



THE VOL. 66 NO. 1 JANUARY, 1983 **WITNESS**

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Haitian Visibility Raised

On behalf of the Rev. Samir J. Habiby and the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, and the many Episcopalians and others who have sought to meet the needs of Haitians being released from federal prisons and INS Detention Centers, I want to express appreciation to THE WITNESS for its October articles on Haitians. We are grateful for this help in raising the visibility of the problems Haitians face, since the importance of response to their needs will be ongoing.

The article by Margaret Traxler concerning the women in Alderson, W. Va. was especially moving. The Rev. Harry Nevels, a member of the PBF/WR Board who had recently accepted a call as rector to Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Ohio, undertook the ministry of the release program at Alderson on behalf of the Diocese of West Virginia, the fund and the church. He was grateful indeed for the help of several interested groups like the Institute of Women Today who coalesced to alleviate the plight of these unfortunate women.

Under the auspices of the fund acting for the Episcopal Church, some 328 Haitians have now been placed from four centers at Alderson, La Tuna, Krome and Fort Allen. Many must have a great deal of ongoing care and some have needed to be placed with sponsors a second time after initial arrangements with family or friends did not work out as expected. Only time will tell what the eventual outcome of their deportation or

exclusion proceedings before the Immigration and Naturalization Service will be, but in many cases the asylum process could be extended over years. It is our prayer that these Haitians will be granted amnesty and legalization under the new Immigration Control Act (Simpson-Mazzoli Bill) pending before Congress. They have suffered enough.

Marion M. Dawson
Asst. Director for Migration Affairs
Episcopal Church Center

Sit, Standing Committee

John Chane's article on the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania's decision on the "inappropriateness" of women priests certainly deserves a response. (November WITNESS) Read the Standing Committee's statement aloud to anyone, and however you say it, it comes out unloving, unkind, un-Christlike, and so, so COLD.

Imagine, if you will, that a certain Mary of Magdala has decided to give full-time service to the Jesus she calls "Master" (not a very suitable candidate for the priesthood — but then I doubt that the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania will have too many former prostitutes applying for ordination!). What was Jesus' response to Mary when she came looking for him, after all the men had fled? He said, "Go to my brothers and tell them that I am now ascending to my Father and your Father, my God and your God." And she gave them his message. She had to — and so do many other women today.

Dear brothers and sisters of the Standing Committee, please, sit down, and as another Mary said to the angel Gabriel, "Let it be."

Roberta Nobleman
Dumont, N.J.

Baby at Pulpit?

I read John Chane's article in the November WITNESS.

He does quite well in his *defense* of women — that they should be con-

sidered as appropriate candidates for priesthood. And, it is a defense. But I'm afraid that no woman will ever be looked upon as a standard-bearer (in the priestly sense) of Christ's teachings.

Now, truthfully, doesn't John Chane lurch a little at the word, *female*? Imagine one of his heroines in the midst of a sermon suddenly going into labor and having her baby at the pulpit! The "joke" would be an inevitability of their unsuitability as priestesses.

At the right hand of God is the Son. At the left hand? Sorry, no daughter.

Mike Polavich
Grove City, Pa.

Possible Solution

Concerning John Chane's article on Standing Committee discrimination against women applicants for Holy Orders, I would like to raise three questions, and suggest a possible solution.

First, can we agree that no person, male or female, possesses a moral or legal right to be ordained? Second, can we agree that the free exercise of conscience is an old, desirable, and theologically warranted right available to all Christians? Third, can we also agree — as Title I, Canon 16, Section 4 makes pellucidly clear regarding race, color, and ethnic origin — that within the church certain discriminatory behavior, however much informed by the dictates of conscience, cannot credibly be considered Christian?

A proposal, then: Why not seek to amend and strengthen the so-called Civil Rights Canon referred to above specifically to include sexual discriminations among its provisions, thereby explicitly extending equal treatment under law to churchwomen and removing sexist discriminatory behavior from the area of arguably licit, i.e., "permissive" Christian conduct? It would be, quite literally, a sin and a shame if the Episcopal Church is *unable legally to affirm a proper right for all*

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THE WITNESS

Editorial

New Year's Resolution

Vice President George Bush made a gallant attempt to convince the Episcopal Church General Convention recently of the Reagan Administration's sincerity in working toward peace. Sincerity, however, is not the issue. The way one chooses to work toward peace involves moral judgments and practical strategies, and the process frequently pits Christians against one another.

For example, Episcopalians Bush and Caspar Weinberger work in an Administration whose strategy includes a 5-year, \$1.6 trillion military defense budget, an arms race to assure a first strike posture, and the installation of a controversial MX missile system dubbed "The Peacekeeper" by the White House.

Meanwhile, the bishops of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches, in the tradition of the social Gospel and the social encyclicals, were writing pastorals forthrightly opposing nuclear arms buildups. Government reaction to the bishops, in the Roman Catholic instance, was swift — motivated, perhaps, by the fact that these spiritual leaders preside over 50 million Catholics (read votes). William P. Clark, President Reagan's National Security Adviser, sent a letter to the National Council of Catholic Bishops arguing that U.S. nuclear policy was, indeed, moral.

What signs of the times can be

discerned here? Surely, as liberal voices become stronger in the churches, conservatives will rise to counterattack. Thus, we see pro-military critics of the Catholic bishops organizing into a group called the American Catholic Committee (ACC), and the emergence of a new magazine, *Catholicism in Crisis*. On the Protestant side, we find the World and National Council of Churches' staff and programs challenged, among others, by *Readers Digest* and *60 Minutes* with regard to disposition of funds and their "radical" stances.

And challenging both the Catholic hierarchy and the NCC is the Institute for Religion and Democracy with Michael Novak, Richard Neuhaus, and Edmund Robb on its Advisory Committee.

Clearly, the forces of the Right are poised to harry the opposition, whom President Reagan has described as "sleepwalking into the future," (duped, no doubt, by the "KGB agents" in their midst).

As the "peacekeeping" efforts of the Government escalate, we should recall with sobriety the many examples in recent history where the church has retreated under pressure from the state, and from the Right. *Therefore, be we resolved*, to stand fast, that a McCarthy-like revival shall not carry the day.

(M.L.S. and the editors)

Hammering the Heretics: Religion vs. Cults

by Joseph H. Fichter

The New York Times reported recently that "the major faiths in the metropolitan area — Jews, Catholics, and Protestants — have joined together this summer for the first time to combat what they call 'destructive cults,' mentioning in particular the Unification Church of the Rev. Sun Myung Moon." The spokesman for the Jewish community Relations council said that the "growth of cults presents a clear and present danger of religions as we know them," because they are different from the three major faiths we know.

Why does the principle of ecumenism break down in relations between churches and cults? Certainly the Conference of Christians and Jews and the Anti-defamation League have brought together people of different religions. Lutherans are dialoguing with Catholics, Episcopalians with Methodists. Ecumenism seems to work

well as long as the religions in dialogue are the acceptable, conventional, bourgeois mainstream faiths.

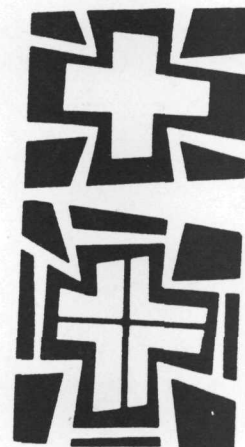
The common secular notion that "one religion is as good as another" seems to apply only to people who are more or less like us, or as Dr. Seymour Lachman said, to those religions "as we know them." Youth cults are treated like alien religions, promoted by people we do not like. John Hall suggests that when journalists wrote their lurid accounts of the Rev. Jim Jones and his People's Temple, they "used the cult terminology in the hope that a label would suffice where an explanation was unavailable."

Definitions are confusing because the objects they define change their meanings as they evolve. Theologians originally defined the cult as *latría*, an expression of divine worship, and as *hyperdulia* for the Virgin Mary, and *dulia* as veneration of saints, sacred objects and events. Traditional cults within the Roman Catholic Church are numerous and varied, like devotion to the Sacred Heart, the nine First Fridays, the cult of the Paraclete (among Catholic charismatics), veneration of the Shroud of Turin, and

many other practices that have declined in popularity: Way of the Cross, Vespers, Novenas, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Sociologically, the cult is defined as the group of people who adhere to these rituals and devotions and reflect the mystical component of Troeltsch's typology. In contrast to sect and *ecclesia*, the cult is described as a small, informal, loosely structured, spontaneous group clustered around a charismatic leader. Probably all the established religions began as cults. The small group of Jesus' disciples constituted a cult that evolved over time into a sect, a denomination, and finally a church. The cult of mendicant religious poverty formed around Francis of Assisi and developed into a large brotherhood. Religious history is littered with cults that arose, flourished for a while, and disappeared. The Black Muslims became a church, so did Christian Science, the Salvation Army, the Mormons, and the Holy Spirit Association (also known as the Unification Church).

Stereotypes about these strange cults, and charges now being lodged against the new youth religions, are reminiscent



The Rev. Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., is a professor of sociology at Loyola University, New Orleans. Dr. Fichter held the Harvard University Chauncey Stillman Chair from 1965 to 1970 and was a Fulbright visiting professor at the University of Muenster.

of the earlier American crusades against Catholics and Jews, Mormons and Quakers. It is as opprobrious now to be a Moonie as it was to be a Papist 150 years ago. Have we forgotten the *Protocols of Zion* and the flood of anti-Semitic hate literature during the 1930s? And to remind themselves that they were targets of earlier persecution, Roman Catholics ought to read Billington's *The Protestant Crusade*, as well as the slanderous *Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk*.

Similar accusations are now updated and applied to the contemporary cults. For example, the common charge of enticement, deception and brainwashing was made in the New York Archdiocesan newspaper this summer by the Rev. Edwin O'Brien who is sure that when young people convert to the Unification Church "their minds are completely broken down. They are totally dependent on the system once this process takes place." The Hare Krishnas, Children of God, the Way, the Forever Family, as well as the Moonies, were specifically singled out in November, 1981 by the General Secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference. His letter of warning to all the American Catholic Bishops was careful not to attack or condemn these religious groups, but it included a copy of *Cults and Kids*, which is a pseudo-psychological "Study of Coercion," published by the Catholic Boys Town Center in Nebraska.

The influence of religion is being employed by the anti-cultists in an outright attack against religion. In the name of religion they are hiring agents to kidnap young people, hold them captive, apply physical and psychological coercion to force a renunciation of their religious faith. Some parents, with at least the tacit approval of clergymen, pay exorbitant fees for agents like Ted Patrick to brainwash and deprogram their children.

One of the more frightening aspects of the anti-cultist crusade goes beyond the physical abduction and coercion of members. It is the insistence that conversion to a youth religion is a kind of mental illness. Some anti-cultists claim that if you join other than an approved religion you suffer a mental sickness called "snapping," a sudden personality change. Last January, *Science Digest* asked the question in all seriousness: "Have Cults Created a New Mental Illness?"

Most clergy and many parents are reluctant to have the young cult convert abducted and subjected to coercive religious restoration. The alternative is

"Charges lodged against the new youth religions are reminiscent of the earlier American Crusades against Catholics, Jews, Mormons and Quakers. It is as opprobrious now to be a Moonie as it was to be a Papist 150 years ago."

to appeal to the courts for a writ of "conservatorship" in which a judge orders the child to return home for a month. Even though, as the American Civil Liberties Union argues, "the use of the temporary conservatorship statute for mental deprogramming threatens the first amendment freedoms of all members of unconventional religious or political organizations," a California judge in March, 1977, handed over five adult Moonies to their parents.

Conservatorship proceedings require these converts to justify their religious faith and also prove to the satisfaction of the court that they are not mentally incompetent because they hold these religious beliefs. In this case the judge ruled that the parents "are in charge of their children. And these are adults, but as I said before, a child is a child even though the parent may be 90 and the

child is 60. They are still mother and child, father and child. The parents are still in charge, and they are to work for the benefit of their children."

The most injurious consequence of kidnapping and deprogramming is the creation of angry apostates who disseminate atrocity stories in an attempt to justify themselves for having followed a religion that they now denounce. Their captors forced them to relinquish the cult with which they had been affiliated. By some strange psychological twist they transfer this experience back to the time they joined the youth religion. If they were **brainwashed** to give it up they must have been brainwashed to accept it in the first place. The thought control that deprogrammed them from their religious beliefs has now switched them to a strong aversion for their former faith.

These apostates and renegades are witnesses at first hand, and the only way their allegations can be successfully challenged is through the testimony of members who continue happily in the religious movement. In the distant past it was the life and work of faithful Roman Catholics that repudiated the horror stories told by apostate priests and nuns on the lecture circuit to anti-Catholic groups. The steadfast fidelity of the membership of cults ought to have the same effect today.

While the animosity of defectors may be traced to the frightening experience of abduction and deprogramming, it is not clear why others are drawn into a crusade of hatred and antagonism against the cults. The common element of animosity among those who have had no bitter experience, or hold no personal feelings (as parents do) seems to be a xenophobia coupled with a selfish notion that their turf, cultural if not territorial, is being invaded.

The fairminded religious person will hardly find an objective treatment of the youth religions in the public media, or

even in the religious press. Some social scientists have provided careful analysis of the cults and sects, but little theological writing has been done about them. A good current article appears in *Religious Studies Review* by theologian Lonnie D. Kliever (July, 1982) who says that "despite a burgeoning sociological literature on the Unification Church, little attention has been given to Unification theology within academic circles."

One model of an ecumenical approach to a cult is the critique of Moonie theology made by four Christian theologians invited to act for the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of Churches. This group made the judgment that the Unification Church is not genuinely Christian, but in no way challenged its right to exist and propagate its doctrines. The Unificationists were not crushed or discouraged by this theological assessment. Indeed, they are the only American church willing to finance a conference of non-Moonies deliberately for the discussion and criticism of their church. Sometimes these critics are quite friendly, but others are sharply critical, as were the Evangelicals who were invited to dialogue with the Moonies at the Barrytown seminary in the summer of 1978.

Another example of the ecumenical approach is the study made by Stanford professor and theologian, Frederick Sontag, who spent 10 months in a personal investigation of the Unification Church. He demonstrates a sympathetic understanding of beliefs and practices with which he is not in agreement. His synopsis of the 14 charges most frequently made against Moon and the Moonies is an example of balanced reporting which takes their religious and ecclesial system seriously.

The ecumenical approach to the analysis of a religious movement requires something more than an

objective description of its central tendencies. We are enjoined to seek out the truth of the particular religion. The expectation in the Vatican decree on ecumenism, which many antagonists completely ignore, is that good human relations, dialogue and interaction are desirable between the members of the different faiths. The purpose is that "everyone gains a true knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both."

Instead of "hammering the heretics," which seems to be the popular reaction of many conventional churchgoers, we are enjoined to recognize that which is true in the doctrines of others who call themselves Christian, as well as in the

"The attempt to deprogram has not been limited to cult members, but has been applied to a Mormon, a Catholic charismatic, an Episcopalian charismatic, a lesbian, a member of the Socialist Labor Party, and even two young women whose Greek Orthodox parents wanted to get them back into the church."

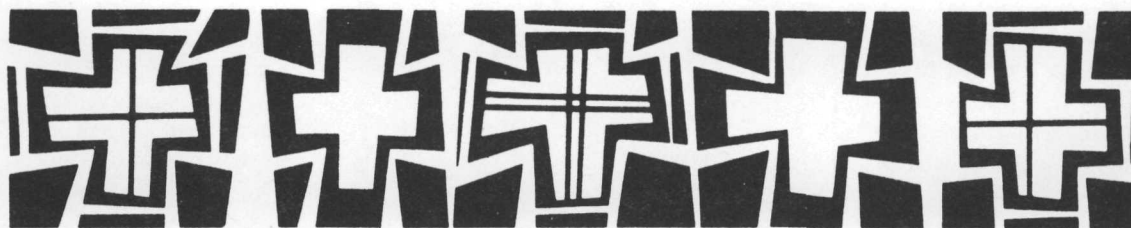
non-Christian religions, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam. Pope John XXIII specifically forbade the Council to issue anathemas, condemnations, reprovals or repudiations. This does not mean a readiness to accept theological error, or to embrace unethical teachings, but it does mean that the church rejects, as foreign to the mind of Christ, any discrimination or harassment "because of race, color, condition of life, or religion."

Logically and morally connected with both the religious and the ecumenical interpretation of the cult phenomenon is the democratic defense of religious liberty. Protecting U.S. citizens against kidnapping is even more serious than establishing some kind of

anti-defamation league to protect the reputation of the cults. The threat of legalized deprogramming is increased by the various proposals to allow temporary conservatorship of cult members by court order. In an article in *The Nation* Thomas Robbins discussed this possibility when he insisted that "Even a Moonie has Civil Rights." And the Rev. Dean Kelley, an official of the National Council of Churches, has shown that the attempt to deprogram has not been limited to cult members like Children of God, Moonies, or Krishnas, but has been applied to other cases: a Mormon, a Catholic charismatic, an Episcopalian charismatic, a lesbian, a member of the Socialist Labor Party, and even two young women whose Greek Orthodox parents wanted to get them back into the church.

In the final analysis it is likely that we fear and distrust that which is strange and unknown to us. To meet personally with young members of some of the cults is a kind of revelation to most of us. They are a bit unusual, of course, if one is accustomed only to materialistic and ambitious U.S. youth who represent the typical middle-class values of our society.

When Steve Allen's son wrote to him in 1971 that he had joined a cult, the Church of Armageddon in Seattle, Allen replied in part: "My feeling in regard to this matter, I suppose, is much like that of those parents whose children decide to enter one of the contemplative orders of the Catholic Church, to become a monk or a nun secluded from the world and to devote their lives to prayer in relative solitude. Here again, selfishly speaking, the parents' hearts ache at the knowledge that they will henceforth be deprived of the sight of those they love. But if they share their children's faith, their sorrow is balanced by a sense of happiness that the children are doing what brings *them* a sense of spiritual satisfaction." □



Why Our Children Join the Cults

by Owen C. Thomas

My main qualification for addressing myself to the subject of cults is that for the past seven years my youngest son has been a member of the Children of God, now known as the Family of Love. Needless to say, this has caused me to think, read, and consult a great deal on all the issues related to cults from deprogramming to their historical significance to the churches.

I believe that the cults are now in a period of retrenchment, reorganization, and settling in for the long haul. There has probably been an overall decline in membership but also an increase in the number of long-term members. They are beginning the long transition from

sects to churches.

In what follows, I discuss some of the things I have learned over the past six years about the cults and about their significance for the churches. This is based primarily on my knowledge of the Children of God through visits to six different "colonies" in France, Sweden and the Caribbean and extended study of their literature, both public and restricted. I will not be arguing for or against the validity or value of the cults but rather addressing their significance for the churches.

First, why do young people go into the cults? Shortly after my son joined the Children of God I happened to be reading Erik Erikson's *Young Man Luther*. I suddenly became aware that page after page was luminous with meaning for the situation of my son and

helped me to understand the psychodynamics of why one would join the cults. I do not mean to suggest that there may not be authentic religious and other reasons involved in joining the cults, but only that Erikson has illuminated for me in a striking way the psychological side. Erikson, of course, was not addressing himself to the cults, since he wrote long before their appearance in their current form on the American scene somewhat over a decade ago.

According to Erikson, adolescents are in a stage in their lives in which they deeply need many of the things which the cults are offering. The human life cycle involves several crises. In adolescence it is what Erikson calls the identity crisis. Adolescents must move out of their childhood identities, which

Owen C. Thomas is Professor of Theology at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge.

they have received largely from their parents, and forge new adult identities. The intensity of this crisis will vary with the individual and the times. It will be intensified especially in times of rapid social and cultural change and upheaval, such as our own times.

Thus adolescents have a deep need to reject and repudiate an old life and set of values, the ones they have grown up with, and to give their complete devotion to a new life and set of values. This need is met by what Erikson calls an ideology, a total view of things which offers a new way of life, cosmic in scope and often utopian in character. Adolescents need an ideology which will help and justify them in repudiating their old lives and which will offer an object of devotion which is demanding, strenuous, and which involves discipline. Young people need an ideology which challenges and channels their earnestness, sincerity, and indignation, and which involves testing, hardship, perhaps some wandering, and the call of new frontiers. In taking on a new identity, adolescents are willing to suffer restriction, asceticism, and obedience.

All of this offers young people a potential solution to the pain and suffering of the identity crisis. As Erikson puts it, "The ideology is the guardian of identity." He notes that this process often involves the experience of conversion, and he quotes William James (who is quoting Starbuck): "Conversion is in its essence a normal adolescent phenomenon."

One of the stages in the crisis of moving from a childhood to an adult identity is the one referred to by Erikson as identity diffusion in which adolescents simply do not know who they are. He quotes the statement of Biff in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*: "I just can't take hold, Mom, I can't take hold of some kind of a life." Because of this the adolescent needs a moratorium, a time-out period, so to speak, in which

"The mainline churches have tended to lose the vision of the radical and demanding character of the Christian faith and life, the strenuousness of what it means to be a follower of Christ."

the identity crisis can be worked out. The moratorium relieves young people of the burdens of decision about life and career which they are not ready to assume. Historically, most societies have offered to young people a moratorium for the purpose of resolving the identity crisis. In Luther's time it was often the monastic life. In our time it is often college, military service, or something like the Peace Corps.

Erikson concludes that young people are very susceptible to ideological movements which are organized to fulfill exactly these needs. In every age these movements have used a kind of indoctrination which we call thought reform, or more colloquially, brainwashing. The ingredients have always been the same: "removal from family and community and isolation from the outer-world; restriction of sensory intake and immense magnification of the power of the word; lack of privacy and radical accent on the brotherhood; and, of course, joint devotion to the leaders who created and represent the brotherhood." Along with this goes a heightening of introspection and self-criticism, which aggravates identity diffusion. This is followed by the offering of a new identity informed by the ideology and supported by the solidarity of the group. This is an exact description not only of initiation into the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt in 1505, but also of modern Chinese thought reform and the methods of the cults. Erikson describes them all as "experiments in first aggravating and

then curing the identity diffusion of youth."

This is Erikson's theory and he applies it in detail to the young man Luther. I think it is quite obvious how it can be employed to interpret the modern cults. I can attest that it applies almost perfectly to the story of my son.

In the light of this interpretation, the main differences between the psychodynamics of joining a cult and joining a mainline church are quite clear. Joining a cult involves a radical discontinuity. It is entering an entirely new and demanding way of life, with a new view of reality, a new set of values, a new and rigorous discipline, a new community, and a new leader requiring complete obedience. Although there may be considerable variety in joining a mainline church, there is usually a maximum of continuity. We call it religious affiliation, and it is often much like joining any other voluntary organization.

This is the major difference between the cults and the churches as spelled out by Troeltsch in his well-known distinction between sect-type and the church-type of Christianity. The church-type and the mainline churches appeal ideally to everyone, to all sorts and conditions, all ages and classes, and tend to be rather heterogeneous in faith



and membership. The sect-type and the cults, on the other hand, appeal to a relatively narrow slice of the population, to those whose particular needs will be met by what they have to offer. In the case of the cults, this will be, as we have seen, primarily young people. Thus the cults, unlike the churches, will have a sharp cutting edge in their approach to new members.

Now what does this mean for the mainline churches? Does the flourishing of the cults represent a failure on their part? Just because they are churches and not sects, the churches usually have not been able to offer to young people exactly what they need in terms of Erikson's analysis. This is especially true because in the experience of most young people the churches represent their parents and their old life of childhood which they need to leave behind. Throughout Christian history the sects can be seen as judgments on the churches for overlooking some particularly important area of life and experience. If there is one word of the Lord in the existence of the cults today, it is that the mainline churches have tended to lose the vision of the radical and demanding character of the Christian faith and life, the strenuousness of what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ.

This reminds me that my son writing to me from his colony of the Children of God in Paris could quote with telling effect many passages of the New Testament in order to contrast his way of following the Christian life with mine. The reason for this is, of course, that early Christianity was a sect rather than a church in Troeltsch's sense. So some of the Christian cults can claim to be much more like the primitive church than can the mainline churches. But the primitive Christian sect became a church with all the problems, responsibilities, and opportunities involved in that. And I would argue that this was the right decision in the light of

the universal character of the mission of the church.

What then should be the response of the churches to the phenomenon of the cults? First, the churches need to work in a variety of ways on the issue of the radical and demanding character of the Christian faith and life, to work on what it is that Christians and the church are called on to be and to do today, in our private and family lives, and in our work and public lives as well. I sense that many Christian people in the mainline churches today are eager to explore these issues and to entertain a more rigorous view of the Christian life.

Second, I believe that we in the mainline churches ought somehow to launch an experiment aimed directly at young people and their needs. What I

have in mind would be something like a combination of a religious order, Outward Bound, an ecumenical work camp, and the Peace Corps. Why these analogies? Religious orders from the fourth century on have harnessed Christian and youthful vision and energy in constructive and creative ways. Erikson demonstrates that it was Luther's moratorium in the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt which made possible the emergence of the reformer. The Children of God have always looked to St. Francis and the beginnings of his order as a model, especially as celebrated in the movie *Brother Son, Sister Moon*.

Outward Bound involves the elements of concentration, endurance, strenuousness, and even danger which young people seek in order to test and discover themselves. A former member of the Unification Church recently compared his experience favorably with that in Outward Bound. Nothing caught the imagination and commitment of the youth generation of the 60s as did the Peace Corps. Finally, perhaps the best model is that of the ecumenical work camps sponsored by the churches of Europe for the rebuilding of churches and hospitals and similar work after World War II.

Certain ingredients of these models are essential to such an experiment: a disciplined community life ordered by a rule; daily Bible study, worship and meditation; commitment to and involvement in helping the poor, the sick, and the oppressed; some kind of work for justice, peace and the preservation of the environment; at least partial self-support; a minimum two-year commitment. Perhaps this model is too old-fashioned and biased by the vision of my generation. Sponsorship by the mainline churches might be the kiss of death. But some such experiment, I believe, is an essential response to the challenge of the cults to the churches. □

Beloved, Believe Not Every Spirit

(In sad memory of November, 1978)

**Out of poor, non-nutritive soil,
the carnivorous plant raises its sinister head,
arrays its colorful traps,
and waits to allure an unsuspecting member
of the insect world.**

**Suddenly, a delicate creature
is seduced by irresistible scents,
submits to the sweetness,
and is trapped!**

**In startling revelation of its foolishness,
it struggles;
but it's far too late.**

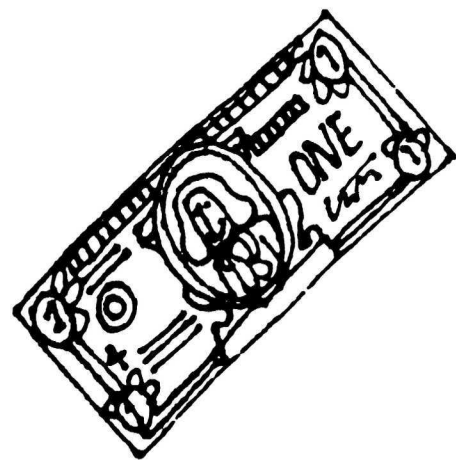
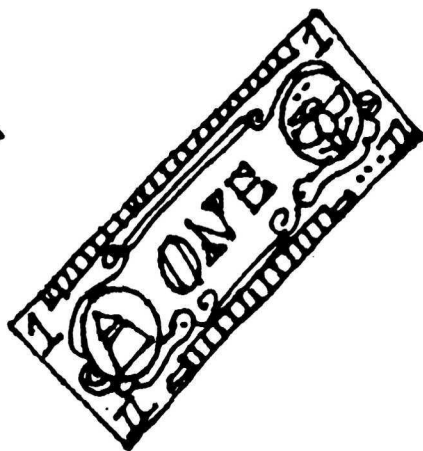
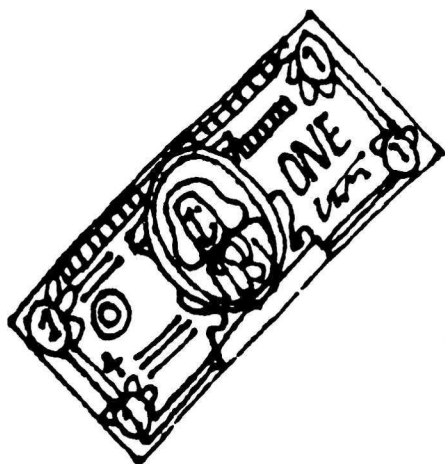
**Slowly its life-giving juices are drained;
its beauty dissolved.**

**Whatever it was or hoped to become
is gone forever,
fully absorbed by the insatiable evil.
Now, mutilated and almost impossible to
identify,
its coffin is closed,
and a plane lifts it from Guyana enroute
home.**

**Its message is repeated over 900 death-
choking times:**

"Give not but to God your Soul. . . ."

— Madeline Ligammaré



The Exquisitely Insensitive Approach

A current joke going around tells about the government that urged its people to tighten their belts. They replied, "Send belts." This open letter to the church is a plea for the church to find out about those belts first in order to show a bit more empathy, sensitivity, and imagination in discussions about stewardship. For example, at the recent General Convention of the Episcopal Church, a resolution from the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development was passed "that the tithe be affirmed as the minimum standard of giving for Episcopalians." We have had the Every Member Canvass since then, winter is here, and we are now discovering the harsh effects of Reaganomics' slashing of funds for many social services. The church's *intention* may well be to encourage us to give generously of our time, our talents, and/or our treasure. But what we actually *hear* is that stewardship means giving money. We also hear the familiar assumption that if we Christians are not firmly and repeatedly reminded of our stewardship duties, we will ignore them.

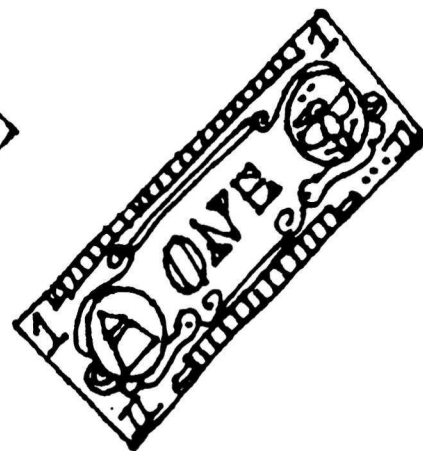
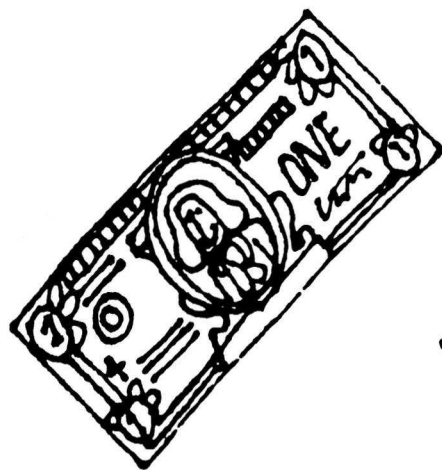
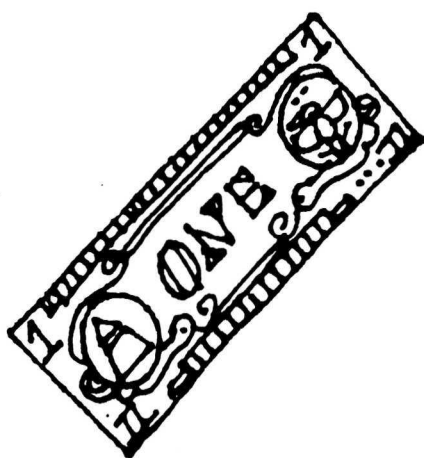
I've been reading Presiding Bishop John Allin's "Testimony of a Tither" which was distributed in our parish at the time of the canvass. He speaks here of the tithe as Convention defined it, as the gift of 10% of one's income for the work of God. Since Bishop Allin is not referring to time or talents, I am impelled to ask, to whom does he assume that he is speaking? To comfortable Episcopalians (professionals, middle-managers, stockholders) with disposable income who can, if they choose, rearrange their priorities in order to tithe? If that is the audience, fine, but then that assumption should be made plain. Because there are many of us to whom Bishop Allin and the Convention

cannot possibly be speaking about tithing 10% or 5% or even 3%.

I live in Michigan where unemployment is at 16.1% and underemployment and financial traumas are epidemic. I am a divorced working mother, a single head of a household, like thousands of others. I have two teenagers at home. Increases in the cost of living, especially in energy costs and utilities, far outstrip the small yearly wage increases I receive. I am moving backwards faster than I can notice. And I am one of the lucky ones: I at least *have* a job that, while low-paying, is relatively secure. Increase my pledge? Pledge 10%? Out of the question. Laughable. The small monthly pledge that I gave today means that I will not pay the dentist for several weeks. It means that of course I do not buy clothing for myself or eat out or go to movies. I do give to my parish as much as I can of my time and talents; and by conviction and necessity, I think a great deal about priorities and simplicity of life.

As statistics about poverty are becoming better known, the vulnerability of the poor becomes clearer. Unemployment nationally is now 10%. Unemployment among young Black people in urban areas is notoriously high. Men and women are being laid off without warning, which means, among other things, that they have no medical benefits. And we should remember that all of us are only one serious accident away from disability. By the year 2000, the "feminization of poverty" will mean the great majority of the poor will be women and children, and the elderly, most of whom are also women. Many women are becoming aware that they may be one husband (and a few child-support payments) away from poverty, and the majority of divorced women with children do not receive child-support payments. Women earn 59¢ for every \$1 men earn — those women, that is, who can find a job, even a low-paying one.

Judith Anderson, of East Lansing, Mich. is a feminist printmaker, woodcarver, and free lance writer.



to Tithing

by Judith Anderson

Surely these facts do not need repeating to anyone who reads a newspaper or a news magazine.

What does need repeating is that many of these people are also parishioners. Or may be, or once were. Sometimes I think there's an assumption that the "worthy poor" are always *outside* the church; that they are those to whom the comfortable parishioners in their largesse can minister through outreach programs. Is there a hidden assumption that "we" are here and "they" are there? Does the Episcopal Church, God help us, mean to be another one of the exclusive Old Boys' Clubs? I would rather not believe that bishops and priests (and vestries) are making these assumptions.

But if they are not, then what I think we should hear from Convention, from every pulpit, and from the Every Member Canvass is something like this:

"Yes, we know that many of our parishioners are in unstable and difficult economic situations. We do know that single mothers are having a hard time feeding and clothing their children and paying the rent. We understand that some of you are out of work, and some are barely making it. We realize that people on pensions and social security are having trouble making ends meet and have increasing medical costs. We're aware of fathers who are paying child support and who have second families. With all of this in mind, we ask that you contribute to the parish and its outreach some of your time and talents, and money if you are ever able. We also realize that there are parishioners whose circumstances are comfortable and stable who can afford to pledge steadily and, in some cases, to increase their pledges. We are asking that each of you, as Christians, rearrange your priorities so that your stewardship is, in praise and

thanks to God, a generous giving of what you can afford in time or talent or money."

If the church does not say all of this explicitly, if it does not clearly acknowledge the varied circumstances of its parishioners, then it is, however unintentionally, extremely insensitive. By really listening to one another, we can at least try to go beyond the thoughtless blindness of classism (and of racism and sexism). In response to the insensitivity, many parishioners and visitors will wonder, *"What are we doing here? They don't even know we exist!"* And many will go away or try to be invisible because they have been made to feel that they cannot "afford" church.

People who are poor may feel unacceptable. They will have been made to feel guilty for being poor. And to lay that trip upon anyone is surely a sin. Our culture is, as we all know, success-oriented and competitive, with little respect or consideration for those whom it considers under-achievers. Money is obviously a sensitive subject, but do we realize how symbolic it is? Do the Presiding Bishop and other church leaders understand that people can indeed very easily be made to feel guilty when they cannot contribute money? Guilt is an odd weapon in the hands of charity.

Would anyone preach about tithing 10% to a poor inner-city parish? No doubt there is more realism and sensitivity in the preaching there. And the church does not have to tell the disadvantaged about sharing and about helping one another — they already know about the widow's mite and support systems, about babysitting for neighbors and relatives, about sharing food and housing. The poor also know about the humiliations in "qualifying" for foodstamps, welfare, ADC, disability insurance, and handicappers' benefits. Surely the church in its inclusiveness should be a place where one does not need to qualify for membership in order to share in its joy, comfort, and fellowship. □

*What does it mean when 41,000 people die
of starvation each day while 20% of U.S. women
college students vomit up their dinners to stay slim?
And 95% of food addicts are women?
The author explores these phenomena of "a food hell."*

Bulimia: Catharsis or Curse?

by Judith Moore

"I'm one of those persons 'by food possessed'," Kitty told me. "I eat compulsively. Not one ice cream cone or two cookies. I consume bags of cookies, loaves of bread, quarts of milk."

Kitty, a 30-year-old seminarian, was described to me by one of her fellow-seminarians as "a good student, good with books and people."

She was articulate, attractive, on the afternoon she explained herself to me as, "like an alcoholic, except *I'm* obsessed with food and eating. Three or four times each week since I was 15 during an hour's time, I have eaten the equivalent of four or five meals. Then, I throw up."

Nothing in her manner indicated what she said was, for her, "a food hell."

I knew that an increasing number of women had trapped themselves in food addiction, of which bulimia — bingeing and purging — is one variant. I knew, too, that not only the food-addicted woman, but women generally, more than men, are preoccupied with food, body size and appetite control. I knew most women felt some embarrassment at this preoccupation.

Sensing in all this some nut I wanted



to crack, I began to ask women about their eating habits. Because I knew Kitty, bulimia especially intrigued me.

Buli, I learned, comes from the Greek word for "huge hunger," or, "hunger never satisfied." Bulimia is characterized by compulsive eating and "purging," usually self-induced vomiting. This vomiting, a physician who treats bulimic dancers wrote, "may come to take on a life of its own, an

habituating effect."

Jane Fonda, bulimic during her boarding school and Vassar years, reports she acquired the habit after reading about the orgiastic eating habits of Romans. But the Roman who went to the Coliseum's vomitorium ate socially. A bulimic eats alone, and in secrecy.

Bulimia was not listed until 1980 in the "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual

Judith Moore is a free-lance journalist based in Berkeley, Cal.

of Mental Disorders” of the American Psychiatric Association. Food addictions only recently have found increased recognition, and psychiatrist John A. Sours writes, “an *absolute* increase in incidence in the United States, Japan, Scandinavia, Great Britain and the countries of Western Europe.”

In late 1981, several months after Kitty first told me her story, physicians from three teaching hospitals announced, through three separate publications: 20% of women college students and 5% of the general female population in the United States are at least mildly bulimic.

During her 15 years of food addiction Kitty had attended a variety of group therapies for women with eating disorders. These figures did not surprise her.

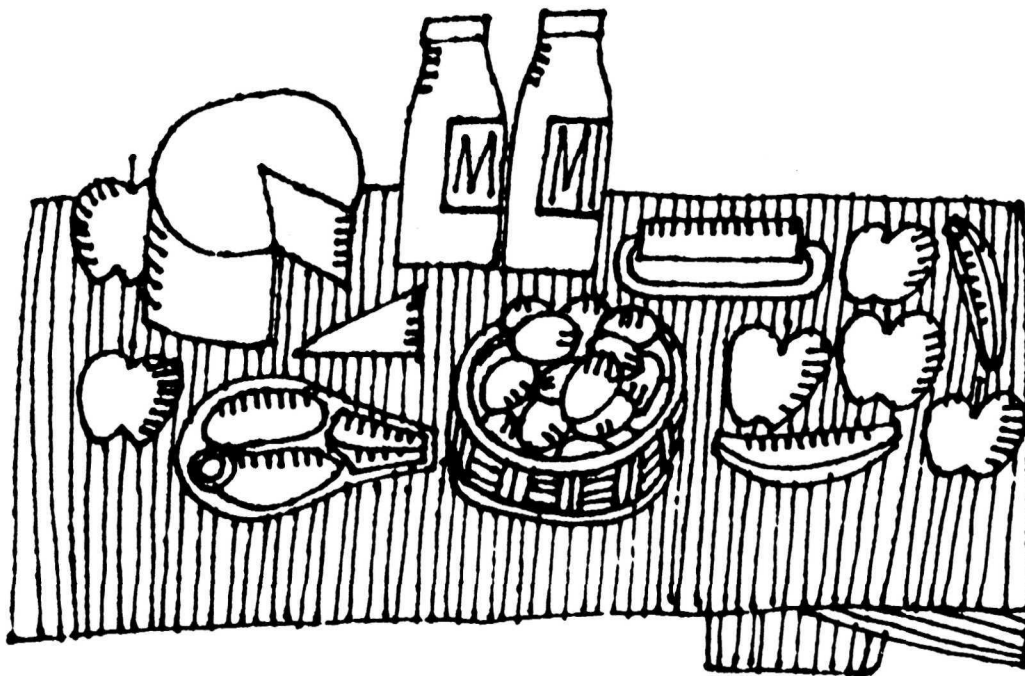
“I’m surprised,” she told me, “that *you’re* surprised.”

The physicians’ announcements roused public interest in bulimia. Experts began to speak out. I continued to be surprised because the experts made no mention of a connection between the omnipresence of food in women’s lives with the figures that showed 95% of food addicts are women.

In case anyone doubted my argument for a connection I copied out the numbers. In 1979 personal expenditure for food in the United States was \$268 billion. In 1978 advertisers spent \$13 billion to influence choices in spending that money — up from \$2 billion in 1950.

It doesn’t take an expert in anything to see that food ads appeal to men as eaters and to women as consumers.

Of the 1600 advertisements pumped into our consciousness everyday, some mean to encourage women to buy one food and not another. This impingement of sophisticated food advertisements has to have its effect on women, has to keep them more preoccupied than men are with food.



Common sense shows us that food money is often a woman’s only money. Food purchases may offer her only discretionary spending, her only power with money, her only treat.

Flesh and appetite-control products direct their advertisements primarily toward women. the numbers I could discover showed that in 1979 advertisers spent \$23 million to advertise reducing salons on local TV. That same year 46% of Americans told Gallup pollsters they felt too fat and 52 million said they wanted to lose weight. Over 75% of these 52 million were women. Almost all diet salon clients are women. The few men I have seen in advertising for the new and popular over-the-counter diet pills are all encouraging women to take the diet pills and are not themselves taking the pills.

Talking with women about diet and appetite control, I began to doubt the Age of Reason had ever dawned.

Hannah, a slender college senior on the Dean’s Select List, once weighed over 200 pounds. “My life,” she told me, “centers around what I weigh. Diet is my life sentence, I’d rather be dead, frankly, than fat again.”

Hannah throws up about half of her meals, almost all of her snacks, takes

laxatives and over-the-counter diet pills.

“I’ve dieted off over 1000 pounds in the last 10 years,” she said, “and I’ve tried diet clinics, but they are mostly bare rooms with a scale and an attendant who keeps a chart on your weight.”

Even though fears like those Hannah expresses were commonplace testimony, women are heavier now than in 1960. Two department store buyers tell me one-third of American women wear larger than size 14. During the past two years many department stores added larger size clothing. A look through bookstores shows books and magazines are being published now that encourage heavier women to simply accept fleshiness, and a number of movements are underway dedicated to consciousness-raising among the obese.

Sarah, at 250 pounds, did not have much hope for a happy future for fat ladies. “Hatred for fat women won’t change just because of F.A.T. clubs,” she laughed, sneeringly. “That’s the acronym for Fatphobia Awareness Training.”

“No,” she assured me, “Men will continue to boycott fat women and thinner women will keep on being

contemptuous. If I could bring myself to vomit, I probably would."

Leila, 24 years old, vomits as a regulatory function to stay at 92 pounds. "Women," she said, "envy my thinness. One said, 'Let me sit next to you. Maybe I will catch anorexia.'"

By the spring of 1982 stories like Leila's, Hannah's and Sarah's began to fill up a stack of recording tapes teetering in a pile on my desk.

The voices were filled with sorrow, desperation, self-loathing, and relief at simply letting go the secrets. Women's preoccupation with food, overweight and appetite control began to seem women's occupational hazard!

Kim Chernin, in her brilliant book, "The Obsession: Reflections on the Tyranny of Slenderness," has suggested that when we open the door onto women's obsession with food and body size, we have entered into the secret emotional life of women *and* into one of the most serious forms of suffering undergone by the contemporary woman.

Maggie Scarf, talking about an

anorexic, describes what the eating disorder can accomplish in the psychological arena: "By confusing mastery of her biological needs with mastery of her psychological needs, she gained the fanciful belief that she had put herself in charge."

Food and flesh offer women readily available, culturally approved materials for expressing conflict between parts of the self and between the world.

"Think," Kitty suggested to me, "how many things a woman says to the world by getting fat or thin. Think how many things she says about herself *to* herself by gorging, by vomiting, by filling herself with ice cream or laxatives or by fasting for three days."

"Women," Sarah taught me, "must cook, but not eat."

This double bind appears to be so deeply institutionalized with culture that "experts" don't connect eating disorders and women with women's constant exposure to food and food issues. Treatment of food addictions remains notoriously difficult.

As Mike Wallace pointed out on 60

Minutes, "More dollars are spent on worthless cures for obesity than for all medical research combined."

But obesity's cure rate remains less than cancer's. No matter what diet is used, losses last two years in only 5-10% of the dieting population. A special problem of food addiction not present in alcoholism, for instance, or drug habituation, is that the food-addicted person must continue to eat; and the food-addicted woman, usually, must continue to plan, shop for, prepare, serve and clean up meals.

Before one begins to levy stern judgments against the food-addicted, one might consider the figures for fat recidivism and imagine, then, how stubborn is its cure. Months after our first chance conversation, I asked Kitty, "What can be done about addictions like yours?"

"The first step," she told me, "in solving any problem still is — admit it exists."

One woman, beating her compulsive eating addiction, said, "The more I talk, the less I eat." □

Letters . . . Continued from page 2

communicants — not to be discriminated against solely on the basis of sex.

The Rev. Reginald G. Blaxton
Washington, D.C.

Center of Superstition?

The Rev. George Porthan's letter in the October WITNESS refers to the shrine at Knock in Ireland as a "center of superstition." I visited there a number of years ago and found the holy water piped conveniently to the parking lot to be a bit much. But behind this rather kitsch imitation of American hardsell (don't we have drive-in churches here?) there is an interesting message from Our Lady to be heard at Knock.

The appearance took place in 1879, in the west of Ireland, politically oppressed and famine stricken. There was no

verbal message, as claimed for other epiphanies of the maternal presence. But there's a great deal of significance in the meaning of the tableau/apparition testified to by the witnesses.

Bridget Trench, 75, said she saw three figures: "The Blessed Virgin was in the center; she was clothed in white, and covered with what appeared one white garment; her hands were raised to the same position as that in which a priest holds his hands when praying at Holy Mass . . ."

Mary Beirne, 26, saw St. John "at the gospel side of the altar, with his right arm inclined at an angle outwardly, towards the Blessed Virgin."

It occurs to me that the message of Knock is that a woman — the Blessed Mother — stands at the altar of the Lamb of God. Can it be that this appearance of Our Lady will finally be understood in, of

all places, Ireland?

The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, when I visited there, had already leapfrogged the Church of Ireland into the 20th century, liturgically and in its concerns for social justice. Will the Roman Catholics there ordain women, too, before the Church which claims the name of Ireland can see the vision at Knock?

The Rev. Grant Gallup
Chicago, Ill.

Prison Articles Helpful

Our community is planning a special celebration recognizing the Prison Ministry in our Diocese.

We found your August article, "Are Prison Systems cheating the Taxpayer?" very helpful. We are expecting

100 people. We would appreciate as many reprints of Margaret Traxler's article as is possible.

The Rev. James Markunas
San Francisco, Cal.

Favorable Comments

Thank you for permission to reprint Jack Woodard's "God Is Not a Pet Rock" (September WITNESS).

There were many favorable comments regarding the article and some interest expressed in its source. I continue to circulate THE WITNESS through our library and reading tables throughout the parish.

Thank you for your continuing good work in the church. I feel better knowing you are on the job.

The Rev. Charles M. Roper
Columbus, Ga.

Articles Timely

I would like to order extra copies of the September issue of THE WITNESS.

What a grand magazine THE WITNESS is! Such timely articles written with conviction and compassion. I hope to share the article by Frances Fox Piven ("The Transformation of City Politics") and the ones regarding the GE iron plant closing by Richard W. Gillett with members of a Northside Pittsburgh cluster group. It is sponsored by the Roman Catholic Thomas Merton Center, dedicated to peace and justice. (Molly Rush of the Plowshares 8 is from the Merton Center.)

Margaret Kirk Stone
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Prized September Issue

Your coverage is exceptional. I especially prized the September issue about America's disappearing industry, which does seem to be ignored by those who should be alerting us to this important phase in the ruination of America. I wish some of our Catholic papers/magazines would do such conscientious work.

Marcella Michalaski
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Seeks Addresses

How about some addresses? Where can we get the T-shirts like the one worn by Bishop Welles on the cover of the November WITNESS (*A Woman's Place is in the House of Bishops*). And where do I write to the Church of St. Stephen & Incarnation to get a copy or two of the lectionary for the year C in inclusive language?

To paraphrase a letter in the November issue, most of the issues you deal with "are central to the church's task of preaching the Gospel." So please, keep on as you are.

Marion Apsley
Martinsville, N.J.

(*Delighted. For T-shirts write the Rev. Judy Upham, Grace Episcopal Church, 819 Madison St., Syracuse, N.Y. 13210 — sizes S, M, L and XL: \$6.95 plus \$1 postage and handling. For the lectionary, St. Stephen & the Incarnation, P.O. Box 43202, Washington, D.C. 20010, \$15.95 — Eds.*)

Hooked on Stringfellow

As a result of the notice of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company award to William Stringfellow, I started to read him, and managed quite easily to get from the United States four of his latest books.

The problem, however, is that I am 24 and an ordinand in the Diocese of London, and I am too young to have been able to lay hands on his earlier work. I fear that I am "hooked" on Stringfellow's theology, and I wonder whether your readers have any ideas as to where second-hand copies of the following may be obtained: *A Second Birthday, My People Is the Enemy, Dissenter in a Great Society, Count It All Joy, Free in Obedience, A Private and Public Faith, The Death and Life of*

Credits

Cover, Beth Seka, adapted from a design by Margaret Longdon; pp. 4, 7, 8, Margaret Longdon; pp. 10, 11, 12, 13, Dana Martin; p. 17, *Cuba Internacional*, courtesy Cuba Resource Center.

Bishop Pike, Suspect Tenderness. I shall be grateful for any suggestions.

Peter D. Eaton
St. George's Anglican Church
7 Rue Auguste Vacquerie
75116 Paris, France

Kudos From W. Germany

As a former subscriber to *Radical Religion*, I have received the copies of THE WITNESS offered to complete my subscription when that journal stopped publishing recently. Thank you for this offer. It is good to know that there are Christian periodicals in the United States that speak freely about the conflicts in society and are not afraid of the majority and the administration! In West Germany you will not find a good chance to do the same in a regular Christian periodical.

But at the same time, I must cut down my subscriptions and I have one other U.S. periodical that I can read regularly. I simply have too much to read! How many West German periodicals do you read regularly? Sorry to let you down. With best wishes for your work, and I am very grateful for your service.

Gerhard Koeberlin
Hamburg, W. Germany

Must Reading

The prophetic stance of THE WITNESS makes it must reading for me each month. I am consistently grateful for both the message and quality of the articles.

WITNESS subscribers are probably the kind of people who would relish Eileen Zieget Silberman's new book, *The Savage Sacrament*. It is the best breakthrough of truth-emerging-from-experience-confronting-official-church-theology that I have ever read. The subtitle, "A Theology of Marriage After American Feminism" speaks for itself. It was published by Twenty-Third Publications, P.O. Box 180, Mystic, Ct. 06355.

Keep publishing WITNESS! We need it!

Patricia Kluepfel
Ledyard, Conn.

Hispanics Bring Suit Against U.S. Government

In a dramatic turn of events, five Hispanic advocates of Puerto Rican independence — two closely connected with the Episcopal Church — have launched a civil suit against the Government, which is trying to subpoena them to testify before a Federal Grand Jury.

The civil suit brought by their attorneys includes a motion to quash the subpoena, it was learned as **THE WITNESS** went to press.

The five Hispanics are Maria Cueto, former executive director of the National Commission for Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church; Steve Guerra of the Board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company; Ricardo Romero, of Alamosa, Col., and Andres and Julio Rosado, of New York.

Figuring prominently in their decision to sue was the recent dismissal of a case brought against them for criminal contempt for refusing to testify. This decision was largely influenced by a prejudicial press release handed out by the FBI, labeling the five as the “unincarcerated leadership of the FALN,” an alleged terrorist group advocating independence for Puerto Rico.

The press handout amounted to trial by newspaper, and prompted Judge Charles Sifton to voice his displeasure at the way the Government had handled the case.

As the case was dismissed, U.S. marshalls moved across the courtroom to serve new subpoenas to the five on the spot. The new subpoenas again call upon them to testify before the current Grand Jury.

One of the more serious implications of the court appearances to date is the apparent decision of the U.S. Govern-

ment to elevate political organizing to the organized crime category by bringing criminal rather than civil contempt charges against the defendants, all of whom advocate independence for Puerto Rico. Heretofore, criminal contempt charges for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury had been reserved for organized crime figures such as the Mafia.

This could put political dissenters on notice that the consequences of disagreeing with U.S. policy could be a formidable jail sentence.

In November, Joan Trafecanty of the Church and Society staff interviewed Maria Cueto about her recent jail experience in Los Angeles and the plight of the five. The complete interview is available from Church and Society, 2808 Altura, Los Angeles, CA 90031.

JOAN: Did they give any reason why you were put in maximum security in Sybil Brand Institution?

MARIA: No. A prisoner may ask, which I did, and they said they didn't know, but that I should know. I wasn't allowed to do anything, even the things that women in maximum are normally allowed to do — like bathe. I wasn't allowed to read or have anything to write on. I was put in what they would call “the hole” in another prison. It's exactly that — just a room with the door padded and there's a hole in the ground for your toilet. I couldn't believe what they were doing and even some of the guards wondered. One said, “What are you charged with?” I said, “Criminal contempt.” She said, “What did you do to warrant this kind of treatment? This charge doesn't warrant that. Did you hit the judge? Did you threaten somebody?” She couldn't understand it either.

JOAN: Before you were subpoenaed last November, did you have hopes that this period of harassment was over?

MARIA: You mean after I was released in 1977 up until 1981? Yes, I did think that it was over. I guess mostly it was wishful thinking, because I knew that the FBI had been around. When I moved from New York to Arizona I knew that they were there. When I moved to Texas I knew that they were there. So it didn't shock me. It just made me very angry. When I appeared before the grand jury in January of 1982, I was kind of indignant. I thought, “What makes you think I'm going to testify before you if I didn't do it before the other one?”

JOAN: Now, do they want to you to testify about the same thing?

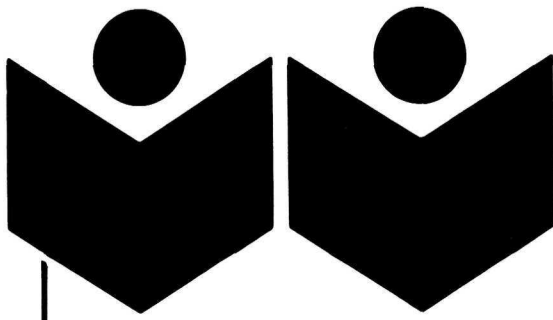
MARIA: The exact same thing, which I won't. I will not have spent a year in jail for nothing. I still believe in the same principles. I don't have to rethink my position. What bothers me is all the other things that go with it — losing your job, putting family through changes, a whole disruption. Those are the hard things that you have to deal with, and all the while you're wondering whether they're going to let you go or will they put you in jail?

JOAN: So you really can't plan for your future because you have no idea what's going to happen next?

MARIA: I can't really do anything. I just have to wait from month to month to see if I have to go back to Federal Court in New York. The waiting period, I think, is the hardest. It's like being in limbo. I can't look for a job. Unless I lie when I apply for a job. Most employers wouldn't give me a job if I tell them the truth. Besides the FBI is liable to go there and also want to know what I'm doing.

JOAN: In your own words, could you explain what your position is, and why are they singling you and a few other people out to bring before the grand jury?

MARIA: I'm not exactly sure why they've
Cueto . . . Continued on back cover



THE WITNESS

1982 Index

Making its debut in this issue is the first index to be published since **THE WITNESS** was reinstituted in 1974. It was compiled by Bonnie Pierce-Spady of **THE WITNESS** staff, who is wearing a happy smile these days to be rid of the mountains of index cards, cross reference notes, and reams of typing paper from her desk. Typesetter Dorothy Forde is equally euphoric.

It has been noted that an index is either the most valuable or the least valuable section a magazine publishes

every year. Librarians and researchers rejoice, authors may thumb through to see if we spelled their names correctly, students doing papers have easy access to given categories, and the FBI has a handy dandy reference if they're interested in pursuing a topic — or an author. Many other readers totally ignore these pages.

We would appreciate your reaction to this innovation, and welcome any queries concerning the availability of back issues or articles by your favorite authors.

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bunched us together. I keep thinking it must be several different reasons, because back in 1977, if there had been something incriminating, they would have found out. I say back in 1977 because the National Commission on Hispanic Affairs was one of the main focuses of the investigation at the time because of the membership. That was the question, and also because of all of the grants that we made to the community. The government took every single piece of paper that was in that office. They came and took the files away. With all their technology and their experience at their finger tips, if there had been something to hide, it would have been in there somewhere, hidden. That was what they had assumed to begin with. The assumption of the government was that we were siphoning funds from the church into the FALN. But nothing came out of their investigation. I thought that they would leave me alone when they hadn't found anything by 1978. So I suspect that they still think somehow that through the church I helped this group.

JOAN: Have church people been supportive, or have you felt like an outcast?

MARIA: There are a couple of things here in reference to the question of the church. One is that just because it's 1982 doesn't mean that the issue has changed. This investigation of me surfaces from my work that took place at the Episcopal Church. The involvement of the church in the FALN — there has never been any on my part or other people's part. The question of the integrity of the church is still something to be dealt

with. After the arrest back in 1977, it is very clear that on a national level many, many things changed. Programs changed . . .

JOAN: Specifically, what was revoked?

MARIA: The social programs. Each of the commissions no longer had the autonomy that we had enjoyed before that — the Native Americans, the Blacks, the Asians, etc. What I'm saying is that what the FBI did in 1977 — people say that it had no effect on the church — but it *did* have an effect. The government *intimidated* the church. This pulling back also took place in the National Council of Churches. I was dealing with the Hispanic Office in the Episcopal Church. There were also 20 other people like me dealing with the Presbyterians, the Methodists, etc. All of the different minorities were doing the same thing, so if it could happen to me, it could happen to each and every one of them.

JOAN: Because of the way the church reacted, do you think a lot of minorities became disillusioned with the church?

MARIA: I think it had a two-fold effect. What the government did intimidated everybody. It shook the church to its very toes. The government was shaking its finger at the church and saying: "Don't do this any more." It hadn't been the first time that the FBI had brushed with the National Council of Churches or any of the denominations around questions like Wounded Knee and all those other things, but this was different. It was different because it went straight for

the throat. The government went straight inside — it walked inside and said "I'm going to take whatever I want." And that's what it did.

JOAN: Was their real purpose to intimidate the church? Or were they looking for the FALN, or what?

MARIA: I think at first, they *really* thought that they had something. They went for everything. The government jeopardized a great deal actually, because it was so bold in what it was doing. They *thought* they really had something.

JOAN: So why would they go through this whole process again?

MARIA: I think they may feel that I might be isolated in the sense that I am no longer with the institutional church. There's also a difference, and the FBI knows this, and that is that originally there was a question of the institutional church being attacked by the government. The National Council of Churches was concerned about this. Now that I'm no longer with the institutional church, it's just the individual, with or without her principles, that they're dealing with. The people who are supportive of me now are the ones who understood from the very beginning what we were talking about as opposed to breaking it up into the different issues that people think are safe. But I think that some individuals from different parts of this country understand what is happening and at this point I think that's important. □