

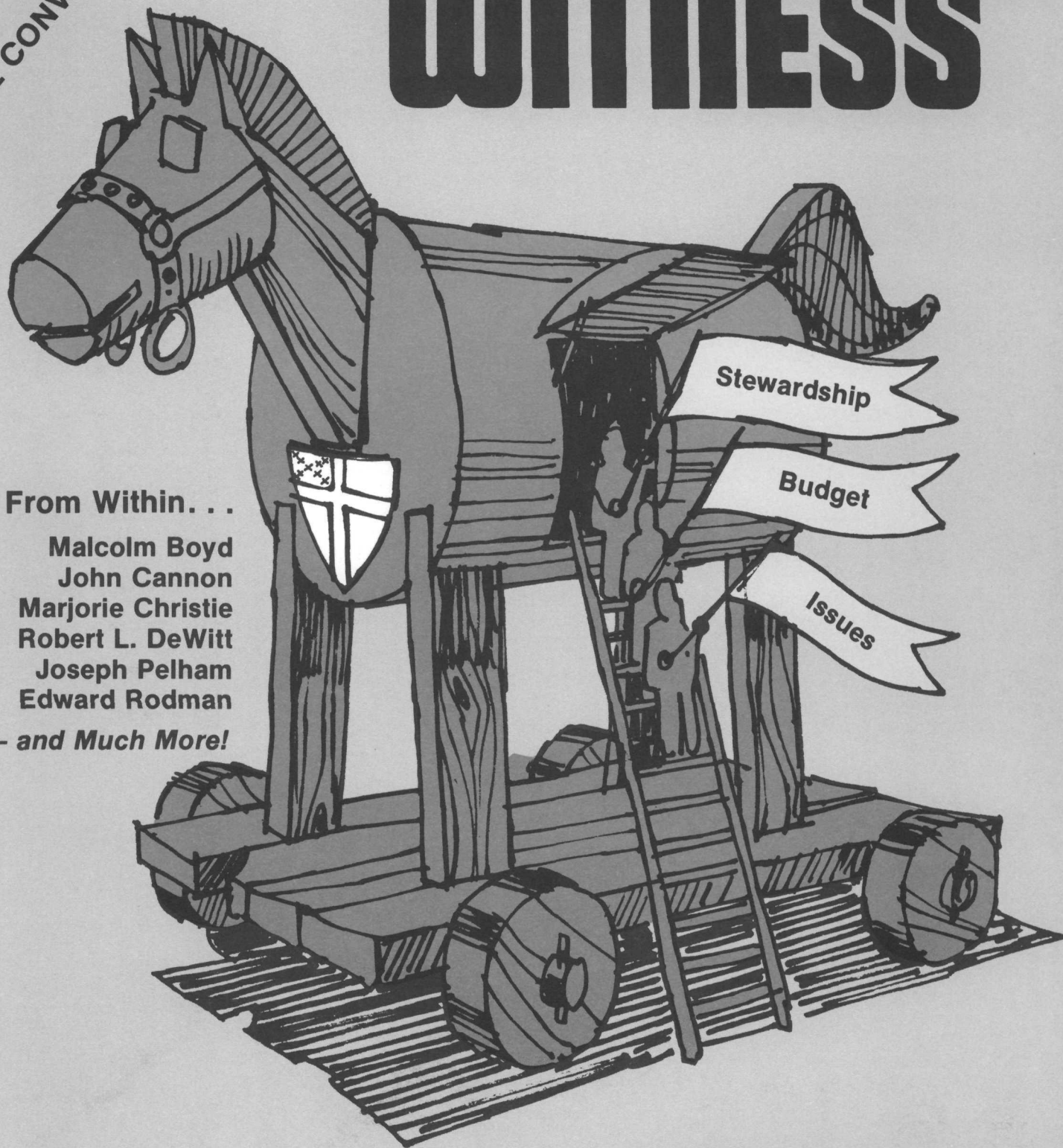
GENERAL CONVENTION ISSUE

THE VOL. 65 NO. 5 MAY, 1982 WITNESS

Boring From Within...

Malcolm Boyd
John Cannon
Marjorie Christie
Robert L. DeWitt
Joseph Pelham
Edward Rodman

— and Much More!



LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Powerful Sequence

Congratulations on the recent WITNESS issues featuring the "Black Women's Agenda." The sculpture of Valerie Maynard on the February cover sets the visual tone. Janette Pierce's introduction articulates the background clearly. The words of Deborah Harmon Hines, Myrtle Gordon, Mattie Hopkins and Barbara Harris come alive again. A powerful sequence!

The opportunity to share this experience beyond the conference of the Episcopal Church's Task Force on Women is exciting. To confront, to hear and respond is imperative to dialogue, growth and understanding. Thanks to THE WITNESS for helping that dialogue happen so regularly and competently.

**Carol D. Freund, Chair
National Task Force on Women
Shaker Heights, Ohio**

A Bit Shocked

When I returned from the New York meeting of the Episcopal Urban Caucus (which I found to be inspiring and encouraging) I was glad to find the February issue of THE WITNESS. Unfortunately, I was a bit shocked to read in the lead article:

"In November, 1981, a national conference of Episcopal women in Indianapolis heard four Black women forcefully express their distrust of the feminist movement. They perceived feminism as a White (woman's) concern which drains energy from the liberation battle of people of color."

I can only conclude that the strains of weary battling are setting in and are unfortunately doing precisely what

those defenders of the status quo hoped for — to divide and conquer all genuinely Gospel-oriented movements aimed at recreating all of humankind. We cannot afford to be divided, for in our weakness lies the diabolic strength and craftiness of Satan, *"And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."* (2 Cor. 11:14).

Let's be united in every possible way in the proclamation of the letter and spirit of an oft-quoted theme in the recent caucus: *"To proclaim liberty to the captives . . ."*

**Jerry Connors, Jr.
Yale Divinity School
New Haven, Conn.**

Moved by Black Women

I have just finished reading the "Black Women's Agenda." I can't tell you how moved I was. I know that the women's agenda had to do predominately with White women and Black women. However, I hope and pray that out of this discussion will grow a keen exchange between Black men and Black women in our mutual efforts to support our communities, strengthen our families and be leaders and developers of the Kingdom of God in the Episcopal Church.

I am renewing my subscription and intend to be an active member of the community of THE WITNESS. It's been some time since I was a regular reader, because of work, travel and finishing my education. God give you courage as you continue the efforts of keeping before us our responsibilities as people of God.

**The Rev. Wayland Melton
Knoxville, Tenn.**

Option to Fight Not a Sin

If being born White and blue-eyed is a sin in some people's eyes, I must confess to it; if being born into an educated and affluent family is a sin, I must confess to that, too. (I even have to confess to that eternally unpardonable sin of being born in Nazi Germany.) It seems, however, that no matter what I may do to atone for these "sins," no matter how hard I may work to undo the injustices of

times past and present, I am always running into those who insist that even having the *option* to fight the revolution is a sin.

Well, my white skin and my blue eyes are not going to disappear. And here, my friends — brothers or sisters, Black or White, poor or rich, straight or gay, American or foreign, Jew or Gentile — is one of the clues to keep or not to keep me going: you can beat me down for what I am and cannot change, or you can pick me up with an encouraging "come labor on."

I was at the conference in Indianapolis and heard all four women on the "Black Women's Agenda." A lot of hatred seemed to be poured onto the listeners, almost all of whom had fought the "revolution" for many years even though they had the choice not to. The response was pain, anger and frustration — hardly ingredients to incorporate into a new battle hymn.

In the end, those of us who fight the "revolution," on Thursdays only or all week long, are all fighting the same evil, which is oppression — whether White over Black, male over female, rich over poor, straight over gay — economic oppression, which is at the root of racism as well as sexism and many of the other "isms." Our Black sisters (NOT stepsisters!) need to realize that in the war against oppression, it is an occasional "servants, well done," rather than "up yours, Whitey," that will go a long way toward counteracting battle fatigue.

**Annette Jecker
W. Milford, N.J.**

Non-White Agenda?

Deborah Harmon Hines' article, "Racism Breeds Stereotypes," in the February WITNESS is most thought-provoking for me. In her words I see the situation of Native Indian women, for here we have many more of them than we do Blacks. They are expected to be like White women, have the same aims as White women, etc. The situation Hines describes could very well be titled

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THE WITNESS is published monthly. Editorial office:
P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002. Phone (215)
643-7067. Subscription rates \$12 per year, \$1 per
copy. Copyright 1982 by the Episcopal Church
Publishing Company. Printed in U.S.A. ISSN 0197-8896

THE WITNESS EDITORIAL

Taking History Seriously

Someone has calculated that if the earth's 4.4 billion people could be compressed into a room holding 44 persons, each representing 100 million people, we would have 10 Chinese, 10 South Asians, 8 Europeans, 5 Africans, 3 Latin Americans, and only 2 from the United States.

Eighteen of the 44 would be children or teenagers. Twenty would be illiterate, 17 would suffer from hunger or malnutrition, 35 would be astonishingly poor by U.S. standards, and 28 would earn less than \$200 a year.

It is a sobering parable. Not only because it illustrates once again the dramatic disparity between the world's haves and have-nots, but because — if pondered for more than a moment — it points to the direction in which history is moving. Is not the struggle of the last 35 years, since the end of World War II, the movement of the majority of the world's peoples, who are poor, powerless, and largely non-white, to claim their rightful share of life, bread, and dignity? And if we Christians believe in a God who is author and initiator of all history, must we not accept that God is present and seeking to be discerned in this great movement?

Prescinding from this overview to a specific event, we note that the 67th General Convention of

the Episcopal Church will convene in September in New Orleans, bringing together one of the most powerful and privileged assemblages in current-day Christendom. The agenda there will deal with many issues: ministry in metropolis, the arms race, Christian education, liturgy and worship, mission (that oft-appropriated word so easily bent to the purpose of the user), and others. Even as traditional convention strategies begin to take shape, the violence and oppression perpetrated by our nation's leadership, with the tacit consent of many, deepens. Increasing numbers of women and children, most of them Black or Hispanic, slip into malnutrition and outright hunger. Unemployment climbs; industrial plant shutdowns increase, turning thousands more into the streets. Abroad, policies of repression, covert intelligence operations, and militarism continue, while at home the armaments factories turn out three new nuclear warheads every day.

But the God of Abraham, of Isaiah, of Amos, of Jesus Christ, is relentless in history's movements. As the Jahveh of ancient Israel liberated the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, so the God of Jesus Christ is today speaking

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THE WITNESS

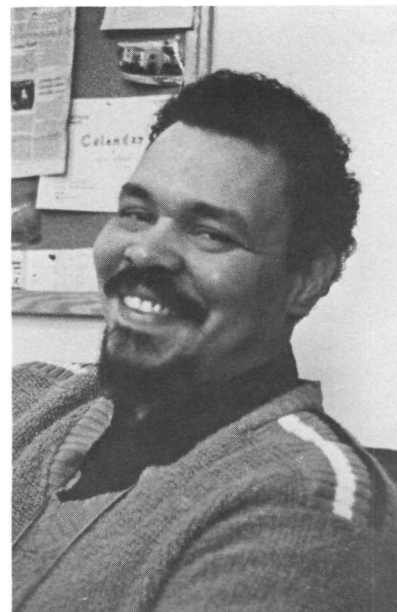
MEMORANDUM

TO: Our Readers
SUBJECT: Convention Issue

We asked three noted Episcopalians to lead off this General Convention issue with commentaries on Stewardship, Women's Issues, and the Budget.

Taking on the task, respectively, are the Rev. Edward Rodman, Marjorie Christie, and John K. Cannon, whose photos and credentials appear herewith, followed by their good works.

We're mighty obliged . . .



THE REV. EDWARD W. RODMAN
Missioner to Minority Communities for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and Canon Missioner at St. Paul's Cathedral, Boston.



JOHN K. CANNON
Member of Executive Council of the Episcopal Church; Parliamentarian, House of Deputies; Chancellor of the Diocese of Michigan.



MRS. MARJORIE L. CHRISTIE
Member of Executive Council of the Episcopal Church; Former Chair, National Task Force on Women; Deputy to General Convention.

Show Biz or Stewardship?

by Ed Rodman

I have observed over the years that Episcopalians are generally very difficult to embarrass, and this is never more evident than during a period of preparation for the triennial General Convention. The drum beat for the march to New Orleans has begun, and the faithful are saving their pennies for the show.

Like the Grand Canyon, one has to see the General Convention to believe it. But unlike one of nature's wonders, this ecclesiastical extravaganza should not properly be offered as a proof of God's existence. Indeed, given the spectacle that the convention in its sheer size, expense, glitter, and general hoopla represents, it is only fitting that the elected, the wealthy, or the subsidized experience it to the full, thereby having their minds boggled and their pocketbooks busted. In fact, continued existence of the triennial gathering on the grand scale in which it is carried forward disproves the notion of survival of the fittest, and proves the adage that the show must go on.

Episcopalians triennially expose themselves to endless debate (normally on obscure issues), endure fanny fatigue and sore feet, and often flagellate

themselves with fantasies of a smaller, shorter and more frugal experience in a future that seemingly never comes.

As one of the subsidized, I write this article with some trepidation, for to proclaim oneself as a hypocrite in print is usually not wise. However, I offer three mundane and naive, but I trust, critical questions for consideration:

- First, can we calculate how many hungry people could be fed by resources expended at this convention?

- Secondly, how many scholarships for poor youngsters could be funded with the air fare, hotel monies, etc., expended to send us there, keep us there, and get us back home?

- And third, and probably most damning, given the collective energies and resources that go into the carrying forward of this enterprise, what kind of impact would they have if a coordinated use of time, brainpower and money were focused on the social policy concerns of this country rather than squandered on our own self-perpetuation and indulgence?

These questions and many others like them, which I am sure each of us could raise, are particularly embarrassing in this period as the four horsemen of the

Reagan apocalypse ride on before us. Like their biblical counterparts (war, famine, plague and wild animals) — General Haig's foreign policy and Reagan's increased defense budget sharpen the sword of war; the sugar-coated, anachronistic states rights policy masquerading as the New Federalism is a plague on the poor; the reinvigoration of the trickle-down theory in the guise of supply-side economics insures famine for many; and the wild beasts of Reagan's appointments are sure to devour much of the social progress made in the previous decade.

Each in their own way, and certainly together, raise the fundamental question: Can an institution such as the church continue to do business as usual? Unfortunately the answer seems to be — not only can it, but it can do it with a vengeance that must make the merchants of the Crescent City laugh all the way to the bank.

Not wishing to be identified totally as a hypocrite, let me freely admit that I enjoy the show, and have been known to participate in its various activities. However, I also used to enjoy driving at 70 miles an hour, and having my house

at 75 degrees in the winter — two luxuries our society deemed to be both extravagant and dangerous, and has strongly suggested we curb. Thus, the luxury of participating in the Episcopal General Convention may be one of the few left that one can still enjoy without guilt or the fear of social ostracism.

Why is this? And what, if anything, can we do about it?

It has been observed that nothing has a greater hold on the minds of people than ignorance fraught with technicalities. The four-ring circus of the Women's Triennial, the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies, and exposition area clearly fills this bill. Even the austere and socially conscious WITNESS Magazine has been sucked into the vortex of spending a whole issue on the general church's tribal gathering. Only the ignorant would believe that General Convention is God's answer to our official prayer for such occasions, which is:

"Almighty and everlasting Father, you have given the Holy Spirit to abide with us for ever: Bless, we pray, with his grace and presence, the bishops and the other clergy and the laity here assembled in your Name, that your church, being preserved in true faith and godly discipline, may fulfill all the mind of him who loved it and gave himself for it, your Son Jesus Christ our Savior ..."

Further, the all too obvious rules of order and parliamentary procedure thinly veil behind-the-scenes maneuvering which marks this as a legitimate political process, and therefore, inviolate in terms of changing in a way that would fulfill socially conscious criteria.

And even awareness of the inability to control our own process is insufficient to overcome the most formidable obstacle — the stoic

pertinacity of Episcopalians that leads us to endure even self-indulgence — if that is what is necessary to make sure all things are done decently and in order.

Given such obstacles, any attempts to alter the juggernaut from its appointed course have proved about as effective as

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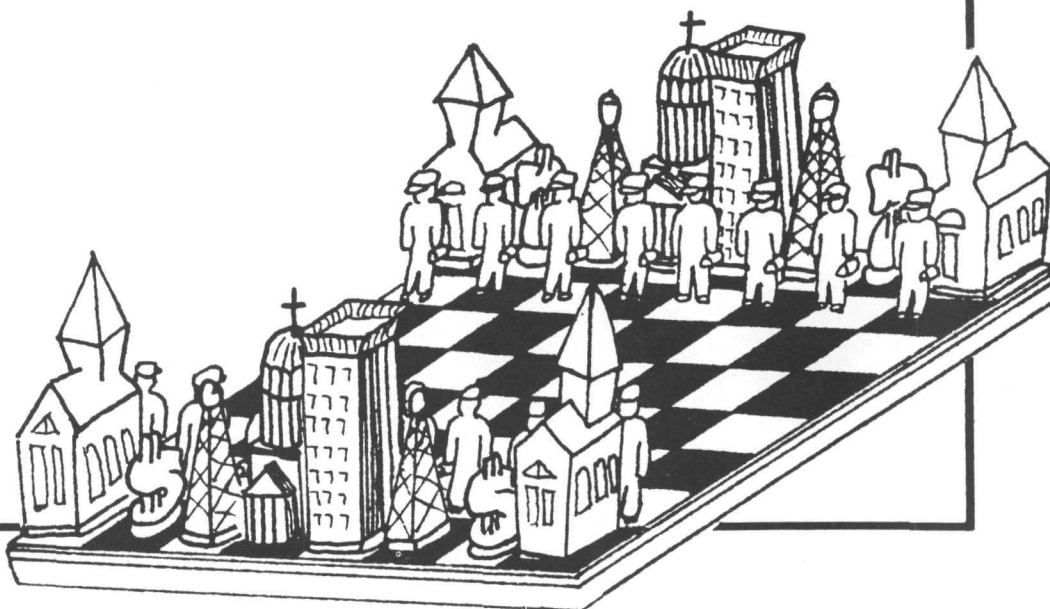
the Social Gospel at a rally of the Moral Majority. Indeed, the current New Orleans enterprise insults women by being in a non-ERA state; insults labor and minorities by taking advantage of the notorious exploitation of the underpaid and poorly unionized hotel workers; and has turned off our youth and forced them to have their own special meeting in Illinois in August. This latter point suggests that young Episcopalians may not be so easily caught up in the ignorance or technicalities of convention, nor disabused from finding a simpler and cheaper way to do it. It is a sad

commentary that we may have to defer to a future generation (which may lack the option to be extravagant) the decision to find a better way.

I would trust therefore, as we endure New Orleans in September, that those of us who resonate to the concerns raised in this article, will do everything in our power to make sure that business is not as usual; that convention decisions impact and unseat the four horsemen of Reagan's apocalypse; thereby helping the church to find a way to direct its attention to the critical needs of the poor. The oppressed, the downtrodden, the hungry, the jobless, and the homeless victims of our insular and self-indulgent society sorely need the collective power, wisdom and resources of the Episcopal Church.

Is it too much to hope that our actions in New Orleans can make a stronger statement and set a direction that will make that General Convention in fact worthwhile, and begin to make real the prayer that we function in true faith and godly discipline and fulfill the mind of Jesus Christ?

I believe it is not too much to hope for, and also believe that we can find a way to follow the lead of our young people into a future that is inclusive of all God's children. □



The Shadow Church

Blessed are the Frustrated

by Marge Christie

Next month will mark 25 years since my confirmation into the Episcopal Church. They have been exciting years, full of opportunities to serve, and the sense of challenge I felt in the past remains with me today. My arena has shifted from parish to national and ecumenical involvement, but my principal focus — the women of the church — has not changed.

I believe in the women of the church, feminist and traditional, and support their sense of mission. I affirm the need to include women in all facets of church life, that they may speak out on issues of justice.

These past 25 years have not been tranquil, by any stretch of the imagination! Times of change never are. Roadblocks and barriers have made for frustrations along the way, but there also have been accomplishments, successes, and times of satisfaction. As the time for General Convention approaches, it is hard to tell whether the balance will tip towards frustration or satisfaction.

Current frustrations come forth in questions being asked with increasing frequency. Why is the convention

meeting in a state which has refused to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment? Why is it meeting in a diocese opposed to the ordination of women? Will the planned opportunities for worship include women? Will anyone care enough to use inclusive language? Can the convention make a difference in these issues which particularly concern women? Will the budget reflect those concerns? Will it address today's severe economic climate? Does the church suffer from the "institutional misogyny" referred to by Betty Schiess and Nancy Wittig in the March WITNESS?

Some of the implications behind those questions become apparent as we think about the several thousand Episcopalians who will gather in New Orleans this fall. Hundreds of thousands of dollars will be spent in hotels and restaurants and shops, in many of which the hiring practices and the wage levels are below those of other communities. Project Equality has very few New Orleans establishments on its list of acceptable employers. There are more civil rights violations by the police force there than in any other city in the country. Those of us attending the

convention as deputy or delegate or visitor will worship among congregations which endorse the refusal to accept women in ministry. In the Diocese of Louisiana there are no women priests, no women deacons, no women in seminary.

Women's role has been that of shadow church for many years — separate and not equal. And I suggest that there are connections to be made between those frustrations cited above and the fact that women have only recently begun to take part in the church's decision making. After all, women were first seated as members of the House of Deputies only three conventions ago, and that seating took 50 years to achieve! By comparison the passage of the ordination canon almost seems easy — once you overlook the fact that there never should have been any question about ordaining women in the first place.

In 1970, 24 women took their seats once the vote to amend the constitution was taken. Three conventions later there were 167 women deputies in Denver, five of them in the clerical order. The news this year, however, is

not good. As of the middle of March there are only 156 certified women deputies, including six ordained women. Some changes will occur between now and September — but there is no reason to expect any great shift from male to female, even though there are 172 women among the certified alternates.

The affirmative action policy the Executive Council is recommending to the General Convention is obviously needed. But it refers only to convention committees and staff, suggesting they be as “representative as practical of the racial and sexual makeup of the church.” Referring the guidelines back to the dioceses would seem to be in order.

Since much of the work of convention is accomplished through its committees, those appointments become very important, and the opportunity to chair even more so. There is satisfaction in noting that Dr. Charles Lawrence, president of the House of Deputies, appointed a significant number of women to those committees last time; but there is frustration with the considerably fewer women serving on the commissions which function between conventions and generate much of the convention’s legislation. With the ’82 appointments not known at press time, I wonder which it will be — satisfaction or frustration?

Does it matter? A few examples may

shed some light. Prior to the 1973 convention, a network of volunteer readers examined the proposed prayer book for sexist language. Their findings were reported to the liturgical commission; that the commission chose to ignore the report is evident in the prayer book. Another example — the unsuccessful effort to find a diocese willing to offer itself as a substitute for New Orleans. In both instances, more experienced deputies, better organized, holding key positions might have made a difference.

By contrast, the effort in Denver to restore the budget of the Coalition for Human Needs owed some of its success to the careful committee work done by both women and men.

What does all this mean for the coming convention? Plans are underway to organize a caucus of women deputies within a coalition of all women on the scene. Many women saw the need for such a caucus in the closing days of the last convention; notice of these plans has generated a great deal of interest. Given the decrease in the number of women elected for New Orleans, the need for a caucus has become even more crucial, especially to organize around the social issues facing the convention. Also worth noting here — the House of Bishops is still an all-male club, and the convention still needs the presence of the all-female Triennial Meeting.

One major issue in New Orleans will be the budget, which the Presiding Bishop describes as a “tool” to raise the conscience of the church. The Executive Council refused to adopt the 1983 budget at its February meeting, something the council has never done before, because the budget failed to reflect a significant response to the issues of peace and poverty. Poverty is very much a woman’s issue; a recent study claims one family in three headed by a woman is in poverty, compared to one in 18 families headed by a man. That statistic certainly provides an agenda for the women of the church, in coalition and in caucus.

The Jubilee Ministry, with its concern for the poor and the powerless and its \$2 million addition to the budget, the impact of Venture in Mission grants on the overseas dioceses and the Black Colleges, peace and disarmament, support for the accredited seminaries, the language of the new hymnal, statements on abortion rights, domestic violence, juvenile justice — there will be no shortage of issues around which to organize — and gain strength in community if not in numbers.

I have treasured a little pamphlet for many years. Its title is *Blessed Are the Frustrated*, and the author’s belief that frustration provides incentive for action has comforted me many times, including this year of preparation for the New Orleans General Convention.



Steps for Economizing

by John Cannon

Mark Twain would love General Convention. Most everybody complains about its cost, but no one, particularly General Convention, seems able to do much about it.

Before one can do something about it, however, it is necessary to analyze the elements of cost which go into a General Convention and which, in the common judgment, make it "too expensive."

Broadly speaking, the costs fall into three categories which, in the aggregate, can be viewed as the amount of money spent by the Episcopal Church each triennial for General Convention. The first element is the money spent by the national church (characterized as "815") from the General Convention Executive Office, mandated to arrange for plenary session facilities for the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies and the Triennial Meeting of the Women of the Episcopal Church; to provide the multiple committee meeting rooms required; to negotiate group rates with hotels, etc. The cost of the 1979 General Convention at Denver (minus the revenues received in the form of registration fees and exhibitor rentals), was approximately \$100,000 for "815."

The second element of cost is the money spent to send the bishops to the House of Bishops, the deputies to the House of Deputies, and the delegates to the Triennial Meeting. Most dioceses, to varying degrees, underwrite or at least partially subsidize these expenses. Because of varying air fares, lengths of stay, hotels selected or available, and culinary tastes, it is difficult to project an average cost per deputy, bishop or Triennial delegate. But, for the 1982 Louisiana convention, it seems this will amount to at least \$1,500 per person staying at a commercial hotel. If each of the 95 domestic dioceses were to send its full complement of eight deputies, its bishops and four Triennial delegates, this element of General Convention expense approaches or exceeds \$1,800,000.

The third element of General Convention cost is even less capable of approximation. It relates to the money spent by visitors and exhibitors whose presence at General Convention is strictly voluntary and unrelated to the business of either House or the meeting of Triennial. Over the course of a typical General Convention (if there be such a thing), the number of people who visit

or exhibit at one time or another exceed by manyfold the number present as bishops, deputies, or delegates to Triennial.

Many people in this category perceive General Convention as a recreational or vacation event, and therefore are likely to spend money that they would ordinarily budget for such diversions. By any account, this represents monies over which neither "815," nor General Convention, nor any constituent diocese has control. Furthermore, by any account, it probably represents the single largest expenditure in connection with a General Convention.

For many, this third element signifies an important and invaluable aspect of the Episcopal Church in General Convention. It represents multiple mini-reunions of seminary classes; an occasion to renew old friendships and a potential for new; and an opportunity to teach Episcopalians about the diversity that constitutes the whole.

Such visitors, on rare occasions, have even been seen in the gallery of the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies or the Triennial, but presence in a gallery is not required and many

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How EUC, Women, Gays, EPF, Blacks View Convention

What particular convention issues will be impacting special interest groups in the Episcopal Church? Or, if their key concerns are not on the convention agenda, how will these groups strategize to achieve their goals? THE WITNESS invited five prominent leaders who will be involved in politics on the floor and in the corridors, to present their platforms to our readers. Following are responses from:

- John Fortunato, president of Integrity/International and psychotherapist-author of "Embracing the Exile: Healing Journeys of Gay Christians;"

- Edrick Bain, president, Union of Black Episcopalians, and president of the Board of Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD), an anti-poverty organization;

- The Rev. Patricia M. Park, president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus and director of the Women's Advocacy Program of the YWCA in Richmond, Va.;

- The Rev. John M. Gessell, president of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and professor of Christian ethics at the School of Theology, University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn., and

- The Rev. Lloyd S. Casson, president of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, canon of the Washington Cathedral, and Cathedral Assistant for Community and Ecumenical Affairs.

Gay Ministry Vital As Violence Escalates

by John E. Fortunato

The 1982 General Convention of the Episcopal Church must be made to hear the urgent pastoral needs of God's Gay and Lesbian children — some 2 million in this country alone — who are being victimized and murdered in increasing numbers. And the church, if indeed it intends to be the church, must be made to respond.

The church's response to the plight of Gay and Lesbian people must be more than renewed gestures of "acceptance" or "support" or, worst of all, "sympathy." Nor can the church allow itself conveniently to be diverted by red herrings like "same-sex marriage" or the "ordination of homosexuals" or the contention that reaching out to Gay and Lesbian people automatically means condoning "homosexual behavior." The church's response must be decisive and substantive because lives are at stake.

The psychological stress with which Gay and Lesbian people must contend in the face of formidable social ostracism and outright persecution is astounding. The incidence of suicide among Gays and Lesbians in the United States is four times the national average. The incidence of alcoholism is seven times higher. And the situation is worsening.

Thanks to the hate-mongering of the New Religious Right during the past year, the number of violent crimes with Gay and Lesbian victims has doubled in most metropolitan areas. The number of murders has risen alarmingly. In Los Angeles now, when police arrest homeless, confused and often drug-addicted young men who are prostituting themselves in order to survive, wax impressions of their teeth routinely are taken. It is a logical procedure. The impressions later will aid the coroner in identifying their abused and mutilated bodies when they are found murdered.

Will the church continue to bury its head and pretend that Gay and Lesbian people are some theoretical minority about which to theologize and hypothesize? Can the church set aside its neurotic need to try to "cure" Gay and Lesbian people long enough to hear their anguish? Is the Episcopal Church at long last prepared to take its Gay brothers and Lesbian sisters just as they are, hear their pain, and be the



church: healing, consoling, and nurturing? Or will the church continue to foist off onto secular society the task of ministry with Gay and Lesbian people?

Can the church begin to fathom that Integrity, with seven solid years of experience in ministry with the Gay and Lesbian community, is the church's resident expert in such ministry? Can the church move beyond tolerating Integrity to supporting it and consulting it about ministry with Gays and Lesbians? Has the church matured enough to see its own past arrogance in trying to prescribe for us what we need without bothering to ask us?

In short, the recent frightening increase in violence against Gay and Lesbian people should be sufficient to motivate the Episcopal Church to do more than offer a patronizing pat on the head and a little guilt money. The signs of the times indicate the need for program, staff and budget. A half million dollars over the coming triennium would barely begin to heal this gaping wound in the Body of Christ. Is the convention prepared to venture half that far?

Racial Justice First On Black Agenda

by Edrick Bain

Since its inception in 1968 as the Union of Black Clergy and Laity, the Union of Black Episcopalians has looked forward to General Conventions of the Episcopal Church as an opportunity to both state as creatively as possible the needs and the concerns of its Black membership, and to await a positive response to that agenda. Unfortunately, that response has not always been satisfactory, as we still live with the failure of the church to truly put the issue of racial justice first on its agenda.

However, the continuing support of the Episcopal Black Colleges, the existence and activities of Frank Turner's Black Ministries Desk at the Episcopal Church Center, and the mounting interest emerging around the work of the Coalition for Human Needs gives us reason to hope as we look toward 1983.

Basically the agenda of the UBE remains the same as long as racism and inequality exist within both our church and society. We believe strongly that it is imperative that the church make real the Executive Council's recent commitment to a national policy of affirmative action, and we trust that the General Convention will



understand its responsibility to respond to this concern by electing dedicated and qualified Black clergy and lay leadership to positions of responsibility in the House of Deputies, the Executive Council, the Church Pension Fund, and other boards and committees that make the critical decisions between conventions that chart the future of the church.

Secondly, we hope the General Convention will look within its own ranks and see what we fear will be a smaller number of Black deputies than we have had in recent times (which has never been adequate to truly represent the largest minority constituency within the church). Thus, in our opinion, affirmative action has as its second principle the election by dioceses of Black clergy and lay people to key decision making positions, including deputies to convention, assuring that affirmative action begins at home.

As always, another priority of the UBE is the continued support of Black Colleges. We are heartened to learn that an item of \$1 million will probably appear in the convention budget for their continued support. Yet we also look at the failure of dioceses to support the VIM program which generates the resources necessary to ensure, on an endowed basis, their continued existence. Therefore we must applaud the leadership of the Presiding Bishop for starting this process by using undesignated funds for this purpose.

We will look very closely at the budget allocations for the work of the Black Desk and the Coalition for Human Needs. We will strongly oppose any new program or redefinition of ministry which would tend to undercut the creative and critical work that these two organizations, as well as the other Ethnic Desks, are performing, not only for the minority communities, but for the whole church and society.

Beyond these internal concerns, the UBE will be working very closely with Coalition E, and other progressive forces within the convention, to help articulate resolutions on the very vital issues of national and international peace and justice that trouble us all at this time.

We are particularly concerned that there be no reinstitution of the draft, no further intervention in Latin America and rethinking and reversing of the new policy for South Africa by the Reagan Administration. We would also like to see strong opposition mounted against government cutbacks, and the so-called New Federalism which is already wreaking severe havoc on minorities and poor throughout the country.

Finally, and most importantly, we are concerned that the church issue a prophetic call to witness that will make this a truly just society for all of its citizens — not merely those who apparently benefit from the trickle-down economic policies of supply-side economics.

Thus, the UBE looks forward to General Convention

1982 as an opportunity for the Episcopal Church to regain its leadership in the various areas of social justice that it so proudly held in the '60s by redoubling its efforts to make sure that all of God's children share in the blessings of this society.

Women to Politic, Stage Arts Festival

by Patricia M. Park

For the last few years the Episcopal Women's Caucus has struggled to retain its historic past and reclaim the vision of the church that was seen so clearly during the struggle for the ordination of women to the priesthood. The Episcopal Church remains a deep and powerful oppressor of the spirit-filled lives of many of the women who are its members. As we prepare to attend the next General Convention, we are aware that this church continues to ignore our needs. Marge Christie aptly names the insults and abuses that greet us at General Convention, elsewhere in this issue of THE WITNESS.

The Episcopal Women's Caucus continues to witness to the Episcopal Church the possibilities for taking old symbols and giving them new meanings and for making connections between theology and daily life. This year in New Orleans we will have an Arts Festival, celebrating the artistic gifts of women. We want to communicate to the church that there are Episcopalian women who know and love each other no matter what their differences. These women, whose cultic center is Anglican, communicate through their art their understanding and deep feelings about God and the preciousness of life. We believe that the church is remiss in not understanding how women perceive God. Through the artistic events we will present, we want to communicate women's experience of God with the hope that a new compassion will be felt for all people.

Politically, we will continue to urge and recommend to the Standing Committee on the New Hymnal that the language used be inclusive. We will continue to encourage dioceses and parishes to employ professional women, clergy and lay. Through meetings with the leadership of the church, such as the one we had recently with the Presiding Bishop, we will urge that the Episcopal Church make a



stronger, more definitive statement on the necessity and validity of women in the priesthood.

Our caucus has been invited by the Women's Triennial to participate in its deliberations by sending a delegate. We are pleased to accept this gracious invitation and look forward to strengthening our bonds with our sisters.

Informally we will be present at our booth for support, networking and conversation. We will be selling T-shirts with slogans like *A Woman's Place Is in the House . . . of Bishops*. The community that gathers at the booth will be a source of creativity, vision and humor for the church.

Disarmament, Peace Focus of EPF Efforts

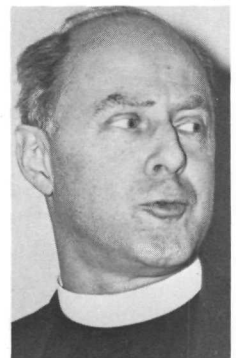
by John M. Gessell

We hear on all sides — in the academy, the market place, legislative halls, and in the churches — that our choice today is war or economic collapse, that we must continue to build more nuclear weapons in order to "keep up with the Russians." The truth is that there is no arms race with the Soviet Union. We in the United States have been engaging in an arms race with ourselves. And it will destroy the earth.

The historic function of nation-states has been to preserve internal order against the threat of chaos, and to protect its citizens from any threat or destruction from abroad. Today, many nation-states act in precisely the opposite way. Their domestic and foreign policies invoke external attack and provoke widespread internal chaos — and threaten all of us with loss of the future without our consent.

I am referring to the military strategies of northern hemisphere nations, and especially to the policies and practices of the superpowers. Strategic assumptions of the United States and the Soviet Union have led to the development of weapons systems which imply a counter-force or pre-emptive first strike strategy and which will certainly create nuclear holocaust. The effects of any nuclear exchange will lead almost inevitably to the extinction of life of every sort and, indeed, of the entire small planet. Nuclear war is the crime against the future.

It is contrary to the law of nations and common sense to risk the world for limited and partial historical goals.



Jonathan Schell in his *New Yorker* piece of Feb. 1, said it for everyone.

We can say that although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is, humanly speaking, infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity. In other words, once we learn that a holocaust might lead to extinction we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance. Therefore, although, scientifically speaking, there is all the difference in the world between the mere possibility that a holocaust will bring about extinction and the certainty of it, morally they are the same, and we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species . . .

In other words, we are living in the time in which a revolutionary historical change has occurred, in which former ways of thinking and acting are outmoded by nuclear weapons technology.

One of the reasons that we have such a hard time with this is that the impending destruction of the world has already begun to effect the destruction of the language by which to speak of it. Destruction of the language of public discourse has led to incoherence, irrationality, mendacity and, not to put too fine a point on it, sheer gibberish. This babel, the language of barbarians, is nowhere more clearly exhibited than in the hysteria of the Reagan regime as it seeks to rush into a confrontation in Central America with what it calls "Soviet imperialism," before the coalescence of an effective opposition by the public and by the Congress can restrain its adventurism.

Nuclear weapons technology has rendered war impotent as an instrument of national policy. War no longer defends — if it ever did — for the bomb has rendered futile, war itself. This has made all debates about strategy, military procurement and the like, suddenly antic, uncouth, grotesque, useless, beside the point.

War may be the final refuge of the demonic, of the principalities and powers of which St. Paul spoke. But God is calling the church in our time to form itself into a peace fellowship to work for a halt to war and all preparations for war, *now*, before it is too late. Since our public servants seem to be incapable of freezing nuclear weapons at present levels and moving toward disarmament, the people must tell them that it is unacceptable for policy makers to pursue a course that will lead to certain extinction for whatever reasons. The growing international movement for disarmament gives us courage.

General Convention will be much occupied this September with peace and disarmament issues. The report

of the Joint Commission on Peace will merit everyone's sustained attention. The Joint Commission is a first step to the organization of the church for its Gospel task of peacemaking. Let the church end its complicity with war and war-making.

Someone recently wrote that human imagination invented nuclear weapons and put them here; human imagination can remove them. The church is the place to start. God is calling us to this work. It is the last chance for the human race.

EUC to Pursue Tough, Multi-Issue Platform

by Lloyd Casson

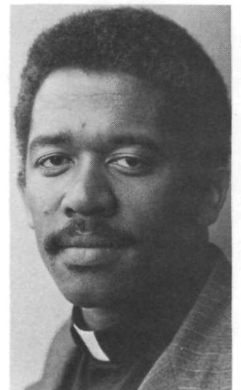
The dynamics and mood which prevail at a General Convention of the Episcopal Church tend to mirror those in the nation as a whole. Invariably, the emotional climate, the issues, energies, official responses and outcomes surrounding national crises, elections, and other events determine (or at least are reflected in) who gets elected as deputies, what priorities the convention establishes and even the way in which convention resolves issues. Given the chaotic situation and tense political climate of our nation and world, some of the resolutions before the New Orleans convention representing Episcopal Urban Caucus (EUC) concerns will be debated in an anxious and even hostile environment.

The same forces which are disrupting the world scene are disrupting things at home. Because of the massive shift to the arms race of financial and other resources, the door to the way out of poverty has been slammed shut in the face of U.S. poor as programs which were meeting basic survival needs for food, shelter, medical care and training have been drastically reduced or abolished.

Moreover, continued plant shut-downs and relocations, business and farm failures and lay-offs of hundreds of thousands of employees due to budget cuts in the public and private sector, have created in short order millions of "nouveau pauvres" — people now suddenly living on the edge of poverty, who just a year or so ago saw for themselves only the securest of economic futures. Some of them will be convention deputies.

The drastic economic crisis and the deep-down-inside fear

Continued on page 21



Demythologizing the Episcopal Church

“**W**hat is the Episcopal Church?” I was asked on a wintry day in Indianapolis by an auto mechanic who was just about to crawl beneath my car. “It’s Catholic *and* Protestant,” I said. “Oh,” he replied, and slid quickly between the wheels.

I have been a part of the Episcopal Church all of my life, although I drifted far, far away from it when I was a student in school. Later, when I had been battered by life and knocked down in youthful collisions with the world, I cast wistful glances toward the church. I was idealistic about the possibility of a better world, and wanted to serve in bringing it about. Could the church partake in such a task?

My belief in God was strong, even though I had recently felt unable to find God inside church as much as outside it. So, was there any point in grappling with the church again? Did a heart beat underneath its stiff trappings? Did a soul stir amid the impersonal counting of monies and the competitive sparring for worldly power? Did anybody there give a tinker’s damn about people, especially sinners?

I prayed. I ate Jesus in the consecrated bread, drank Christ’s blood in the consecrated wine, and fervently pleaded for divine guidance. I read the whole Bible from beginning to end, seeking the Word of God. My heart burned with a new (for me) but very ancient fire, the fire that Moses saw in a burning bush. I felt the death of my old self in immolation and ashes, was born again, understood the newness of pardon and grace, love and resurrection.

I was tired of conflict, which was the child of the devil. I would sit inside a vine-covered ecclesiastical building for the rest of my life, wear a black suit with a round white collar, sip tea with devout

churchwomen, write classic sermons for godlike delivery on Sunday mornings, and be a role-model for holiness.

I was an Episcopalian in the ecumenical crossword puzzle — instead of a Roman Catholic, a Greek Orthodox, a Methodist, a Baptist, a Lutheran, a Presbyterian. Now, 27 years after being ordained a priest, how do I perceive the church?

It seems to me the Episcopal Church is quite different from what it’s generally *supposed* to be. In other words, its prevalent image appears to be a distortion.

For example, the Episcopal Church is held to be “rich” and “social,” yet most of its members whom I know are solidly middle-class; worried about how to pay for an offspring’s education, an elderly parent’s care, needed house improvements, the rising cost of automobile insurance, the food bill, and their own security in a time of coming “retirement” that portends anything but ease, conjuring up a rugged King Learian landscape instead of the measured serenity of an advertised “Leisure World.”

The myth of “rich” Episcopalians is a bore. It is as gross for a newly-moneyed social climber to seek church credentials that are alleged to be “chic” as it is for a “conspicuous consumer” to purchase an immense, guzzling car that is a symbol of social acceptance and prestige.

Wherever and whenever membership in the Episcopal Church is seen as possessing a “Gold Card,” ecumenically speaking, the time has clearly come to demythologize.

In my opinion, many Episcopalians secretly love the false myths about the church. Isn’t it nice to think we are, indeed, a band of millionaires, tycoons, power brokers and world movers? This

is especially true on a rainy, overcast Sunday morning when the worn-out old car won’t start to get us to church, housed in a mortgaged structure whose heat bill is soaring and unpaid.

The Episcopal Church is said to be formalistic, anti-evangelical, and have poor preaching. Nonsense. A robust celebration of the liturgy with rousing hymns, energetic clergy and a fired-up congregation is evangelical to a fault. Preaching in Episcopal parishes is better than in the Roman Catholic, a half-inch beneath peak Presbyterian standards, more literate than Methodist and more interesting than Baptist.

Another classic myth about the Episcopal Church is that we are the bridge church between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Balderdash. Communities like Taizé in France are far more conspicuous and active in bridge capacities than we are; and don’t for a moment forget the Lutherans. In the burgeoning women’s religious revolution, most bridges have been sawed down or blown up, anyhow; bridges are seen as *passé* because the people involved are already *together*.

Women in the Episcopal Church, despite a considerable amount of publicity to the contrary, are still second-class citizens. Female role models — celebrating at altars and preaching in pulpits — are still rare. This sharply refutes a seemingly emergent new myth (one quite prevalent in Roman Catholic circles) that the Episcopal Church has “solved” its problems concerning women as clergy and in other leadership roles.

Episcopalians have a love-hate relationship with bishops, who frequently incarnate their own sets of myths. It took an African Christian (writing in *Prayer in The Religious*

by Malcolm Boyd

Traditions of Africa by Aylward Shorter) to say frankly and up-front what a lot of American Episcopalians feel about a number of bishops, but only say behind their backs, especially at cocktail parties and church conventions:

Bishops feel superior,

Behave as if they were Our Lord himself.

Episcopalians are ambivalent about the matter, enjoying episcopal pomp (up to a point, at least) while being riled by pomposity. Priests as well as bishops easily fall into the arrogance of ultimate role-playing: playing god.

The darker side of spiritual arrogance takes different forms of ecclesiastical hubris. Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan left an unforgettable portrait in her memoir, *The Glitter and the Gold*. The young English duchess visited the imperial court of Franz Joseph where she witnessed the Maundy Thursday observance of the "foot washing." The emperor each year washed the feet of 12 beggars. Mrs. Balsan later wrote of the event:

"Originally intended as an act of humility, it had become, when I saw it, a scene of splendor in which arrogance masqueraded in spurious simplicity. Twelve of the oldest and poorest men in Vienna were seated on a bench just in front of the tribune from which I watched the scene. They had been carefully washed and scented so that no unpleasant odor should offend the imperial nostrils. I was told that on one occasion such precautions had been neglected and that the emperor at the time had been nearly overcome as he knelt to wash the filthy feet extended to him. The feet now were faultlessly clean — one might

almost say manicured — and each man in turn placed a foot in perfumed water. When the emperor reached the last man he raised his weary eyes in which I saw disillusion shine cold and bleak. Then rising he returned to the archdukes, who were dressed in gorgeous uniforms and stood in line facing us. It saddened me that an act of Christian humility such as the washing of the beggars' feet should have become an operatic scene shorn of all spiritual meaning."

The memoir is useful to us simply as a reminder of our own tendency to substitute spiritual arrogance in place of humility before Christ. It is a tendency as strong in the Episcopal Church as in any, and there is a compelling drive underlying it. The answer to the problem? Demythologize. Name the demons. Get back to scriptural basics.

Instead of fastening our attention solely on old myths, we should change focus and perceive different realities. For example, I have a favorite recollection of the Episcopal Church as poor and dispossessed, a fragment of a shattered remnant. One morning I stood at the altar of an Episcopal parish in the Deep South that had a Black congregation and priest. It was a backwater parish, separated by social apartheid, if not theology, from the mainstream of church and society.

The building smelled moldy. The wooden floor on which I stood was unsteady, needing repairs. The prayer book I held was falling to pieces, its pages coming apart and breaking.

I celebrated the Eucharist there, and saw a side of the church that many people never see. In that tiny, poor, embattled parish there was a vision of the Universal Church, the Body of Christ, that was deep and imbedded, and would not go away.

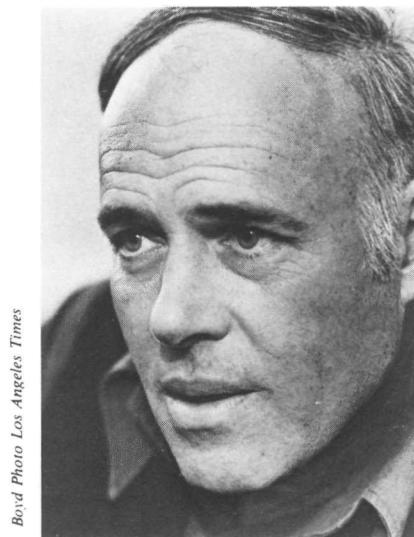
Now, looking around inside the Episcopal Church, I see new breed

Episcopalians: sophisticated beyond belief, yet innocent as lambs; tough survivors and tender lovers of each other; media-saturated women and men who find the gospel, its hope and challenge, ever new. Their diversity is striking: Black, White, Asian, Latino, female, male, heterosexual, Gay, Lesbian, rich, middle-class, poor, young, middle-aged, old. . . .

Sometimes I feel surrounded by a lively cast of unlikely saints who seem to be in a roadshow company of T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* — vital, caring, concerned people who are truly committed, but wouldn't wear it on their sleeves for all the world.

Hopefully, I will long remain a critic of the church and its myths — always a loving one. I am a member of the particular family that is the church. I know where the skeletons are hidden, the closet doors nailed shut, the unspoken secrets shared in secret. I want the church to be, and do, better than it has. For it is desperately needed as a means of succor, a symbol of conscience, a channel of communication, a vessel of loving, a sacrament of God's purpose. □

The Rev. Malcolm Boyd is Writer-Priest-in-Residence at St. Augustine-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Santa Monica, Cal. He is a social critic and author of 20 books including *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?*, *Take Off the Masks and Look Back in Joy*.



Boyd Photo Los Angeles Times



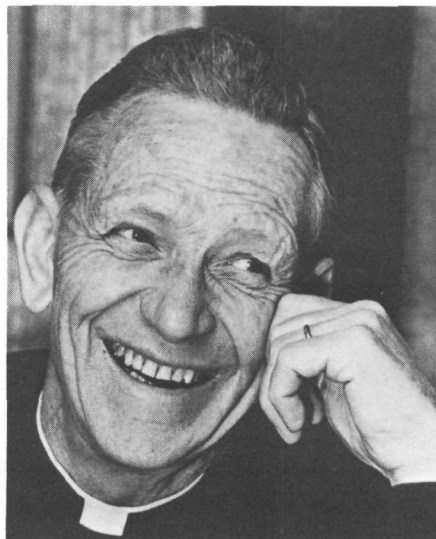
Colorful Moments, Personalities From Conventions Since 1952

by Robert L. DeWitt

Episcopal General Conventions in recent decades, prior to the Seattle Convention of 1967, were usually *pro forma* occasions. Necessary business was tended to, the church took its collective pulse, host cities rejoiced in the coming of multitudes who had a reputation for tipping, eating and drinking well, and another *Journal of Convention* was printed and bound.

There were exceptions, of course. The Boston Convention of 1952 is often cited as a great convention. What is usually remembered, however, is that buses were chartered from all over New England and thousands of Episcopalians converged on the Boston Garden for a mass service. Not remembered so well is the lively debate over what was perhaps the most important legislative issue at that convention, the revision of the marriage canon to allow the re-marriage of divorced persons.

And the most significant event at that convention is all but forgotten. Bishop Clinton Quin had offered to host the next convention in Texas. Acceptance of such an invitation was customarily greeted with expressions of gratitude and relief, since the problem would be solved for another three years. To everyone's astonishment however, Bishop Norman Nash of Massachusetts rose and said that if Bishop Quin could guarantee that there would be no discrimination in Texas against any Black Episcopalians at the convention, he would gladly vote in favor of that location. The House of Bishops followed his lead, and the invitation was accepted, subject to that condition.



Robert L. DeWitt

After some months spent in assessing the situation, Presiding Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill reassigned the convention to Honolulu.

That episode at Boston in 1952 cast a shadow of things to come. The world was intruding into church affairs. Issues familiar to the daily newspapers would begin to appear on convention agenda. They emerged slowly, to be sure. For example, the next convention, Honolulu in 1955, drew its battle-lines over the new Seabury Series curriculum being offered by David Hunter and his colleagues in the Department of Christian Education. The church was being pressed to decide whether its educational nurture was to continue to consist in an emphasis on tradition, or in learning how to be open to the Spirit. However, what the Spirit might ask the church to be open to was not identified.

The following convention in 1958 in

Miami Beach saw the election of a new Presiding Bishop, Arthur Lichtenberger. Many remember his acceptance speech in which he told of going for a swim after the election, and being tempted to head away from shore, and keep going! My own strongest recollection of that convention was being asked by the Michigan deputation to present a resolution concerning the Church Pension Fund. It was at one of the late-night sessions that I presented the resolution, which called for "the appointment of an impartial committee to investigate the policies and procedures of the Church Pension Fund, and to report back to the next convention." When the vote was called, virtually everybody in that enormous arena voiced their disapproval with a thunder as from heaven.

The following day an old friend, Powell Dawley, of the faculty of the General Seminary, told me, "I would have liked to have voted for your resolution, but I just couldn't. You see, in the church we assume that all committees we appoint are impartial. And further, in the church we don't 'investigate' each other — we 'study a question.'"

The Detroit Convention in 1961 was dominated by an emphasis on the church's relationship to industry, thanks to a committee chaired by Bishop John Hines. The Detroit Industrial Mission under the leadership of Hugh White arranged bus trips to automotive assembly plants, and presentations on the implications for the church of modern industrialization. Though no one made the connection, it

was suggestive of Bishop Nash's intervention in Boston. It asserted strongly that business-as-usual is not an assumption to be made lightly by the church — whether in relationship to race relations, or to the church's mission in the industrial age.

In 1964 the convention was held in St. Louis. William Mead was the new dean of the cathedral which hosted many of the convention services. He had recently come from St. Paul, Minn. Together with an impressive array of pastoral abilities, he was also an avid baseball fan — indeed, a baseball nut, as his many friends in St. Paul well knew. By a coincidence which he thought providential St. Louis won the pennant, shortly after his arrival, and just before the convention.

The convention's presence in a World Series city gave a wry twist to the then-current saying that "The world should set the church's agenda." Yet at that very time Martin Luther King's name was becoming a household word. The marches and the Freedom Rides had begun, and they would not soon stop. The church was already deeply immersed in the '60s, far deeper than it realized.

The new Presiding Bishop, John Hines, realized it full well. His first convention as presiding officer was in 1967 at Seattle. What had seemed in 1952 a nuisance point of social ethics — to alter the location of a convention because of racial discrimination — had become in 1967 a national crisis. Civil rights was the top priority on the nation's agenda. And, thought the new Presiding Bishop, therefore it was a forced option for the church. Empowerment of the poor was the prescription for justice. An astonished and bewildered convention followed his daring lead. The church pledged millions of dollars for empowerment, and "no strings attached" and "self-determination" became the by-words of the church's new approach to mission.

But the church had bought before it had fully appraised the purchase. The implications of the Seattle actions soon became apparent for what they were — a radical change in the understanding of the church's mission. A special convention, the first in generations, was convened in South Bend two years later, in 1969, to deal with the implications of the Seattle actions, and to face the delayed backlash. Housed in dormitories of the University of Notre Dame, the convention had a flavor unique in convention tradition. It was intimate, intense, confrontational, ambivalent. Problems of race were center-stage.

On the one hand, for example, there was an address to a joint session of the two houses by the Rev. James Woodruff, a Black priest. He brought the house down when he pointed out, in a cataloguing of Black contributions to American society, that the in-put of Black music to American culture had been a part of the plan of Providence to save Americans from the music of Lawrence Welk. On the other hand, there was that electric moment, in another joint session, when Muhammed Kenyatta from Philadelphia forcibly took the microphone from Bishop Hines to address the convention, an action which the Black deputies supported.



But as in the nation, so in the church. The backlash was mounting. What the Black community had for decades referred to as "the problem," and what the Swedish sociologist, Gunnar Myrdal, called "an American dilemma," continued to be the problem, remained a dilemma. The quarterly meetings of the Executive Council ("the convention between conventions") were constantly fighting a rearguard action on the approval of grants authorized by the Seattle Convention. At one meeting, Charles Crump from Memphis attempted to block a proposed grant to one Black community organization, characterizing a flyer they had circulated as inciting to revolution. A Black council member, Charles Willie, a sociologist from Syracuse, spoke to the question, referring to the alleged revolutionary rhetoric as "sociological poetry," and the grant was approved. But every meeting of the council was punctuated by debate, sometimes bitter. The lines were drawn. And at the convention of 1970 — ironically, as Bishop Nash would have pointed out, held in Texas — the opposition grew and made itself felt. Brilliant budget work was done by people like Charles Ritchie, to save the heart of the new mission emphasis, but more reactionary people were elected to key posts. Some of the pinions of the fledgling mission thrust were clipped.

It became apparent then that the political process of convention would be the handmaid, or the nemesis, of the church's mission. This point came to mind recently when I had an extended conversation with Byron Rushing, Chairperson of the Board of the Boston City Mission. He has been a deputy to the past three conventions and, with the Rev. Gil Avery, the co-coordinator of Coalition E. I asked him to explain the coalition:

"Coalition E is a loose network of the progressive deputies at convention," Rushing said. "It exists only during

convention. It took form at the Louisville Convention in 1973. Gil Avery and I had been elected deputies, and at a pre-convention meeting of the Massachusetts deputation, we were asked to see if it would be possible to bring together like-minded deputies into some kind of organization at the convention.

"In late 1972 we called together a group of people to discuss the idea. A number of the issues we all stood for — equality, empowerment — began with the letter 'E,' so we decided on that for the name. Actually, Coalition E stands for a whole range of issues that unite many deputies. We drafted a statement of purpose which has not changed. It reads:

We affirm the direction toward openness, diversity and the investing of ourselves in the social issues of our time, which our church has taken. We are committed to the idea of empowerment — creating the opportunities for all women and men to exercise fully their God-given power through Christ. We see this direction and commitment as the liberating function of a servant church. We prepare for General Convention with this aim: to have openness, diversity, social consciousness and a commitment to empowerment both shape the reforms in our church and inform our strategies to share the Good News with everyone, everywhere."

Rushing does not exaggerate the importance of Coalition E, but its very existence underscores an important point which can be put simply: a convention counts votes, and votes count. The colorful, irrepressible Bishop Jim Pike was frequently criticized by his friends for not paying enough attention to "floor work," that is, to political process. Frequently, he would be sitting in a session of the House of Bishops, smoking incessant

cigarettes, absorbed in a newspaper account of the address he had made the night before, seemingly oblivious to what was going on. Suddenly, he would drop his newspaper and rush to a microphone to point out that the ineptitude of the action under consideration would defeat the very intent of the House. Such was the acuteness of his legal training. Often he saved the bishops from putting their collective foot in their common mouth.

Yet, when it came to controversies



concerning himself, he would blithely go it alone, only to be shot at, and frequently shot down. His floor work, his political organizing, was abominable. So had it been with many of the concerns of those who came to associate themselves with Coalition E.

An unresolved difference exists over political process and its appropriateness to a convention committed to religious concerns. Some feel it is utterly out of place. Their understanding of how the Spirit of God influences a group of

people is atomistic — God speaks to individuals, and then that message is relayed by individuals to the group. On the other hand, there are those who feel that political process — caucusing, lobbying, organizing — is the proper method whereby the Spirit makes its will known to a group of people.

Political organizing at a General Convention took on dramatic form at Louisville in 1973. A good deal of organizing was done by those who wished to elect John Allin as successor to Bishop Hines. A careful counting of potential votes was made, favorable retired bishops who might otherwise not have attended were urged to come. It was a legitimate, effective process, and proved successful. On the other hand, there was no organizing at all on the part of the progressive bishops. And that helped make possible the election of John Allin. That was the first convention at which Coalition E had been in existence, and they were tracking this issue. In Rushing's words:

"The approval of the House of Deputies is required when the House of Bishops has elected a new presiding bishop," he said. "In the past that has been *pro forma*. The deputies would go into executive session, people would stand up and say what a wonderful diocese the elected bishop came from, what wonderful people lived there, and what a wonderful man had been elected. At Louisville, the closer we came to the election, the stronger Bishop Allin looked, even though he was the most conservative of the candidates. We of Coalition E decided that in the eventuality of his election, there would have to be some kind of response from us. The only 'statement' we could think of that would be effective would be to have a number of deputies vote against approving his election. To accomplish this — it would be so extraordinary — we had to have members of Coalition E speak first when the election came before the deputies for confirmation."

But how was Coalition E to know

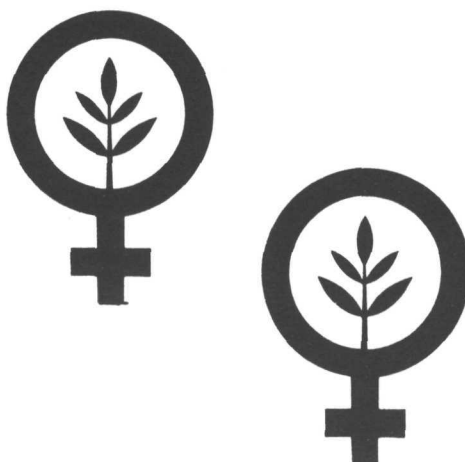
who was elected before the issue was presented to the deputies?

"We were able to persuade one of the members of the committee bringing the report from the House of Bishops to give us a signal on reaching the platform," Rushing explained. "The signal was given to us — without a word being said — which let us know that Allin had indeed been elected. Then while the committee's report was being made, persons from Coalition E stepped up to all the microphones in the hall. When the debate for concurrence was opened, no matter which floor microphone was recognized by John Coburn, the presiding officer, a Coalition E spokesperson responded.

"Our proposal was that the election be reconsidered. We lost, of course, but we were able to raise the issue, and for the first time in the history of our church there was a genuine vote in the House of Deputies on the election of a presiding bishop. Actually, Massachusetts and a number of other dioceses voted against his election.

"This action sent a message to John Allin about the mission priorities of a great number of deputies. It also sent a message to the convention about Coalition E, that there was a considerable group of progressive deputies who were organized. It set our reputation for future conventions."

When 11 women were "irregularly" ordained to the priesthood in Philadelphia in 1974, the church was taken by surprise. The House of Bishops was both confused and outraged by the initiative taken by the three ordaining bishops. The church found itself in a very awkward stalemate. It became clear that only the convention could resolve the impasse. Although it was evident that a majority in the church, and a strong majority of the bishops, were in favor of the ordaining of women, it was not at all clear that the convention would speak affirmatively on the question. The success at the Minneapolis Convention



in 1976 of those favoring the ordination of women was due in large measure to the careful political work of Coalition E and a host of other organizers such as Pat Park and Bill Coats.

Since Boston in 1952 compromise has yielded to confrontation, issues have been sharply defined, lines have been drawn. The one God who out of love created one world seems unalterably opposed to the separate packaging of issues between the church and the world to which it is sent.

For example, those opposed to the ordination of women correctly pointed out that it issued from the movement for women's liberation. And liberation also has a theological aspect which is properly the church's business. In the same way, peace in this nuclear age is a question with military, economic and political facets. And it is very much the concern of the followers of the Prince of Peace.

Convention has lost its innocence, and can never be the same again. Issues may not erupt at this coming convention in New Orleans, or even at the next. But convention has learned how to erupt, and that threat, sheathed though it may be at any one convention, can always be drawn. In the nervous but unavoidable, the tentative but continuing encounter of the church with the world, may that sword be the sword of the Spirit of God. □

Coming Up . . . in **THE WITNESS**

• **Winners** of the Scarlett, Spofford, and Scudder Awards to be presented by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company at a dinner during General Convention.

• **Nuclear Disarmament** — A major article on how this issue impacts the churches and how churchpersons might strategize to impact the issue, by George Regas.

• **The National Security Agency** — A former NSA official and his wife say the NSA can be harmful to the health of the nation and to families who work for it.

• **The Economy** — An historical and analytical view of how we got into the present dilemma by Frances Fox Piven, noted political scientist who frequently appears in the pages of the *New York Times*.

Back Issues Available:

• **Black Women's Agenda:** Parts 1 and 2 — Subject of this month's provocative Letters to the Editor, articles include "Racism Breeds Stereotypes," by Deborah Harmon Hines; "Bigotry Fashionable Again," by Myrtle Gordon; "Other Struggles Seducing Blacks," by Mattie Hopkins, and "You Don't See Most of Us," by Barbara Harris. February and March issues. Plus Ben Chavis' stirring article of his prison experiences, "Freeing Prisoners With the Bible." Package, \$2.

• **Two Islands** — The "revolution" going on in Northern Ireland as seen by Mary Condren and Nancy Montgomery, and the socialist revolution in Grenada, "a revolution even a Republican tourist could love," by A. Linn Neumann. \$1.

Cannon . . . Continued from page 9
persons attend General Convention without ever seeing the legislative bodies in action. It is when analyzing this third element of General Convention expense that one must remember that this purely voluntary element expends the most money — money not likely otherwise to be used in furthering the national or diocesan programs of the Church.

The most controllable aspect of General Convention expense is that portion directly related to the way the Episcopal Church goes about the business which is the purpose of its gathering. Yet repeated efforts to reduce even that expense have failed. By all accounts, such efforts will be renewed again in New Orleans, probably with little chance of success.

Proposals to economize include:

- Reducing the size of deputation from four in each order to three or two (eliminating on the way the "divided vote" if the reduction is to three, but also, in the view of many, dramatically reducing representation of minorities and women as well).

- Holding General Convention on a college campus, housing deputies and bishops in student housing, rather than

commercial hotels. This would be enhanced if the size of General Convention were reduced, as the choice of available sites would then be increased.

- Moving General Convention from the Labor Day period to the Fourth of July period. This would make a move to a college campus more viable, and in any event, produce markedly more competitive hotel room prices if it remains in commercial facilities. In many areas, hotel rates are approximately half the price in July compared to September. Such a change would also permit parish priests to be present at the beginning of their church school years.

- Shortening the duration of General Convention. A modest move in that direction from 11 legislative days to 10, is being implemented in New Orleans. A proposal is also forthcoming to reduce the 1985 General Convention to eight legislative days. An eight-day July convention would reduce costs by somewhat more than 50% according to one estimate.

But will an economy model convention serve the needs of the voluntary visitors for whom General Convention is an important triennial



event? Will the several seminaries find facilities on a college campus for holding their traditional dinners? Might not a July convention increase the number of visitors as it falls in more normal vacation periods? Can those greater numbers be accommodated? Will the sense of camaraderie and community that is a part of General Convention be diluted? If General Convention is more accessible to visitors, might not the church as a whole find that it has spent more on its economy model than on its present model?

These questions will again be asked in New Orleans and, perhaps, some answers given. □

Editorial . . . Continued from page 3
through and for the world's poor and deprived. In Central America peasants, priests, nuns, are that voice; in Amarillo, Tex. a Roman Catholic bishop says "No" to the making of the neutron bomb at the Pantex plant there and is that voice. In the throats of increasing millions, both in Europe and the United States, the cry of God for an end to the worldwide nuclear arms race moves to crescendo.

It will not be enough in New Orleans — even though it will be

necessary — to ask for money for the revitalization of ministry to the cities, to denounce racism and sexism, and pass a nuclear weapons freeze resolution. The God of history demands — has always demanded — that people take history seriously.

The greater challenge to the Episcopal Church gathered in New Orleans is whether voices and programs will emerge that help us begin to turn our backs upon the high altars of privilege and power where we have customarily

worshiped, and take the first steps of an Abrahamic journey of risk, into a solidarity with the lost, the rejected, the despised: the majority of the world's peoples. Such an understanding of history would, furthermore, identify the minority peoples within our own borders as part and parcel of it.

By that kind of courage and faithfulness alone will we begin to realize the promise by which all the families of earth will bless themselves.

— R. W. G. and the editors

Casson . . . Continued from page 13

for the coming of the end of it all (by nuclear warfare or otherwise) is beginning to produce severe social disintegration. The stress on families and households is overwhelming and the incidents of divorce, child and spouse abuse and neighborhood crime are on a fast upward spiral. Moreover, official sanction has been granted to identify scapegoats to be blamed for the economic and social disintegration — the poor — especially Blacks as “freeloaders of public funds;” refugees “taking jobs away from people;” Gays “promoting sexual immorality” and women “promoting abortions” to name a few. Racist and anti-Semitic terrorism has increased considerably, resulting in sniper killings, cross burning and desecration of churches, synagogues and cemeteries.

In the face of the economic and social deterioration, more and more Americans are turning to an old time religion which reveres earlier “more stable times” and which honors a sinister God who justifies the survival of the fittest; who justifies the devaluing and the destroying of some human life in order to maintain their own. Some of these will be at convention too.

The convention will play host to all the attitudes and moods described above and they provide the back-drop for the debate on issues of interest to the Episcopal Urban Caucus. The primary concern of the EUC platform adopted at its assembly in New York in February is for the poor and the oppressed whose presence and voices at convention will be minimal. And, in spite of expressed concerns that the EUC agenda is spread all over the map, it is our intention to point out that the luxury of addressing the issues of racism, poverty, injustice, war and peace, foreign policy and all the rest in seriatum fashion is no longer available. They are tragically, inextricably and hopelessly intertwined and we are bombarded with the full implications of each of them, all at the same time.

The Episcopal Urban Caucus will support resolutions before the General Convention which will 1) Support the Jubilee Ministries Program, recommended by the Joint Commissions on the Church in Metropolitan Areas, to raise consciousness about the level of poverty and economic injustice in America, enabling Episcopalians to take active roles in joining with the poor in ministries of advocacy and empowerment. We support the contention that the parish is

SEEKING ADDRESS

THE WITNESS is seeking the present address of Valerie Maynard, the African-American artist whose sculpture appears on the February cover. If any reader out there knows where she is, could you drop us a line — THE WITNESS, P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002? Many thanks!

the primary base of this ministry and that significant resources allocated for this purpose will be the sure and certain sign of our seriousness; 2) Support a \$1.5 million budget for the Coalition for Human Needs (CHN), in order to continue at more effective levels, our creative national ministry of support to programs for community education, development and other projects for and on behalf of the poor; 3) Support a CHN racism education program to enable Episcopalians to grasp the depth and evils of racism in our public and private lives as well as in the church and to understand clearly the church's teaching in response to racism; 4) Urge the U.S. and U.S.S.R. to adopt a bi-lateral freeze in the production, testing and deployment of nuclear weapons and delivery systems; 5) Urge the U.S. and other nuclear powers to adopt a “no first-strike” policy;

6) Ask for federal legislation to fund the conversion of military production to civilian and socially useful production; 7) Oppose any further increases in military spending at the expense of human services, especially for the poor and the working poor; 8) Support continued funding and the staffing of the Church's Peace Commission; 9) Urge the call by the Presiding Bishop of a national congress in 1984 to address issues of human needs and survival, and to search for ways in which the church should change its ways of acting and speaking in order to relate more effectively the word of God to the human condition; 10) Call for a national energy office with staff to provide consultation, training and resources to dioceses, parishes, and other church groups concerned about energy conservation; 11) Re-affirm civil rights of homosexual persons, and call an end to discrimination against them in the church and society; 12) Oppose military intervention in El Salvador and urge that financial aid to El Salvador be made contingent upon human rights guaranteed by the government.

Given the sense of anxiety, frustration and hopelessness which convention participants will bring with them and which they will project on to the convention process, most of these resolutions and others like them will face hot and divisive debate to say the very least. However, our hope is that with this platform the EUC will assist in getting the crucial issues which these resolutions represent before the church for honest and open discussion. We feel that in these parlous times the church can stand united and firm in commitment to Jesus Christ and to justice and peace.

True, time is running out. But neither paralysis, nor frantic efforts to hold on to things as they are, need define us. In spite of what may, or may not happen at the convention with respect to this platform, the members of the EUC have committed themselves to living out the meaning of these resolutions in our own personal lives and in our parishes, institutions and communities to the fullest extent possible.

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"After you deliberate and identify priorities, we'll be  
here and expecting to hear from you."

— George Quiggle, Testifier  
Urban Bishops' Public Hearing  
Birmingham, Ala.  
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To Hear and Not to Heed

*An Open Letter
to Mr. Quiggle
on the State
of the Episcopal Church
from Joseph A. Pelham*



In the following pages, the Rev. Joseph A. Pelham, author of *To Hear and to Heed*, (the summary of the Episcopal Urban Bishops' Hearings) presents a response to George Quiggle, who testified with great expectations, in 1977. Pelham is Executive Director of Episcopal City Mission, Boston.

Dear Mr. Quiggle:

If you and others who share your concern about the church's response to the crisis of the cities and the plight of their people took note of the mood of the Episcopal church and the agenda for its General Convention in 1979, you and they had reason for cautious hope that longstanding issues which had commanded the attention of the church were either resolved or soon to be resolved.

The struggle to realize the wholeness of the ministry of the church, as that struggle was focused in the effort to open access to all levels of ordained ministry to women, had climaxed three years previously in Minneapolis. The time, energy and monies poured into the process of Prayer Book revision seemed to have accomplished their purpose as the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* moved toward almost certain adoption. The Episcopal Church seemed to have settled the issues of who is authorized to preside at the celebration of its sacraments, and what words the celebrant is authorized to use.

There was reason for hope also in that the Urban Bishops Coalition had emerged after the Minneapolis Convention as the most cohesive and coherent force in the life of this branch of the church. That coalition had grown to virtually half of the membership of the House of Bishops, had demonstrated its ability to vote as a bloc and, therefore, to exert disciplined power in that House.

The coalition had completed its Institutes on Public Policy, designed to examine the way national policies affect the welfare of the cities, and its series of Public Hearings in seven cities in which you, Mr. Quiggle, and over 100 others presented testimony pointing to what one bishop described as a "mosaic about God's people who are hurt, suffering and deprived." The members of the coalition had adopted an agenda for action. That agenda challenged the

bishops themselves and the church at every level, parish, diocesan and national, to make certain unequivocal decisions: to be *for the poor*, to enter into a struggle that has no foreseeable end, to be involved as a servant church which recognizes the priority and authority of the people it serves, to recognize that racism and sexism within the church itself make its mission in the world fraudulent and impotent, to be present in the cities in a way that calls less for *money* than for personal *involvement*, to use power and influence in any appropriate political way to effect changes in the city, and to direct resources away from remedial programs of service to that action which gets at the root causes of systemic ills.

There was hope in that the Urban Bishops had made sufficient gestures that they were prepared to exercise the kind of leadership from which they had largely abdicated in recent years.

The hopeful gathered in Denver (and you, Mr. Quiggle, may have watched from afar), believing that the Urban Bishops, with support from those clergy and laypersons who shared their concern, would indeed be the most effective force in the convention. You may have dared to hope that at last you might get a response!

The apprehension which even the hopeful felt as the convention assembled was grounded in the fact that an agenda related to the needs of the cities and their poor would have to *intrude* if it were to be heard. The formal docket provided little opportunity for bishops and deputies to make the kinds of decisions to which the members of the Urban Bishops Coalition had called themselves and the church as a whole.

As the convention lived out its days, the Urban Bishops Coalition, joined by clerical and lay deputies who shared the same concerns, did manage to fight off proposed reductions in the budget for the Coalition for Human Needs. They

did bring the convention to instruct its Standing Commission on the Church in Metropolitan Areas to prepare a comprehensive strategy for the church's urban mission for consideration in New Orleans in 1982.

However, the old question of who is authorized to exercise ordained leadership in the church surfaced again. The decision to open the priesthood and episcopate to women had been described not long before by the Presiding Bishop as an "experiment" (with which he personally disagreed). Given that kind of leadership, bishops were quick to bless the consciences of their brethren who wished to demur from the formal decision of the church.

The old question demonstrated its persistence also as a behind the scenes deal struck by bishops, including some leading members of the Urban Bishops Coalition, resulted in the rejection of a persuasive report on the appropriateness of the ordination of gay persons, by adding a conclusion that was totally at odds with its premises.

That report as adopted must remain a source of puzzlement to those who expect the Episcopal Church, a body of reasonably intelligent persons, to behave in an intelligible fashion. The puzzlement, however, fades away as one understands more fully the church's ability to act in a totally inconsistent manner, especially when it gathers in formal conclave.

Apprehension was also demonstrated to be well grounded as the soft underbelly of the Urban Bishops Coalition's surface strength and formidability began to be exposed. Officially, the coalition numbered some 50-60 bishops, but there were never more than a dozen who were willing to let their agenda be shaped in significant ways by concern for the plight of the cities and their people. The Urban Bishops Coalition had been, in fact, a bandwagon in a rather brief parade.

Neither could the bishops in that

coalition resist the siren song of Venture In Mission, conceived by those who believed that the way to restore tranquility to the church was to divert its attention away from divisive issues to an ecstasy of fundraising for largely unspecified and undefined programs of "mission."

The Urban Bishops had heard the plea to the church presented by the people of the cities, a plea not for money but for the church's involvement in issues of political, social, economic and racial justice. They had heard the warning that major effort at fundraising could have a diversionary effect. They had heard the plea and the warning. They chose not to heed either.

Mr. Quiggle, the state of the church on the eve of its assembly in New Orleans is not significantly different from the state of the church as it departed from Denver.

The difference is, of course, that history has now moved on. Institutions which do not change with the flow of history find that by standing still in terms of their perceptions and commitments they are, by default, significantly different. If the church has not changed since Denver, historical realities have produced a different world and, therefore, a different church:

- The agonies of the cities and of their poor have increased in a geometric fashion.

- Racism, which lies at the heart of the plight of the cities and their underclass, was on the defensive during the 50's, 60's and 70's. It is on the offensive again. A man occupies the office of the Presidency and exercises profound influence over the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government who "hasn't a racist bone in his body" — he just happens not to like Black persons. He "supports equal rights for women," but just happens to prefer their guarantee not be written into the Constitution but remain dependent on male dominated state

legislatures. If these attitudes and policies represent the national response to Blacks and to women, Latinos, Gays, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and poor Whites fare no better.

- The social contract which determined the way our life together was shaped for many generations has collapsed. That contract which acknowledged that the rich have an obligation to the poor, and the powerful have an obligation to the powerless is now supported by no clear consensus.

- The notion that the chief role of government is to be the instrument through which the needs of the people can be met: the need for food, housing, jobs and for full rights of citizens, has been replaced by the notion that the chief role of government, perhaps its only role, is military preparedness.

- Extensive tax cuts are defended in the face of a horrendous imbalance in the federal budget *because* there is no desire to produce added income which in the hands of the more humane members of the Congress might find its way into restored social programs.

- Withdrawal of federal support for that infra-structure which could make the cities viable places in which more than the affluent can afford to live promises to hasten the collapse of the cities and threatens the sheer survival of their poor and marginally poor.

The historical realities in which the church exists have changed. Since the church has remained essentially unchanged in its perceptions of those realities, it has become more remote from them, and is, *de facto*, a different church. There is less room left in which the church may equivocate. It can respond to you, Mr. Quiggle (if you are still there waiting for a response) *only* if it makes its choices and commitments much clearer than they have been.

A year following the 1979 General Convention, the Episcopal Urban Caucus was born in an assembly in Indianapolis. Concerns and com-

mitments, bottled up and frustrated since the retirement of Presiding Bishop John Hines and the subsequent dismantling of the General Convention Special Program, found a means of expression through the caucus. Five hundred persons gathered in Indianapolis in 1980, and 400 a year later in Louisville. In each of these, the number of bishops dwindled. In February, 1982, fewer than a dozen appeared.

This may mean that they felt more committed to a movement in support of urban mission when it was solely under their direction and control. It may also mean that they prefer more exclusive gatherings where the supportive camaraderie which characterizes



meetings of the House of Bishops prevails. Neither bishops, clergy nor laity seem entirely at ease when all three orders of ministry are, or should be, equally valued participants in the same process. For whatever reason, the conspicuous absence of bishops in recent caucus gatherings is offset only by the presence of laypersons in numbers which approach half of the total.

The caucus became soon after its formation the umbrella under which all sorts of progressive forces in the church gathered — the only game in town. The necessity for and value of its inclusiveness, however, has prevented it from achieving coherence, a clear focus, and a singular commitment to the poor.

The caucus is caught in the dilemma rooted in the fact that U.S. society in which it exists (and the church to which it is related) is oppressive to women, Blacks, Latinos, Gays, the poor and the working poor. However, each of these forms of oppression is distinct. Oppression is a common enemy among all such persons, but the way in which oppression expresses itself is both common *and* unique. Coalitions, and the common strategies of action which can result from the give and take which such coalescing demands, remain beyond the reach of the caucus. The caucus is marked by competing agendas and seems unsure of who and what it is.

Venture in Mission has been the preoccupation of the church at large since Denver, as some had predicted. After a slow start, nearly every diocese participated in some form of capital fundraising. The net result generated a significant amount of money: \$134 million at last count, \$35 million of which has been released for funding programs identified in the national V.I.M. Casebook.

There is some ambiguity in regard to the sense in which the national effort can be declared a success. Some want to declare a victory and bring the matter to a close. Others, including the Presiding Bishop, wish to continue the money raising effort, perhaps so that ambiguities in regard to the degree of its success can be cleared away. Perhaps also because, when the chips pile up it is hard to withdraw from the game.

It is not certain that the cities have benefited from V.I.M. Of the \$9 million which members of the Urban Bishops Coalition had claimed for support of urban mission, less than \$2 million has been identified for that purpose, and of that total, \$1 million is designated for use in the one diocese which generated those monies.

At the diocesan level, V.I.M. campaigns have expended enormous effort. They have, however, produced

additional monies, chiefly for use in the dioceses. Programs funded by those monies cover a wide spectrum, and in some instances certain urban mission efforts have been the beneficiary of additional funds. The question remains, has that funding been accompanied by *presence* and *advocacy*, and a real transformation in the life of the church? Earlier the Urban Bishops Coalition had acknowledged that many of the resources necessary to address the crisis of the cities already exist. What was needed was a tough-minded, careful, honest analysis which could lead to a redeployment of programs, properties, personnel, and resources to the right task. Whether local V.I.M. campaigns were the occasion for that kind of analysis, or lessened the chance for it to occur is worth pondering.

To the degree to which the church moved beyond its preoccupation with money raising during the past triennium, it began to speak to the issue of nuclear arms and, in much more muted tones, to the issues of economic justice in light of the war against the poor being prosecuted at every level of society.

The nuclear arms issue, as welcome as it is to those concerned about the survival of the human race, has a certain weakness about it. The nuclear arms race does not exist in isolation. It is a function of the militaristic and imperialistic foreign policy which the United States has pursued during the modern era. It is, moreover, a function also of the classism and racism which characterize both foreign and domestic policy.

To imagine that the nuclear threat can be overcome without dealing with a host of related issues is to assume that the nuclear arms race is simply an aberration in a society otherwise dedicated to equity, justice and sanity. If the Episcopal Church moves more fully into the arena of nuclear arms (and armaments as a whole), it would do well

to hear and to heed the observation of a perceptive observer of U.S. social policy who was asked, at the height of the last war: "Why are we in Vietnam?" His reply was, "We are in Vietnam because we are in California!"

The church's cautious excursion into opposition to cutbacks in human services likewise remains at surface level if it responds as though these cutbacks are an isolated issue, based solely on the scarcity of resources, and not on an analysis of the root causes for the domestic and global economic stagnation which has made such cutbacks appear justifiable in light of seemingly shrinking resources.

In its typical fashion, the Episcopal Church may inadvertently have started raising questions to which it really would prefer not to have the answers.

What, then, Mr. Quiggle, can you expect to hear from the 1982 General Convention, assuming that you are still waiting and expecting?

Expect above all else that whatever response you receive will be from a church whose present state exhibits these longstanding characteristics written deep into its nature:

- The church remains unclear about its commitments. It knows that by Biblical injunction its commitment ought to be for the poor, but it is so much a part of the culture and political milieu in which it exists that its tentative and extremely cautious efforts to follow good instincts are overwhelmed by its inclination to be a chaplaincy service to the Establishment and to the status quo. It hears the Gospel and responds to it as an affirmation of what it has persuaded itself to be the legitimacy of things as they are, and not as a judgement upon the principalities and powers, the social, political and economic demons which reign supreme in things as they are.

- It confuses talk about mission, preparation for mission, and fund-raising for mission with *engagement* in mission.

- It misuses and misdefines the notion of mission. Its behavior suggests that its definition of mission is the creation of special and exceptional arrangements for keeping traditional patterns of church life from breaking under the pressure of new historical realities. Its mission is, in that sense, no more than the desire for survival.

- It is both the oppressor and the victim. It is not free to be itself or imagines itself not to be. Its captivity leads it to isolate and subvert the efforts of those bishops, clergy and lay persons who are struggling toward their own freedom and the freedom of the church. It has created and validated a new category of ministry which it values more highly than prophets, evangelists or teachers: *managers*!

- It is slow to identify itself with those movements for healing and renewal which exist in this disintegrating society because from its position at the established levels of that society it is largely out of touch with those movements and, when in touch, reluctant to associate itself with them.

- It remains incapable, seemingly, of exorcising from its own life the demons of racism, sexism and classism. By its dilettantism in dealing with oppression, it participates in the pitting of one oppressed group against another.

Mr. Quiggle, you probably know what to expect, given the present and continuing state of the church. It may be that, despite our clear intention to destroy ourselves through nuclear holocaust, or to destroy all but the privileged few by genocide against the underclass, you and others who are God's people can survive and wait yet longer for our response. If you can, let your hope be in a God who confronts us with a history which we cannot forever avoid, and which will eventually force us to deliberate and identify our priorities.

**With hope and with apprehension,
Joseph A. Pelham**

Letters . . . Continued from page 2

"Non-White Women's Agenda," I think. Of course, I look at it from the White perspective and it may look more different from the non-White perspective than I think it does.

I do like her strong words about racism in the Episcopal Church. It is in all churches, but I saw it firsthand mainly in the Episcopal Churches, here, with the Indians and years ago in Texas with the Blacks. It is still rampant in my hometown church in Sealy, Tex.

Your final paragraph in the February editorial coupled with paragraphs three and four present a point that is overlooked more often than not — minorities and the underclass do not have the luxury to choose in hardly any areas of their lives — not only in choosing whether to go to jail or not, to do civil disobedience or not. The report on Hispanics and the Grand Jury — involving racism as well as injustice, tops off a powerful WITNESS.

Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska

To Reprint Hines

I am writing to ask permission to use an article in your February edition of THE WITNESS in an upcoming edition of my newsletter, *Fact Sheet*. The article is entitled, "Racism Breeds Stereotypes," by Deborah Harmon Hines. *Fact Sheet* is published by my office on a quarterly basis.

L. Faye Ignatius
Feminism and the Church Today
National Ministries, ABC
Valley Forge, Pa.

Appreciated 'Mad Lady'

I should like to convey my appreciation to Roberta Nobleman and THE WITNESS (February) for the essay "Mad Lady Had Message for Time Present." This charming personal backward glance was the type of retrospection that many religious traditionalists can share and compare with their own experience and spiritual growth. Through swift seasons, we have encountered various changes that seemed both eccentric and wayward. The "Mad Lady" of yesteryear

would be most gratified, I suppose, to find that her idiosyncrasy — the desire to receive communion from female hands — is currently gaining general acceptance in the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Of course, as the author points out, the negative image of pagan "priestesses" still rankles in our somewhat conservative Anglican souls. And it's unfortunate that gender alone should so distract or embarrass any parish community, considering the bright examples of womanhood presented to our Judeo-Christian civilization. Soon the clash of tradition and contemporary societal reality shall be resolved in our churches. Then, perhaps, we shall only wonder why this ecclesiastical change took us so long to effect.

William Dauenhauer
Willoughby, Ohio

Handicapped to Monitor

The 1981 meeting of the House of Bishops, at San Diego, made a forthright and potentially significant statement about the church's responsibility to the handicapped. It has received little attention so far. It deserves much more. Implementation should be encouraged and accounting asked.

The distinctive clause of the resolution is an affirmative action declaration which calls for "the recruitment and hiring of handicapped persons to committee and staff positions throughout the church, including Executive Council and General Convention." We will monitor this pronouncement during the coming months.

The Rev. W. J. Johnson, Director
Vanguard Institute
Lakewood, Ohio

Opiate of the Masses

Please do not renew my subscription. As a radical evangelical, I have found your magazine to be more concerned with Establishment middle-class liberal ideology than with Biblical Christianity. This Sadduceism is all too characteristic of mainline denomina-

tions today and is a more insidious obstacle to the Kingdom than the Pharisaism of conservative "fundamentalists." Pseudo-liberation movements like "gay rights" are the opiate of the masses. I am disappointed by your acceptance of these counterfeits.

Dan Dornbrook
Eau Claire, Wisc.

Destructive Garbage

Please discontinue my subscription to THE WITNESS. It is destructive and negative. You seem to think that invoking the terms school, learning, God, motherhood and apple pie, the "rights" of prisoners, third world populations and women gives some sort of credibility to the garbage you publish.

Dr. Rachel Nunley
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Sustaining Subscriber

Thank you for one good/great WITNESS after another. Enclosed is my renewal in the category of "sustaining subscriber." I used to do this when Bill Spofford was alive and editor. I can afford it less now in my old age, but want to do some small thing in answer to those depressing "cancellations"! Keep up the good work!

The Rev. R.M.C. Griswold
Lakeview, Ore.

Water in Desert

I can sympathize with the person who wrote recently to drop the subscription because politics and religion should not be mixed. How well we know! As Jesus was the "wayshower" in many things, He showed us what happens when we cross the establishment and the politicians — crucifixion! Nobody likes that — but how often we forget that Good Friday is followed by Easter. We all like to start over again, renewed, refreshed. And if we are truly willing to follow Him to the cross, there will be a resurrection for us, too.

Thanks for your magazine. THE WITNESS and *The Other Side* are my water in this conservative desert!

Ms. Mary Gaines Read
Santa Barbara, Cal.

WITNESS Editorial Prompts Tax Resistance

Just wanted you to know how great I consider your WITNESS magazine and that the February issue with an editorial on Thoreau fell into my hands the Sunday morning before my tax return was due. It was this editorial which gave me the courage to go through with tax resistance this year. My letter to the IRS follows:

Internal Revenue Service
Ogden, Utah

Greetings:

Oliver Wendell Holmes advised his reluctant law clerk to pay his income taxes gladly, for "With your tax money you're buying civilization." As a tax payer and tax preparer for the IRS, I have often given the same advice to reluctant clients. For the past two years I have agonized over this position and now after much study, prayer, consultation and fasting I have reluctantly concluded, along with Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle, that it is not civilization but "hell on earth" that my tax money is buying.

With more than 50,000 nuclear bombs already in place around the globe and a projected war budget over the next five years of about \$1½ trillion for the USA alone (\$10,800 for every U.S. taxpayer) and the military-industrial power brokers seriously plotting to use these weapons in a first strike tactic, we can be sure if we all

numbly go along with that our mother the earth and all its creatures will be incinerated in our immediate area, if not the entire planet.

To continue freely participating with my tax dollars in this madness is clearly for me a sin on at least four counts. First, the sin of premeditated murder against my brothers and sisters, and I consider all mankind my family, including the Russians; second, the sin of suicide against my own person; third, the sin of injustice against approximately 25% of the earth's people who are homeless, ragged, hungry and sick through no fault of their own. (If solving these human problems was as profitable as preparing for war the solution would have been found years ago.) Lastly, the sin of idolatry for trusting in arms rather than in Jesus Christ: "Thou shalt have no strange Gods before me" . . .

I wish my conscience permitted me to continue to live by the old motto, "My country — right or wrong — my country." However, this is no longer possible for me or for ever increasing numbers of loyal citizens.

In obedience then to my conscience and in the hope that my small act of civil disobedience will help my country and the world to pursue justice and peace rather than war, I join Archbishop Hunthausen in withholding half my income tax. You will find enclosed a receipt from the Ramsey National Bank and Trust Company of Devils Lake, N.D., where I have deposited the missing half in a Peace Trust fund to be used in staffing the proposed U.S. Peace Academy for Conflict Resolution (legislation before Congress).

A few days ago our fifth grandchild was born and I take my stand now as an act of hope in a future Kingdom on earth for Brady Michael Lange and all the other Holy Innocents of the world

...

Deacon Larry Lange
Devil's Lake, N.D.

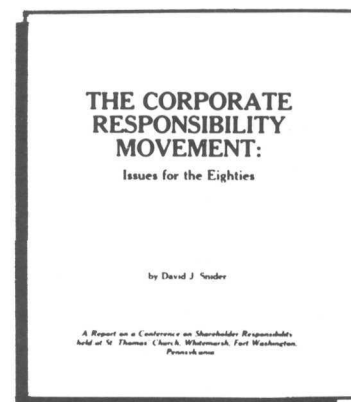
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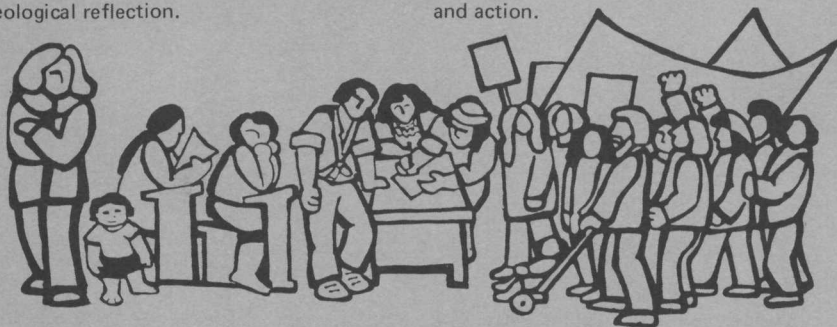
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