

THE an ecumenical journal of social concern WITNESS

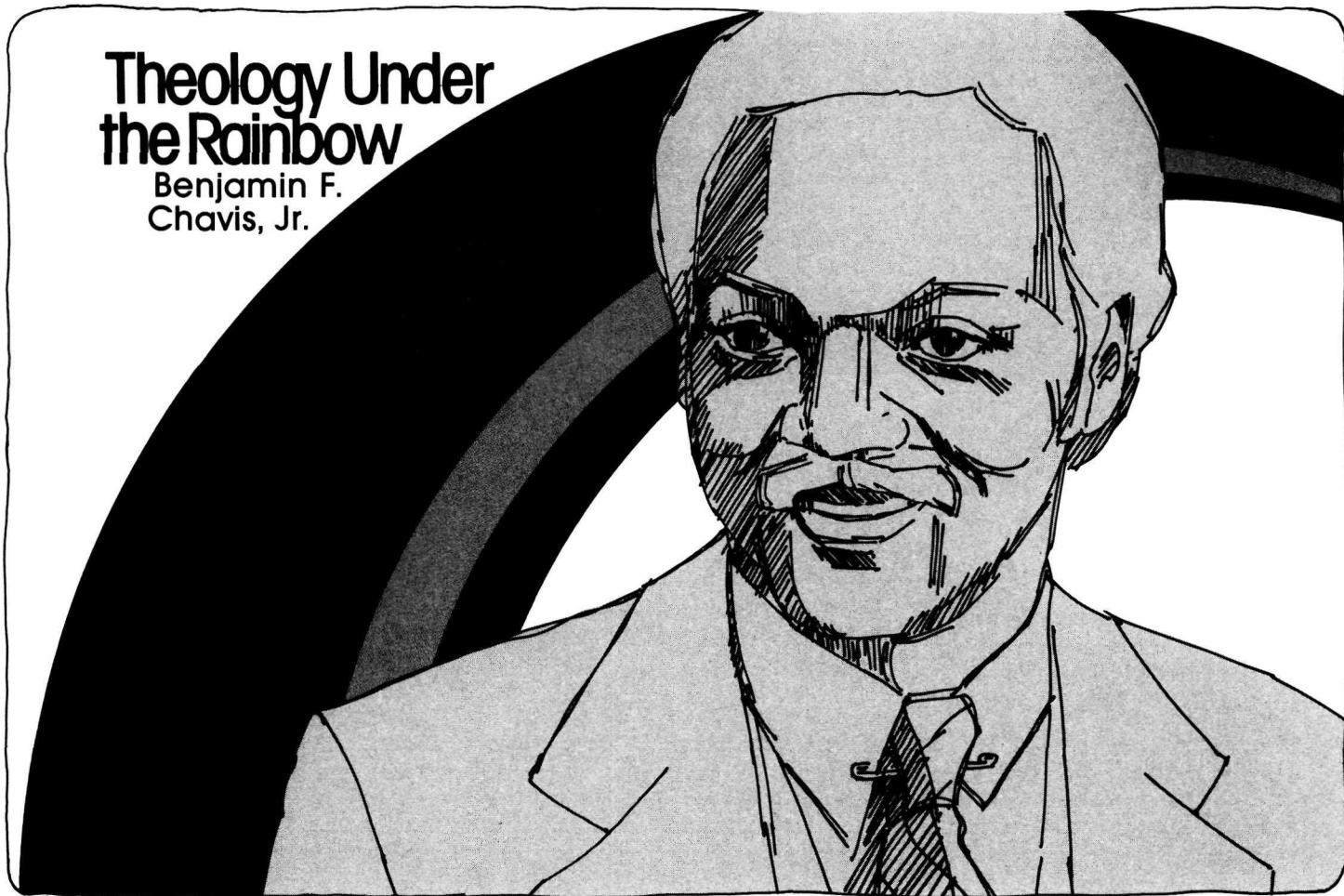
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Guatemala: Tapestry of Genocide • Jean Molesky

Sects in Latin America • Gary MacEoin

Theology Under the Rainbow

Benjamin F.
Chavis, Jr.



Letters

'We Can't Wait' Dept.

A special friend of ours, and of THE WITNESS, the Rev. Jean Dementi (priest-in-charge of St. Jude's, North Pole, Alaska) reports on an amazing opportunity ahead for her.

Paula Long from her congregation found a white envelope on the airport parking lot as she went to pick up Jean and her husband, Jim, as they arrived home from a brief vacation. She investigated the envelope's contents, and to her great surprise discovered \$14,000 in checks which had been donated toward expenses of Pope John Paul's visit to Fairbanks on May 2! When Paula called Catholic Diocesan Headquarters to report what she had found, she requested that her priest be included in the Pope's celebration. She was told there would be no mass celebrated, and that only the sick and the handicapped would be seeing the Pope. Paula, undaunted, explained that her priest had terminal cancer, and was then assured that Jean would be included.

The Episcopalians and Catholics are somewhat awed at all this emanating from the little mission of St. Jude, the patron saint of lost articles and hopeless cases.

**Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, Cal.**

(When Mary Eunice Oliver had a moment in 1981 in Los Angeles to urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to ordain women, Jean Dementi told her, "Well, that takes care of England." When Jean—the first woman to be nominated for Diocesan Bishop in the Anglican Communion — intersects with the Pope, who knows what miracle of wholeness might take place? Mary Eunice says she is ready to proclaim, "Well, that takes care of Rome." — Eds.)

'Realistic Reflection'

I was pleased to receive the insight of the Rev. Pauli Murray about "Minority

Women and Feminist Spirituality." (February WITNESS) The essay, although it seems more emphatic about empowerment of Black women than an assessment of feminist spirituality, is an important one, I believe. The emphasis on an updated understanding of Black women is essential for the kind of readership which THE WITNESS enjoys.

Social concern and social justice are generated by a clear understanding of social reality and social analysis. Pauli Murray offers us a realistic reflection, and thus invites us all to renewed meanings for spirituality as an exercise of the gifts of the Spirit (e.g. wisdom, knowledge, fidelity, trust). Thank you for providing such inclusive information in your magazine.

**Toinette Eugene, PBVM, Ph.D.
Asst. Prof. of Education & Society
Bexley Hall
Rochester, N.Y.**

(We have learned that the American Theological Library Association has requested Pauli Murray to do a 100-word abstract of her WITNESS article for inclusion in Religion Index One.—Eds.)

Questions Shaull

When Richard Shaull speaks of "imperial power" and a "pattern of economic development (where) the few rich get richer while the masses of the poor get poorer" he has my sympathy ("Christian Faith and the Crisis of Empire," January WITNESS). But when he speaks of America's imperial power and "our pattern of economic development" Shaull shows little knowledge of international banking or appreciation for what has been given.

In the recent examination of what went wrong in Brazil, for example, we found the economic policy of that country had not been set by America. On the contrary, loans had been made to that nation by both capitalist and communist govern-

ments from the world over. The administration of these noncoordinated funds had been carried out by the government of Brazil in secret. If anything was learned from this experience, it was not that too much direction was given these loans, but rather, like Lear, the giving was too generous. Goneril chose her own self-consuming love.

I sympathize with the church today for wanting to speak of injustice. In the early third of this century we did a poor job of speaking for Christ in the world, as the success of Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and Stalin proved. However, though today the church appears to be more involved in the affairs of the people, I wonder if that much has changed?

Taking a longer view, when we look at our past and consider men like Thomas à Becket and David, we find men who were knowledgeable in both theology and politics, men who had not only the innocence of doves but could utilize the wiles of snakes.

When speaking of injustice, why speak only of America? What about: Russian airplanes with nuclear capability recently stationed in Viet Nam? Cuban troops invading South Africa? The Rumanian connection in the assassination of the Pope? Afghanistan? Poland? To mention a few.

The world is complex and so is human nature. The "cowboys" and "Indians" are not as clearly delineated, and often disagreement is between men of good will. As a foil to such argument we are cautioned to be impartial in judgment.

I wonder, if in the spirit of our heritage, we might not reflect on all aspects of truth, assess its dialectic nature as Aquinas did, and then reflect upon it so that through prayer we might arrive at insight.

It seems to me to avoid the sectarian conflicts today that have been so often a part of religious institutions in every society, we are going to have to reassess our religious literature against the light of what we can know about the world. It's

good to start from principle and then define its limits against reality. But to start from principle and act on assumptions of reality leads to a tyranny which eventually is self-consuming.

Douglas H. Schewe
Madison, Wisc.

Shaul Responds

I find it very difficult to dialogue with someone who criticizes specific things I've written without dealing with the context in which they were said.

My central thesis was: In the prophets of the Old Testament and in the theologians of the fourth century, we have a theological perspective on the crisis of empire we would do well to take into account. They offer us the freedom to look critically at an empire in decline and to see why it stands under judgment. More than that, they propose that we look at the present crisis in the light of "the world to come" — a new order of greater justice — and rediscover our reason for existence as a nation as we struggle toward that goal.

Douglas Schewe may consider this to be a mistaken interpretation of our theological heritage; or he may be convinced that it doesn't apply to our situation in the United States today. These are questions on which we might have a fruitful exchange.

As he has not expressed his opinion about them, I can only point out that the perspective I've presented by no means ignores or considers unimportant the issues he raises. But it does deal with them in a quite different way.

Take the question, "Why speak only of America?" As a matter of fact, I didn't. I made a point of speaking of U.S. and Russian power, the problems both nations create for the little peoples of the world, and the decline of both. But if I've learned anything from the prophets, it is that judgment must begin at home. I hope that, if I were a Russian citizen, I would

have the wisdom and the courage to look critically at what my country was doing. But I'm a North American, and my burden is to understand God's judgment and mercy as it applies to my country, and act accordingly. Moreover, after several decades of living in other cultures, and participating in international conferences, I have discovered that I can best help other people take a critical approach to what is happening in their countries if I demonstrate that I am doing the same thing in relation to my own.

On the issue of balance and impartiality in the face of complex problems, the need to "reflect on all aspects of truth" and avoid "sectarian conflict," are important things after which the Christian spirit should always strive. But from the theological perspective I've referred to, there is another question which must always be raised with it: In doing all this, toward what end are we moving? On this point, I think the prophets are very clear: We are called to analyze society and all its ambiguities *as we work diligently for its transformation*. They would, I believe, urge us to make sure that we are not using the argument about lack of complete balance or impartiality as a means of avoiding the radical call to repentance and new life as a nation.

Richard Shaul
Philadelphia, Pa.

Unique Ministry

As part of my Lenten discipline to express praise and care, I am writing to thank you for the unique ministry of THE WITNESS magazine.

Other Episcopal Church publications serve as in-house organs of communication, but only THE WITNESS provides Episcopalians and others to whom we invariably pass along the issues (pun intended) with a truly global awareness.

THE WITNESS is a witness to the needs of a broken world, and a call to Christians to respond to those needs. In a

sense, the magazine publishes the creative Word's persistent invitation to minister to the suffering, almost embodying the sacramental ministries of compassion (the diaconate), consecration (the priesthood), and communication (the episcopate). And it makes us all one in this call, affirming that whether in the ministries of baptism or ordination, we are one people, God's *laos* all.

I know of no other publication that addresses, in one issue, Scripture ("Holistic Scripture", David Ross), pastoral ministry ("The Politics of Pastoral Care", William Stringfellow), social Gospel issues ("Walesa, Socialism & Christianity", Jacques Ellul), the sacraments ("In Celebration of Commitment", Robert Crome), and profoundly moving poetry ("Identity", Georgia Pierce) mirrored by personal perspectives on philosophy and history ("Minority Women and Feminist Spirituality", Pauli Murray). [See February WITNESS.]

One more service of THE WITNESS — and this is also essential. You stand for the vital unity of functions which the world and the church have too often falsified as separate: spirituality and sexuality, the personal and political, public and private, clergy and laity, social and scriptural, home-centered and worldwide. You stand for the cosmic perspective that is the most accurate view of creation, and the church's mission on earth is to both see and speak from that perspective — which is all too often lost, and where we all too often fail and fall into blindness.

The Rev. Dr. Alla Bozarth-Campbell
Wisdom House West
Sandy, Ore.

'Think About This'

Jacques Ellul's article in the February WITNESS is excellent. He carefully washes away the muddy and murky

Continued on page 21

The Permanent Underclass

It clearly matters who is elected President of the United States in November. Those persons even marginally concerned about justice and peace in our country and in the world will see that the rejection of our current domestic and foreign policy is imperative.

But in this election, and beyond it, those who take with some seriousness the Gospel's insistence on justice "for the widow and the orphan" must focus on the underlying reality overtaking American society in the 1980s; namely, the hardening into permanence of a throwaway underclass.

This observation has been made before, even from within the churches. In fact, it may now be a bit *chic* to acknowledge it — as one takes another sip of chablis at a wine and cheese party and rolls one's eyes in pretended horror at talk of Reagan being re-elected.

Yet the human tragedies continue to unfold, family by family, mother by mother, child by child. The reader can find the afflicted individuals easily enough in his or her own community. A sample of statistics documents the spreading plague of poverty in this wealthiest nation on earth:

- One child in five in families below the poverty line is now malnourished; *one Black child in two* in families below the poverty line is malnourished;

- In 1983 demands for food

assistance jumped an average of 71% in 20 of the nation's cities;

- From 1980 to 1982, the number of people living below the official poverty line (\$9,862 for a family of four) jumped by 5 million.

- As of 1982, 34.4 million people — *15% of the population* — were poor.

While unemployment has dipped to about 8% in the population as a whole, unemployment for Blacks is climbing, reaching 17.8% in January. ("Economic recovery" talk omits noting the increasing employment occurring in the expanding military production section which does not produce goods and services. Nor do the job statistics count those discouraged workers who have given up looking for work.)

The Reagan administration basically disbelieves that anyone is truly hungry or that people cannot find a job if they really want to work.

Furthermore, in the President's 1985 proposed budget, he asks for more cuts of \$2.8 billion in federal outlays for poor persons. He includes cuts in aid to dependent children; cuts of at least 200,000 pregnant women, infants, and children under the age of five from a special program supplying high protein food; and cuts in Medicaid, the health care program for the poor. Said Reagan's budget director Stockman as he unveiled the 1985 spending plan in January:

"We have to do something about entitlements . . . but *big, sweeping changes are not feasible in this Congress.*" (Emphasis ours.)

If not in this, perhaps in the 1985 Congress, over which Reagan would preside?

We are not confident, either, that the present Democratic front-runners, on gaining the White House, would vigorously address the issue of a permanent underclass existing in the midst of American society. Presumed budgetary pressures, the presumed need to allow private enterprise increased freedoms from taxation and governmental restrictions so that capital "may be productively invested," and the "need for a strong defense" are likely to continue to make the poor the scapegoats — even with the Democrats in power.

The religious community in this country is one of the few societal groupings left to question this emerging holocaust for the poor. In Hitler's Germany, good church people could not bring themselves to acknowledge the incremental steps taken against Jews, homosexuals, and leftists until it was too late. Today we stand in similar danger. In and beyond the presidential campaign, the churches must find the voice and the program to address directly this human tragedy.

(R. W. G. and the editors)

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THE WITNESS

an ecumenical journal
of social concern

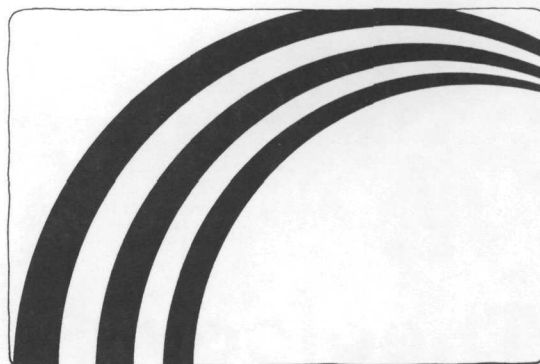


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Theology Under the Rainbow

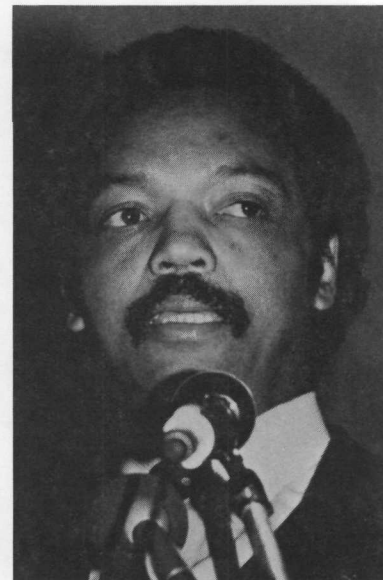
by Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

To be sure, 1984 is not just another election year when candidates and political parties engage in national efforts to maintain or to seize the reins of power and decision making in the White House. In addition to the usual national media events, debates and elitist power brokering that has characterized prior presidential campaigns, there is today something quite different happening. The presidential campaign of the Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson over the last several months has emerged as one of the most important national and international crusades for justice, liberation and peace of the 20th century.

On Nov. 3, 1983, in Washington, D.C. standing before thousands of sup-

porters in the Washington Convention Center, Jesse Jackson announced, "We are here that we might fulfill our mission to defend the poor, make welcome the outcast, deliver the needy and be the source of hope for people yearning to be free everywhere." Jackson's decision to seek the presidency of the United States was not only political, but also a moral decision which continues to provide a unique opportunity to reaffirm the essence of the Christian faith through political praxis.

I was present when Jesse Jackson announced his decision to run. His address was more of a sermon, in the tradition of great Black Baptist preachers, than a speech by an aspiring politician. Throughout his speech, many in the audience shouted "Amen," "Run, Jesse, Run," and "Win, Jesse, Win." As it is experienced in the Black church tradition, "the Spirit was sure present." The political genius of his message, however, was not diluted by the presence of Spirit. Jackson affirmed:



Jesse Jackson

My candidacy will help to change the present course of our nation and to rekindle the dormant flames of idealism for all Americans, but especially for the young. This administration has turned its back on civil rights, human rights and the poor, both in the country and in the world. It has inverted the basic notions of our Judeo-Christian ethic, encouraging us to spend millions to beat our plowshares into swords, while leaving the disadvantaged begging for bread.

Regretfully, the Democratic Party and its leaders have remained too silent and too passive in the face of these onslaughts. My concern is to lift the boats stuck on the bottom; to fight to provide education based on one's ability rather than one's ability to pay; to fight to provide health care for all Americans on the basis of need not wealth; to provide a strong and adequate national defense, but end

The Rev. Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. is Deputy Director of the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ. He was recipient of the William Spofford Award given by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company at the 1982 General Convention.

the massive waste, fraud, abuse and other unnecessary costs of the military; to campaign on behalf of a national and fair immigration policy; to move beyond our current, racial, sexual and class battle-grounds to economic and political common grounds; and to change the present course of our foreign policy so we can again be respected in the world community.

From that moment American politics has not been and never will be the same. Immediately following Jackson's announcement, the *Washington Post* in an editorial commented, "Jesse Jackson has the potential to change the political dialogue. Few, if any, politicians today are more adept at public debate and framing the issues." A mass-based politics developed through a serious moral appeal for the human rights of all people regardless of race, class, sex, religion or geography has the tremendous potential in 1984 to begin the process of transforming the nation.

At this time in history, it is crucial that the church community in the United States, across denominational lines, strives to understand the theological importance of this new prophetic crusade and mass political movement.

Theological Underpinnings

James H. Cone, in *God of the Oppressed*, has reminded the church community that God is political. Cone stated, "Yahweh is known and worshiped as the Lord who brought Israel out of Egypt, and who raised Jesus from the dead. He is the political God, the protector of the poor and the establisher of the right for those who are oppressed." The quest for theological understanding, therefore, involves the experience of the community of faith in the political struggles of the oppressed. Cone emphasized, "For theologians to speak of this God, they too must become interested in politics and economics, recognizing that there is no

truth about Yahweh unless it is the truth of freedom as that event is revealed in the oppressed people's struggle for justice in this world."

Unfortunately, there are some church persons who take the position that Divine salvation has nothing to do with social justice, world peace and electoral politics. Yet, in the Old and New Testaments, the Scripture challenges all who believe in God in Christ to "do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God," (*Micah 6:8*). Doing justice, loving mercy and walking with God involves more than the contemplation or affirmation of faith. The challenge of the Christian faith, in addition, involves a commitment to social action, i.e. an acting out of the faith in human history. In *A Theology of Liberation*, Gustavo Gutierrez concluded:

Theology as critical reflection on historical praxis is a liberating theology, a theology of the liberating transformation of the history of mankind and also therefore that part of mankind — gathered into ecclesia — which openly confesses Christ. This is a theology which does not stop with reflecting on the world, but rather tries to be part of the process through which the world is transformed."

Jesse Jackson has affirmed by word and deed his commitment to a theology of social transformation through political action. Jackson's theology is a theology of liberation, informed by the Black church religious experience and in dialogue with the religious and political experiences of the world community, particularly the Third World. For the first time in American history, a candidate for the office of President of the United States has articulated a sensitive respect and concern for the liberation of the oppressed masses of the world as the moral basis for the U.S. government's domestic and foreign policy.

For Jackson there can be no world peace in the presence of world injustice.

Martin Luther King, Jr., writing from the Birmingham Jail, cautioned that an "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We remember, however, the wrath of criticism that was directed at Dr. King for linking "peace with justice" in his public opposition to the immoral U.S. war in Viet Nam. Jackson, despite the political risks, continues to state:

My candidacy will be a quest for a just society and peaceful world. We must recognize, as did Dr. King, that we need to develop a world house. Likewise, we must appreciate that the world has become a global village where military resources alone will not supply peace.

Justice, therefore, is the precondition for peace. The God of justice demands peace with justice. "Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God." Effective peacemaking necessitates that all international conditions of injustice be challenged in the interest of a new "world house," i.e. a just world order.

The Jackson campaign has changed the focus of the political debate concerning U.S. foreign policy. He has challenged the policy and contradiction of U.S. involvement and support of multinational corporate exploitation and military domination of the peoples of Central America, the Philippines, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Africa. Never before in the history of American politics has a candidate campaigning for the presidency been invited to speak to a constituent body of the United Nations.

In his January 1984 speech before diplomats representing more than 50 African nations, Jackson stated, "My approach to foreign policy is to engage in negotiations, not confrontations. Africa and the rest of the world community must be treated justly and fairly by our government . . . The racial injustice of apartheid in South Africa is a disgrace

before God.” There was a tremendous response from the African diplomats and a pledge made to invite Jackson to speak to the international meeting of the Organization of African Unity this spring. Similar invitations have come from Latin American and Asian organizations.

Jesse Jackson’s call for the building of a “rainbow coalition” has several theological implications. First is the affirmation of the equal creation of all human beings in the “image of God.” Racism and sexism are sins that defy this basic tenet of the Christian faith. The call for African, Hispanic, Asian and Native Americans to join with progressive Anglo Americans, women and the poor to work together politically and spiritually is to affirm through social action the oneness of humanity created by God in God’s image.

Secondly, the rainbow coalition in its formative stage has already nurtured a rebirth of a national ecumenical spirit and political cooperation between main-line Protestant denominations and the historically Black denominations. Not since the 1960s, in response to Martin Luther King, Jr.’s prophetic leadership have I seen this kind of unity in action among Black and progressive clergy persons.

A Rainbow Theology

T. J. Jemison, President of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., made an unprecedented step when he announced his personal endorsement of the Jackson campaign. Jemison along with most of the national leadership of the other six largest Black denominations in the U.S., representing over 17 million members, has become an integral part of the rainbow coalition.

William Howard, former President of the National Council of Churches, stressed, “Jackson’s vision and organization of the rainbow coalition has reminded us of some of the past failings of the organized ecumenical movement in terms of embracing some of the diverse groups of our

society. To the extent that we have now learned of these shortcomings, the rainbow coalition is likely to give greater impetus to the ecumenical movement for many years to come.” Rainbow theology, therefore, is an ecumenical theology that calls for the celebration of the oneness and diversity of God’s creation. It is a political theology affirming God’s presence in the struggle of the oppressed for liberation and it provides an opportunity for theological reflection on the spirit of ecumenism as it is related to social and political transformation.

Thirdly, rainbow theology should not be viewed as an attempt to engage in some vague type of pluralism that lacks theological clarity. Rather it is justice-seeking theology that is evolving out of concrete political praxis and it takes seriously the issue of self-determination. For example, Bill Chong of Asians for Equality has concluded that the rainbow coalition is important to the Asian American community because it can help to heighten their struggle for justice and empowerment. Chong stated, “We must forge and strengthen alliances with Blacks and other oppressed groups. The rainbow coalition is not only a good idea, but a matter of survival for our community.”

Rainbow theology must by definition be directed toward supporting and interpreting the struggles of all of the oppressed within and outside the church. It is an inclusive and mass-based theology rather than an exclusive or elitist conceptualization of ultimate reality. Tony Bonilla of the National Hispanic Leadership Conference predicted that, for the first time, the Hispanic agenda will be lifted up before the entire nation through this rainbow coalition. John Collins of Clergy and Laity Concerned has challenged other white religious leaders to join him in helping not only to build this new coalition but also to help address the new theological awareness and practice of rainbow theology.

Another unique religious aspect of the

rainbow coalition is the active participation of the Nation of Islam under the effective leadership of Minister Louis Farrakhan. The operational and spiritual unity working through the activities of the rainbow coalition is unprecedented: Christians, Jews, Islamics and others all working for justice and freedom together — not just in theory but in practice. Farrakhan affirmed:

Now the power and presence of Allah (God) is being felt in the activity of the children of slaves, who, in quest of their own freedom, must make a thrust for the freedom of all others. That one of the sons of former slaves is running for the highest office of the land is a sign of the times in which we live and is clear proof that Almighty God is with us.

Farrakhan’s faith in the God of justice who intervenes in human history on the side of the oppressed has created a bridge for constructive dialogue and joint action with the Christian community. The theology of the rainbow coalition continues to evolve out of the struggle of the coalition-building process itself. There is much to be learned, there is much to be shared and there remains much to be done.

Any analysis of Jesse Jackson’s bid to become President of the United States at this point in the campaign can only be tentative. From the very beginning, though, it was clear that certain questions and risks were involved:

- Can a nation like the U.S.A. that is grounded in racism, capitalism and sexism repent and change?
- Can the church afford to be silent to Jesse Jackson’s prophetic challenge?
- Will 1984 be the last presidential election because of the likelihood of nuclear war under the present administration?
- What does the Lord require of us today?

These questions, I believe, can only

be answered through the risks of faith, i.e. allowing God through Jesus Christ to use us at this moment in history to act out our faith in God no matter what the risks might be. The presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson offers the church but another opportunity to respond to the love and grace of God in the concreteness of social and political action. The theological importance is that we now have a chance to do a new theology that is grounded in a new indigenous mass

movement for liberation in North America in concert with the struggle of other peoples throughout the world.

Jackson's success in his mercy mission to Damascus to free Lt. Goodman and to avert escalation of the war in the Middle East is testament to the efficacy of maintaining a faithful witness over being politically expedient. National church leaders such as Charles E. Cobb, Wyatt Tee Walker, H. H. Brookins, C. T. Vivian, Philip Cousins, Calvin Butts,

William Jones, William Howard and thousands of others have recognized the positive impact of the Jackson campaign.

Speaking in the Dorchester section of Boston recently, Jackson concluded:

This mission for leadership that makes sense, this mission of black, red, yellow and white — all of us are precious in God's sight — this mission does not stop in July. It's not just an election to win. It is a civilization to save. ■

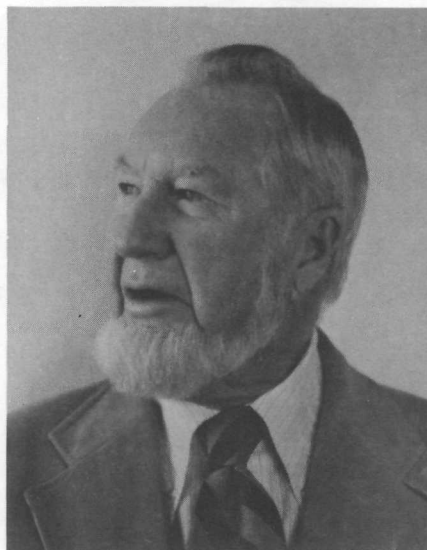
A Different Kind of Obit

To our staff, it always seemed that Jo Shannon should more appropriately be donned in a sou'wester, hauling lobsters of a weekend in Maine alongside his friend and WITNESS editor, Bob DeWitt. He had the visage of a sea captain — but Jo worked in coat and tie, an enthusiastic promoter of the magazine. How wrenching for THE WITNESS family that Jo died of cancer in mid-March.

His titles and good works were many, covered in the usual obituary notices. But obits frequently omit most meaningful data; for example, how Jo loved daffodils and planted them around his home, in numbers and varieties to make a Wordsworth proud.

Over and above that, Jo was "special" to us for the creative groundwork he did to get THE WITNESS launched. He put his head and heart and ready wit to the task of outreach and promotion in the mid '70s when the magazine was revived. Best of all, staff morale always soared when Jo was in town.

Administrator, ecumenist, counselor, he met life with great humor. His pastoral approach left people healed in its wake. And why not? He was a deeply committed Christian, for whom the Gospel precepts were simple and self-evident. He was somewhat mystified why people,



The Rev. Jones B. Shannon

Ordained Christ Church, Bloomfield Hills, Mich., 1952; Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, State College, Pa., 1952-57; Director, Church Society for College Work, Washington, D.C. 1957-1966; Founder, Consultation Search; Founder and President, Hospice Outreach Chapter, Fall River, Mass.

even churchpeople, "got the message all fouled up," as one of our staffers put it.

He had a profound respect for the English language and for the pursuit of

scholarship. An unanswered note on my desk still chides, from Bob DeWitt, "Contact Jo about Associates for Religion and the Intellectual Life." My fondest memory is of Jo sharing literary passages which moved him.

"Listen to *this* . . ." He would read, his white beard bobbing up and down, punctuating the prose. Frequently moved to tears by his own declamation, he would pull out his handkerchief, wipe and blow, slam the book shut and declare, "*That's* writing." One could hardly miss the implication to "go and do likewise."

His last project for us was to set up a process for wider distribution of THE WITNESS to seminaries. This reflected his special devotion to students and faculty of colleges and seminaries throughout his life, which kept him remarkably young in spirit.

Those seminarians who find THE WITNESS available today in their libraries or student centers are the beneficiaries of Jo Shannon's labor.

We are grateful to Jo and to God for Jo's presence in our family. To his wife, Ginny, his sons, William and Jones B. Jr., and daughter Dinny, our loving prayers, and thanks for sharing Jo with us.

Mary Lou Suhor & WITNESS Staff



Spiritual Values In Today's Student

by William Pregnall

It is commonplace today to note the obvious shift in campus ministry from social action to the highly personalized place religion now occupies. We look at our strengths as Anglicans and how we might offer kerygmatically and catechetically this rich heritage to the strengths of today's students. We know the difficulty and the frustration of communication with a student populace that, on the one hand, is narcissistic and oriented toward material gain through the system and, on the other hand, is suffering from a severe ennui which has no enthusiasm for any system or its institutions. All around us are the end-of-the-world syndrome, the sexual revolution, drugs, the loss of any sense of direction, the loss of healthy competition, and the escape into interior space walled by fantasy games of Mazes and Monsters or by headphones which substitute self-selected noise for the noise of the external environment. In the midst of such a litany of despair, it is a tenuous task to probe (carefully) into the question which haunts so many in campus ministry today: Where is the wellspring of spiritual values in today's student?

I.

First, let me share three of my presuppositions.

God's Holy Spirit is at much 'at work in today's world as in ages past. I deeply believe that God

works in and through so-called secular culture as well as through the church. Kathleen Bliss once wrote something to the effect that it makes an immense amount of difference when we Christians go into the world whether we see ourselves as carrying Christ to the world or whether we expect to find him there already at work. (K. Bliss, *We The People*.) I expect to discover him already at work.

My second faith assumption is that God calls us to be faithful witnesses of the work of salvation—wrought in our past, in our own personal lives, and being worked in our culture today. In that sense, I rejoice in those in the renewal movement who speak unabashedly about the Christ in their lives. For too long we have been too bashful about our witness to that which is our basic motivation and power in ministry, the living Christ. I am aware in myself and others of my own unbelief. But equally I am aware of my own distaste for simplistic, overly confident statements about what God has done today that "I've witnessed." I am also aware that as baptized Christians we are called to represent Christ and his church and to bear witness to him wherever we are.

A third presupposition is that we who do ministry—especially in a setting such as a campus—want to be able to communicate with those with whom and for whom we offer our ministries. Not to be able to communicate with them—whether lay or ordained—is about the most frustrating of all situations. It is in the dialogue, the give and take of honest communica-

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tion, that God's Spirit can work in both parties in the dialogue.

A corollary to this is that without valid communication, we ourselves lose our sense of identity and self esteem. All of us know that as a marriage is troubled and breaks down, communication fails, and there is a loss in both parties of identity and self esteem. But we also know that a loss of self esteem and identity is often a cause as well as an effect in the breakdown of communication. As it is in a marriage, so it is in our ministries. Jesus said that to lose one's life is to find it. An aspect of what this means for me is that insofar as I am able to offer you myself—my life, thoughts, feelings, values— and insofar as you are able to receive me into your life without violating me in my vulnerability before you, then we are beginning a dialogue which ultimately is life-giving to both parties as each loses herself or himself in the other.

God is in creation. We are called as witnesses to God's work. Communication with another is the issue—dialogue through which God's Spirit can work to make our witness effective, renewing our own sense of identity and esteem.

II.

Next I wish to venture a diagnosis of the world—looking at it externally and internally—in which today's student has grown up.

Externally—everything points to the reality that we live in the end times—a dying society.

1. The threat of nuclear holocaust I shall file by title although I think it is the most significant difference between our age and all other ages of humanity. We have the power to destroy what God has created—this good earth, our island home. We are only beginning to experience what it means to grow up not expecting a future. The silence of death by nuclear holocaust has an ultimate terror which is new.

2. But, we also live in the end time of the rise of a nation—this nation or any other nation. Economically, we are beginning to recognize that no one currency will save the day—will pull us out of recession. Multi-national conglomerates and common markets and intricate new international economic policies mandate the end of the rise of nations. Militarily we have no armed force dominant. We live in a careful balance of super powers which allow certain small wars but cannot entertain any more wars to end war. This balance of military power and the complexity of international economics is far distant from each of us as private citizens, and all seems out of control. We feel victimized and helpless.

3. We live at the end of post-Reformation Christianity—for both Catholics and Protestants. Christen-

dom ended in the West with World War I, or perhaps the French Revolution. But this is more than the end of Christendom. No longer are values of the faith intertwined in institutions and political assumptions and goals. There has been a breakdown of the post Reformation synthesis of Christian values and society. The whole construction of reality which was a post-Reformation heritage is ended. That Protestant/Catholic synthesis combined with the enlightenment and the industrial revolution of the West is over. For me, some pointers are: (a) There is a loss of the Holy. Where does one go for a blessing when the Holy has no place in your reality? (b) There is a loss of reference for values. A sense of right and wrong is still around. Valley Girls' "Grody to the Max" is a definite value judgment. But where is the reference—the measure—by which anything is gross—grody—even a little bit, much less to the max!? Who/What defines right and wrong? We live at the end times with rampant relativism. (c) There is an end of the significance/power of societal institutions. Institutions are corporately agreed upon incarnations of values—but the post Reformation agreement about institutions and what they are has broken down.

Internally—What is the Diagnosis? I am aware that Elizabeth Kubler-Ross is much over-used in looking at the internal response to death and dying, but she does provide categories which I believe help to describe what I sense in today's student.

1. Denial and Bargaining. There are possible elements in the dynamics which turn students on to religious movements and easy-answer Christianity. It is easy to take pot shots at Moonies and occultism of various kinds. It is not so easy to ask young converts to Jesus Christ to think/feel, probe/grow beyond an initial encounter with the Holy Spirit or group experience, which sentimentally uses Christ-talk to give warm feelings. It does seem to me we have a responsibility both to honor the point of contact with the Christian symbols and the living Christ, and to nurture that contact to grow beyond its initial, often self-

Continued on page 22



U.S.-Based Sects in Latin America

In Latin America, as in regions of Christian culture worldwide, religion has acquired a central role in the social upheavals that characterize our age. Must the search for individual salvation exclude social concern, or at least take precedence over it? Or is the question wrongly formulated? Rather, should it be whether all salvation is of its essence social, that we form the people of God only to the extent that we are a human community?

Both Roman Catholics and mainline Protestants are deeply divided on these issues. While nobody speaks seriously of schisms, we have in fact two mutually exclusive understandings of what church means — those with one understanding actively supporting intransigent oligarchies and dictatorships, those with the other not only partisans but agents of radical change. In this context, fundamentalist sects from the Mormons to the Church of the Word have redoubled their missionary efforts, and their numbers are growing rapidly in much of the hemisphere.

Dictators and big business welcome this diversion and support the new religious movements politically and financially. This patronage is strictly pragmatic. The fundamentalist sects defuse pressures for change by teaching

their members to obey constituted authority and avoid involvement in politics. As such, they represent a continuing force to create dissension among the marginalized poor who for the first time in history have started to become aware both of their oppression and of their ability to challenge it.

Source of Recruits

In Central America, specifically, they are proving a source of recruits for right-wing death squads and for the “rural pacification forces” now being promoted in El Salvador and Guatemala by the United States in a replay of the genocidal pacification projects developed in Vietnam. They are also aggressively active in Nicaragua, where Protestantism has grown four-fold to 13% of the population since 1979, the increase being overwhelmingly among fundamentalist sects.

Money and political backing are not the only reasons for the progress of the sects. Objective conditions with deep roots in history also favor them. Until the 19th century, Roman Catholicism had a monopoly in Latin America. Its bishops and higher clergy were named by the Spanish crown (and later by the presidents of the various republics), and it functioned as a department of state, providing health and education principally for the small minority who constituted the ruling class or who were needed as its service sector.

The church was never totally devoid of prophets and pastors who worked to secure justice for the Indians, and later

for those Indians who had been incorporated as a work force into the Spanish culture, the *mestizos* or *ladinos* who are today the dispossessed peasants and slum dwellers. Bishop Bartolomé de las Casas has always had worthy successors, such as Bishops Antonio Valdivieso in Nicaragua and Oscar Romero in El Salvador, and Dom Helder Camara in Brazil. But they were a tiny minority. The intellectual and emotional incorporation of society into the institution, and the accompanying practices that characterized Western Europe were never transferred to Latin America. The people are highly religious but not very “Catholic”. Their religiosity lacks the communal organization and discipline, the systematic practice and the historical roots that typify Catholicism.

With the growth of German, English and U.S. presence and influence in Latin America after the elimination of Spain in the first half of the 19th century, Protestant preachers arrived not only to serve the foreign communities but to evangelize the masses, claiming with considerable justification that Roman Catholicism had not done its job. By this time, the Roman Catholic institution had come to identify with the oligarchies. As successors to the Spanish crown, they had devolved the *patronato*, the right to name bishops and higher clergy.

Protestantism, for its part, depended for survival and expansion on the business interests with which it had entered the region, and it soon identified with those interests. Presbyterian liberation theologian Rubem Alves of Brazil points

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by Gary MacEoin

out that Protestantism quickly followed Catholicism in interpreting its theology to support the oppressor against the oppressed.

Although, as noted above, a new model of church committed to a preferential option for the poor has arisen since the 1960s among both Catholics and mainline Protestants, the ensuing conflict between these progressive sectors and the earlier mentality that still dominates the top leadership is being fought out principally within the confines of the institution. Vast numbers of the most deprived elements in society, most of them nominally Catholic, are still not effectively reached by either traditionalists or progressives. They are the groups, Indian as well as mestizo, who offer the easiest harvest for the fundamentalist sects.

Growth Among Poor

The experience of the Mormons is significant. They began large-scale missionizing in Latin America about 25 years ago. As a middle-class church that cares for both the spiritual and material needs of its members, it expected that the principal response would be in the middle and upper classes. It found instead that the interest was greatest among the poor, that segment of society that was least reached by the existing Christian denominations. In addition, dictators faced with growing popular resistance approved its teaching that its members are to be "subject to kings, presidents, rulers and magistrates," wherever they live; and that they should

avoid politics and concentrate their energies on expanding the church's membership and influence.

The blood bath that followed General Pinochet's overthrow of the elected government of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973 pitted a major part of the Catholic Church in Chile, including Cardinal Raúl Silva of Santiago, against the dictator; and vigorous denunciation came from Catholic and Protestant leaders around the world. The situation was ideal for an alliance between Pinochet and the Mormons. The regime would provide favorable conditions for Mormon missionary efforts. The Mormons would do two things in return. They would urge the followers of Allende to "turn to the Gospel" and give up their "political communistic opinions." And the leadership back in the United States would spread the word that religion was alive and well in Chile. Benefiting from this symbiosis, the Mormons increased their membership in Chile in less than a decade from 20,000 to 120,000, an expansion that resulted in the opening of a Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Santiago in September, 1983.

Pinochet was by no means the first to recognize the possibility of manipulating religion in the struggle for "the minds and hearts" of Latin America. Several years earlier, in 1969, Nelson Rockefeller reported to President Nixon on the threat to U.S. interests caused by the switch of dynamic elements in the church to support the oppressed in their efforts to improve their condition. The Nixon

administration lost no time in initiating strategies to neutralize this progressive movement. In 1975, for example, a congressional investigation established that in the late 1960s the CIA had funneled several million dollars into a research institute in Chile headed by Jesuit Roger Vekemans for his campaign against the Theology of Liberation, the ideological justification for the progressive church's preferential option for the poor.

When Allende came to power in Chile in 1970, Vekemans moved to Bogotá, Colombia, where he joined forces with Alfonso López Trujillo, who in 1972 became secretary general of the Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) and who was made a cardinal in 1983.



Since that time Vekemans and López Trujillo have pursued a vicious campaign to have Rome declare the Theology of Liberation heretical. One source of their lavish funding, a funding that permits López Trujillo to maintain luxury apartments in Medellín, Bogotá and Rome, is the DeRance Foundation of Milwaukee. The nation's wealthiest religious foundation, with assets estimated at not less than \$160 million, it has been a major funder of international efforts to discredit progressive leaders and thinking in the church in Latin America. It also served as the conduit to launder CIA money for Vekeman's campaign to prevent Allende's election.

Vekemans now heads DeRance's affiliate, the Institute of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in Bogotá. Last November he joined other DeRance proteges and supporters in California to plan a 24-hour-a-day Catholic Cable Network. Programs already in production in English and Spanish include a news magazine with general and religious information similar to the 700 Club.

The DeRance project can be expected to perform the same two major functions in relation to Latin America as the 700 Club. This extremely influential TV program follows the Reagan-Kirkpatrick line, ignoring the longstanding social injustices and presenting the conflict in El Salvador, Guatemala, and elsewhere in Latin America as caused exclusively by outside communist agitators. The United States is presented as the beleaguered defender of Christianity against an international conspiracy of godless communists.

A substantial proportion of the many millions of dollars that result from the hard-sell appeals for funds for the Lord's work made by the 700 Club and similar simplistic programs is funneled into support of the proselytizing campaigns in Latin America. The Christian Church of the Word (associated with Global Reach, Eureka, Cal.) is a favored bene-

ficiary of the 700 Club. Its star convert was General Efraín Ríos Montt who seized power in Guatemala in a military coup in March 1982, and until his ouster by his Minister of Defense in August 1983, officiated at mass "conversions" and in weekly TV broadcasts explaining God's plan for Guatemala, a plan that included mass extermination of Indians.

Technically, the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon should not be called fundamentalist. It is, according to a formal statement by the bishops of Honduras who analyzed its teachings, "a truly anti-Christian church." A U.S. congressional report described it as a strictly disciplined international political party with financial enterprises and other businesses. With assets estimated at over \$1 billion, it controls a bank and an insurance company in the United States; the daily *News World* and its Spanish edition *Noticias del Mundo*, in New York; and the daily *Washington Times*, competing with the liberal *Washington Post*, in the nation's capital. In Moon's native South Korea, it owns a pharmaceutical company and an arms factory.

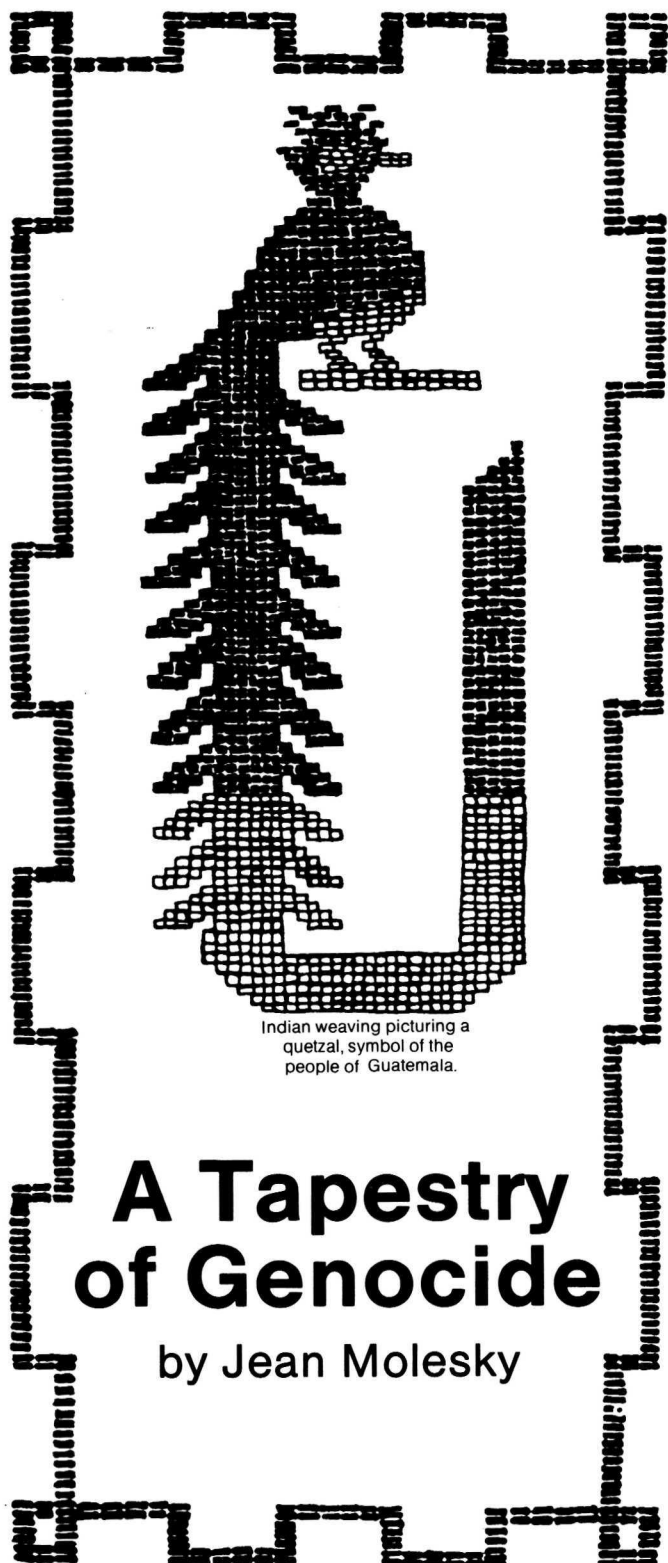
An August 1983 report in the *Washington Post* said that the Unification Church was investing millions of dollars in an anti-communist campaign in Latin America. In Uruguay, Moon obtained in August 1983 a decree from his friend, the president, General Gregorio Álvarez, granting a 9-year tax exemption to his \$25 million investment in a luxury hotel complex. While supporting political and economic organizations opposing social progress in Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama, he has been most active in Honduras. Moon's "apostle," Colonel Bo Hi Park (founder and ex-director of the Korean CIA), after long discussions with President Roberto Suazo Córdoba and other Honduran military and business leaders, founded in 1983 the Conference of Associations for the Unity of American Societies (CAUSA). Its president is General Gustavo Álvarez

Martínez, head of Honduran armed forces and today the effective dictator of Honduras, thanks to a constitutional amendment making him independent of the president. (*Álvarez recently ousted.*—Eds.)

An ecumenical team from the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches (U.S.), and the Latin American Council of Churches, reported in October, 1983, on the heightened activity in Honduras of many sects, nearly all from the United States. It noted the "amazing freedom" allowed them by the Honduran government, in spite of the fact that they use "very aggressive methods of proselytizing" in their efforts "to exert greater influence on the country's religious and social life."

The sects are similarly active in southern Mexico, where Central America's social unrest is spilling over massively. Speaking in the presence of Mexico's president, Miguel de la Madrid, in the same month of October, Governor Pedro Joaquín Coldwell protested the proliferation of religious sects and other foreign institutions. This "neocolonial avalanche," he said, hid new forms of domination under a cloak of social assistance.

Christian missiologists in the post-colonial era have radically rethought the long-accepted symbiosis of Christian missions and imperial powers. They now generally agree that the identification of Christianity with political and economic imperialism reduced the Gospel to an instrument of conquest, a destroyer of societies and cultures, often an ally in a process of ethnocide and genocide. Ignoring this lesson, the fundamentalist sects proclaim a message dressed in the style and assumptions of the U.S. way of life. Those least equipped to survive the neocolonial eruption are Latin America's 40 million Indians speaking some 600 languages, many of them in Mexico and Central America. No benefits for U.S. interests can justify such ethnocide. ■



Indian weaving picturing a quetzal, symbol of the people of Guatemala.

A Tapestry of Genocide

by Jean Molesky

“I want the people of the world to know the life and suffering of my people. I am a witness and I talk on behalf of my people.”

These words are from a 26-year old Mayan woman from the northwest region of Guatemala, whose three brothers have been assassinated in the last two years. She has sought refuge in the United States.

Domitila Canec was a social worker and teacher of literacy, Mayan culture and catechetics in her village of 13,000 and coordinator of a Catholic radio program in her native language, Cakchiquel. Now, one year in exile in California, she works in an assembly plant, writes poetry and is an active spokesperson for the dignity, culture and suffering of her Indian people. She is one of more than 200,000 Central American refugees in the United States.

When asked why she came to this country, she clasped her thin, brown hands in her lap, and replied intensely:

“Well, in March, in 1981, you could feel the repression in Guatemala spreading like fire. The military massacred 50 to 100 people daily. Where I worked, in Quiche, you could see dead bodies every day. My older brother was seized and never returned. I suspected that at any moment they would seize me because I had worked very closely with the people. Many of my friends and catechists had been killed. Over one year’s time, about 100 teachers were killed. I felt if I stayed where I was and continued my work, I

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was going to die.

"Today the Indian is accused of being a communist, but we do not imitate other cultures. We have respect for all life. We don't even needlessly kill an animal, mistreat a dog or a cat. My father didn't know any other system. He just said, 'On the other side of the lake, there are other people.' Within ourselves we have a strong consciousness of being Indian. We are not moved, like others, to adapt because this system is better than that one. The land is ours. We only want the right to live."

Domitila's words reflect the reality that the Mayan people, who comprise some 60% of Guatemala, have a strong sense of continuity with their past. It is their unique view of the world and their place in it which gives them the ability to keep up the struggle against the dominant cultures. They feel that outsiders will come and they will go away. Their gentle demeanor and easy-going manner obscures the tenacious, sometimes violent struggle they have waged to maintain the integrity of their culture. In the 1980's, they are struck not only with a blow to their dignity, but to their very survival.

The discovery of rich reserves of oil in the late 1950s in the northwest and the wooing of oil companies by the Guatemalan government in the 1970s has proceeded alongside the violent persecution of the Indian people. By the late '70s, seven foreign oil companies had been granted contracts and concessions, and in 1977 the first commercially exploitable well was spudded in Rubelsanto. Six years later in the same area, it is rare to find an Indian family who has not had at least one member disappear, been killed, or had lands burned.

During the 16-month regime of Efraín Ríos Montt, more than 6,000 people were killed and over 100 Indian villages destroyed. Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores, who served as Defense Minister under Ríos Montt and acted as his close advisor, took power in a coup last August.

While Defense Minister he was directly involved in planning and directing Ríos Montt's counterinsurgency program that resulted in thousands of deaths and destruction of villages, using "scorched earth" tactics. Now, 1 million are refugees in their own country; 200,000 in the exterior. Frequently villages are surrounded by the military and the Mayans are held hostage in their own village.

"Let me tell you about my people," Domitila said. "As Indians our inheritance is to be religious and to respect the land. Our whole life springs from the land. In the morning the Indian opens the land to plant, first asking God for permission. Then the Indian kneels and begs the God of land, then of heaven to bless his or her hand. Only then can work begin."

Domitila's bright huipil, hand-embroidered with birds, flowers and stars, reflected her culture. In her dress was evidence of centuries of Mayan weaving, incorporating symbols of astronomy, mathematics and mythology.

"From the time we're young, we're taught to respect things. For example, we couldn't throw corn on the road because it could feel it was being treated badly. It is disrespect to both the road and to the corn. Any violation of nature is a sin. On Good Friday, people in my village don't even grind corn to make tortillas. Nothing on that day is to be mistreated—not the rock or the corn."

"When I was young we were very poor, so we all slept together in one room. One night as I was jumping over my baby brother to get to my place in bed, my mother reprimanded me. 'Your brother has life and you must respect him.' We can not even walk over the clothes of another person. It would be a violation of that person. Imagine what the tortures and massacres in Guatemala today do to the soul of my people."

Domitila, a *campesina*, was one of 15 children, though only seven survived infancy. She spent her first years as

other young Guatemalan Indians—carrying firewood, planting beans and corn, learning weaving and household chores. Her father made 25¢ a day, so all the children worked to survive. At 11, she began her three years of primary school. When she finished she begged her father to continue her education at a nearby school. She struggled a great deal with him over this decision, because after all, she was a woman of 14 years. At that age she was ready for marriage. She promised not to marry in the near future and forfeited the piece of land which was her dowry. She continued for six more years, and was the first Indian woman in her village of 13,000 to become a teacher.

Confronting the prejudice that the Indian is "stupid and ignorant," she was not able to find a job. Instead she did field work as an interpreter in a clinic, teaching classes on nutrition and women's health. Still committed to her vocation as a teacher, she approached a Catholic priest with whom she later worked for six years. They traveled around to different villages offering courses on Mayan culture, literacy in Spanish and Cakchiquel, and pedagogy. Sunday mornings, she addressed social problems from a Christian viewpoint on the radio.

"It was during this period that I understood way down deep, our Christianity has a lot to do with the Mayan religion. When the Europeans came to Guatemala, they met a strong culture and colonized it with the Christian faith. It appears we accepted the faith, but not really so. We already had the faith. It was a way of life for my people. It's like we just changed clothes and put on a mask. Our faith is profound within us."

The tapestry of Mayan lives, dating back to 1500 B.C., is woven on an ancient cosmic loom. Their inheritance is their dignity woven through the centuries in the warp of a religious mythology and the woof of life amidst Creation itself.

A Guatemalan priest and friend of

Domitila, is also in exile in California. He explained that “many people have the misconception that the Mayans are polytheistic, but that’s a misunderstanding of our religious mythology. For the Mayan, there is one God, one Spirit, with different manifestations, different relationships to life.

“There are many parallels in belief and ritual which made Catholicism easily acceptable among the Mayans,” he said. “For example, in Mayan mythology all is created by God, called ‘Heart of Heaven,’ but there was a creature, semi-God and semi-Creator who wanted to be bigger, brighter, higher than the sun. From that creature of evil comes the seven shames. I think they may parallel the seven capital sins.”

“There is also one to come who will rescue and save the people — Junajpu. He is like a Christ figure. He is both a person and a process. In the human-divine encounter, the individual and the whole people become king, that is one with God. Today this process is imaged in the Quetzal, our national bird and symbol of freedom.”

But the marriage of Spanish Catholicism and Mayan spirituality has hardly

been a love affair. In 1524, the Spanish invaded Mayan territory. Bishop Bartolome de las Casas, an advocate for and defender of the Indians, accused the Spanish of killing 4 million indigenous people between 1524 and 1540. Two-thirds of the Indian population was wiped out between 1519 and 1610—by the sword, from forced labor or European diseases against which they had no immunity.

The Spanish master and Catholic priest replaced the Mayan noble and priest. At the same time, the Spaniards were abusing and exploiting the Indians, forcing them into servitude. The Indian was forced to work on stolen lands, harvesting coffee, beans and corn for the Spanish landlord.

Though the Spanish dug deep into the economic and political structures, the Indian village head and his informal council of elders still made the decisions and used the old language. The traditional rites and festivities continued and the old spirits exercised their power and charms behind the panoply of new saints and saviors, and still do today.

After an expulsion of Catholic clergy in the late 1800s, an invitation was extended by the church to missionaries from various countries. Most began their work among the mountain indigenous people. In 1968, after the Catholic Bishops’ Conference in Medellin, many in the church opted for the poor. Priests worked with the Indians to develop *Comunidades de Base*, agriculture cooperatives, and literacy classes in native languages as well as in Spanish. The Indian people, growing in consciousness of their oppression, began demanding a just wage.

To the Indians, Rios Montt, continued the saga of the Spanish conquistador, only wearing a different mask—that of a born again Christian. Indians now began to be told that they must be Christians, “not like the Catholics, who were communists.”

The repression continues under the military dictatorship of Mejia Victores,

but now in a more sophisticated fashion. His 30 years in the Guatemalan Army is now being used to militarize Guatemala. Instead of intervening through religious fundamentalism, as Rios Montt, he uses the schools to infiltrate the country. Young boys are encouraged to join elite clubs which instill a military consciousness. Children are taught to spy and inform on family members. Occasionally villages will be invaded by his computerized *Operation Octopus* in which soldiers surround a village and every 10 hours enter homes, search and often take one family member at random.

Domitila continued. “People in the United States think, ‘How good the government is to give out food.’ But the people are starving because the government has burned fields, the military has encircled the villages like concentration camps. Young men between the ages of 18-38 are forced to join the Civilian Service. Women are forced to wash the clothing of the soldiers and to feed them. It’s like a person who enters a trap and dies just for a piece of bread. The real truth is that they don’t want the people to be aware of what is going on. They tell us it is a sin. The other sin is to be Indian.”

Behind Domitila, hung a turquoise banner she had put together in memory of her family. Photos of her sister weaving on a traditional loom and of her three assassinated brothers were carefully placed among pinecones, wheatsheaves, flowers and an ear of corn. She had glued the words “Weaving the Life” to the cloth.

“For the Indian, the most fundamental thing is life. We can tolerate being robbed or being poor, but when they start taking away life . . .” She wiped her face, catching some of the tears; others dropped on the embroidered flowers of her huipil.

Then Domitila raised her head, with Mayan pride. “I am a witness. I talk for all my people. We are a raped people. But we must continue to restore our culture, our worth and dignity as persons.”



The Kissinger Report: Rewriting History

by David F. Ross

An Episcopal priest who was a classmate of Henry Kissinger's at Harvard analyzes the report on Central America issued by his fellow alumnus.

The Kissinger commission report pleads both a practical and a moral vindication for the Reagan policy in Central America. The case is stated at the beginning.

The crisis in Central America makes a particularly urgent claim on the United States for several reasons. First, Central America is our near neighbor. Because of this, it critically involves our own security interests. But more than that, what happens on our doorstep calls to our conscience.

It is reiterated at the end.

This is one of those instances in which the requirements of national interest and the commands of conscience coincide.

Some who have observed previous virtuoso performances by the adept Dr. Kissinger may suspect an element of hypocrisy in this evaluation of the strategic importance of Central America to the United States; some may feel similar reservations concerning his pronouncements on conscience. To those of us who look hopefully for signs of order in the universe, it is comforting to discover that the report is consistent: there is no more truth in its moral than in its empirical dimension.

The Kissinger position on the strategic importance of Central America was suc-

cinctly stated in 1969, in a conversation with Gabriel Valdéz, Foreign Minister of Chile in the Frei administration.

Kissinger: You come here speaking of Latin America, but this is not important. Nothing important can come from the South. History has never been produced in the South . . . What happens in the South is of no importance. You're wasting your time.

Valdéz: Mr. Kissinger, you know nothing of the South.

Kissinger: No, and I don't care.*

Why does he now tell us that our interest in this region is vital and urgent? The most obvious reason is that Kissinger, when functioning as a presidential advisor, had used his brilliance not to enlighten presidents but to provide rationalizations for an outdated Euro-Caucasian worldview. This is not, however, the reason offered in the report.

The conditions that invite revolution . . . have been exploited by hostile outside forces — specifically, by Cuba, backed by the Soviet Union and now operating through Nicaragua . . . The intrusion of aggressive outside powers exploiting local grievances to expand their own political influence and military control is a serious threat to the United States.

This, then, is one of the legs on which the Kissinger report — and Reagan's policy — must stand or fall. Are the

forces we are attempting to suppress or overthrow in Central America indigenous, or are they Bolsheviks in disguise? If the report is to be taken seriously as a background study for policy formation, it must buttress this allegation of Soviet surrogates; if it neglects to do so, it is exposed as nothing more than the familiar Kissinger brand of erudite sophistry.

The charge of a Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan conspiracy to convert Central America into a Soviet military outpost is made in the Kissinger report with appropriate emphasis.

Soviet and Cuban proxies . . . have become endemic . . . The Soviet and Cuban threat is real. No nation is immune . . . In 1978 . . . Castro's Soviet patrons . . . were coming around to his view that the time for guerrilla war in Central America had arrived. External financing [to reach development goals] may be available if outside aggression is eliminated.

Corroborative detail, however, is remarkably sparse in a 127-page report of which this is the major thrust. Only two specific allegations are made. One is that the El Salvadoran revolutionaries have received training assistance and arms supplies from and through Nicaragua. This is undoubtedly true, but it is scarcely prudent for an official of the U.S. government to give currency to the idea that such logistical support constitutes "outside aggression." The other is that in 1982, the Soviet Union, Eastern Euro-

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*Quoted from *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* by Seymour Hersh.

pean countries, and Cuba gave a total of 7,500 university scholarships to Central American students, while the United States gave only 391. Lest the reader overlook the aggressive implications of this, it is described as an "educational strategy" involving the "targeting of students from lower income families."

Decisive testimony is not lacking, however, to the point that the Soviet threat to Central America is a pretext rather than a justification for U.S. intervention.

The original peace initiatives of Nicaragua have given little cause for optimism. . . . The latest of the Sandinistas' formal proposals . . . would bind the parties to refrain from sending arms from one country to another in the region, and otherwise to end intervention, "overt or covert," in the internal affairs of other nations of the region. Significantly, these Sandinista proposals would prohibit exercises and maneuvers of the type United States and Honduran forces have carried out.

Call To Conscience

The classic statement of Kissinger's position on conscience was made when he was Secretary of State, in 1975: "I hold the strong view that human rights are not appropriate for discussion in a foreign policy context."

Why, then, is he now invoking conscience as the other half of the foundation on which his recommendations rest? Again, there is an obvious answer — he has confused conscience with something else, perhaps noblesse oblige. Here too, however, the report gives another reason. By following a policy of benign neglect, we have allowed the present crisis to develop.

When our neighbors are in trouble, we cannot close our eyes and still be true to ourselves. For most of the first 200 years of its

history . . . the United States focused its attention only intermittently on the South. . . . The 1980's [sic] must be the decade in which the United States recognizes that its relationships with Mexico and Central and South America rank in importance with its ties to Europe and Asia.

But has the policy of the United States toward Central America been either benign or neglectful? If in fact we have persistently intervened in Central American affairs, then the present crisis may indeed call upon us to examine our conscience, but the result of such an examination could well lead to a resolve quite different from that which the Kissinger report promotes.

Kissinger's evidence that the sins of the United States against Central America have been sins of omission is, of necessity, largely negative. In Chapter 2, of the report for example, the "chaotic" history of the Central American nations is traced from independence to the present. To omit from such an account the long list of U.S. presidents, armed forces, business tycoons, and adventurers who have stirred up and capitalized on that sad reign of chaos is as impossible as to write the history of bread without mentioning yeast — yet Kissinger has almost

done it. He slips only once — in 1954 "the United States helped bring about the fall of the Arbenz government."

That U.S. intentions have been benign cannot, of course, be established by omitting facts — for this purpose, facts must be distorted. The Monroe Doctrine, a unilateral declaration of U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere, is described, for example, as expressing

the vision of a hemisphere united by a core of common commitment to independence and liberty, insulated from other quarrels, free to work out its own destiny in its own way, yet ready to play as constructive a role in world affairs as its resources might permit.

Certainly the most dramatic distortion, or rather outright denial, of the facts, is found in a discussion of the U.S. role in Nicaragua.

The ability of Somoza and later his sons to portray themselves as friends and even spokesmen of the United States began with the use they were able to make of the legacy of U.S. military occupation, thereby creating an identity between the United States and dictatorship in Central America that lingers, independent of the facts, to this day.

Central America						
	Costa Rica	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Nicaragua	Panama
Percent of school-age population in school	55	47	33	48	54	68
Literacy rate	93	65	50	60	66	85
Population per physician	1,500	3,160	2,540	3,180	2,060	1,130
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births)	24	53	72	90	90	34
Percent of population with safe water	81	48	42	55	46	83

Source: World Military and Social Expenditures/N.Y. Times

The truth of the matter is so widely known and well documented that no one of less stature than a Kissinger or Goebbels would dare deny it: We put the Somoza dynasty in power and sustained it there until its collapse was imminent.

Because these small nations, our near neighbors, are in trouble, and because we, as a great power, can make a difference, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to act. We must not, however, exceed the limits of protection. Big brothers can, as Kissinger disarmingly acknowledges, become tyrants. This is not, he assures us, the aspiration of the United States.

The issue is not what particular system a nation might choose when it votes. The issue is rather that nations should choose for themselves, free of outside pressure, force or threat. There is room in the hemisphere for differing forms of governance and different political economies. Authentically indigenous changes, and even indigenous revolutions, are not incompatible with international harmony in the Americas. They are not incompatible even with the mutual security of the members of the inter-American system — if they are truly indigenous. The United States can have no quarrel with democratic decisions, as long as they are not the result of foreign pressure and external machinations.

This is a profoundly reassuring statement. Regardless of whether the civil war in El Salvador is a manifestation of Soviet foreign policy, regardless of the sins we have committed in Central America in the past, such a statement would point us in a promising direction for the future. It would, that is, if it represented the true visage of our foreign policy leadership, and not merely an image contrived for public-relations effect.

Which is it? Well, here is Kissinger commenting in 1970 on the last free

election in Chile: “I don’t see why we need to stand by and watch a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people.”

Choose Life

And where does that leave us as we watch Reagan and his faithful guide Kissinger galloping off to new adventures? There is a way along which conscience and national interest will guide us if we can rid our eyes of the scales of self-righteousness and open them to the righteousness of God. The first requirement, as always, is penitence. We did not create poverty and injustice in Central America, but we share the burden of guilt as the receiver of stolen goods shares that of the thief. The meager land from which the people of Central America must wrest their living has been progressively taken from them, mostly in the present century, to produce cash crops for the U.S. market — originally bananas, most recently beef for fast-food hamburgers. Whether the thieves have been U.S. corporations or their local confederates, every act of intervention by the Government of the United States, whether military, political, or economic, has been to assist the thieves and repress their victims.

By now, the game has very nearly been played out. You cannot take more and more from people who have less and less without eventually reaching the point where those people have nothing to lose, and no choice but to die or fight back. That point has been passed in Nicaragua, has been reached in El Salvador and Guatemala, and is not far off in Honduras. We cannot prevent this by means of arms, or cosmetic elections, or arcane distinctions between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. We can only prolong the agony by such means (as we did in Southeast Asia). The peace-with-honor still open to us is that which is eternally promised if we confess our sins, let the wrath of God be fulfilled, and pray for

the chance to make amends.

As for national interest, we need to recognize that it is threatened not by ideology but by hostility. It was the U.S. embargo, not Marxist ideology, that drove Cuba into dependency upon the Soviet Union. The most rigorously Marxist political leader in the world, Enver Hoxha of Albania, is no friend of the Soviets; Indira Gandhi of India, a devoted capitalist, is. Non-communist Syria threatens our troops with Soviet missiles, while we strengthen communist China as a means of neutralizing the Soviet threat.

When Congress was agonizing over an economic aid bill for Nicaragua following the Sandinista victory, the House added provisions requiring that 60% of the aid go to private business, and that none go to projects using Cuban personnel. This effectively left those fields where popular support is to be gained (such as health and education) to the Cubans. We have, in short, nothing to fear from a Leftist orientation among Latin Americans, but much to fear from our own invincible ignorance and perverse determination to drive them into enmity and deliver them into the hands of our rivals.

Resources

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Pan Americanism from Monroe to the Present, Alonso Aguilar (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1968)

Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America, Walter LaFeber (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983) ■

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

misunderstanding that surrounds the word *socialism*. He strips the word of any identity with Marxism, communism and Stalinism and presents us with a respectable and very acceptable foundation for true socialism. And his accusation that in the past 40 years, capitalism has not presented the world with anything new in the political or economic organization of society should prod us to "think about this."

Charles D. Corwin
Colonial Beach, Va.

'Fastidious Clarifications'

That Jacques Ellul found some "new way" that does not belong to capitalism, communism or the Third World is to fudge on the fact that in Walesa's case his struggle came from a communist camp. It also ignores those with spiritual courage from the capitalist side and the Third World. A solidarity movement can happen wherever citizens understand there is a need for cooperation and it is not forthcoming. It is important to note

that the bourgeoisie who claim Walesa as their champion are also against his socialism.

Where national concern puts corporate profit before its people, socialism comes from the right. The factions within the United States who accept no human face wish to replace Hitler on the world economic scene. In the United States socialism is only viewed as coming from the left. Our policy forces us to be anti-communist, which is how Nazi Germany handled not sharing its industrial advantage with the world, and enabled building an arsenal to fight anyone who opposed it.

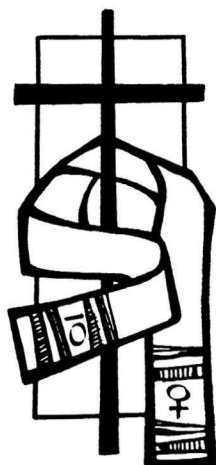
Our citizens are permitted the advantage of national health care without a job as in other industrial countries. Overseas we do allow the state to do this humane socialism because western corporations then can avoid a traditional labor/management cost. When American workers have no job, no health care and still support corporate America's interpretation of a competitive market place their orientation is Darwinian slavery. Of course those who do not favor humani-

tarian state-aid do not believe in Darwinian theory.

To say "absolutely nothing" has been accomplished in the capitalist world is to deny an effort nobly made to turn this country toward a Christian direction. Of course 40 years of condemning liberal policies and the indictments of all those who express them as communist has done its damage. A fastidious clarification must be made. The superiority of the powerful can only be maintained if the Lech Walesas, the Martin Luther Kings or the Mohandas Gandhis go unheeded. When unions no longer defend workers against manipulation (government or management) they have joined the powerful. When leaders no longer work for the real needs of the people they should not claim their support of democracy or Christianity. There is no problem in choosing a Marxist economy with a Roman Catholic face, or finding trade between Hebrew and Moslem traders. It happens. The truly authentic Christian is a creator of non-violent solutions.

Gray Anderson
Bloomington, Ind.

Special May WITNESS, Video Film to Mark 10th Anniversary Event



A special edition of THE WITNESS commemorating the 10th anniversary of the "irregular ordinations" of the 11 Episcopal women priests in Philadelphia will be published in May. All present subscribers will receive this bonus issue, and it also will be distributed during the week of 10th anniversary celebrations in Washington, D.C., culminating in a Eucharist at Washington Cathedral May 26 at 2 p.m.

Among events planned, in addition to the Liturgy, are a conference celebrating women, lay and ordained, at Villa Cortona in Bethesda, Md. May 23-25; the annual meeting of the Episcopal Women's Caucus beginning at 10 a.m. May 26, in Hearst Hall (near the Cathedral), Washington, D.C. and an open party hosted by the Rev. George Regas, rector of All Saints, Pasadena, May 25 at 8 p.m. in Hearst Hall.

The Episcopal Church Publishing

Company will sponsor a half hour video program entitled, "Women on the Altar," to be shown at a wine and cheese party May 25 from 5 to 7 p.m., place to be announced. The docudrama film will present archival footage of the '74 ordinations and interviews with key participants.

Issues to be included are:

- The function of power and authority in the church
- How to organize around an issue effectively
- The functions of class and economics (including an analysis of the usefulness of sexism and racism in keeping the unorganized powerless)
- What has been accomplished and what is yet to be done.

For further information on the above, write or call THE WITNESS, P.O. Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002 (215) 643-7067.

Values . . .

Continued from page 11



serving, position—whether that self service is denying certain ugly realities or bargaining for time with God before an impending Doomsday.

2. Anger. It is justifiable. If there is any truth in my earlier external diagnosis—that we live in the end times of World-Nation-functional Christian faith—then students are justifiably angry. It is sane to be angry at times, like when you're dying.

Sane, focused anger produces fight from within. Adrenaline flows, heroes are made; battles are won, shackles are thrown off. Anger can be a very positive response.

But unfocused anger can simply become rage which radiates all around. Undifferentiated anger, unfounded rage spills over into every walk of life. We are saturated with violence everywhere. Read your local newspaper. Headlines, movie titles, games, rock groups—all give ample evidence that we live in a sea of unfocused rage, anger, and violence.

3. Depression (anger repressed). Ennui is a lack of caring for self or others or creation. A boredom or tedium, a weariness or dissatisfaction with life that signs up for courses without rhyme or reason and just as easily drops them, which may or may not follow through on stated commitments, which neglects personal appearance, common decency, and simply doesn't give a damn about anything—ennui is all around us.

Behind the depression is the repressed, unfocused rage which may from time to time erupt but which most probably remains undercover in a collective laid-back cool which is extolled as a virtue.

4. Fear (Kubler-Ross doesn't name fear as a stage, but in the face of dying, people are afraid.) Internally, I think the narcissism of today's student, the withdrawal into self, is the result of fear. Fear is a deeper emotion than anger, manifesting itself in many forms of self-isolating behavior. When all around is unsure, to withdraw into a private world isolated by headphones from the world's noises is safe. Withdrawal can be into a private fantasy about the quest—whether through Tolkein or a game of Mazes and Monsters where both fear and anger are lived out in fantasy.

The internal diagnosis is one with elements of denial and bargaining, anger and depression and a deep underlying, self isolating fear.

Where is the wellspring of spiritual values in today's student?

It is as if they have grown up in the world of Jeremiah:

My people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns, that can hold no water.
(Jer. 2:13)

III.

Where is the wellspring? Of spiritual values? It is where the Christian gospel always has said it was. It is in that death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which we have long proclaimed. In thinking about the Paschal Mystery of Christ, the death and resurrection which gives new life, we have perhaps too narrowly focused on this as an event within the individual believer and not seen it in its more cosmic implication.

What if our society is in a tomb? Cannot God strike that rock which closes the tomb and again bring forth living water? What if all is dark, and Jerusalem is surrounded? Cannot Isaiah proclaim a hopeful song?

Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust and will not be afraid . . .
Shout and sing for joy, O inhabitants of Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of
Israel.

(Isa. 12:2-6)

From death God raises new life. That is the wellspring.

Today's student knows the death. The hope of new life is the message to which we witness.

In entering the dialogue about life rising from death, I would note three phases—all of which I believe to be the great values of today's students.

First, there is the value of courage. To have the courage to persevere with an education in these days is a magnanimous act. It can be Stoic; it can be self serving, but let us honor in our students their courage to keep on living. Better to seek a career than to drop out. Their courage ultimately is sacred. It is rooted in some deep knowledge within the species that to persevere is necessary if life is to have meaning. It is the struggle of Jacob who will not let go of the angel until blessed.

Second, let us honor the honesty in our students who can say that our old world is dying and that it hurts, that it is frightening, and that it is enraging. Let us not deny their dealing with the death and dying of a culture. Let us honor their struggle and listen with them for the sound of living waters that might



emerge from these cold stones. Let us dare feel with them, in our own lives, the pain and fear and anger of living among the dying. When we are able to do so, I expect we will experience new levels of communication which will bring us both new life.

Third, let us dare embrace with them a new world, a new vision of life—not a world of self isolated fear, but the world of micro-chips, which can help connect us, the world of interdependent world states, the world of international business and agriculture, the world of negotiation and careful compromise which can defuse the threat of nuclear genocide.

Let us not only embrace a new and strange and different world but let us help them to hear with us the biblical promise—“Behold I make all things new.” (Rev. 21:5)

To discover wellsprings is to go deep. More than one church in Europe rediscovered their wellsprings during excavation after the bombing ended. Thus, All Hallows, Towergate, uncovered a Saxon Arch of its original worshipers. St. Clement’s, Rome, now is excavated below its present active church building to a fourth religious level—a Mithraic Temple.

There is certainly a sense in which we all prefer to live on the surface of life. But today’s student, as well as we ourselves, will only discover our wellsprings if we dare go deep enough.

Deep into Sheol—to the place of departed spirits. Deep into the death and dying of an era, a nation, a religious synthesis—all of which have served us well but which now are dying.

With our students let us have the courage, the honesty to look into this deep, this watery chaos, and discover the Spirit of God hovering—the One who makes all things new, who from death raises up new life.

Monica Furlong wrote the following twenty years ago:

I cannot imagine a more enjoyable time to be a Christian, except possibly in the first few centuries of the Church. For while the great holocaust is sweeping away much that is beautiful and all that is safe and comfortable and unquestioned, it is relieving us of the mounds of Christian bric-a-brac as well, and the liberation is unspeakable. Stripped of our nonsense we may almost be like the early Christians painting their primitive symbols on the walls of the catacombs—the fish, the grapes, the loaves of bread, the cross, the monogram of Christ—confident that in having done so they had described the necessities of life.

(Monica Furlong, *The Manchester Guardian*, January 17, 1963.)

Where is the wellspring of spiritual values in today’s student?

It is in the watery chaos of this age, a chaos over which the Spirit of God hovers to create light and life.

It is in the darkness of the tomb awaiting a dying age—a dying nationalism, a dying religious synthesis. And from that death and dying God will raise up a new body, a new world, and give it light and life.

Our ministry, I am suggesting, is one of sitting with a grief-stricken generation who has the courage to continue in the face of death and who has the possibility of embracing, even forming with God, the new age yet to be raised up. ■

(The above article is reprinted with permission from *Plumblin*, Volume 11, Issue 2.)

Two More Children

two more children, god,
rained upon us,
dropped from the sky last night.
their mom’s in the hospital.
no place to go.
i have no fondness for child-rearing, god.
and you already gave us chrissy and tony.
we kept them when their mother didn’t come back.
four is a few too many, god,
for an orderly person like me
who likes her house clean, and her peace and quiet.
my lover has a gift for this, god,
a calling.
says she wants five or six or seven
including a baby, please.
me, i never wanted this.
me, a mother?
can’t fathom it.
so traditional.
so stereotyped.
i’m a liberated woman, a radical christian.
i’m called to change systems,
speak prophetic words
confront the powers and principalities.
but children, god?
in my home?
their needs so immediate —
seven-year-old charles crying in bed last night
“i want my mother”
and i creep in to hold him close
and whisper words of assurance.
i’m not cut out for this one-on-one stuff, god.
too demanding.
too consuming.
i want to fight dragons
and you give me children.

— Patricia Broughton

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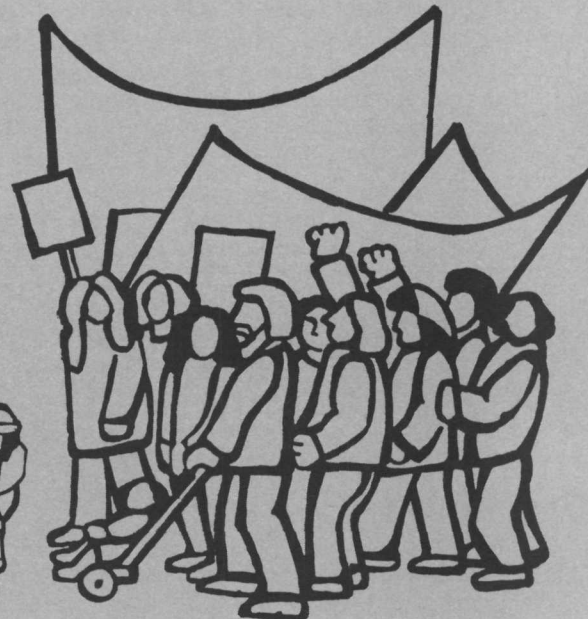
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