

THE an ecumenical journal of social concern WITNESS

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Minority Women and Feminist Spirituality

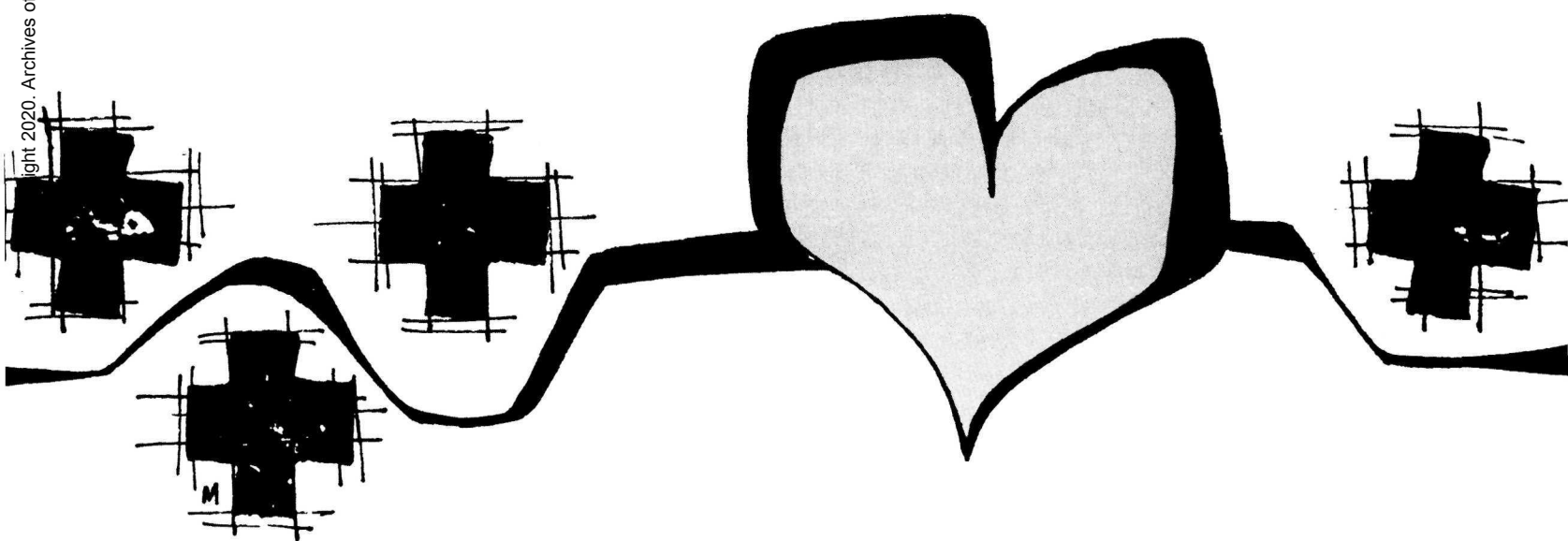
Pauli Murray

The Politics of Pastoral Care

William Stringfellow

Holistic Scripture: New Lectionaries

David Ross



Letters

Dangerous Precedent

THE WITNESS rightly labeled the United States “the Herod of imperialism, cutting off new governments before they have had a chance to develop,” in its December editorial relating to Grenada. Much has been written about the events leading to the killing of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and the subsequent military invasion of Grenada.

But the new element was the so-called “invitation” by members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to the United States and other non-members to participate in the invasion. This was in violation of the very articles of the OECS itself, and of international law as well.

This revised application of the Monroe Doctrine constitutes a dangerous precedent with serious implications for Latin America as a whole and Central America in particular. It allows members of a regional security organization, enjoined and convinced by the United States, to invade a third nation, regardless of the internal situation in the latter, and in violation of that nation’s sovereignty and international law.

The action coincides with the revival of the Central American Defense Committee (CONDECA), by Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras at the instigation of the United States, to resolve the Central American crisis through the military. It is now possible for example, that El Salvador might call upon its allies in Central America and the United States to resolve its internal crisis militarily, or for Honduras to invite the United States, through CONDECA, to invade Nicaragua. I believe that it is against these possibilities that public opinion must analyze and judge the Grenada episode.

The Rt. Rev. Antonio Ramos
National Council of Churches
New York, N.Y.

Editorial High Point

Your editorial, “Blessed Are the Peacemakers” (December WITNESS) was a high point in good writing, maintaining your “right on target” prophetic tradition. We need your voice. I’m enclosing gift subscriptions for some of my friends who will be grateful for that voice and who will help to assure that it continues to get a wider audience.

James B. Guinan
Deerfield, Va.

Jesus Not a Murderer

In the November issue of THE WITNESS there is a so-called poem by Jim Janda titled, “Jesus Feeds the Multitudes.”

While Janda is obviously trying to underline the attitude of many of our church-going citizens, and I will admit that there are many of these Christians that feel great anathema insofar as homosexuals and homosexuality are concerned, I feel that Janda’s placing Our Lord Jesus in the role of a murderer is disgusting and even blasphemous.

Surely the editors of THE WITNESS can provide their readers with articles, poetry and the like, which have a real and positive Christian basis, and not the kind of tripe that calls Jesus a murderer.

Charles D. Corwin
Colonial Beach, Va.

Frightening Parody

J. Janda’s “Jesus Feeds the Multitudes” is unthinkable, offensive, shocking — yes indeed. The poem is a horrifying, frightening kind of parody.

What if the prodigal son, returning home to his father, found him waiting, whip in hand? What if Jesus made a scourge and turned it on the children, instead of the money changers? What if one substitutes the word “gay” for Samaritan?

The message of the Cross, the mes-

sage of the Incarnation is disturbing, especially in the light of persecution and hate. Ask St. Paul after Damascus. Ask gay Christians today.

To be Christ-like, the church should no longer tolerate the prosecution of any of its children. Like Jesus, who never put labels on anyone for their sexuality, we need to nurture, feed, share and love all our brothers and sisters.

Roberta Nobleman
Dumont, N.J.

Granada Address

I am very much interested in obtaining the address of Dorothy Granada about whom THE WITNESS wrote in November (“38-Day Fast for Life Ends With Communion”). She ran our St. Luke’s Hospital School of Nursing in Puerto Rico in the middle 1940’s, and over the years we lost touch with each other. Now that I have “found her again,” I would like to say, “Que tal, como estas?”

You publish an excellent magazine and you have championed the cause of Hispanics under official persecution. For that we praise you.

The Rt. Rev. Francisco Reus-Froylan
Bishop of Puerto Rico

Several readers have written requesting Dorothy Granada’s address. She can be reached through Fast for Life, 4848 E. 14th St., Oakland, CA 94601. — Eds.

Fox Called ‘Disloyal’

I am flattered by the prominent play which THE WITNESS accorded me and the message I wrote when I resigned my commission as Captain in the U.S. Army Reserves. I am grateful to you for helping me make the most of this one-time podium to express my feelings on our country’s outrageous behavior in Central America. (See December WITNESS.)

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THE WITNESS

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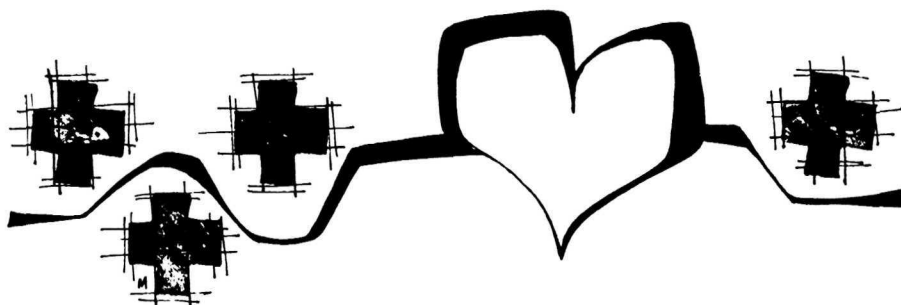


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The Judas Generation

by Henry H. Rightor

Guest writer for this month's editorial is the Rev. Henry H. Rightor, J.D., D.D., Professor Emeritus of Pastoral Care and Canon Law at Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria. He practiced as an attorney and served as a representative in the Arkansas State Legislature prior to ordination.

We in the Western religious tradition have always made associations with certain symbols taken from Scripture. When we have behaved badly, Peter has often given us hope and an understanding of ourselves; if a friend has had doubts, Thomas has been useful to us; many of our well loved communities have been named Salem.

It would not come easily, however, for people in the Christian tradition to identify themselves or their generation with Judas — Judas who destroyed himself after he had betrayed our Lord for money, then repented, not to Jesus but to the chief priests who first had bribed him, and then spurned him and the silver he returned.

It would require considerable “reorientation” of the Judas sym-

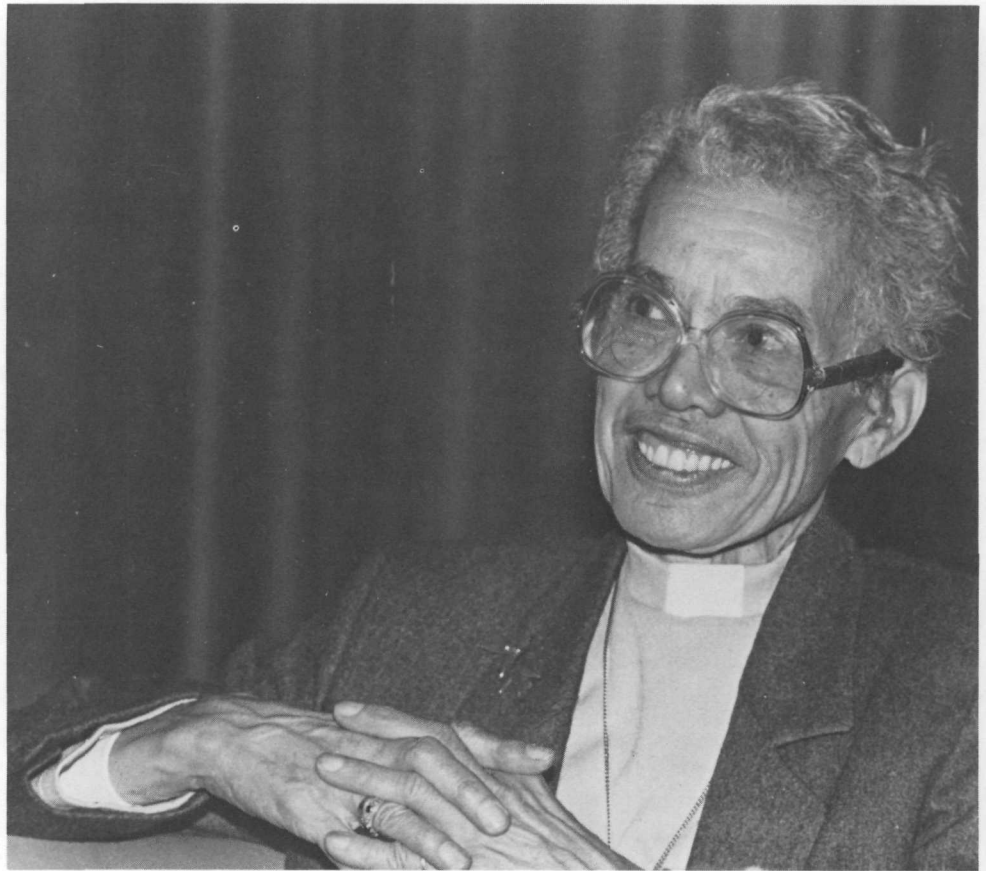
bol for us to apply it to our whole generation. There is, however, precedent of a kind in Jesus’ personalizing a whole generation as “wicked and adulterous,” and then contrasting them with the people of Ninevah who heeded Jonah’s call to repentance.

Identifying our generation with Judas could awaken us to the iniquity implicit in arming for nuclear warfare. God has made us responsible for creation; and it does not overstretch my imagination to relate Judas’ betrayal of our Lord to the steps we are taking toward the betrayal of our responsibility through the destruction of God’s people and God’s world.

Identification of our generation with Judas could awaken us in another way. Should we become

disposed to repent our stockpiling of nuclear weapons, the Judas story tells us how *not* to repent and to whom we should *not* give over the profits from their manufacture. For our basic betrayal has been of the responsibility given us by God. Therefore, our repentance should be to God, and whatever “silver” we might have (from our profits or the disposition of arms, the plants that manufacture nuclear arms, etc.) should be given to God’s needy children here and around the world.

The alternative to such repentance and restoration is clear in the story of Judas, who went out and hanged himself. This is the first generation that has had the means of destroying itself, along with its world. Pray God that we may change our present path. ■



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The Rev. Pauli Murray

Minority Women and Feminist Spirituality

by Pauli Murray

The Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray, a retired Episcopal priest, is one of the co-founders of the National Organization for Women and has had full time careers as lawyer, professor of political science and American studies, and advocate for human rights. She is currently finishing her autobiography to be published by Harper and Row, and until her retirement served as priest-in-charge of Church of the Holy Nativity, Baltimore.

Some time ago, I did a comparative study of Black Theology and Feminist Theology, seeking insights into the dual burdens of race and sex. I discovered that although the two theologies arose out of parallel liberation movements in the United States and that certain historical similarities in the subjugation of Blacks and women suggest a basis for solidarity and fruitful dialogue, considerable tension existed between the two.

Black theology, rooted in the male-oriented Black Power movement which began in the late 1960s, regarded the emerging women's movement as a com-

petitive diversion. Its exponents ignored feminist theology and did not address themselves to the special problems of Black women.

On the other hand, the revived women's movement, led by predominantly White, middle- or upper-class women, had not successfully incorporated the aspirations of poor and minority women into its struggle. Both groups tended to concentrate upon a single factor of oppression without adequate consideration of the "interstructuring" of racism, sexism, and economic exploitation. I noted that focusing on a particular factor of oppression

could obscure the goal of universal liberation and reconciliation which lies at the heart of the Christian gospel.

Some feminist theologians, aware of this danger, stressed the necessity for an inclusive approach, broad social analysis, and self-criticism which recognizes and opposes the oppressive practices within one's own group. This feminist analysis also points to the fact that women constitute half of every social class and their common concerns necessarily embrace the whole spectrum of the human condition. This offers possibilities for joint action which can begin to transcend barriers of race, sex, and economic class. At the time of the study I also noted that the interlocking factors of racism and sexism within the Black experience await analysis.

With these findings as a point of departure, the question arises: What promise does feminist spirituality in the context of the women's movement hold for minority women—and specifically Black women—in their struggles for liberation? In the broad sense, spirituality refers to that which gives meaning and purpose to our lives, our vision of wholeness of being. Theologian Letty Russell speaks of the spirituality of liberation which focuses upon partnership in situations of oppression. "Feminist theologians," she notes, "have sought to articulate the groaning of women and to build solidarity among those working to anticipate the new meaning of human wholeness."

When I seek to apply this model, however, I find that the severe tensions existing between Black women and White women stand as barriers to the solidarity which feminist spirituality envisions. What follows is an attempt to highlight some of these tensions in the hope that an analysis will produce insights that point the way toward reconciliation and collaborative effort.

Alienation of Black Women

A typical expression of the deep-seated alienation Black women continue to feel toward White women 20 years after the rebirth of the women's movement is that of Dr. Deborah Harmon Hines of Meharry Medical College, Nashville, and national president of the Union of Black Episcopalians. Speaking on "The Black Women's Agenda" at a conference of the Episcopal Church's Task Force on Women in 1981, Dr. Hines declared:

The Black women that I work with, seek advice from, socialize with, go to church with come from a wide variety of backgrounds, economic strata, educational levels, work, family and leadership experience. These women unequivocally see their roles as maintaining, strengthening and uplifting our race, our families, our culture and heritage, our men and ourselves. And these women see racism as our archenemy in this struggle.

Dr. Hines spoke of the degrading images—"Aunt Jemima," "Jezebel," and "welfare seeker"—with which Black women have to contend, and charged that "my White step-sisters are often as guilty or guiltier than their menfolk in perpetuating these myths about Black women." (See THE WITNESS, 2/82.) She went on to say:

Black women find it extremely difficult to ally themselves with those who have not been part of the solution, but a part of the problem. Black women find it extremely difficult to ally themselves with those who say, 'We have all suffered the same,' when we know it isn't so. Black women find the situation intolerable when we are told (by White women) what we should do in our struggle, and not asked what we want to do. Until

our step-sisters stop superimposing their needs onto us, we have nothing to say to them.

This sentiment expressed by a Black professional woman who is a deeply committed Christian is echoed in various ways by other Black women and is cause for deep concern among those of us who work for solidarity among women as a necessary expression of our feminist spirituality. Its implications go to the core of our beliefs and actions and must be confronted honestly, however painful this may be.

A review of recent literature in which Black women have sought to define themselves and their priorities reveals the consistent theme that Black women are the victims of multi-layered oppression. The "Black Feminist Statement" formulated by the Combahee River Collective states: "We believe that sexual politics under patriarchy is as pervasive in Black women's lives as are the politics of race and class. We also find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are experienced simultaneously."

To a much greater extent than White women, Black women are victimized by racial-sexual violence which has deep historical roots in slavery and continues today in rape, forced sterilization and physical abuse in family relations. They constitute the most disadvantaged group in the United States as compared to White men, Black men and White women. They are found in the most menial, lowest-paying jobs, and are disproportionately represented among poor, female-headed and welfare families. Black women and their families suffer from inadequate health care, high rates of infant mortality and other health hazards associated with poverty and powerlessness.

As Deborah Hines indicated, Black women have had to struggle against

myths and humiliating stereotypes which undermine a positive self-image. The Black matriarchy myth which became popular in the social science literature of the 1960s has depicted Black women as having an unnatural dominant role in family life, which has had damaging effects upon Black society. The ill effects attributed to the alleged existence of a matriarchal family structure included juvenile delinquency, self-hatred, low intelligence, cultural deprivation, crimes against persons, and schizophrenia among Blacks, according to one reviewer. The sharp rise in numbers of female-headed families in the Black community has reinforced this stereotype.

This matriarchy myth has come under heavy criticism during the past decade, particularly by Black women scholars. Dr. Jacqueline J. Jackson of Duke University Medical Center, has pointed to the demographic factor of a significant sex-ratio imbalance in the Black population. She noted that in 1970, there were about 91 Black males for every 100 Black females in the United States. The growing excess of Black females over Black males has been reflected in every census since 1860, but has become increasingly acute. By 1976, the U.S. Census reported that there were 80.7 Black males for every 100 Black females over 24 years old.

This cannot be explained solely on the ground that Black males have been overlooked in the census count. Jackson finds that this sex-ratio imbalance is directly related to the high proportion of Black female-headed families and has defined these families as an adaptation to larger social structural forces. The limited availability of marital partners for Black women is also a factor in expressions of hostility toward White women who enter into sexual or marital relationships with Black men.

In their embattled struggle for day-to-day survival, Black women's attitudes

toward the women's movement have ranged from indifference and outright rejection, to suspicion, to cautious approval of certain of the movement's goals coupled with aloofness and strong criticism of perceived racism and classism within the movement itself.

Gloria I. Joseph and Jill Lewis of Hampshire College, in a penetrating analysis of conflicts in Black and White feminist perspectives, maintain: "The White women's movement has had its own explicit forms of racism in the way it has given priority to certain aspects of struggles and neglected others, and it has often been blind and ignorant of the conditions of Black women's lives."

While they acknowledge that many of the issues raised by White women do affect *all* women's lives—e.g. contraception, abortion, forced sterilization, rape, wife battering, inequities in law, health care, welfare, work conditions, and pay—they point out that "because of the inherently racist assumptions and perspectives brought to bear on these issues in the first articulations by the White women's movement, they were rejected by Black women as irrelevant, when in fact the same problems, seen from different perspectives, can be highly relevant to Black women's lives." "Too frequently," they assert, "participants in the struggles of parallel liberation movements are blinded to each other and have only a limited understanding of each other's priorities."

One area of misunderstanding has been in the perception of male/female relationships. According to the Joseph and Lewis study:

The differences recognized in the sexual relationships between Black women and Black men in contrast to White women and White men relate to the question of power . . . To categorically lump all men together and at-

tribute the same sense of power to both Black and White men is racist in the same sense that the crucial role of white-skin privilege in our society is being disregarded. It is incumbent upon White feminists to recognize the very real differences that exist between White men and Black men when their degree of power is considered.

While White feminists necessarily have directed their energies against a system of male domination, Black males and females are bound together in a political struggle against White racism which has traditionally repressed in the most brutal manner assertions of power by Black males. Black women, feeling a strong need to support their men, have often perceived the women's movement to be a "divisive" tactic which would alienate them from their partners in their effort to throw off White domination. Black women face the dilemma of the



Rachel Burger/cpf

competing claims of the Black liberation movement and the women's liberation movement, each of which is a separate entity based on its own distinctive realities. The Black woman cannot participate fully in both, but she cannot afford to ignore either movement.

Toward a Resolution

The rise of Black feminism within the past decade is an important development but it is not yet clear what direction it will take to resolve the Black woman's dilemma. Some Black women's groups have developed coalitions with White women on specific issues. Several Black feminist groups have sprung up as a third movement exclusively devoted to the concerns of Black women, but their isolation and aloofness raises questions as to their effectiveness. Dr. Constance M. Carroll, President of Indian Valley College, Novato, Cal., urges an alternative course which is a "productive but difficult and lonely road if the Black woman is to achieve concrete benefits at the end of her struggle. She must be the gadfly who stings both movements into achieving their goals—prodding the women's movement into confronting its racism and working doubly hard for the concerns of Black women, and prodding the less volatile Black movement into confronting its inherent sexism and righting the injustice it has done to Black women. She must become the sorely needed bridge between them if their goals are to be translated into reality."

Some Black women are beginning to follow this course—reexamining their position and becoming more vocal in their feminism, within the Black movement at least. Several Black women theologians have launched a critique of Black theology. The most pointed criticism has come from Jacquelyn Grant, doctoral candidate at Union Theological Seminary. She observes that "Some theologians have acquiesced in one or more oppressive aspects of the liberation

struggle itself. Where racism is rejected, sexism has been embraced. Where classism is called into question, racism and sexism have been tolerated. And where sexism is repudiated racism and classism are often ignored." She declares bluntly, "The failure of the Black church and Black theology to proclaim explicitly the liberation of Black women indicates that they cannot claim to be agents of divine liberation. If the theology, like the church, has no word for Black women, its conception of liberation is inauthentic." Grant also questions the thesis that the central problem of Black women is related to their race and not their sex. She says, "I contend that as long as the Black struggle refuses to recognize and deal with its own sexism, the idea that women will receive justice from that struggle alone will never work."

Significantly, these and similar criticisms have influenced Black theologian James H. Cone to reexamine his views. In his recent book, *My Soul Looks Back*, Cone confesses: "When I began writing about Black theology, the problem of sexism was not a part of my theological consciousness. When it was raised by others, I rejected it as a joke or an intrusion upon the legitimate struggle of Black people to eliminate racism."

Cone traces his reeducation which began at Union Theological Seminary where he was exposed to the women's liberation movement. He says:

While White women forced me to consider the problem of sexism in a White context, Black women forced me to face the reality of sexism in the Black community . . . As I listened to Black women articulate their pain, and as I observed the insensitive responses of Black men, it became existentially clear to me that sexism was a Black problem too . . . Black women theologians appear to be developing a new comprehensive way of thinking about theology,

church, and society. While Black male theologians focus almost exclusively on racism, White feminists primarily on sexism, and Third World theologians or Latin Americans concern themselves with classism, Black women are seeking to combine the issues of race, sex, and class, because they are deeply affected by each.

Further indication of Cone's movement toward a more comprehensive approach is his reflection upon the doctrine of "woman's place," and the doctrine of "Black people's place," which leads him to ask, "Is it not possible that the two doctrines are derived from the same root disease? This does not necessarily mean that the struggles of White women are identical with Black people's liberation. It does mean that oppressions are interconnected."

Cone's new insight affirms the central theme of my presentation. As feminist theologian Rosemary Ruether has urged, it is "essential that the women's movement reach out and include in its struggle the interstructuring of sexism with all other kinds of oppression, and recognize a pluralism of women's movements in the context of different groupings." White feminists need to recognize that racism is also a feminist problem and begin to deal with it as a necessary development of feminist consciousness. As Ellen Pence, a White feminist, has put it:

Knowing that we grew up in a society permeated with the belief that White values, culture, and lifestyle are superior, we can assume that regardless of our rejection of the concept we still act out of that socialization. The same anger and frustration that we have as women in dealing with men whose sexism is subtle, not blatant, are the frustration and anger women of color must feel toward us. The same helpless feelings we have in

*trying to expose that subtle sexism
must be the feelings of women of
color in working with us.*

The women's movement has rich resources at its disposal to deal seriously with this issue. One of these is the experience women have gained in consciousness-raising, which can now be used to explore the ways in which racism has dehumanized women of all races and classes in the United States. This is already being done by small groups of Black and White women in face-to-face discussions, especially in the academic field.

Finally, if feminist spirituality includes the vision of wholeness of being, then those who follow that vision have the task of reeducation within the women's movement, which involves both a search for greater understanding and a capacity for self-criticism of the racism and classism which alienate us from one another.

Feminist theology points the way toward this imperative. Marianne H. Micks reminds us that "human selfhood before God is historical selfhood," and speaks of the need to "stretch ourselves, go beyond ourselves, as we enter the spaces of our common past which many of us have never visited. If we are to understand each other today," she says, "we must know more about Native American experience, Black experience, and the experience of many additional ethnic groups."

I submit that our openness to self-criticism is an antidote to the guilt which often paralyzes our actions and makes us resistant to change. I also believe that the sharing of personal histories and feelings in face-to-face contact brings an understanding which we cannot achieve merely through the absorption of historical and statistical data. Both are important steps in the healing process which builds mutual trust and the basis of genuine solidarity as we strive together in our daily lives to make real our vision of human wholeness. ■

Resources

Black Theology, A Documentary History, 1966-1979; Gayraud S. Wilmore & James Cone, eds. Orbis Books 1979.

But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies; Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith, eds. Feminist Press 1982.

Racism and Mental Health; Charles Willie, Bernard Kramer and Bertram Brown, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972.

Black Macho & the Myth of the Superwoman, Dial Press, 1979.

Common Differences: Conflicts in Black and White Feminist Perspectives; Gloria I. Joseph and Jill Lewis. Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1981.

Our Search for Identity: Humanity in the Image of God, Marianne H. Micks, Fortress Press, 1982.

Growth in Partnership, Letty Russell, Westminster Press, 1981.

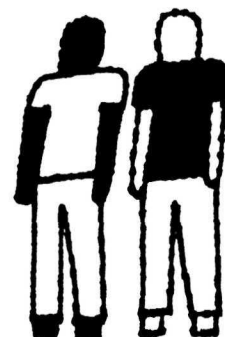
New Woman/New Earth: Sexist Ideologies & Human Liberation, Rosemary Ruether, Seabury Press, 1975.

Identity

(Song for Two Voices)

What is black?
Black is a grackle's feather
tinged with blue,
a shadow
washed with purple,
a dot
on a ladybug's wing.
Black is the weather side
of an oak
after rain.
Black is the big round open letters
in a child's first
reading book.
Black is ebony, jet,
and the heart of a daisy.
I, too, am black!

What is white?
White is the breast of a snow goose,
a shaft of light
with dusty motes,
a dot on a woodpecker's back.
White is a birch tree
in the winter sun.
White is the space between the big round open letters
in a child's first
reading book.
White is ivory, crystal,
and a daisy petal.
I, too, am white!



—Georgia Pierce

Holistic Scripture

by David F. Ross

Biblical sexism is the evil for which an inclusive-language lectionary is the currently proposed corrective. Two versions of this remedy are now available, *Hearing the Word*, published by the Episcopal Church of Saint Stephen and the Incarnation in Washington, D.C., and the National Council of Churches' *An Inclusive Language Lectionary*, published by Westminster Press. Neither has as yet been approved for liturgical use in the Episcopal Church, and another acrimonious controversy can be expected when the proposal is made. Zealots on each side will see bigots on the other, with women's rights as the battleground. The smoke from this battle may well obscure, however, a more fundamental aspect of the problem.

The issue of women's rights has been addressed by Claire Randall, of the NCC, who points out that women experience a "different kind of feeling" when they hear Bible readings that include them. Jack Woodard, of Saint Stephen and the Incarnation, points to the benefits of "understanding that women have always been part of God's people, and that women to this day are addressed by God's word as fully as are men." The

situation of a girl or woman in church has always been that of a daughter whose mother goes quietly about her household tasks while her father sits praising the virtues and achievements of his sons, occasionally remembering to add that he loves his daughter too, because she is pretty and obedient.

Without going far beyond the bounds of translation and into the realm of fantasy, we cannot do much at this stage to correct the invisibility of biblical women. The daughters of Adam and Eve are lost to us forever, along with the name of Noah's wife and the remorse that she and her husband must have felt over the fate of their daughters. Substitutes can be found for masculine pronouns, "Sons of Abraham" can become "Children of Sarah and Abraham," but when all is said and done most of the people who are memorable for their words and deeds will remain male, and most of the women who are identified will be known only for their sexual roles. Women were chattels in biblical times, after all, and have been repressed throughout all of human history. Even if we could conceal this, it would not advance the cause of women's rights to do so. It is something, rather, of which we need to be more aware. The pulpit, rather than the lectern, must be our principal recourse.

The more fundamental aspect of biblical sexism, however, is one that can be attacked most effectively through the lectionary. The Word of God, reflecting

the nature of God, and reflected in God's creation, is unmistakably a combination of feminine and masculine elements. Nothing can conceal this; but when the Word is transcribed, interpreted, and translated exclusively by male minds and hands, it becomes distorted. It is through this distortion that we receive the macho image of God that denies us the hope of peace and denounces the hungry for their weakness. Without addressing this issue, the inclusive-language lectionographers can do nothing to restore that balance of the feminine and masculine qualities which Jesus laid down as the foundation of his church.

Because the opposition does and will proclaim the contrary, it needs to be emphasized that the movement for inclusive language is one of renewal, not of revision. It is, in essence, rigorous Christian fundamentalism. The feminine element is present in the Holy Scripture, but in a male-dominated culture it tends to become obscured and depreciated. This was the situation that Jesus found when he came into the world. His teaching lays such stress upon the "feminine" virtues that the ethical content of the Gospel is not inclusive but downright feminist. Christians, in fact, have often felt it necessary to counter the image of sweet, gentle, meek-and-mild Jesus by pointing out that what he did required considerable courage and fortitude, that he did lose his temper on occasion, and that he resorted to physical aggression

The Rev. David Ross is associate professor of economics at the University of Kentucky. An Episcopalian priest, he is author of the newly published book, *Gandhian Economics: Sources, Substances and Legacy* (Prasad Publications, Bangalore).

against the money changers in the temple.

The balance that is inherent in God's will and creation could be restored in the time of Jesus's ministry only by throwing a lot of weight on the feminine side, and the same is true today. One needs no other reference than the daily newspaper to establish this. The current personification of so-called Christian fundamentalism, Jerry Falwell, for example, opposed the showing of a television program on the horrors of nuclear war because it might induce support for unilateral disarmament. Indeed it might; and it might even be granted that unilateral disarmament would be an inexpedient approach to the world's problems at this moment in history. Still, nothing could be more pure, fundamental, and orthodox in its adherence to the clear, explicit, and reiterated teaching of Jesus than unilateral disarmament. Falwell must know this at the intellectual level, but it has not penetrated to the gonadal essence of his being. It is difficult to take seriously such transparent jocks-for-Christ theology, but we must, because it is a caricature of something real and potent in the church.

The problem is not, and probably never was, that people are persuaded to resort to force by faith in a scriptural representation of God which exaggerates masculine values. That tendency requires no cultivation, and in fact thrives on neglect. Sunday-morning Christians do not habitually consult the Bible before deciding how to deal with domestic, social, economic, and political choices. They are vaguely aware, however, that Jesus said things like "love your enemies," "turn the other cheek," and "blessed are the meek." They cannot help but wonder from time to time how such articles of faith apply to developing a first-strike nuclear capability or invading Grenada. The superman version of the Christian deity promoted by such clerical and lay leaders as Falwell and Reagan is dangerous because

it rationalizes the suppression of such tentative propensities toward the lamb and consecrates the beast.

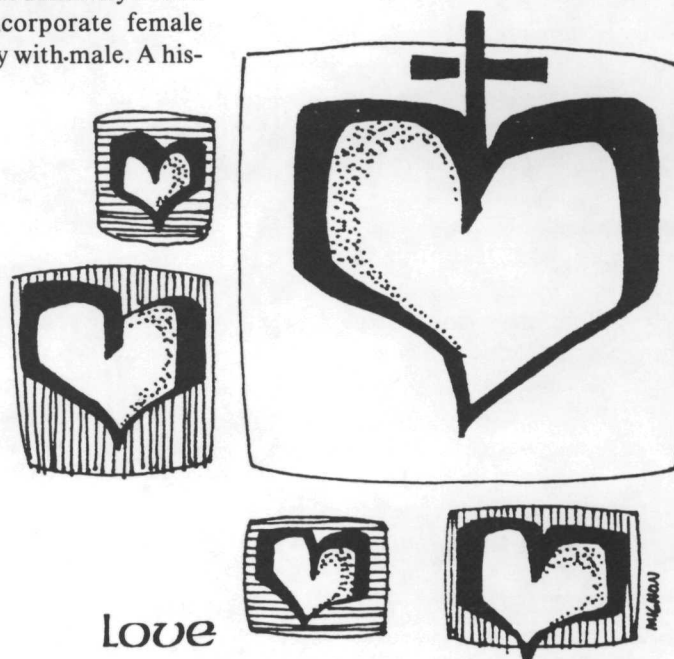
The metaphor of God as parent is so fruitful that it cannot be eliminated without impoverishing the faith. It conveys creation, authority, loving, caring, disciplining, teaching, sustaining, forgiving — everything, in short, that we mean and can express in no other way when we turn our thoughts to God.

The error in the symbolism of the Heavenly Father is merely that it is incomplete — it is part of our heritage, instead of everything that comes from God. Grammarians may insist that the masculine embraces the feminine and that "our Father," like "our fathers" and "our forefathers," refers to parenthood generally, not just to the male line. Nevertheless, for most of us they conjure up images of men — admirable men of great strength and intelligence who are brave, just, faithful, creative, and extraordinarily farsighted, but definitely not so remarkable as to incorporate female characteristics equally with male. A his-

torian or patriot who wishes to give equal credit to the strong, courageous, and otherwise admirable women who were borne up through the hardships and dangers of the wilderness and of defiance to tyranny by the vision of a better life for their descendants, can only do so by referring explicitly to "our forefathers and foremothers" or "our mothers and fathers." So too it must be with God, if we are to preserve the parental metaphor.

The problem with Jesus is more complex, because when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, the flesh was unquestionably male, and unquestionably referred to God as "Father." From these historical facts derives the father-son imagery of the trinitarian formula, leaving only the ambiguous Holy Spirit as a partial expression of the feminine essence. Nothing in the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation requires us

Continued on page 20



is not just words
and mere talk
But something
real and active.

The Politics of Pastoral Care

Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a man lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful to ask alms of those who entered the temple. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked for alms. And Peter directed his gaze at him, with John, and said, "Look at us."

And he fixed his attention upon them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver and gold, but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.

And leaping up he stood and walked and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God, and recognized him as the one who sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

The Acts of the Apostles 3:1-10

And as (Peter and John) were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they arrested them and put them in custody . . .

The Acts of the Apostles 4:1-3A

an ecumenical meditation concerning the incumbent Pope

by William Stringfellow

In the earliest experience of the Apostolic Church, during the period promptly after Pentecost . . . long before the church acquired an ecclesiastical polity resembling what now prevails . . . when the orders and ministries of the church were simply authorized charismatically and functionally . . . prior to the conformity and decadence sponsored by the Constantinian Arrangement . . . the precedent for the office and service of those who would, later on, be called and ordained as bishops was established. So it is that the vocation of a bishop is illuminated in *The Acts of the Apostles*.

I have participated during the last few years in the endemic dismay of church-folk — both within and outside of the Roman Communion — at the ambivalent, and poignant, behavior of Pope John Paul II.

Perchance I should mention, before further comment, that I remember circumstances when I, as with many other non-Roman Christians, thought it impudent to publicly volunteer my views of any Pope's conduct. That vain etiquette, however, has been obviated by, among other things, John Paul's own construction of the ecclesiastical primacy of the papacy.

Hence, in the midst of my repeated bewilderments and multiplying disenchantments with John Paul, I turn to *The Acts of the Apostles* to ascertain what I

can from this elementary source about what a bishop is (or is supposed to be) according to ancient experience.

What is to be found and confirmed in *Acts* is a priority of pastoral care epitomized in the function and ministry of bishop. Administration, which so pre-empts the attention of contemporary bishops, is, in *Acts*, a matter, at most, of quaint allusion. It is merely one specification of the pastoral office. At the same time, teaching in *Acts* virtually always has the particular connotation of "teaching and proclaiming the resurrection from the dead." It is more prominent than administration, yet it has the same emphatic aspect of nurture. Teaching is a feature of pastoral care. Much the same can be affirmed, from *Acts*, concerning the confrontation with the world and the discernment of the needs of the world, as the texts cited indicate.

In brief, the Apostolic ministry begins in pastoral concern for each member of the whole church and reaches into the very interstices of the body of the church. Simultaneously, it addresses the worldly regimes of the principalities and powers, as well as all people everywhere, at once exposing every need and vouching for the redemptive vigilance of the Word of God in the world. Thus, a bishop (as I am sure many bishops realize) is dialectically positioned between church and world. This is really not a situation of grandeur. Maybe that is why, too often, where the office of bishop has been rendered grandiloquent it has lost pastoral integrity for either church or world.

While I name pastoral care as the venerable characteristic of the ministry of a bishop, I trust it is understood that

there are no particular psychological or similar implications assumed. Pastoral care has acquired narrow, partisan and self-serving connotations in certain ecclesial precincts nowadays associated with assorted therapies. Possibly such have some worldly legitimacy, but, recalling *Acts* concretely, none furnish substitute for the new life, exemplified in Jesus Christ and informed by the vitality of the Word of God in the Holy Spirit. None do more than foreshadow the new humanity in Christ which constitutes the exact vocation of the Church. Bishops have reason for both gratitude and cheer. They are not called to be amateur or ersatz therapists of any sort: they are called, rather, to be pastors for the whole church in this world.

Yet if the pastoral ministry pertinent to a bishop's office is free of heavy psychological or personalistic or indulgent implications, it must be openly acknowledged that pastoral care *does* have political significance. In this regard the whole Bible is redundant, and the book of *The Acts of the Apostles* is most notably so. Thus, the episode first related in *Acts* concerning the activities of the Apostles following their own renewal as persons and as a community in the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost, is archtypical of the episodes reported later on in the book. *Acts* is, simply, the chronicle of the confrontations between the Apostles and the Apostolic Church and the ruling authorities. The witness and ministry *pastorally* of the new Christians is beset by hostility, harassment, surveillance, arrest, imprisonment, sometimes execution, persecution. Over and over again, the story of that experience which composes *Acts*

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is, essentially, the same as that which Peter and John knew in the first reported incident involving the healing of the lame beggar at the gate of the temple called Beautiful.

The lame beggar is healed (notice that the beggar did not seek or ask to be healed, but only that he be given alms or conventional worldly charity), and thereupon the Apostles are arrested. Peter himself asks the rulers why he and John have been kept in custody because of "a good deed done to a cripple." (*Acts 4:9*) Why should the political authorities take offense at that? Why were Peter and John arrested? And why did a similar fate thereafter meet the pastoral effort of succeeding Apostles?

Peter's question is no conundrum. The authority invoked and deployed in addressing the lame beggar is that of the resurrection from death. The healing is itself a sign of the efficacy of the resurrection. But that is an authority which straightforwardly exposes the impotence of the authority of the rulers.

The authority of the rulers is not only helpless against the power of death, it relies upon death and diverse threats of death as its only moral sanction. And so, from the earliest experience of the church, the Apostles are poised against the rulers of this world. That is the basic posture in the relationships of church and worldly regimes. I believe this is a clue to the political character of authentic pastoral care, especially as the pastoral ministry is vested in the office of bishop. One lesson to be learned from the arrest of Peter and John in consequence of their care for the beggar and their witness, thus, to the world, is that when bishops are most conscientious pastorally they are apt to be most cogent politically.

Some bishops seem, lately, to return to this discernment (after the prolonged manipulation of bishops and of the whole church via the Constantinian Arrangement and its derivations). The American Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letter

on nuclear reality is a particularly significant example. Other bishops, including some Episcopalians, now repudiate the "just war" sophistry which has so benighted Christendom in the West for so long.

There seems, however, to me to be such diffidence on these matters on the part of the incumbent Pontiff as to raise a query about whether John Paul — reputed chief pastor of all in both church and world — comprehends the inherently political character of pastoral ministry as elucidated in *Acts* in incidents like that of the arrest of Peter and John.

At the least John Paul appears radically ambivalent. One specific source of disillusionment with his behavior is, on one hand, his bold and passionate pastoral involvement in Poland — and the manifold and continuing political ramifications of that care; coupled, on the other hand, with his paternalistic and caustic attitude toward the need for a comparable ministry and witness in Central America.

Meanwhile, especially on the American scene, John Paul sponsors the interminable suppression of women, particularly the religious, and exacts "loyalty oaths" favoring male dominance ecclesiastically from nominees to the episcopacy. In that context, his views concerning both sexuality and sex invite ridicule. To put it directly, does the Pope seriously suppose that scoldings condemning masturbation as "a very grave moral disorder" deflect attention from the oppression of women or merit more notice and effort than the threat of nuclear obliteration, about which the Pope has been cautious, if not equivocal?

Papal utterances concerning the sanctity of life sound hollow or hypocritical to many people who note the quietness or coyness of the Vatican on Grenada, or El Salvador, or, for that matter, Lebanon, or the increasing probabilities of nuclear calamity. And, to me, most ominous and alarming are the official Papal inquests into some of the women's religious orders.

These parallel investigations affecting the Archbishop of Seattle (who has refused to pay taxes for war) and kindred bishops, and the attempts to manipulate the governance of the Jesuits. Are these what they seem to be — attempts to intimidate factions or persons or powers within the church who are apt to be critical of the Pope and his ambivalent politics?

It is a melancholy scene that attends John Paul, one in which a politics is practiced that has a kind of anti-pastoral emphasis, or in which a pastoral ministry is professed which is anti-political. There may be no *timely* remedy for this extraordinary shortcoming or confusion in the ministry of John Paul. But I commend, to one and all, that a fit remedy is awaiting application. It is in the politics of pastoral care articulated in *The Acts of the Apostles*. ■

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The 100th Monkey

by Ken Keyes, Jr.

*There is a phenomenon
I'd like to tell you about
In it may lie
our only hope
of a future
for our species.*

*Here is the story
of the Hundredth Monkey:
The Japanese monkey,
Macaca fuscata,
has been observed in the wild
for a period of over 30 years.*

*In 1952,
on the island of Koshima
scientists were providing monkeys
with sweet potatoes
dropped in the sand.
The monkeys liked the taste
of the raw sweet potatoes,
but they found the dirt unpleasant.*

*An 18-month-old female
named Imo
found she could solve the problem
by washing the potatoes
in a nearby stream.
She taught this trick
to her mother.
Her playmates also
learned this new way
and they taught their mothers, too.*

*This cultural innovation
was gradually picked up
by various monkeys
before the eyes of the scientists.*

*Between 1952 and 1958,
all the young monkeys
learned to wash
the sandy sweet potatoes
to make them more palatable.*

*Only the adults
who imitated their children*

learned this social improvement.

*Other adults
kept eating
the dirty sweet potatoes.*

*Then something startling took place.
In the autumn of 1958,
a certain number of Koshima monkeys
were washing sweet potatoes—
the exact number is not known.*

*Let us suppose
that when the sun rose one morning
there were 99 monkeys
on Koshima Island
who had learned
to wash their sweet potatoes.*

*Let's further suppose
that later that morning,
the hundredth monkey
learned to wash potatoes.*

THEN IT HAPPENED!

*By that evening
almost everyone in the tribe
was washing sweet potatoes
before eating them.*

*The added energy
of this hundredth monkey
somehow created
an ideological breakthrough!*

But notice.

*The most surprising thing
observed by these scientists
was that the habit
of washing sweet potatoes
then spontaneously jumped
over the sea—*

*Colonies of monkeys
on other islands
and the mainland troop of monkeys
at Takasakiyama
began washing
their sweet potatoes!*

*Thus, when a certain critical number
achieves an awareness,
this new awareness
may be communicated
from mind to mind.*

*Although the exact number may vary,
the Hundredth Monkey Phenomenon
means that when only
a limited number of people
know of a new way,
it may remain
the consciousness property
of these people.*

*But there is a point at which
if only one more person
tunes-in to a new awareness,
a field is strengthened
so that this awareness
reaches almost everyone!*

*Your awareness
is needed
in saving the world
from nuclear war.*

*You may be
the "Hundredth Monkey" . . .*

*You may furnish
the added consciousness energy
to create
the sacred awareness
of the urgent necessity
to rapidly achieve
a nuclear-free world.*

— Excerpt from "The 100th Monkey"

(You can get *The 100th Monkey* by Ken Keyes, a short but compelling book raising consciousness about nuclear disarmament, for the nominal cost of \$1.50 while supplies last, from THE WITNESS. Send your prepaid order to THE WITNESS, P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002.)



We Win the War, Lose

Since our leaders are inclined to minimize the catastrophic nature of nuclear war, it is imperative that we repeatedly remind them that no one could win World War III and that both sides would suffer a total devastation. Yet it is not enough to rest one's desire for peace on the argument that war would be mutually destructive.

For one thing, the mutual-destruction argument contains the unintentional but stunning implication that the only thing, or most important thing, keeping us from incinerating millions of human beings who inhabit the Soviet Union is that we too would be destroyed. It implies that if nuclear war *were* winnable, and the destruction *not* mutual, if the Soviets could not retaliate in any seriously damaging way, then a nuclear attack might well be an acceptable option at some future time. Indeed,

there are influential military strategists and policymakers in Washington who have drawn that very conclusion.

The belief that no one would survive a nuclear war has never actually been demonstrated — thank God. But never having been demonstrated, it remains an arguable hypothesis rather than a conclusive prohibition in the minds of some. It is an empirical proposition, not a moral one; it rests on no moral stricture, only on crass self-interest. Hence, those who have a different empirical view might not feel morally constrained to reject nuclear war. Indeed, starting from the same self-interested premise, persons in high places have calculated that under the right circumstances the next war could bring a resounding victory over the Soviet Union, with only “minimal” losses to us.

Let us assume they are right. Let us assume that the United States can win a nuclear war without sustaining millions of American casualties and without doing much damage to the ozone layer, and without contaminating the earth's atmosphere and the world's food and

water supplies for years to come. These are gargantuan assumptions, but let us make them anyway.

What exactly would such a victory bring? A nuclear win against the Soviet Union would obliterate not only the rulers but the ruled of that nation. Some 260 million human beings, whom on other days U.S. cold warriors dream of liberating from the “Communist yoke,” would now be judged better dead than red. We are told that the Soviet people are the innocent captives of the Soviet system. But to vanquish that system by nuclear arms we would have to slaughter millions upon millions of unoffending men, women and children, obliterate their cities and farmlands, and devastate and contaminate one-sixth of the earth's surface.

What would it mean to win such a holocaust? How many of us are prepared to engage in the greatest mass murder in human history in order to free the world — or what would be left of it — of Marxist persuasions (assuming the war would do that)? How many of us want to demonstrate that Amer-

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Our Souls

by Michael Parenti

ican capitalism has produced a more lethal nuclear delivery system and a more insane leadership than Soviet socialism?

In order to win a nuclear war our leaders presumably would have to strike first. What moral justification could they possibly give to the world for an all-out attack? What would they claim as a sufficient *casus belli*? Would it be some unusually rambunctious statement issued by Moscow? Or information known only to U.S. intelligence agents that the Soviets were purportedly planning to strike first? Or news that the Red Army was at last rousing itself to make that long march into Paris which our cold warriors have been fearfully anticipating for almost 40 years?

There is *no* moral justification. This is the central point recently made by the American Catholic bishops and by religious leaders of various other denominations who maintain that nothing, not even victory, can justify an act of genocidal ferocity greater than all of history's previous atrocities combined.

We who oppose war, therefore, must do better than rest our polemic on an amoral self-interested, cost-benefit calculation.

Nuclear war is to be denounced not only because it is unwinnable but because even if "the enemy" sustains most or all of the losses, it is the most horrendous, dreadful act of destruction and murder one could imagine. Even if we accept the highly improbable view that the war would not be suicidal, it would still be monstrously genocidal. A policy that entertains the possibility of nuclear victory is not only "insane," it is profoundly evil — even if achievable. To paraphrase the bishops, in trying to save our lives by preparing for World War III, we are in danger of losing our souls.

Our opposition to nuclear war and to the nuclear arms race, therefore, should not rest primarily on calculations about retaliation and survival but on the unyielding, uncompromising, absolute moral rejection of mass murder and the instruments that increase the likelihood of mass murder. ■

The Lost Ones

They wander the streets of New York,
Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle;
every year, a million American kids
run away from homes
which cannot provide them
with the time and the care
and the love they need
to survive.

For them, the pace gets faster and faster;
every day there is more and more pressure
in a rat race that never stops;
they must earn money for clothes and books,
working parents need their help
with household chores and younger siblings;
and, if they don't get grades in the top percentile,
they can't qualify for the scholarships required
to admit them to college
and save them from sharing the fate
of the untrained and inexperienced
for whom there is no future.

They buy a ticket
to wherever a bus will take them —
Minnesota Strip or Sunset Strip,
in search of new lives
as models or disc jockeys;
they become the prey of hookers and pimps
to whom they sell the precious instrument
which was intended to provide
the deepest fusion of two human spirits
for a few lousy bucks
or a dirty bed in a flophouse.

If they have no funds to buy a ticket
they wander the streets of their hometown
on their own private "Highway to Hell";
they escape from their well of loneliness and pain
via a freeway overpass, a forgotten hunting rifle,
or a bottle of aspirin.

The parents who want to help them
must carry double workloads
to earn enough for food and rent;
the counselors and crisis centers
to which they might go
are all victims of Reaganomics
which supports the Right to Life,
but not the right to live.

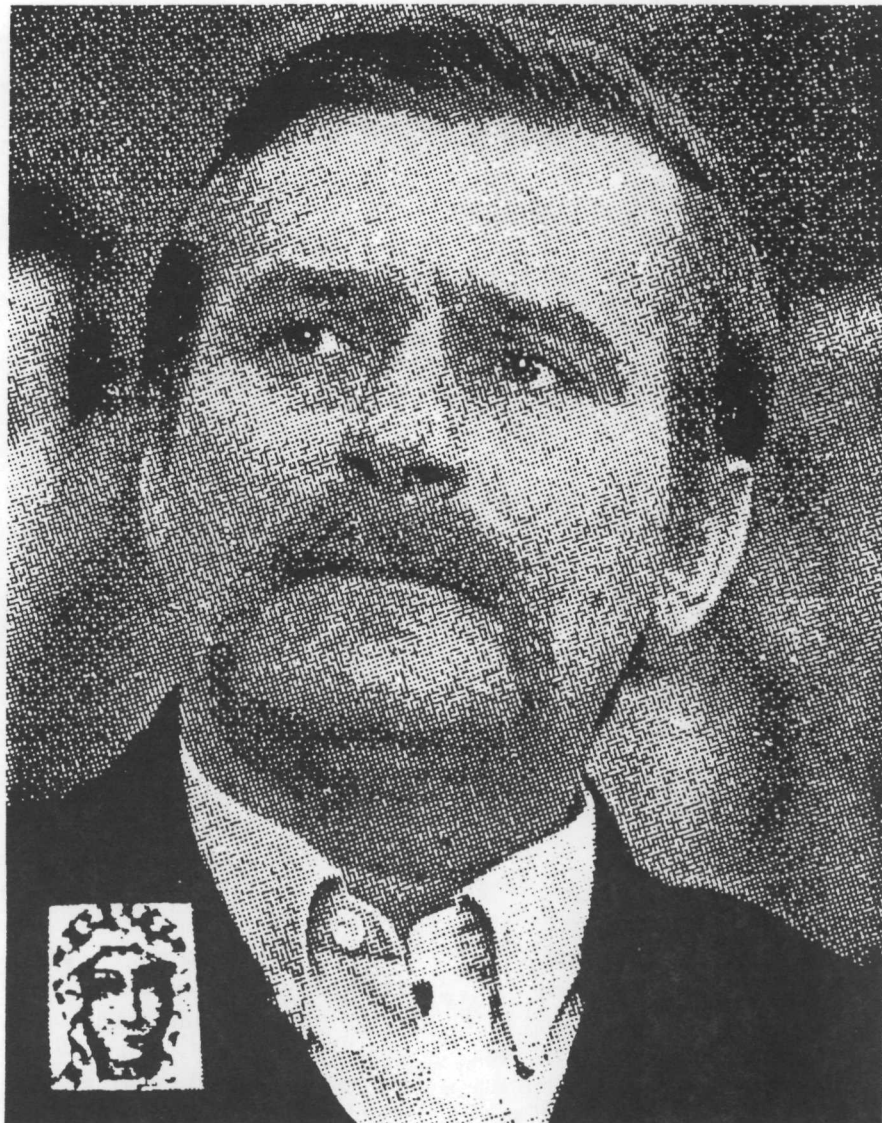
The Highway to Hell is paved
with the souls of these, our kids,
whose lives were considered of less value
than rapid deployment systems
and neutron bombs.

— Mary Jane Brewster

Walesa, Socialism & Christianity

by Jacques Ellul

Jacques Ellul is Professor of Law and Jurisprudence at the University of Bordeaux. His most recent books published in the United States include *The Betrayal of the West*, *Apocalypse*, *The Ethics of Freedom* and *The New Demons*.



Nobel Prize winner Lech Walesa

We must understand that Lech Walesa's *Solidarity* Union is in no way a rejection of socialism, a return to capitalism, a reestablishment of the bourgeoisie. Quite the contrary! Yes, it certainly is *anti-Soviet* communism; but at the same time it is the appearance of a new socialism. The widely heralded socialism which starts from *the base* — with a human face, self-directing, flexible, progressive — will certainly not be put into practice by the Soviets or by the renewed, profound Marxist theories found throughout the world.

The socialism that is being created in Poland by Walesa and *Solidarity* comes out of a Catholic Christianity, deeply lived, exacting, determined and capable of self-renewal and confrontation, with a socialism stripped of its police and its ready-made ideas about economics and administration. This encounter is not a pure and simple spontaneity, heeding all impulses coming from *the base*.

The base is not "in itself" — the people or the proletariat. It does not exist "in itself"! It cannot be objectively defined: it has a past, beliefs, hopes. It lives today

following a specific morality. Its “spontaneity” will differ depending on the components it brings to the crisis. On this point, I believe that the Catholic Christian components explain this remarkable orientation in Poland toward a new socialism.

I believe the role of Christianity — if, alas, this were properly understood by the churches in other nations — provides socialism with the possibility of an evolution which, apart from the *Solidarity* encounter, cannot take place. There is talk about “Christians for socialism.” I believe there is only one example and realization of “Christians for socialism”: Lech Walesa and his *Solidarity* Union.

In France and the World Council of Churches, the link, even at times the identity, between socialism and Christianity is excessively evident. The opposite, I suspect, is the proclamation in the United States, i.e., the *incompatibility* of socialism and Christian faith. Walesa gives us a very important example. Of course, I am not about to redefine socialism. I will only point out that we must not confuse socialism, Marxism, communism and Stalinism. These are four different orientations and conceptions, and no single one necessarily implies the others. I am speaking of *socialism*.

What is essential to me is that we see in *Solidarity* an encounter, if not a union, between Walesa’s socialism and what would seem to be in this respect the harshest, most irreconcilable, most intransigent form of Christianity: Roman Catholicism in Poland. Then the questions: Could Walesa be a bad Christian? On the contrary, his behavior represented a *lived* Christian faith. Is he a bad Catholic? The Pope himself gave Walesa his total approval, blessed him, and declared him to be in the right.

Is Walesa a bad socialist? He is certainly an anti-Stalinist. He seeks to destroy the hierarchical, centralized, authoritarian, police-ridden communist

order. But he does this precisely with the goal and perspective that moves to the truth of socialism. He calls into question the deviations, lies, and oppressions of socialism, *not socialism itself*. That is, Walesa does not wish to return the principal means of production to private control. On the contrary, he wishes those involved in production to exercise control (and not a State and Party administration to replace administration by cartels). He does not wish to reopen the question of the path to social justice. On the contrary, he emphasizes it by demanding suppression of the unjust privileges of members of the Party and of the *Nomenklatura*.

He does not reopen the question of union power, but he refuses to let the union be an organ of the State and administration, so that the union can become again a free association defending the freedom of workers. He does not reopen the question of socialist planning. On the contrary, he demands that planning be truly socialist, that is, that it be based on the real demands of people, and not on bureaucratic decisions. Everything he demands corresponds to a truer socialism than that of Stalin. There is nothing anti-Christian in all this.

Moreover, Christians must consider the following: In the past 40 years, only two attempts with genuinely new methods sought to get the world out of its impasse (and not to resolve the economic crisis — the situation is much graver!), to find a new way which belongs neither to

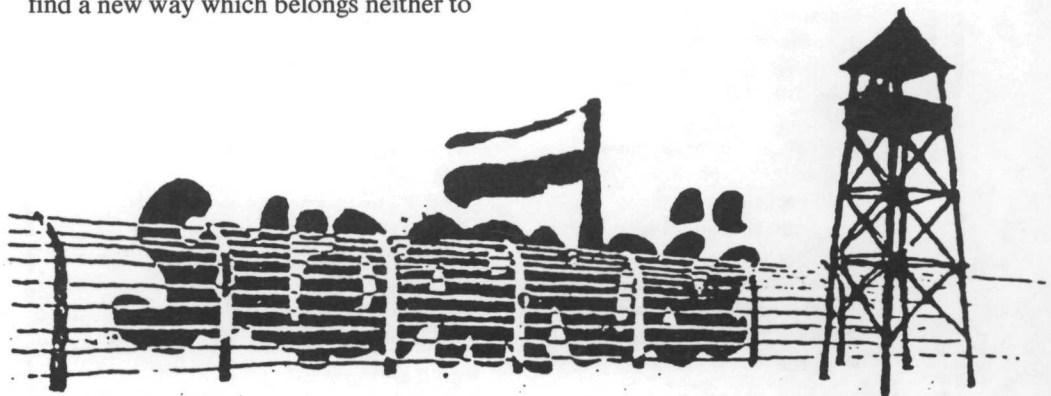
capitalism nor communism nor the Third World. They were both made in communist countries: Radovan Richta’s in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Lech Walesa’s in Poland in 1980.

In other words, these two methods were created from the harsh *communist* experience, as an attempt to go beyond it, to take the greatest advantage of technical progress by placing this progress in the service of the most humble and weak, to balance the excess of power by a return to human values. In the capitalist world in the past 40 years, absolutely *nothing* new has been discovered in the political or economic sphere — neither the reorganization of society, nor the incarnation of Christian values, nor the better utilization of science, nor progress toward peace: *nothing*.

The two fundamentally new methods are linked to socialism. In Richta’s case, an intellectual foundation taking seriously humanistic values. In the case of Lech Walesa, the foundation is practical syndicalism and authentic Christian inspiration.

We should think about this. ■

The above article is excerpted from “Lech Walesa and the Social Force of Christianity” by Jacques Ellul in the 1982 summer supplement of Katalagete, with permission of the editors. Copyright by Katallagete, Inc.



Barbara McClintock, 81, was awarded the Nobel Prize recently for her pioneering research in medicine. Dr. McClintock's work in the corn fields and in her laboratory in Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y., moved the medical profession along toward solving riddles about virus-transmitted diseases, resistant bacteria and cancer.



Nobel Woman

For Dr. Barbara McClintock

Your winter words
staggered the world:
life changes before the egg!

No amount of lack of interest
or neglect stopped you
from your job of smiling over
the miracle in your yard,
the stunning erotics of poetry
hidden by sheer commonness:

the double helix surprise
of something new, an ear
of corn deciding on variation
within itself —

you listened to grain grow,
you watched, you told
what you saw over time,
you amazed us with your maize,

you spoke a new tongue,
like the women who saw
the Resurrection and told
what the Angel said

and no one believed them
because no one could imagine
what had never been dreamed
before, until the news media
began to spread the Word
and a few accredited committees
verified it: What the woman says
is true! Maize does produce
spontaneous genetic changes
and Christ is risen indeed!

And so we are encouraged
by our elders to go on
telling in tongues of fire
what happens in secret cornfields
at night and what unheard of
wonders visit our gardens at dawn
and call our names
and tell us to weep no more.

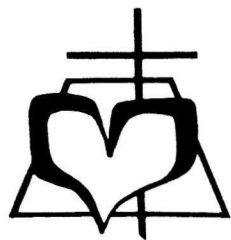
— Alla Bozarth-Campbell

Scripture . . . Continued from page 11

to believe that the eternal Word is in any sense peculiarly male apart from the fleeting moment of the incarnation; nevertheless, “Jesus, the Son of God” so readily turns into “Jesus, God the Son” that theologians and laity alike identify the second person as a glorified version of the man who was born of Mary.

Since the doctrine of the Trinity is post-biblical, the most that can be done to rectify this misconception through the lectionary is to emphasize the significant aspect of the incarnation — that the Word became human — and let it stand as merely incidental that the particular form of human flesh was male. This is, again, not revision, but the strictest fundamentalism. Nothing in the canonical record of Jesus's life and ministry, except his circumcision, depends upon his masculinity.

Both of the inclusive-language lectionaries now available do an excellent job of restoring what visibility is possible to female characters in the biblical drama. The editors of *Hearing the Word*, however, have approached the theological problem with such caution and circumspection that the result is hardly noticeable. Pronouns are avoided to a great extent with reference to God, and “Son of Man” becomes “Chosen One”; “Son of God” remains, however, as do most of the references to God as “Father.” Those who are concerned about the dangers of macho theology can find significant comfort only in the NCC's version, *An Inclusive Language Lectionary*. Here alone can be found “God the Mother and Father” and Jesus, the “Child of God.” The selections are, unfortunately for us, not precisely those of the Episcopal lectionary. They coincide at many points, however — to permit extensive trial use in congregations which are sufficiently feminine in their orientation to value the spirit of the Gospel above the legalism of the canons.



In Celebration of Commitment

by Robert Cromeey

Marriage is not a celebration of love; it is a celebration of commitment. Love is a basic ingredient in marriage. But the reason for getting married is to make commitment public. It is the agreement to be faithful, monogamous, and to be with the partner in sickness and in health for a lifetime.

Commitment is a rational act. It is the willing, free choice of a person to be committed to another person. Love is not rational. It is an emotion. It is flecked with highs and lows. It is mercurial, full of passion and pain. Commitment is rational. It is a reasonable statement and promise and pledge that two people make to each other. Commitment is not bondage. Commitment, when entered into willingly and freely, brings great freedom and peace.

Is it reasonable to think that in our life and time faithful monogamy can work? Isn't it an old-fashioned notion? Can people in a faithful monogamous relationship keep up the interest and the

excitement with each other that they felt when they were first in love?

Yes, indeed. I think faithful monogamy is absolutely essential to marriage and to committed relationships. Yes, people can try open marriages and relationships. Yes, people can experiment with other partners for sexual and personal pleasure. Many people in our society do just that. Unfortunately, it just doesn't work. It might work for a time. It might last a year or two. Or three. Or four. But something will soon give. Either the marriage will break up or the outside relationships will end. It sounds rational and possible to maintain relationships where there are other partners. But my experience, both as a priest and as a therapist, having talked to hundreds of couples, is that it just doesn't work to try to be in a deep relationship without the commitment of faithful monogamy.

Monogamy needs help. It must be nurtured by a radical, complete openness and honesty. The couple must be willing to share with each other their dreams, their fantasies, their emotions, their resentments, and their demands in considerable detail. It is not just an honesty about the facts of life. It is an

honesty about the emotional stuff that happens between people.

Faithful monogamy must be nourished by an open and full sexuality. In the old Prayer Book, the couple vowed, "With my body I thee wed." And that free sexuality is a sacrament of the inner grace and peace that comes to a couple who really deeply care about each other. Faithful monogamy is nourished by constant expressions of appreciation, respect and love, not just once in a while, but regularly, constantly. Each partner must tell the other what he or she likes and appreciates. Out of that great well of love and appreciation will come the capacity to be even more honest about resentments and troubles.

Julia Poppy, a good friend, has a wonderful line. She says that she becomes all women to her husband, and her husband becomes all men to her. And when people get that notion and live from that point of view, there is the possibility for true faithful monogamy.

Well, what happens when one person is attracted sexually to another person? The first thing to do is to talk about it immediately to the married partner. Radical openness and honesty is to tell that partner "Yes, indeed, I am attracted

The Rev. Robert Warren Cromeey is an Episcopal priest-counselor and rector of Trinity Church, San Francisco.

to Sam or Sally, and yes, while I am sexually attracted, I choose not to do anything about it. I renew again my vow to be faithful and monogamous with you." One must be able to talk about sexual attraction in some detail with his or her partner. And the partner must be able to listen and to understand without judging the feelings of attraction. Those feelings are absolutely natural and normal in life. When they can be acknowledged and shared, then the person who feels them can turn to his or her partner and say, "Yes, I have these feelings, but I am not going to act on them." And the full monogamy is affirmed.

Persons in any committed relationship are one body with their partners. And yet they are separate. They are close, yet free. Being one yet separate is a dynamic tension that exists in a marriage. Learning how to do this is one of the challenges of a committed relationship.

When persons have a full commitment to another person, they grow, are enhanced, flower and blossom. And they can change, often for the better. That certainly is one of the wondrous by-products of a full committed relationship.

Finally it is important to say a word to those who are not in committed relationships. Not all people are called to that state at any given time in their lives. Sometimes we go through life-long periods where that kind of relationship or commitment is not available to us. Perhaps we are not ready. Perhaps we have not met the right person. People should not feel bad because they are not in that kind of relationship. That may not be what they are called to be.

But those of us who are called to be in a committed relationship must take seriously the issue of full, faithful monogamy as a joyous and wonderful way to be in the world. Commitment needs celebration. ■

Letters . . . Continued from page 2

Although there were those who did try to hit me with their flack of criticism, I am buoyed by the greater number of people I have since come into contact with who are supportive of my action and who have a deep and abiding concern with the Reagan Administration's policy toward Latin America as a whole.

The Army, however, views things differently. I was informed in my "exit briefing" that despite my 13 years of honorable service, two Meritorius Service Medals, Army Commendation Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal and a couple of other awards, my official files are now flagged and I am categorized as "disloyal." Well, I expected that, and if speaking with a conscience is disloyalty, then so be it. I intend to continue.

**Peter Fox
Billings, Mont.**

An Aid to Hope

Your December WITNESS is worth the total price of a year's subscription. I am an 80-year-old Unitarian Universalist, and do not expect to live much longer, but THE WITNESS helps me to hope for a better world.

**Lynette Colbert
Arcata, Cal.**

Children's House Excels

Thank you for the December issue of THE WITNESS which included the excellent article, "Who's Minding the Children?," by Connie Myer.

We are most appreciative of this highlighting of the church's role in child care, a role which has tremendous implications for the church as well as the nation at large. The Episcopal Church may well be proud of the Children's House, one of our demonstration projects and the boxed focus of the article. It is indeed a significant ministry.

**June R. Rogers
Child Advocacy Office
National Council of Churches**

On Yielding Sovereignty

Near the end of last year, I, along with millions of others, watched "The Day After" and the panel discussion which followed. I was terrified — not by the movie which depicted scenes far less frightening than those I've imagined, but rather by the paucity of hope offered by the panel which contained a good representation of this country's most respected opinion-makers. The least dreadful vision was offered by Robert McNamara who felt that a reduction from 40,000 to 20,000 nuclear weapons during the next decade might be possible. My God!! That reduces the number to only (insert your guess) times that's needed to destroy the world.

In many disciplines, we learn that when a problem appears insolvable, it's time to re-examine the assumptions. Although not explicitly stated, all of the "unacceptable" solutions are based on the assumption that no nation will relinquish its sovereignty to a higher authority. It is axiomatic that, in such an environment, each nation must protect itself against aggression to the best of its ability. And, when potential enemies distrust one another, an arms race is inevitable. It must be remembered that every arms race in the history of mankind has ended in war.

In this nuclear age, when war is no longer an acceptable means of resolving conflict, the root cause of war, national sovereignty, must be eliminated, and a supreme world government established. On a lesser scale, our founding fathers realized this when they replaced a weak confederation of sovereign states with our present form of government. It's time now to move this thought process up a level, i.e. to sovereign nations.

We tried it after World War I. The threat was not real enough, particularly to the United States whose failure to join essentially killed the League of Nations.

We tried again after World War II. This time we, and only we, had the bomb and our insistence on a veto in the United Nations, to insure that that body

could not dictate to us, doomed that experiment to failure.

Now with two super-powers — each with the power to destroy the world — and at least four other nations in the “atomic club,” yielding national sovereignty is no longer unthinkable — indeed, our only hope of survival lies in a world government with the power to resolve international conflicts through a rule of law.

Donald L. Pike
Santa Barbara, Cal.

Different View Helpful

Thank you for your witness. Your articles on Central America are especially important. It helps to have facts and different viewpoints when talking about that area.

Robert and Jean Wagner
Chapel Hill, N.C.

Organizing Courses Set

In 1984, three week-long training sessions which may be a valuable resource to readers of THE WITNESS will be sponsored by The Institute for Social Justice, which organizes for justice in the church and in the community:

Urban Organizer Training: Boston, March 25-30

Rural Organizer Training: Little Rock, April 15-20

Church Based Organizer Training: St. Louis (Kenrick Seminary), May 27-June 1.

The purpose of the training is to promote the understanding, vision and commitment that will enhance effective work. Included in the training are practical skills and principles of organizing. The Institute has a working relationship with ACORN, the nation's largest organization of low to moderate income families (over 80,000 family members in 27 states).

For information contact: Institute for Social Justice, 4415 San Jacinto, Dallas, TX 75204

Terry B. Thompson
Dallas, Tex.

What Will It Take to Prevent Nuclear War? It Will Take People!

- prophet-people who dare to lay bare the fallacies that choke and blind us even if we cannot hear their words nor dream their dreams;
- parent-people who look with love at the work of their creation and refuse to leave their children only a heritage of destruction;
- nurture-people who grow plants and feed birds and pick up dirt from the earth and love what is great, fresh and growing;
- healing-people whose hands touch others into life and well-being, struggling always against the forces of death;
- poet-people who call us beyond where we are, point to the lastingness of life, the folly of choosing death ever;
- fun-people who lift up and lighten and laugh others into fruitfulness and courage for the long haul;
- women-people whose role through time has been to nurture, to empower others, to make grow, to make clean, to make new again;
- soul-people whose eyes are clear and open, inviting trust and the kind of bonding that draws us together;
- young-people who have nothing to gain by destruction and death but death itself;
- justice-people who cry out against the oppressors of people, the destroyers of the earth, those who would bomb and burn and obliterate;
- little-people who don't know themselves as special but who are in truth the 'salt of the earth,' feeding and clothing and housing the human family from one end of day to the next.

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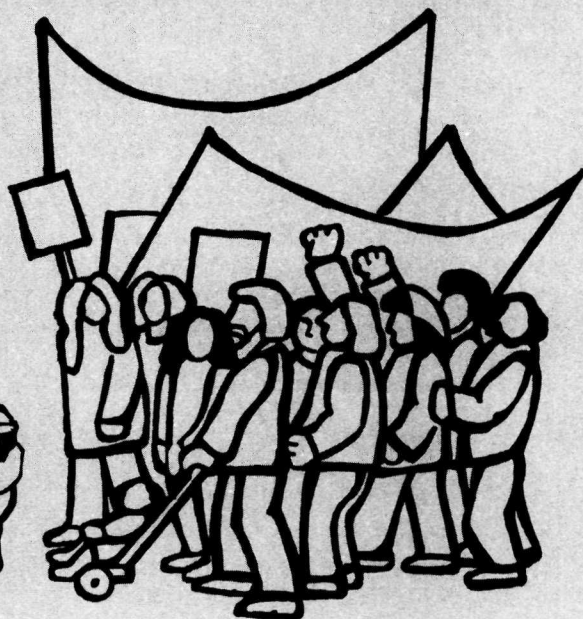
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