside the beds. There I met an attractive dark-haired woman to whom Bishop Walker had granted an interview which he terminated in mid-session because of the leading — or misleading — questions. He felt they had little to do with the Assembly or urban mission. The woman gave me her name, but refused to offer any identification, business card, or press credentials. She claimed that she worked free-lance and was employed by a documentary firm in Washington named Bishop and Bryant, but had no documents to support this. She also said it had never occurred to her to register her presence as a journalist at the registration area in the lobby right outside her door. It was, to say the least, an unproductive exchange.

Several hours later, she had discovered who her client was, because she telegraphed a request for interviews with several people using the local address of the headquarters of the SPBCP. Also Ben Alexander, SPBCP president, wrote Lloyd Casson, Urban

Janette Pierce is news editor of *The Episcopalian*.

Caucus president, a hand-delivered note complaining of the treatment of the TV crew and saying that if interviews were not granted, the SPBCP would feel "obligated" to publicize such non-cooperation to the church at large. Shortly thereafter SPBCP officials and the TV woman showed up in person. They now inquired about the possibilities of registering her as a press person, although she still claimed she had no identification to indicate that she did indeed work for Bishop and Bryant, which the SPBCP people seemed to expect me to recognize as a religious documentary firm. I didn't.

Finally it was agreed that a Mr. Bishop would call me to confirm her employment and I would see if any of the Assembly planners would consider changing their mind about taping the plenaries. The TV crew had also sought

permission from the Dean of the Cathedral to televise the Assembly's special Eucharist and he had refused. The dealings with the TV crew were complicated by the fact that the EUC had hired Worley Rodehaver of Southern Ohio, to film a 30-minute show on the flavor of the Caucus, but he taped only one speech, some color shorts, and several interviews with people attending the Assembly. He did not plan ever to tape the large plenary. But we did have TV, which they knew. I must add that even that little was not popular with some of the Caucus leadership.

The eventual outcome of this — almost 24 hours after it began — was that the woman was registered as a print reporter, given a badge and a docket and schedule. Two hours later, Alexander told me that she had left the meeting and gone back to Washington.

As a footnote, I never did talk to Mr. Bishop. I missed the first call and when I called back the number that had been left, I got a recording that said the firm could not take my call now because they were out helping Republicans retake the government. But if I was calling to inquire about "elections, appointments, or advice," I could leave my name and number and they'd return the call "faster than you can tell a Democrat he's fired." Religious documentaries are, one supposes, a Bishop and Bryant sideline.

As I see it in retrospect, the issues involved include: *bona fides* of press people; limits of dissembling for investigative purposes; prior restraint; TV vs. print coverage of church meetings; and how much one should try to protect people one works with/for from hostile press. I found it a learning experience, a warning and a puzzle. ■

New SST . . . Continued from page 3
and government workers (who) may engage in subversive activities without being fully aware of the extent, purposes, or control of their activities." (*Mandate for Leadership: Policy Management in a Conservative Administration*, p.940) Two other groups which sparked the creation of the new Subcommittee are the American Security Council and the National Committee to Restore Internal Security.

For THE WITNESS, the history of harassment of former editor William Spofford in the '50s raises the concern that this new Subcommittee might become the lineal descendant of the McCarthy Committee. Reputations and livelihoods of thousands were destroyed in witch hunts for dissidents and "fellow travelers" in those days. A beleaguered citizenry was greatly relieved when Congressional committees investigating Communist infiltration into liberal organizations, the army, the arts, and education disappeared over the last decade.

Today, this new Subcommittee is potentially more harmful than its predecessors. The judicial system has been skewed by conservative appointments in judgeships at the top, and, at the bottom, by the dropping of the \$321 million Federal program of legal aid for the poor. Also, the system can now jail people

for refusing to cooperate even if they invoke the Fifth Amendment, thanks to "use immunity." That is, if immunity is granted, the witness may have to choose between testifying or going to jail, as did Maria Cueto, Raisa Nemikin and others in the celebrated Grand Jury investigation reported by THE WITNESS in 1977 and 1978.

Another advantage enjoyed by this Subcommittee is a fragmented Left, unlike the '60s when most Left groups were united in coalitions to protest the Vietnam War.

In this setting, as we see the use of the words "terrorists" and "terrorism" escalating in international and domestic usage, it is worth pointing out Vic Navasky's observation in *The Nation* recently:

"Terrorism, properly defined, cost the world 1,700 lives last year by the highest estimate. Compare that to the thousands killed by Somoza, our friend in Nicaragua until he was forced out, and the 10,000 massacred in tiny El Salvador . . ."

With the body count in El Salvador now mounting well over 10,000, and violent repression continuing in Argentina, Guatemala, Paraguay — can it be that the Latin American theologians were right, and that the stage is being set for an ideological pogrom in the United States? ■

Salome Singing In Her Sleep

I may be dreaming
but he
was pretending
not to be
a part of the dance
pretending not to see
through the veils of light
pretending he
could keep the vigil
eyes wild awake
all through the night
pretending he
never dreamed
the flesh the soul is pinned to.

I may be temptress
but it was he
who tempted me
to believe the Word
was real as the Rock
and I
merely obliged
his desire
with the sword.

"I am John," he said to me.
"I pretend I don't notice
pretend I don't see,
except with my head
severed from my body."
"I am John," he said,
"Set me free."

"I am Salome," I replied
laughing, dancing
weaving thin veils of fire;
"I am Salome blinded by the light;
I cannot see.
Set me free."

"I am John," he answered,
no body all head
all eyes
I see
through veils
of ice."

Then
I am Salome
demanding to see
my own head
on a plate
in a mirror.

— Linda Backiel

Letters . . . Continued from page 2

"Go ye, and do likewise." There is much joy to be found in unselfish love.

Louise Dominy
Gary, Texas

Blacklock Responds

Brooke Myers, we agree. The selections from the Mother Thunder Liturgy in February's WITNESS don't show it, but when we refer to Jesus in his historical ministry we do not avoid the masculine pronoun. However, when we mean the second person of the Trinity otherwise, we do not say "He."

I'm not sure why Louise Dominy, who clearly gains much from identifying God's Holy Spirit as "Herself," would want to limit her common prayer to language that doesn't allow her to say that.

The Rev. Martha Blacklock
New York, N.Y.

Methodist Kudos

I am writing on behalf of the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women in Alaska. We were very impressed with the February issue, giving the story of Jean Dementi, Martha Blacklock's article on inclusive language, and a psalm by Corita Kent. That was indeed a rich issue!

Then came the March issue with the statement on the family, prepared by the Women's Project of Theology in the Americas, which is very pertinent and well done. Thank you for your excellent WITNESS.

Olive Robison
Anchorage, Alaska

WITNESS Sustaining

When I read letters like the Rev. Richard Kew's in the February issue, I feel that I must counter-balance his point of view by writing to say that I am glad that I subscribe to THE WITNESS.

I was a subscriber years ago when the Rev. William Spofford, Sr. was editor. It

sustained me in my concern about the Incarnation's significance for the healing of total society. However, I saw the "boom" of the '40s and early '50s lull us into a feeling that God is in heaven and all's right with the world, and then when GCSP came along many jumped ship. I became disgusted and left our ministry for a good many years.

However, the love of God will not let one go, and that prevailed, and I came back on St. Valentine's Day in 1969. I am glad that I did. I have had the privilege of directing two diocesan Venture In Mission programs, and know that we have now begun to do the work of the church, rather than just maintaining a chaplaincy to nice people. Thanks for your ministry to me.

The Rev. H. Paul Osborne
Garrison, Ky.

Advocate for Disabled

Thank you for making THE WITNESS a reality. Its arrival is always a joyous event in this den of "way making."

As a disabled student seeking ordination and possessing a strong civil rights persuasion, I am sharing the following observations with you and hopefully fellow readers and finders of ways.

1. It is gratifying to see that the economic status is being addressed, and students and those over 65 receive a special WITNESS subscription rate. As the National Gray Panthers Access Advocate I applaud the mingling of students and seniors. Gray Panthers' motto is "Age and Youth in Action."

2. But you, like most church leaders, have not taken DISABLED PEOPLE (with limited income) into consideration. We only are invisible because others *choose* not to see us. My student status should expire before I become a certified senior but my disability will bridge the gap, going with me along this road of living "which has been sanctified by generations of religious tradition." (Including ignoring, whenever possible, the less able fellow traveler.)

Several activists are planning a Grand Gathering of Disabled People along with

their able-bodied supporters to spend the weekend of July 25-26 in Washington, DC., letting other disabled people feel fellowship with us and to let some more traditional doubters know we are very ABLE people! As plans unfold we will share them with you and your flock. We hope to gather people nationwide.

Recently I was asked why I had not been more involved with the church during the last decade. *Steps and mobility impairment are incompatible.* The design of most Episcopal churches is not a Welcome Sign to us. Even the Episcopal Seminary for the most part, including the chapel, is off-limits to wheelchair users.

Thank you for your guidance and support for those who are *not* the mainstream of our society — but collectively *are* the majority. But how do we get us, pathfinders, working in concert instead of opposition? Or indifference?

Jane Jackson
Berkeley, Cal.

(Editor's Note: THE WITNESS appreciates Jane Jackson's thoughtful letter, and although our promotional literature does not state it as yet, we will extend the same half-price offer to disabled persons if they so identify themselves when subscribing to THE WITNESS. Also, an article is in preparation on the disabled.)

Used Articles in Class

I used your WITNESS articles on the steel industry in a course I teach to engineering students at Boston University. This is a metallurgy course but I put it in a context of ethical issues, so we talk of such subjects as the difficulty of producer countries of Africa and Latin America benefiting from their copper wealth, the U.S. auto industry's endeavors (and lack of) to lower gas consumption by using lighter materials in cars and then of the inertia and lack of long range planning by the U.S. steel companies — where I referred to your most stimulating articles.

While today's student often seems

most interested in how soon he or she will get into the job market, I hope that they might recall some of the ethical issues raised in this class when in later years they come to make some decisions.

The Rev. David L. Holt
East Boston, Mass.

Lauds Bishop

This is my second opportunity to renew my subscription to THE WITNESS since Bishop Robert Anderson provided access to free introductory subscriptions to members of the Diocese of Minnesota. I would like to pay public tribute to him for providing us with the opportunity to get to know your publication, and for having the courage to take important stands on issues where he knew that not all his people would be behind him.

I know from reading your letters that not all Minnesotans have appreciated the magazine. Many of us, however, find it one of the most valuable publications being published in the church. Keep up the good work of spreading the *real* good news.

Rex W. Gaskill
Minneapolis, Minn.

One in Spirit

Our parish staff finds THE WITNESS a great tool for our Social Ministry Committee and a source of information and edification for ourselves. As a Roman Catholic staff, we find it inspiring to feel that we are one in the Spirit with you.

Avril Makhoul
St. Edward's Religious
Education Center
Bon Air, Va.

Bad Magazine

We subscribed to THE WITNESS for six months and didn't think much of it. In fact, we think it is a very *bad* magazine. I hope the general public doesn't judge all Episcopalians by it.

The George Fodors
Spring Mills, Pa.

Preparation for Monday

You come home on a Friday, a bit bothered from the weekly struggle, looking forward to a couple of days apart, to get your bearings and get ready for another week of battling it out.

My weekend renewal activities usually consist of seeing family and friends, involvement in the natural world, reading, worship. One weekend I found it a wonderfully renewing experience to read the March WITNESS, which was THE WITNESS at its best.

The quote from Stringfellow summed it up: "There is one thing about being a Christian — you know you are going to lose!" March carried Robert L. DeWitt's editorial about short-term losing and the assured long-term victory of God; the articles by Burt, Spong and Charles about the urban and MX issues and how the bottom line is people (last week there was hardly a meeting when someone didn't speak of the bottom line as the almighty dollar). And the other articles were also top quality.

THE WITNESS came through, facing up to the real world of suffering and tough, ugly issues, illuminating life with insight and hope. Such writing helps to prepare me for Monday and the struggle as I face the issue of whether the bottom line is people or dollars.

The Rev. Robert L. Green, Jr.
Dorset, Vt.

Sees 50-Year Setback

I hope that in future issues of THE WITNESS you will direct the full focus of your attention not to problems within the church, but to the major overriding problem facing us for the next four years; namely, the cruel, dangerous and heartless policies of the Reagan Administration. These policies are the exact opposite of everything which Christian social activists have fought for during the past 50 years.

I hope you will provide your readers with the facts and ideas we need to challenge and oppose these policies.

Charles Previte
Highland Park, N.J.

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