THE WITNESS

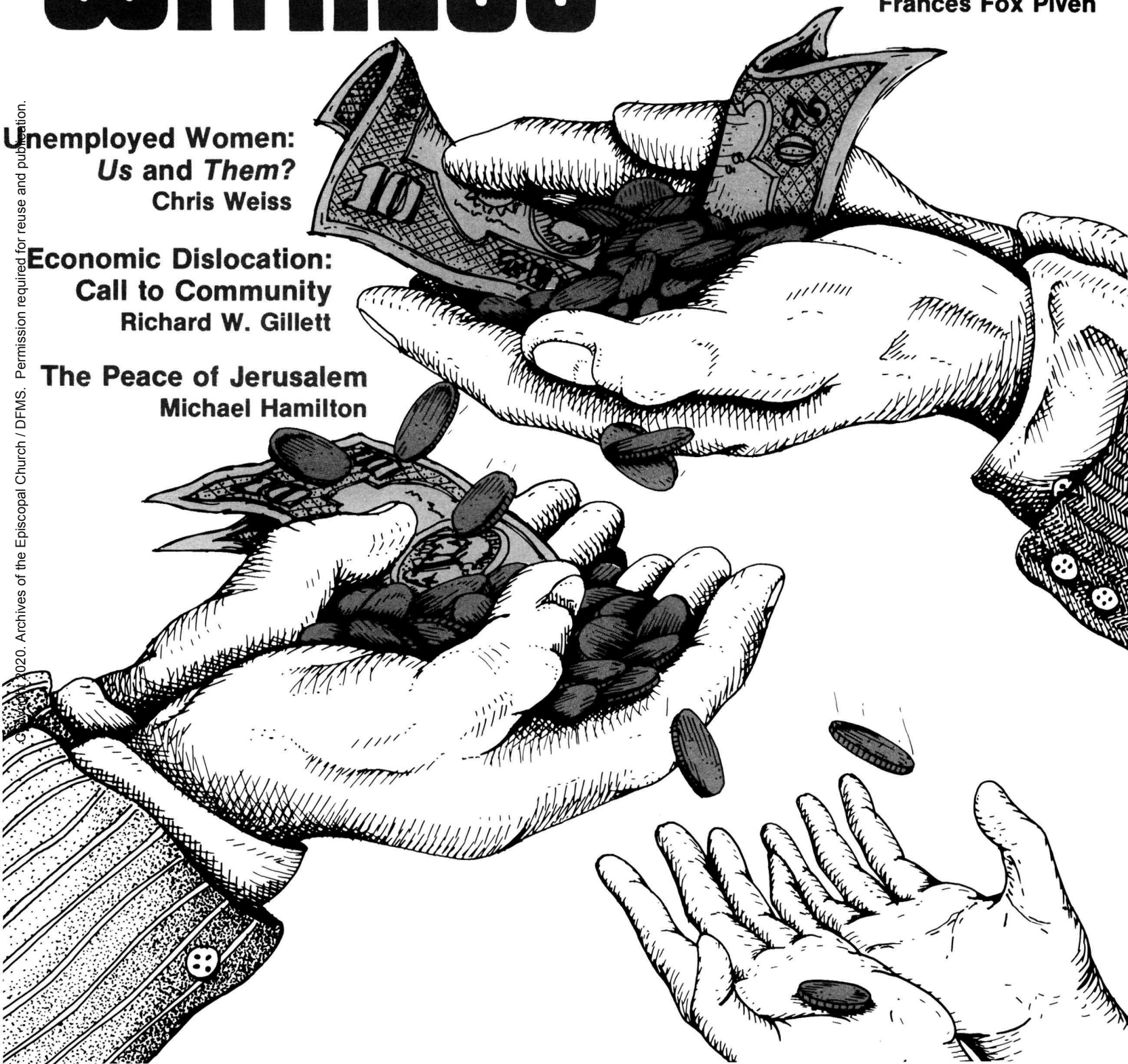
VOL. 65 NO. 9 SEPTEMBER, 1982

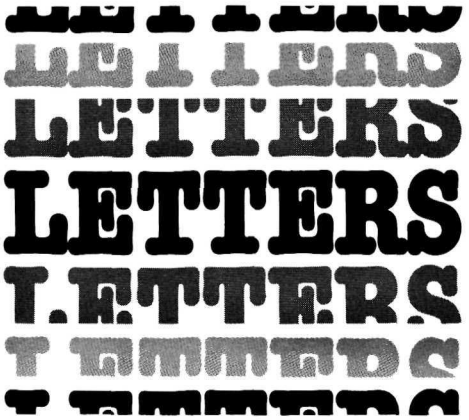
The Transformation Of City Politics
Frances Fox Piven

Unemployed Women: *Us* and *Them*?
Chris Weiss

Economic Dislocation: Call to Community
Richard W. Gillett

The Peace of Jerusalem
Michael Hamilton





Peace Issue Impressive

I was very impressed with the June issue of THE WITNESS with its map of nuclear weapons locations in the United States and the accompanying articles. Bishop George Hunt has asked me to co-chair a committee in the Diocese of Rhode Island to assist congregations in their own attempts to educate their people with regard to the dangers of nuclear armaments, and to help them in programs and activities which will promote peace on a world wide basis. I have convened a meeting and would appreciate your sending me 25 copies of the June issue so that I may distribute it.

I am also delighted to see the list of those designated to receive awards from the Episcopal Church Publishing Company at the dinner on Sept. 7. You have indeed chosen a group worthy of such honor and I commend you for that.

The Rev. David A. Ames
Providence, R.I.

Will Influence Planning

Thank you for the June issue of THE WITNESS which is given over to nuclear arms concerns. This issue makes a substantial contribution to the discussion of nuclear disarmament within the church. As always, THE WITNESS is on the forefront of the discussion of important issues to the church and to society. I know that this issue will influence our Planning Committee for the Philadelphia Theological Institute's conference on The Theological Implications of Nuclear War. I am also sure that we will want copies of THE WITNESS available at the conference.

The Rev. James C. Ransom
Philadelphia, Pa.

Women's Issues Central

In response to the Letter to the Editor by Charles Riemitis (June issue), let me say THE WITNESS is *not* copping out by speaking to women's issues. They *are* the "bread and butter" issues when two-thirds of the poor in this country are women and children. Until the male hierarchy, which predominates in every church, starts to address the reason why women and children are the poor, there will be no new "vision for the church's life that holds promise of new social possibilities."

Preaching the gospel of good news to the poor" (women and children) will not ameliorate the conditions of poverty brought on by centuries of imbalance in the power structures, including those deeply entrenched in every church, and most particularly the Episcopalian church.

Nor will "the children of God live in the world as peacemakers" when one-half the population of every country lives as second-class citizens, and ironically it is that half that society has delegated as its nurturers and peacemakers. As long as the so-called nurturers and peacemakers are thought of as second-class, so also will nurturing and peacemaking be viewed as less important than power broking and military might.

Your "heavy emphasis on women's position in the church" is therefore central to the "real issues that face us today as human beings and as Christians." Keep it up and thank you for being a voice crying in the wilderness of all too many men like Charles Riemitis.

Margo V. House
Gordon, Mich.

Bach Let Woman Sing

When I feel, at times, like Prior Christopher Jones in his June letter on the ordination of women, I like to chuckle as I recall that Bach's having let a woman sing in his choir was the factor that precipitated his losing his first job.

But then, the ladies prevailed. They sang so prettily and proved they could be technically competent. They won out. No wonder the castrati were worried.

Douglas H. Schewe
Madison, Wisc.

Discovers WITNESS

You don't know how glad I was to learn about your magazine, because other Episcopalian publications just didn't satisfy me. I might add I also subscribe to the *National Catholic Reporter* because I also find food for thought in it. In fact — I pass on to the vicar my copies of THE WITNESS and NCR after I read them. I am forwarding the names of six members of St. Chad's Episcopal Church. Perhaps if you send them a complimentary copy they might subscribe.

Ruth Lackey
Albuquerque, N.M.

'Control' Is Key

Thank you for the provocative series, Black Women's Agenda, (February and March issues). It is demonstrably true that racism is the oldest item on the church's moral agenda, and that there has been no satisfactory resolution of this dilemma.

There is a danger, though, in placing too much polemical distance between Black and feminist concerns. The essayist, Ellen Willis, has pursuasively argued that at the bottom of the demand that one set of concerns be decisively addressed before dealing with the other, lies a moralistic bias. Because we consider "our" group, whichever it is,

Continued on page 19

THE WITNESS

EDITOR
Mary Lou Suhor

SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Robert L. DeWitt

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Richard W. Gillett
Hugh C. White

STAFF
Ann Hunter
Susan Small
Bonnie Spady
Lisa Whelan

PUBLISHER
Episcopal Church Publishing Company

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. Printed in U.S.A. ISSN 0197-8896

THE WITNESS EDITORIAL

For Shame, Mr. Begin

With the invasion of Lebanon, Menachem Begin has sullied the name of Israel and lost credibility in the world community.

So soon after the Holocaust, Mr. Begin has transformed Israel into an imperialist power, and every Palestinian man, woman, and child has become an Israeli military target.

Only two weeks after the Israeli invasion, the figures were horrific: 14,000 Lebanese and Palestinians killed, 30,000 wounded and one half million homeless. On just one Sunday in June, doctors at the American University Hospital in Beirut removed 1,100 limbs from victims of bombing and shelling — many, no doubt, victims of cluster bombs which the United States sold to Israel.

An ecumenical team of observers from the World Council of Churches, recently returned from Beirut, described the scene as "a mini-Hiroshima," and a study in "absurdity, scandal and horror."

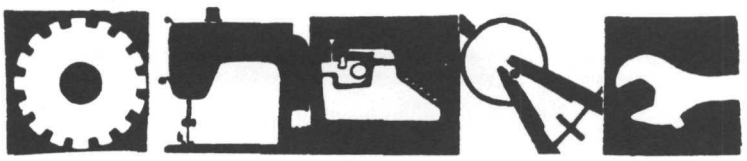
Moreover, Israel has impeded access and assistance from international humanitarian agencies such as the Red Cross, contrary to the Geneva Convention, and cut off water and electricity to those who are suffering. And with a strong lobby, Israel has somehow carried the United States on its side. Even liberal legislators who were so strong on human rights are turning their backs on this issue.

There are glimmers of hope — in the peace marches in Israel, for example, and in the defection of Col. Eli Geva, a combat officer who resigned in protest of the slaughter. But hope hangs slim. Reports are that the Israeli Army is prepared to stay the winter in Beirut, although Mr. Begin originally announced he would penetrate only 25 miles into Lebanon.

Please God, an end to the hostilities may have occurred by the time this is being read, but the lesson cannot be lost; that another attempt was made by brute force to achieve goals against a helpless civilian population.

THE WITNESS, therefore, stands in total agreement with the recent World Council of Churches document which demands "the immediate lifting of the Israeli siege on West Beirut," and which condemns "the Israeli invasion of Lebanese territory." WCC recommendations call the recovery of Lebanese integrity "a key to peace and justice in the region,"

Continued on page 19



How We Got This Way

The Transformation of City Politics

by Frances Fox Piven

"Having recognized the large role that government has played in determining our fate, the question will be, in whose interests will government act in the future? And that will depend on how forcefully people of the cities push their interests and demand their due, on the platforms, in the polls, and in the streets."

In American politics, there is a prevailing doctrine. The doctrine asserts that people in communities can and do mobilize to improve their condition, to demand the housing, public facilities and services that will better the life of the community. Similarly, the doctrine asserts that people in workplaces mobilize to improve workplace conditions, to demand the higher wages and shorter hours, the safety measures and enlarged benefits, that will better the life of workers.

But today, in cities across the industrial belt of the United States, the context for the mobilization of people in communities and workplaces seems discouraging, the prospect for making gains, dim. Instead of improvements, people are incurring losses. So gloomy does the prospect seem, that people are quietly settling for less.

Why this gloomy prospect? The reason, we are told, is that our cities are in "crisis." Our municipalities spend too much, and take in too little. To reconcile this fiscal gap, city governments will have to slash budgets, and city dwellers will have to become accustomed to the prospect of fewer services and fewer public sector jobs. Similarly, workers in the industrial belt are told they must curb their demands, for excessive concessions to workers will further weaken an eroding economic base.

This diagnosis of "fiscal crisis" has an official etiology. The presumed causes are twofold. First, the economic base of the cities of the older industrial sector has weakened as the result of what are called "market forces," forces which are so profound and inexorable as to be virtually natural laws. Second, political leaders in the older industrial cities have defied these laws; they have been profligate and inefficient where they ought to have been cost-conscious and efficient. They have given in to greedy urban interest groups by spending too much.

Both explanations are misleading, and I will try to explain why. My analysis will proceed in three parts.

Frances Fox Piven *teaches political science* at Boston University. She is co-author, with Richard A. Cloward, of the forthcoming book, *The New Class War.*

First I will argue that while the economic base of the older cities has in fact eroded, this was not an inevitable process governed by market "laws," but rather was a process actively supported if not created by federal policies. Second, I will argue that municipal politicians are not so much profligate as they are politicians. They did what they did and spent what they spent because of the extraordinary political forces set in motion by changing economic conditions. Finally, I will argue that the specter of cities "dying" is a weapon that is being used against the cities, and especially against working-class and lower-class groups, in order to more easily slash the concessions won by these groups in the 1960's.

Urban Economic Changes

Agriculture was one area where economic changes ultimately contributed to the current "urban fiscal crisis." Rapid mechanization and other technological advances, stimulated by federal subsidies and loans, quickly diminished the need for agricultural workers in the period after World War II. At the same time, federal supports for idle land further reduced the need for agricultural labor, while federal welfare policies allowed the agricultural states to refuse welfare to this displaced workforce and thus, force the migration of surplus agricultural population to urban centers in the north and mid-west. Neither the creation of this huge labor surplus, nor the deliberate use of restrictive welfare policies to force migration of the people-made-surplus to the cities, were the result of market laws. They were the result rather of federal policies operating in tandem with the interest of large-scale planters. Federal policies, in other words, had a great deal to do with the economic processes which forced the migration of people—many of them Black or Latin—to the cities.

Meanwhile other large scale regional and sectoral changes were weakening the economic base of the older cities and reducing their capacity to provide employment. Labor intensive industries were leaving the older industrial cities of the "snowbelt" for the south. This began long ago, with the shift of the New England textile industry to low-wage southern states in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But the persistence of that trend owes much to federal policies. Until the 1960's, the federal government refused to interfere with the laws and practices of the southern states which enforced caste arrangements and thus kept wages low. Moreover, the federal Taft-Hartley law, passed in 1947, permitted the "right-to-work" laws favored by Southern states which effectively prevented unionization. The results can be illustrated by looking at North Carolina, a state that attracted a good deal of labor intensive industry. In 1976, the manufacturing earnings in North Carolina averaged $3.63 an hour, compared to the national average of nearly $5.00 an hour. Not surprisingly, North Carolina had the lowest percentage of unionized industrial workers in the United States. Also not surprising, manufacturing jobs have doubled in the state in the past 25 years.

Sectoral shifts have also been important in accounting for the weakening of the economic base in the industrial belt, and federal policies have been important in accounting for those sectoral shifts. The relative growth of such capital intensive industries as defense, oil and aerospace owes much to the stimulus of federal grants and contracts. And the relative growth of these industries in the sunbelt owes much to the "tilt" in the pattern of such contracts toward the south and southwest. The overall result is that sunbelt manufacturing jobs increased by 30% in the 1960's, while the northeast increased by only 6%. Meanwhile, federal subsidies for public infrastructure also poured into the south, with the result that during the same period public-service jobs in the sunbelt increased by 70%.

At the same time, economic changes within the metropolitan areas of the industrial belt further contributed to the weakening of the central cities. Suburbanization was draining the central city of its more affluent residents, of its commerce and industry. As market economists tell this tale, its explanation was quite simply that everyone in America wanted a little suburban house, and with the relative affluence of the post-World War II period, many people could act on what they had always wanted. But American society is not so simple. We do not really know that this vast out-migration of people would have occurred had income tax policies not made home-ownership advantageous, had Federal Home Administration and Veteran

Administration mortgages not provided the cheap long-term financing which made it possible, and had federal highway grants, and water and sewer grants, not subsidized the whole huge event of the suburbanization of America. If suburban homeowners, if industrial plants, if commerical establishments each had to pay the true cost of suburban relocation, it is by no means clear that this development would have taken place.

Finally, the economic base of the cities was being transformed by urban renewal. Presumably, federal urban renewal programs were designed to improve the urban tax base, even if that required the demolition of the homes and neighborhoods of low-income people. But the evidence is now overwhelming that urban renewal did nothing of the kind. Rather, clearance helped to destroy small businesses that employed people on the one hand, while on the other hand increasing long-term costs to the municipal treasury as a result of new services committed to the renewed areas. And urban renewal, of course, could not have happened had the federal government not subsidized it.

In brief, declining revenues in the older cities are the result of a declining economic base. But economic processes in our contemporary United States do not operate according to the "laws" of a free market. Rather these economic processes reflect the very large role of the national government. As investor interests and federal policies combine in the search for greater profit, city governments are left helpless. All they can do in the effort to maintain their economic base and their tax base is to beg and bribe businesses and industries that have the license to pick and choose among localities in their choice of investment sites. In that process, the doctrine of local self-government turns into a mockery, for it is investors who are governing, and local government that is governed.

The Transformation of City Politics

Cities are not only centers of economic activity, but they are also centers of population and centers for the political struggles in which groups of the population engage. Economic change, of necessity, means a certain upheaval for these populations. It means the emergence of new political groupings reflecting changed economic roles, and it means new political demands. This happened in the industrial cities in the post-World War II period.

Population shifts were obvious. People displaced from agriculture came to the cities, while those who could take advantage of federal subsidies for suburbanization left the cities. A massive shift of this kind is always taxng for the political organization of a community or a society, for it means new linkages have to be forged between the populace and its leaders. Historically American cities have adapted to this problem through practices made famous by the big city machines, which delivered enough friendship and favors to streams of immigrant newcomers to ensure their political allegiance.

But by the post-World War II period, the old machines had themselves been transformed. They had become bureaucratized, and bureaucratization meant that stakes in city politics were much more firmly fixed than ever before. What older groups had received as favors was now encoded in bureaucratic regulations, and not easily redistributed to help gain the allegiance of incoming migrants. Therefore, the Blacks and Latins who came to the cities during this period were not integrated into the urban political organizations, at the very same time that changes in the economic base made their economic absorption more difficult. The result was perhaps predictable; the new groups became politically volatile.

Thus, in the late 1950 s, the Black vote became insecure, and by the 1960 s Blacks were engaging in marches and demonstrations and later in riots. To deal with this problem in the very heart of its urban base, the national Democratic Party inaugurated a series of programs for the "inner city." The programs were called mental health programs or model cities programs, but their main significance was that people who were causing trouble got something. They got some jobs, some services, some benefits.

These demands by newer groups in the city helped trigger demands by older groups with a large stake in the city's programs. As a consequence, the 1960's also witnessed unprecedented organization and mobilization by municipal workers who also demanded more, and demanded more with tactics far more militant than before. In the face of trouble on all sides, mayors already weakened by population shifts gave in on all sides, and city budgets rose.

As a consequence, large popular gains were made in the 1960 s through municipal politics. The people of the ghettos gained jobs, often para-professional jobs, and they got new services, and they got welfare. The municipal workforce enlarged as Blacks and Latins were admitted, and as older civil service workers won demands for reduced work load. And civil service salaries and benefits soared. Older forms of patronage also expanded as beleaguered mayors tried to shore up their faltering political fortunes by using the city payroll to support their political organizations. And real estate interests—always prominent in municipal politics—also gained. In exchange for their usual campaign contributions to shaky mayors, they received the subsidies and tax concessions which made possible their huge profits on office and luxury residential construction. All of this meant skyrocketing municipal budgets, of course, but the cities stayed afloat. They stayed afloat because so long as

the cities were seething with trouble, the federal and state grants-in-aid kept flowing.

Thus, the rising costs which are clearly a feature of the fiscal crisis are rooted in national economic developments, for these economic developments produced the political disturbances that made the 1960's so turbulent. But through turbulence, people won. City governments gave in, and their bills were paid by the state and federal governments. In a sense, what people won was a contemporary form of patronage, and it surely was not enough to compensate for the economic disturbances which prodded their mobilization. Still in the 1960 s, people did win something.

The 'Death' of the Cities

The cities of the industrial belt are changing. But they are not dying. There are still large economic stakes in the cities, stakes in real estate, in banking, in corporate headquarters establishments, and in all of the professional enterprises that service these corporate headquarters. The much-touted "death" of the cities, and the fiscal crisis itself, can be viewed as a strategy by elites which reflect their interests and their determination to preserve them, and their determination to contribute as little as possible to the population of the cities.

By the 1970 s, the turbulence of the previous decade had subsided. The manufacturing economy in the cities continued to erode, and to erode more rapidly as a result of rising interest rates and the recession produced by the Nixon-Ford economic policies. As a result, the discrepancy in the cities between expenditures and revenues rapidly widened. And this discrepancy in turn created the opportunity for the mobilization of business groups at the state and local level to deal with the so-called fiscal crisis. With "efficiency" and "economy" as their rallying cry, business and banking interests launched a drive to reorient the city's budget toward the headquarters office functions which now dominated many of the older industrial cities. The arguments they made were not arguments about politics, although this was very much a political drive. Rather the arguments were about economic imperatives, about "market laws" to which municipalities would have to conform to avoid the specter of municipal "death."

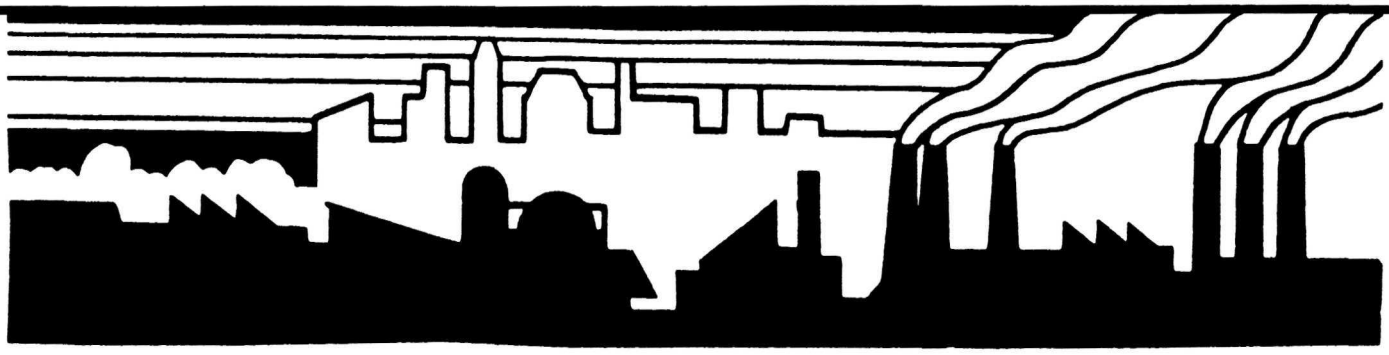
Shielded by these arguments, business and banking interests pushed through business-oriented tax-reforms, emasculated regulatory controls and pollution controls, and forced increased public subsidies for business. To do all of this, popularly oriented services had to be cut: welfare programs were slashed, senior citizen centers and drug abuse programs were closed down, services to working-class and lower class neighborhoods were cut back, and public jobs were eliminated by the tens of thousands.

With the election of 1980, business interests have seized full control of federal policy as well. Their goal is clear. They have already succeeded in using the federal budget to accomplish a massive redistribution of income. Taxes on business and the rich, especially big business and the very rich, have been slashed. And to offset the enormous loss of revenues, the federal programs that support the cities, and support the poor and unemployed in the older industrial cities, have been slashed as well. To justify this extraordinarily bold development, the rhetoric of "market law" has been raised to a new pitch. Mobil Oil, for example, in one of regular advertisements-editorials, attacks "negative growth—growth in taxes, government spending and burdensome regulation" resulting from "the era when government grew so fat and flabby that its weight pulled the private sector right in the ground." Mobil means to single out those government programs that business does not want. It invokes the doctrine of a free market, and happily ignores the range of government interventions on which corporate America depends.

So far, this drive has been succeeding. The people of the cities appear to have been rendered helpless. To a considerable extent, they have been rendered helpless by the prevalent definitions of their situation, by definitions that ascribe the fiscal crisis to inevitable market imperatives and to the profligacy of politicians; by definitions which raise the fear that the older cities are dying, and surely will die if people do not settle for less. Accordingly, whatever small-scale struggles have emerged have been bound by these definitions and popular groups turn only on each other in their struggle to preserve shares of a shrinking pie.

But the fate of our cities until now has not been inevitable, and the future of our cities is not inevitable either. It is not a future that will be forged by autonomous economic processes, but a future that has been and will be forged by government policy, and by the dominant economic groups who have so far used government policy to their advantage. And it is not the "natural law" of the market place that underlies the action of government, but another kind of law, the law of power.

The future of cities in the industrial belt thus depends to some degree on our ability to pierce the definitions of the fiscal crisis that have paralyzed us, to resist the cuts in our services and facilities and jobs, and to exert the not inconsiderable force of an aroused people. Having recognized the large role that government action has played in determining our fate, the question will be, *in whose interests will government act in the future?* And that in turn will depend on how forcefully the people of the cities push their interests and demand their due, on the platforms, at the polls, and in the streets. □



Case Study: California General Electric

The workers at the GE clothing iron factory in Ontario, Cal., first began noticing the peculiar occurrences in their plant over three years ago. Factory equipment was not being modernized; some broken machinery was not replaced; spare parts inventories started to drop. Still, at Christmas 1979 the company congratulated its 1000-member work force for producing 5 million irons for only the third time in GE's 46 years as plant owner, and gave out complimentary soft drinks and cookies. So it was easy to ignore the subtle symptoms of impending shutdown and assume a long and secure future with a company where "we bring good things to living," and where "progress is our most important product."

But that same year, Mary McDaniel, president of the plant's union (United Electrical Workers) noticed a more ominous sign. In the trade journals, GE ads for the metal iron (made only in California in the U.S.), disappeared. Then, early in 1981, a fatal tipoff: GE announced that it had built new metal iron factories in Mexico and Brazil and that it was already producing a new plastic version of the appliance in Singapore and Asheboro, N.C. In March of 1981 — despite GE's assurances to the mayor of Ontario that the company was not closing — a community-labor committee was formed to evaluate the closure possibility and to plan action.

In July, the bombshell came. Due to increased consumer preference for the plastic iron and in response to GE's need to stay competitive in the market, the company said, the plant would be closed the following February.

Analysis:

International Profit Vs. Community

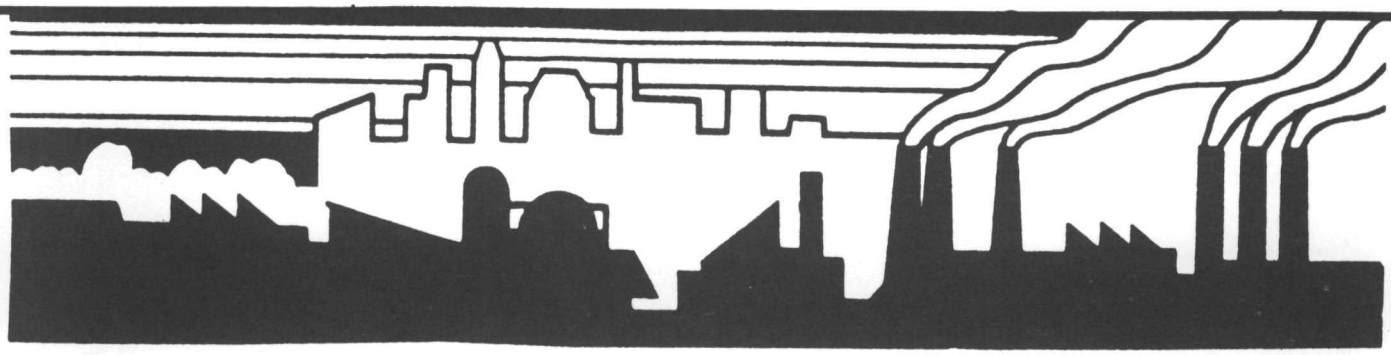
Why did the GE shutdown in California attract so much attention? Three aspects of the closure merit particular concern.

• First, the plant closed *while making a profit.* Ordinarily, according to the traditional rules of free enterprise, if a firm settles and makes a profit, management and labor benefit both themselves and the surrounding community, and interdependent relationships grow, to everyone's enhancement. But here GE, looking at its operations in the global aggregate, made decisions about profit in the global aggregate also. The Ontario plant's profit margin was simply not enough.

• Second, GE was clearly running overseas in search of a cheaper labor force. Ontario workers made an average of $8.50 to $9 an hour. In Brazil a worker at this job makes $1.73; in Singapore the rate is $1.09, in addition to which Singapore has just changed its labor laws to make almost all forms of industrial action by workers illegal.

• Third, diverse sectors of the community came together to oppose management's decision to close the plant. Union people and church people were working side-by-side, breaking old negative stereotypes. And business representatives, city and utilities officials were working with them in a unified effort. It certainly was not the first time a community has come together to fight a plant closure (witness Youngstown) but the occurrence has to be underlined. A closure of a major factory in a community affects all: small businesses, schools, welfare services, the city — even church offering plates.

Therein the seeds of a basic value



ron Factory Sacrificed to Singapore

The community and workers were shocked and angry. The newly formed community-labor group, headed by Episcopal priest Charles Bennison and including municipal, electric and gas company officials; the United Way; and nine local church pastors, placed a half-page ad in the local paper in the form of an open letter to GE president John F. Welch, Jr. The letter accused Welch of running overseas for greater profits and urged him to keep open the profitable and highly productive Ontario plant. In August, almost 2000 workers and community supporters — church pastors among them — marched in protest. Throughout the fall, public interest in the closure grew. Here was a profitable plant with an experienced and stable work force (about 80% female with strong minority representation), closing — the product moving overseas for far cheaper, non-union labor and even higher profits. It became clear to the workers that the closure had been years in planning, well before the production record of 1979, and that GE had lied in denying plans to close.

GE was not exactly going broke, either; in 1981 its earnings overall were $1.6 *billion* dollars, a near record.

But closure plans went forward relentlessly despite attracting nation-wide attention (TV's "60 Minutes" documented the closure) and on Feb. 25, 1982 the last metal iron produced in the U.S. moved off the assembly line. Ironically, a union consumer preference study published the day of the closure revealed that 72% of those polled in a national sample indicated they had bought metal irons within the past year. (R.W.G.)

Well-Being

by Richard W. Gillett

conflict begin to appear: the demands of international capital versus a community's right to have some say-so in major decisions affecting its well-being.

By now almost everyone has heard of the widespread plant closures occurring in America. However, there is a lamentable slowness, even on the part of the socially and politically aware, to recognize both the extent and depth of plant closures, and then to place them in a wider context: that of the profound and long-lasting changes now underway in the basic structures of the U.S. work force. Indeed, such changes are

Author Richard W. Gillett, director of the Los Angeles office of the Church and Society Network, is shown on a picket line in Ontario, Cal. He has been active in organizing community study and resistance around plant closings.

worldwide in dimension. It thus becomes vital to recognize that "plant closures" is not strictly an issue itself, but rather a symptom of a basic economic and labor dislocation that Pope John Paul II hints at in his recent Encyclical "Laborem Exercens": *"We are on the eve of new developments in technological, economic and political conditions . . . which will influence the world of work and production no less than the industrial revolution of the last century."*

The scope of such economic dislocation is vast. According to economists Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, 30 to 50 million workers have lost their jobs in the past decade due to private disinvestment by U.S. businesses. The loss cuts across the Northeast, the industrial heartland of the Midwest, and is devastating the Far West, from California (210,000 jobs lost in just the last two years) to the Pacific Northwest, and into the Deep South. Of course most of those workers find new jobs; but they are usually much lower in pay and tend to be non-union. And up to 25% of laid-off workers may not find another job at all.

What are some aspects of this massive dislocation? First, there has been a decided shift towards service industries (computer and business machine operators, office personnel, fast food and restaurant workers, accountants, store clerks, health care workers, warehouse and security personnel, etc.) and away from traditional "blue collar" industries. Electronics industries are also booming. Second, the power and scope of large international corporations has greatly increased in the past 10 to 15 years. Through improved transportation capabilities and through the global use of computerized information systems, their production and marketing techniques are unified conceptually into a single global market. These huge and powerful institutions — from Europe and Japan as well as the U.S. — are in deadly competition. Like planetary monoliths, they grapple with each other, straddling the globe, while at the mere local level, entire communities are wiped out in sacrifice to "the global market."

Adding to this power of multinational corporations is what Professor Harley Shaiken of M.I.T. calls a "massive infusion of new technology into industry, a technology based on computers and micro-electronics." The result is the coming automation of many jobs right out of the human labor force and the introduction of robots in their stead.

We can be somewhat encouraged that the religious community is beginning to respond here and there — albeit not yet fully aware either of the dimensions of the issue or of the striking opportunities it presents for engagement. Ecumenical coalitions or conferences on plant closures or the plight of labor have been formed or held in many areas, such as Boston; Philadelphia; New York; Chicago; Milwaukee; Anaconda, Montana; Greensboro, N.C.; and California. A theological task force of the Commission on Religion in Appalachia recently produced a commendable document titled "Affirming Labor Justice." In Ohio, with church participation, discussions are taking place on the possibilities of a study of the regional economy, and public hearings in impacted areas.

At the national level, the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, under the initiative of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, has filed plant closure stockholder resolutions with GE, General Motors and U.S. Steel. More significantly, the Church

and Society Division of the National Council of Churches has just commissioned a study of plant closure and "economic crisis" groups across the country, to help interpret the role of the churches in this issue and to encourage greater involvement.

In California, the outcome of a highly successful Western International Conference on Economic Dislocation held last fall has been the formation of an effective statewide California Coalition Against Plant Shutdowns. The conference brought together rank-and-file workers and religious, community and academic representatives. Having the backing (if not always the wholehearted support) of official labor also, the coalition heavily concentrated on California plant closure legislation. Taking the long view, it decided that state legislative work, while probably not destined to be successful, nonetheless offered a way of concrete involvement as well as an opportunity to educate the wider public. The early information-sharing about the issue and the bill became with practice a highly sophisticated lobbying effort by summer. Religious institutions at regional levels as well as pastors began to support the bill, as did labor. In June over 500 workers, religious and community groups from across the state went to Sacramento for a Ways and Means Committee hearing. The bill has now moved much further than even its supporters had hoped. Whether the bill passes or not, work on it has achieved, in spades, the coalition's aim: to involve and to educate.

Obviously these church involvements, significant as they may be, are virtually nil compared to the dimensions of the problem. But they appear to be growing, and as such pose some critical questions: Do the churches have the competence to tackle this issue? Do we have the potential to be effective? Is organized labor really worth working with? Is not such an issue, addressing as it does the behavior of the free market system, so potentially divisive as to put at risk the institutions of the churches themselves?

Regarding the churches' competence, we must once and for all rid ourselves of the mystique surrounding many economists and corporate executives. Their supposed competence — certainly being deeply questioned now! — is a competence invariably technical and narrow both in its origins and focus. Our competence as churchpeople is based rather on a biblical vision of the community of the people of God — a community where economic systems are evaluated by God's justice rather than the reverse.

Is organized labor worth working with? Much labor leadership is as locked into outdated concerns as is management. Further, many unions have still not rid themselves of racist and sexist behavior. But some labor leaders are anxious for change, especially at lower levels. My own experience in California is that many directly affected rank-and-file working people are becoming actively involved and badly need our support. With it, they are already pushing their own leadership to respond to the real issues.

But the greatest strength of the churches lies in our theological heritage, and in the fact that we are already in the community. As was demonstrated again in Ontario, Cal., the churches' presence can make a difference. In Youngstown, even though the steel plant was not reopened, a tremendous statement was made nationally, in the churches' involvement.

Will the churches find themselves under attack for this involvement? Of course. But from perhaps a narrower sector than might at first be imagined. For all sectors except those highly privileged stand to be negatively affected by what is going on in this phenomenon of economic and labor dislocation. Therefore, there are new opportunities for alliance with small business, labor, municipalities and ordinary middle class folk — all of whom, along with ourselves, stand to learn a great deal about how things really work. And, in the process, perhaps we might catch the thrilling feeling again of what the divine vision of a people of God standing for justice, community, and bearing one another's burdens, is all about. □

Plant Closures: Resources

A Pastoral Letter and Call to Action, drafted by and addressed to clergy and laity on the mandate of participants at the Western International Conference on Economic Dislocation. Contains a brief analysis of plant closures and economic dislocation, particularly as it affects the West, followed by 11 recommendations for action. Available with it are a Bill of Rights for Working Women, the stockholder resolution filed with General Electric on plant closures, and a summary of the plant closure bill (AB 2839) debated in the California legislature this year. 30¢.

Shut Down: Fifteen Early Warning Signs, a pamphlet for workers and communities detailing the signs of possible plant closure. Produced by the United Electrical Workers Union Local 1012 in cooperation with the Coalition to Stop Plant Closings. $1.50.

Corporate Flight: the Causes and Consequences of Economic Dislocation, by Barry Bluestone, Bennett Harrison & Lawrence Baker. 92 pages in booklet form. An excellent basic primer. $3 plus postage.

Community and Capital in Conflict: Plant Closings and Job Loss, edited by Raines, Berson and David Gracie (Protestant Chaplain at Temple University, Philadelphia), with chapters on grassroots action, Black economic rights, and many other aspects. Order from Temple University Press, Broad and Oxford Sts., Philadelphia PA 19122. $19.50 plus $1 postage.

Order above (except for the last item) from the Rev. Richard W. Gillett, Director, Church and Society, 2808 Altura St., Los Angeles, CA 90031.

Unemployed Women:

The Thin Line Between *Us* and *Them*

by Chris Weiss

Let me begin by introducing myself. I work for an organization called Women and Employment, an organization that I helped form in 1979 in Charleston, W.Va. I live on a 260-acre farm outside of Charleston. In West Virginia that is mostly up and down hills. I am the mother of four and the grandmother of one, and have called West Virginia home for 10 years.

Women and Employment is a small organization. We have a board of 16, equally comprised of Black and White women. We get free office space in a basement of a public housing development and rely on a lot of volunteer help to keep going, as all community organizations do these days. The thing that sets us apart from other organizations is that all the board, staff and volunteers of Women and Employment have personal experience with race and sex discrimination in employment and have decided to band together to do something about it.

Women and Employment in 1981 was a recipient of a United Thank Offering grant, the first women's employment project ever to receive such a grant. We had the support of our Bishop, Robert Atkinson, and our local church, St. John's Episcopal with its fine priests, Jim Lewis and Lynn Honeycutt. Through United Thank Offering's financial assistance, we have been able to attack some of the root causes of poverty and discrimination against women, and in the process, enabled women to help themselves.

Much of the work that we do involves opening up job choices to women in what are called "nontraditional" jobs. Here are some of the things that we have done:

Through service, the organization

— placed the first woman carpenter to ever come out of the carpenters union on a building trades job, and three women in a pre-apprenticeship program for the ironworkers;

— formed a Women in Construction Support Group, thereby facilitating women working together on three redecorating/painting jobs;

— held a workshop on opportunities in construction jobs for women, attended by 60 women;

— helped a welfare mother to re-establish a slip-cover business by raising dollars for an industrial sewing machine and advising her on good business practices.

Through education, the organization

— appeared on radio and TV shows to talk about nontraditional jobs for women;

— published an article in May 1981 *Mountain Life and Work* on employment problems of rural and urban West Virginia women;

— sent five female construction workers to a meeting in Kentucky sponsored by a coalition of women in construction from five states;

— held a Health and Safety workshop with West Virginia's Labor Institute, and a conference for women in the 80% — traditional women's jobs.

*"In a discussion on economic equity for women, there is no **us** and **them**. The line is there in our minds. It is put there by those who find it convenient to divide us."*

Through advocacy, the organization — formed alliances with minority men to enforce federally-mandated goals and timetables for women and minorities;

— testified before the West Virginia Human Rights Commission on race and sex discrimination in the construction industry and in nontraditional vocational education around the state.

In the fall of 1981, the board and staff of Women and Employment moved beyond nontraditional jobs to look at the needs of women in traditional jobs and to the potential for women in economic development as a way of achieving economic equity.

If it sounds like we make a lot of trouble, that's what change is all about — trouble — for those who do not want to change. For others, change can allow them to provide an adequate income for themselves and their families. So that is what we are — agents for change in West Virginia. Why are women willing to take risks for change in West Virginia? To answer that in context, I would like to discuss the situation of working women in this country and in West Virginia specifically.

Let me share some figures. Nationally, as working women, we represent almost 50% of the work force. In West Virginia, we entered the work force in record numbers in the last 10 years. In 1970 we were only 30% of the work force, but in 1980, we were up to 42% of the work force. In Kanawha County where I work, we are 51.3% of the work force. Statewide, that 12% jump in the number of women in the work force is quite a change. It means that in the last decade we just about caught up with women in the rest of the country who were already working. However, we have yet to catch up in another respect. In the rest of the country, women make on the average 59¢ to every man's $1. In West Virginia, we only make about 38¢ to the average man's $1.

One of the reasons for this is the kinds of jobs that we hold. Some 80% of all women work in traditional jobs in four job categories: sales, service, clerical and light factory work. These jobs tend to be low-paid and dead-end. In West Virginia, government is the largest employer of women as clerical workers. In industry, we hold only 4.4% of all jobs in the five highest paid fields which are contract construction, mining, primary metals, transportation equipment, and chemicals.

Another alarming statistic from the U.S. Department of Labor shows that a man with an eighth grade education makes on the average more than a woman with four years of college.

Severe job stereotyping occurs as men and women enter the job market. My brother makes three times as much as I do as a civil engineer. I have a service job. When I was growing up and wanted to be a chemist, my father advised me to go into the nutrition field, saying that cooking was after all, a form of chemistry.

In the early 60 s, women made 64¢ to every man's $1. Despite a concerted attempt to remove Rosie the Riveter from the factories after World War II, some of her kind stayed, and rose to responsible positions. I am told that in Charleston after the war, all the new men to enter the GE plant were trained by women. These women are now retired, hopefully to pensions, but I wouldn't bet on it.

In rural West Virginia towns where all the men work in coal mines and all the women are secretaries or waitresses, equal pay for equal work is a moot question. The real question being raised now is called comparable worth.

Comparable worth tries to assess in terms of dollars and cents what a job is worth to the economy that one is a part of. It asks some hard questions of employers. In a recent study, women in South Dakota found that men who washed road equipment were paid more than secretaries for highway engineers. They asked, "Is making sure that the seats are clean on the bulldozers really more important than typing the specifications accurately and getting them out to highway contractors and all the other thousand details involved in getting ready for a bid opening? Which job is more important to the smooth running of the state highway department?"

Further, since nine out of ten women who work do so because of economic need, we have to assume that women work for the same reasons men do, to support their families. However, if full-time women workers only make 38¢ on the dollar, compared to men, it follows that families headed by women are going to have a hard time financially, as compared with men.

In fact, the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity in 1980 came out with some startling and grim predictions for women.

According to the council's report, "All other things being equal, if the proportion of the poor who are in female-headed families were to increase at the same rate as it did from 1967 to 1977, they would comprise 100% of the poverty population by about the year 2,000." While it reported that the total percentage of those living in poverty has declined "to the extent there have been winners in the war on poverty during

the 1970 s, they have been male — and mainly white. The feminization of poverty has become one of the most compelling social facts of the decade."

In another study entitled "Women and Children Alone and in Poverty" which was published in 1981, the authors talk extensively about the causes and cures for poverty. According to them, women are poor for different reasons than men are poor. Distinct reasons for the poverty among women can be traced back to two sources. First, in American culture women continue to carry the major burden of childbearing. In a divorce, the woman in the overwhelming number of cases wins custody of the children. The same divorce that frees a man from the financial burdens of a family may result in poverty for his ex-wife and children.

The second major source of poverty among women is the kind of opportunities, or more accurately, the limited opportunities available to women in the labor market. Occupational segregation, sex discrimination and sexual harassment combine to limit both income and mobility for women workers.

Furthermore, according to the study, if day care expenses were subtacted from the earnings of women who work outside the home, there would be substantially more households headed by women in poverty.

Poverty among men is often seen as a consequence of joblessness. Find the man a job and his family is no longer poor. This does not work for women for two reasons. One, occupational segregation confines women to job "ghettoes" where the pay is low and the mobility is little or nonexistent. Second, these women who manage to avoid female job ghettoes encounter sex discrimination in salaries, promotions, benefits and/or sexual harrassment. Ask any woman who has taken a job in the coal mines or on a construction crew, the price she pays for her high hourly wages.

The feminization of poverty and the current depressing statistics about the economy make us uneasy, and lead us to ask "How does that affect me?" Maybe you identify yourself as one of those women who are struggling to maintain yourself and your family on low wages and inadequate resources. If not, I would like you to reflect a moment on a concept that I call "the thin line" theory.

Too often we tend to divide ourselves into "us" and "them." We are the ones who are educated, have a job or will get one soon because we have some sort of a degree, or are happily married to a man who makes enough money. We might define this into a class distinction. We are middle-class — regardless of our color — and are not the ones who have to worry about economic equity.

"When I was growing up and wanted to be a chemist, my father advised me to go into the nutrition field, saying that cooking was, after all, a form of chemistry."

"They" are on welfare, or some other program designed by government to "help" them. They haven't a degree or as many years of schooling as us. We see "them" in restaurants where we eat, stores where we shop, and hospitals when we are sick.

The point that must be understood and fully internalized by all those participating in a discussion on economic equity for women is that there is no *us and them.* This line exists in our minds. It is put there by those who find it convenient to divide us.

Something happens to some women — a transformation of consciousness perhaps, a realization that they have been thrown on the other side of the line. Some might call it a shift of loyalties. Divorce does it for a lot of women. They realize as the sole support of themselves and their children, they are vulnerable to the whims of employers, agencies who "help" them and make them dependent. And in some cases they become vulnerable to real poverty in a way they have not had to face before. Or it could happen the other way around. Women marry or get a good job as a result of education or training and realize that they have crossed over to the more secure, affluent side of the line.

That change, in the best of circumstances, can prepare women to work together, to come together to affect the conditions that put them on one side of the line or the other. That leads to organizing for change. If there is one thing that is constant in the struggle for economic equity, it is that women as individuals always have a story to tell. The question asked is, "How did you get involved? What happened to you that made you want to work on these problems? What is in your experience that makes employment your issue?"

That change in women in the Kanawha Valley led to the formation of Women and Employment. It also led to Working Women, a nation-wide organization for clerical workers in Cleveland. It led to the Coal Employment Project and the first woman in the coal mines.

How do we, individually, begin to deal with the reality of the feminization of poverty? We can educate ourselves for one thing, and ask questions.

Where really is the problem? Is it in us as individuals? Should we dress for success? Should we take the right classes, study hard, wait for our chance to get a good job, marry the right man?

Is the problem in the economy really a balance of payments or the lid on the interest rates placed by the Federal Reserve?

Or is it misplaced priorities?

We can work collectively for change. In the last analysis, elimination of the feminization of poverty is up to us as

women. No one is going to do it for us.

We must ask, what do the facts concerning women and poverty say about priorities in this country? We are supposed to be the backbone of the family — the raisers and upbringers of future generations. How are we supposed to do this with a lack of resources to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter for our children?

We can't — so we have to do something to make changes in our work places and in our communities.

That word *change* brings me back to the beginning. I have been called a "trouble-maker" in Charleston. I am making change that some people don't like. I don't exactly know how I got this way, and why I'm not home, minding my own business, like some people think I ought to. I think it is because I was always very literal-minded. When I was collecting nickels and dimes for my own United Thank Offering box when I was growing up, I loved that hymn "all things bright and beautiful, all creatures, great and small, the Lord God made us all." Then as I got a little older, I began to reflect on that phrase in the Pledge of Allegiance — "with liberty and justice for all." And in the 60 s, it began to sink in to me, that this country didn't have justice for all. In 1978, I worked for the Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, and I held meetings for rural women in West Virginia to talk about their employment problems. Women shared with me and each other their desire for good jobs and their pain at being on welfare. Those meetings inevitably led to the formation of Women and Employment.

I have a sense of mission about the work that I do in West Virginia, and I am not alone. Many women have joined with me to effect change and all together, we will. We haven't waited for the government to make it easy for us, or our church leaders to lead the way. It is within all of us to make change.

We must educate ourselves. We must register to vote, run for office and become active in the legislative process. We must face the racism that divides us from working collectively with Black women and deal with it. We must learn about ways large corporations affect the economy of our local area. We can join together and work for change. We must! Our children depend on it! □

God Is Not a Pet Rock

by Jack Woodard

For some of us, prayer is something like talking to a pet rock:

> *"O Rock, listen to what I need and those I care about need and what I believe is good for the world. Get me out of this money bind; don't let me get cancer; make my friend feel better; don't let my plane crash; prevent a nuclear holocaust; help me sell my house; give us a nice weekend — no rain, please and perhaps just a little cooler. Amen."*

There are some advantages to praying to a pet rock. One is that rocks don't talk back. But then they just sit there and do nothing. If we don't expect our prayers to make any difference, rocks are OK. But if we are spiritually needy, then we'd better get beyond the pet rock stage of praying. God is not a pet rock.

Likewise, prayer is far more than talking to God; it is listening also. As a matter of fact, God has given each one of us two ears and one mouth. That would seem to indicate we are to listen twice as much as we talk with God and anyone else for that matter.

To begin to discover a meaningful relationship with God, we must begin to practice silence, to listen.

Prayer is first of all being quiet. Thus it begins in our own heart and not easily. Our hearts contain a great deal of clutter and noise. We must make room within ourselves to receive God. We must practice achieving inner quiet.

When we're quiet, it's time to begin letting silence take us over. Not resigned silence. Or the silence of despair. Or empty silence. But the silence of pregnant expectancy. Pregnant silence.

Just being silent within is healing, gives serenity, helps us to center ourselves. But silent prayer is so much more.

Prayer is unity with God. We can look at Jesus and see the whole of prayer. He said that he would tell us *everything.* He did. Everything about prayer is to be seen in the life of Jesus, from temptation to the Gethsemane scene, from baptism through the healings and the specific prayers to the Resurrection. Jesus' whole life was prayer. And there was a rhythm of silence and encounter, of giving and receiving grace.

As Jesus was at one with God at the inmost level of the heart, so we can be. We can be the love of God experienced by another, if we are at one with God. We can live in the grace of God and find the burdens of others given to us light to carry, if we are at one in our hearts with God. That is the realistic goal of spiritual development for every Christian.

It is what we can begin to develop when we are willing to venture beyond our pet rock. □

The Rev. Jack Woodard is rector of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church, Washington, D.C.

The Peace of Jerusalem

by Michael P. Hamilton

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May they prosper who love you!
Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers!
— Psalm 122:6-7

All Christians are in some sense religious citizens of Israel. Like the Psalmist, all of us pray for the peace of Jerusalem. But Israel is a land of many unresolved problems — many issues of justice and peace. How are we, for instance, to resolve the ancient religious claims of Muslims, as well as Jews and Christians, to the city of Jerusalem? How are we to exercise our compassion for the inhabitants of Israel, Jews who live in fear of national oblivion, Palestinian Arabs who have lost their land and political freedom? These issues embody deep ethical and moral dimensions.

I was fortunate to live in Israel for a year sometime ago. Since then I have followed the development of that State with interest, and I recently made a return visit. In general, I believe Americans are poorly informed about life in Israel. Such ignorance breeds unwise international policies which in turn can only too easily lead to war. I offer my perspective on Israel as a concerned individual Christian, and I make no claim to provide *the* Christian understanding. I believe we must be free to examine such important matters of justice, to try and sense God's will in relation to them, and to remember that the bonds of our Christian community are forged by God's love and cannot be broken by our differences of opinion.

Let me share first the concerns of the Jews as I have experienced them. They are engrossed in the development of the beautiful land where they live. As they welcome Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world — the Diaspora — and provide them with food, housing, education and employment, they are fulfilling their ancestors' hopes. As they work hard and imaginatively to make the desert bloom and raise up exciting

The Rev. Michael F. Hamilton is Canon of Washington Cathedral, Mt. Saint Alban's, Washington, D.C.

new cities, they believe they are in a mysterious way following their national and religious destiny. Life with them is invigorating, the people are talented and vivacious and one senses a heightened experience of what it is to be human when one moves amongst them.

But this glorious life is overshadowed by economic problems and by constant fear. They have been persecuted down the centuries and it is not easy for them to trust others. At last they have a foothold on their Biblical homeland and they believe it can only be defended by military might. They see around them nations who are technically still at war with them and who are reluctant to acquiesce in the loss of lands taken from them by force of arms. The Arab nations who waged war against them have always been defeated and their hostility elicits Jewish defensiveness. The Jews also have a fast-growing, dissident, Arab minority within their military controlled borders and it is difficult to devise long-term policies to live together with them. The Jews wish for peace so that they can preserve what they have gained but their borders are narrow and difficult to defend and they are constantly obliged to prepare for war. Listening to them I found them to be so obsessed with these demanding, national goals of security and development that most, but certainly not all, are blind to the needs and pain they have inflicted on their neighbors.

The Palestinian Arabs are like the Jews in many ways. Both are Semites and one cannot tell many of them apart when they are in similar dress. Arabs also live vividly. They are hospitable people, excitable, have a respect for education and a great sense of humor. Whatever justification there may have been for Jewish control of the land of Judah and Israel in Biblical times, whatever the compromises attempted by the British in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and their proposals of 1937 to divide the country between the Jews and the Arabs, the Palestinian Arabs know that in their living memory the land of Israel was largely theirs.

Before the Second World War there were half-a-million Jews and 1 million Arabs. Now within the larger controlled borders of Israel there are approximately 4 million Jews and 1.7 million Arabs. The Arabs remember being forced off their land, first in the 1948 war which the Jews call a "liberation" war and the Arabs mourn as "imperialist." In attempts to regain that land, they lost two more wars in 1967 and 1973 and their shame, their hurt and their sense of justice denied has led them to bitterness. When they appealed to the United Nations for return of part of their lands, that which was appropriated by the Jews after they won the 1967 war, the United Nations supported their claim in Resolution 242. However, Israel paid no attention. When most recently the Israeli government annexed the Golan Heights in the name of "national security," the Arabs asked, "Security for whom?" Americans insist, the Arabs say, that they negotiate peace with the Jews, but on the other hand Americans permit the Israeli government, without negotiation, to annex Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

It should not come as a surprise then that some Arabs, unsuccessful both in war and in negotiation to regain their lands, have resorted to violence. Other Arabs are not in sympathy with terrorism ad they accurately see it as exacerbating differences and making eventual negotiation more difficult. The Palestine Liberation Organization is an umbrella organization embracing within it a large variety of Arab views. Undoubtably in a time of peace the factions within it would break up into political parties, but in the meantime, it contains both terrorist and non-violent factions. The PLO is the only national expression of Palestinian Arabs which is politically viable and is seen by all of them as their symbol of hope. It is the only Palestinian Arab organization through which peace may be negotiated.

While terrorism on anyone's part is to be condemned, so is retaliation resulting from it. In response to raids and a build-up of PLO military groups on the Lebanon-Israeli border in 1981, the Israeli government struck back by serial bombing attempting to hit the PLO offices in the city of Beirut. The casualties which the Israeli Air Force inflicted were ethically quite out of proportion.

I would like to say more about the problems of the Palestinian Arabs because they are not well known in this country, and that itself is a moral issue. Education of Jews and Arabs is separate and unequal. There are fewer teachers per pupil in Arab classrooms, and financial support is significantly lower. The Israeli Army, or in some cases their civilian authorities, must pass on the hiring and firing of faculty at the main Arab university at Birzeit. This university, incidentally, founded by an Episcopalian family in 1920 as a high school, is an intellectual center for Arab culture and nationalism. But admission and expulsion of students, the structure of academic curriculum including the books to be read, are all subject to Jewish control.

Land on the West Bank continues to be expropriated from Arabs under the pretext that they cannot find documents of title, even though no one had disputed their ownership and their families had lived there for generations. In the West Bank the new Israeli settlers have dug many deep wells which result in the drying up of adjacent Arab ones. Arabs however are not permitted to dig new wells and the water for Arab irrigation is metered and limited only to that amount which was available to them in 1967. As a result many Arab farms have been destroyed while Jewish settlers build swimming pools. If Arab

civilians protest some new abuse of their land ownership or political or civil liberties, the Israeli Army is active in communal punishment. Arab protest demonstrations and support for an independent Palestinian state sometimes result in rock throwing at the Israeli tanks and armored cars sent in to break them up. Following such incidents, speakers are deported, curfews imposed, Arabs' shop doors welded shut, schools closed and there is general harassment of the local population. Occasionally, particularly brutal retaliations occur, as depicted in the recent ABC documentary of young girls, unarmed Arab students, hopping down the street after they had been shot in their legs by Israeli soldiers. This particular incident occurred as a result of a student protest around the closing of their university. Frankly, the continuing abuse of the Arab population is a scandal and, thank goodness, many Jews themselves deplore it.

It is sad that Jews, so terribly persecuted in the European Holocaust, have now themselves become oppressors. If one wonders how sensitive and talented people can do such things, I suggest we look into our own recent American past. As I walked through the streets of Beer Sheva and Jerusalem and drove along the country roads, I was struck how Arabs were mainly in a second-class citizenship status. It was they who walked along the side of the dusty roads as others sped by in cars. It was Arabs who worked as waiters and cooks in the cities and cleaned the streets. While there are many Arab professionals, by and large most Arabs in Israel farm or do menial work. It is not difficult for Israeli Jews, or for American tourists, to ignore the Arab plight, to look over their heads so to speak, and not even notice their suffering. Any citizen of the United States over 40 years of age will recognize parallels to this in the way we treated Blacks in our own land.

Ironically, there is less opportunity for discussion of these touchy matters in the United States than in Israel. For nothing that I have said here has not been debated publicly in Israel, has not been argued in their press, their parliament and in their private homes.

Let me close by sharing some suggestions from various sources so that the influence we exert, both as Christians and Americans, may be as constructive. I believe we must continue to provide strong support for Israeli security as a nation. However we should not be manipulated by reference to the Holocaust to justify Israeli policies. We must continue to condemn and frustrate Arab terrorism and insist on the recognition of the state of Israel by all Arab nations. We must try to understand more fully the plight of the Arabs who have been displaced and their legitimate needs, both economic and political.

Peace will come from making friends, not enemies, and if the Israelis continue to rely on military force and the Palestinians indulge themselves in terrorism, neither party will achieve its goals. There are both ethical and practical reasons for negotiating civil rights for the Arabs and national security for the Jews in a single package. There is not much time left, for demographers tell us that the current minority of Arabs within the state of Israel and its presently occupied lands will become the majority in approximately 20 years. If Jews and Arabs, both within Israel and on the West Bank, do not reach a modus vivendi by then, civil order and the future of Israel itself will be in question. If the plight of the displaced Arabs is not justly met, undoubtedly the surrounding Arab nations will continue to wage war against Israel, and eventually Israel will lose. As the Jewish leaders often say, but are slow to think through the implications, Israel cannot afford to lose even one war.

Hence, many statesmen and Middle East scholars argue for an independent Palestinian state, with special arrangements for the government of the city of Jerusalem, as an essential part of the solution to these problems. It is argued that this proposal is the best means of both reducing the likelihood of more wars — and therefore in the national interest of Israel — and as bringing a measure of justice to the displaced Arabs. Incidently, the initial thrust of the American Camp David negotiations for full autonomy for the occupied Arab lands is not in conflict with an eventual independent Palestinian state. Such a state, economically complementary to Israel, could serve as a buffer between Israel and the surrounding Arab nations. The boundaries of such a state should be drawn with an eye to the military security of Israel and would include most of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Of course in our age of increasingly sophisticated weapon technology, whatever the boundaries, there can be no real military security for any state. The stationing of United Nations troops on some of these borders could be a further factor for stability. If such a Palestinian state were to be negotiated and established, then the rationale for Arab terrorism would be greatly weakened, and Jewish military security would be correspondingly enhanced.

In this article I have necessarily had to speak of problems and catalog injustices. But we must not forget there are many Jews and Arabs who, on a deep, personal level, wish to be reconciled with each other. Part of our task is to provide ways for them to meet together, to recognize how their present attitudes and acts dehumanize each other, to encourage them to try to meet each other's needs, in fact to love one another. So shall we pray for the peace of Jerusalem. □

Editorial . . . *Continued from page 3*

with the withdrawal of "all foreign forces" necessary to accomplish this.

The document, further, calls for the "resolution of the Palestinian question on the basis of the Palestinians' right for self determination, including the right of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state." It also asks for "initiatives for a just, comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, by which the rights of Lebanon, Israel and other states of the region to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries are guaranteed."

The World Council, finally, asked churches "to help mobilize international public opinion on the Lebanon situation." This editorial and the article by the Rev. Michael Hamilton in this issue are a small part of that effort.

(M.L.S. and the editors)

Letters . . . *Continued from page 2*

to be better than "yours," our discrimination deserves to be taken more seriously than yours.

The problem with this divisive approach to racism and sexism, particularly as it effects the question of the propriety of white clergywomen accepting assignments in predominantly Black churches, is that it detracts attention from the most significant aspect of both racial and sexual oppression. Simply put, neither Blacks nor women exercise substantive control over clergy deployment policy or practice at any level of the church's institutional life. And, finally, it doesn't take much imagination to figure out who does.

The Rev. Reginald Blaxton
Washington, D.C.

Prays None Left Behind

I was very touched by the *Black Women and the Women's Movement* statement.

I have always been sad that only White women were ordained in the Philadelphia 11 at Church of the Advocate in 1974, and I have been grateful that primarily Black people gave us a home that day. I was not surprised that no primarily White congregation opened its "sanctuary" to us. Did we trespass that day?

In my gut I've felt uncomfortable about lumping racism and sexism together. They are both important evils to overcome, but there are lots of differences. Since reading about Elizabeth Cady Stanton's life, I've had some strong questions about what happened when women worked so hard for abolition and the vote for Negroes and then were left with no vote for themselves.

As a woman, as a White, I want to work together with Black people and men rather than below or over any of them. As our battles are won, I pray God no one will be left behind.

The Rev. Katrina Swanson
Union City, N.J.

Avid Reader Writes

I have been an avid reader of THE WITNESS for several years now, after having received a sample issue from sources unknown. Congratulations on your social, political and religious stands. I shall stay with you as long as I live. My roots and affiliation are Quaker, Universalist, Unitarian (Arlington St. Church in Boston, Mass. Our minister reads you too. If he didn't I'd see to it that he did!) Long may you flourish.

Frances P. Nesbett
Brookline, Mass.

CREDITS

Cover, Beth Seka; p. 5, Lynd Ward; p. 8, 9 Workers' Rights Law Project Newsletter; p. 10, Coalition for a New Foreign & Military Policy; p. 12, CPF; p. 16, Johanna Vogelsgang, Art for People, courtesy *MERIP Reports*.

To Diana

See that girl sittin' over there?
She's my sister.

That's right!
She's my sister.

I know . . . I know . . .
I am wide and tall,
She is short and small.

But,
She is my sister.

What, you say!
She cannot be.
It ain't right!

Because I am Black
and she is White.

I said, she is my sister . . . over there!

And she won't abandon me and
hide in her cocoon of whiteness.

Because, she is my sister over there.
Aren't you, Diana?

— Deborah L. Watkins

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

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
North Wales, Pa.
Permit No. 121

Ecumenical Hearings on Puerto Rico

A broad spectrum of religious, legal, labor, social action and populist groups in Puerto Rico have responded to an ecumenical initiative spearheaded by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company to hold hearings in Puerto Rico in September.

Subjects to be considered during the hearings include civil rights, repression, the economy, migration, militarism, natural resources, and social and cultural issues. Participants will also probe the theology underlying each of these subjects.

The idea to hold hearings grew out of the widespread frustration and anger with the policies of the Reagan administration, which have begun to unite normally divided Puerto Ricans to demand redress, according to the Rev. Hugh C. White, ECPC staff coordinator of the project.

Reagan administration programs which have roused indignation include:

- The Caribbean Basin Initiative which threatens Puerto Rico's rum and tuna industries;
- Restrictions on the Food Stamp program;
- Vast cuts in the CETA program, which have eliminated 25,000 jobs and raised unemployment to 24%;
- Restrictions on travel to Cuba for the Caribbean and Central American Games, infuriating thousands of Puerto Ricans who have already paid for tickets and transportation;
- A new tax bill for Puerto Rico which would have the effect of diminishing corporate investment in the island and thus increasing unemployment.

The underlying problem to be examined is the old nemesis, colonial control by and dependency upon the United States, White said.

As presently envisioned, the concept of the hearings projects events to be held in four cities in the United States as well. Timetable for the project is as follows:

Hearings in Puerto Rico, Sept. 27 to Oct. 1 in San Juan; hearings in the United States to be staged in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles — two days each on consecutive weekends in November, 1982; and finally, a one-day forum in Washington, D.C. in early December, date to be announced.

Further information can be obtained from Hugh C. White, Ecumenical Committee on the Future of Puerto Rico, 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Mich. 48201.