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Jean Dementi and Friend

What message did this Alaskan woman priest deliver to the Pope? See page 12.

Letters

St. Constantine, Yea

It's time somebody stuck up for St. Constantine. That's right, *Saint* Constantine, the ancient Roman Emperor who embraced Christianity. The "Constantinian Arrangement and its derivations," as William Stringfellow wrote in the February issue of *THE WITNESS*, is blamed for just about every wrong in Christian history since the reign of the Peer-of-Apostles, as the Orthodox call him to this day.

I really do have enormous respect for Stringfellow, but this carping at Constantine isn't fair. Consider the circumstances of the time: After centuries of intermittent persecution, the new young ruler announces his intention to fashion his rule with reference to Christian principles. What *is* the faithful response of the church? Polite refusal?

There is no question that the Constantinian Arrangement frequently disfigured the church beyond recognition. As is often said, the embrace of Caesar can easily break the back of Christ's Bride. But the crusades and the inquisitions, the corrupt popes and servile theologians and conquistadores are not the whole story of this Arrangement. There were also Bartolomeo de las Casas, St. Hugh of Lincoln, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, St. Philip of Moscow, St. Margaret of Scotland, St. Maximus the Confessor and many others whose voices and deeds represent the holy side of the Arrangement.

And there was St. Constantine himself. Now, some attorneys may wish to prosecute him, before the Throne of Judgment, for seducing the church into apostasy. But in his defense will testify countless widows and orphans whose lot he improved, slaves whose rights he advanced, and gladiators whose killing he forbade. It is for God to judge his motives.

And where would Christianity be today without his contribution? Very possibly where Mithraism is. In other words, extinct. In every great missionary advance, imperial power has provided the conditions necessary in the crucial initial stages: in the ancient Roman Empire; in Armenia and Georgia; in Western and Northern Europe; in Asia, Africa, and in the Western Hemisphere. And when the empire has fulfilled this role, it has always disappeared — leaving the church firmly rooted among God's people.

Finally I would like to address a few questions to William Stringfellow:

1) What do you mean by "just war sophistry"? Do you mean that the classic qualifications for a just war are abject casuistry, not deserving of serious consideration? Do you mean that no war can ever be justified from a Christian point of view? That, for example, the armed resistance of Guatemalan Indians, in the attempt to prevent the torture of their children, is unjust? Or is your reference only to nuclear war?

2) What about Nicaragua? Is the Sandinista attempt to fashion a new society with reference to Christian principles *not* the latest derivation of the Constantinian Arrangement? Is not Sandinismo a new Constantine? Or do you approve of this aspect of the "ambivalent, and poignant, behavior of Pope John Paul II," agreeing with him that the Nicaraguan priests have no business in the Government of National Reconstruction?

St. Constantine symbolized the appropriateness of political activity on the part of the church. Modern political theologians and Christian revolutionaries have this in common with him, surprising and outrageous as it may seem. For he represents the willingness of the church to run the risk of being *in* the world in

order to transform the world, rather than keeping aloof from the world in order to preserve her purity.

The Rev. William J. Teska
Minneapolis, Minn.

Stringfellow Responds

I have no elaborate quarrel with the remarks of William Teska regarding Constantine. I think that I appreciate the historic circumstances which occasioned the Constantinian Arrangement. That does not alter the basic truth that the Arrangement represents a reversal of the Apostolic precedent for the church's stance with respect to the established order of society and to the ruling authorities.

To put it another way, I have less trouble with Constantine than I do with Adolph Hitler, who received solemn sanction from the established church in Germany in 1934; or, as supercilious as he may be, with Ronald Reagan.

With regard to the various questions addressed to me:

1) I do not believe that war can ever be "justified" from a biblical perspective.

2) I do not believe that there can be a "Christian nation" or a "Christian society" as such, as benign as the aspirations for such may sometimes be. The only Christian nation in history is the society of the Church of Christ. That is why the church, where faithful, stands over against the secular order in unremitting tension.

William Stringfellow
Block Island, R.I.

Kudos From a Spofford

I would like to take this opportunity to send in my subscription renewal and also to congratulate you and *THE WITNESS* on your 10th anniversary.

I am Bill Spofford, Sr.'s daughter and

I can't tell you what a boost your magazine gives me. You have done an excellent job and have continued in the tradition of my late father. The magazine is very readable, informative and dynamic. It brings your readers hope and reassurance in a very mixed-up world.

**Suzanne Spofford Rester
Charleston, S.C.**

(We are most appreciative of the kudos from Suzanne Spofford Rester as we continue to publish "in the tradition" of her courageous father, former editor William B. Spofford, Sr. That tradition is one of social concern and advocacy, which has animated THE WITNESS since its beginnings in the World War I era. After Bill Spofford's death in 1972, the magazine ceased publishing for a while. But THE WITNESS (redivivus) rolled off the press again in 1974 under Editor Robert L. DeWitt, with the announcement of the "irregular" ordinations of the first Episcopalian women priests. Therefore, depending on how one reckons, this year we are either 67 or 10 years old! — Eds.)

Isogesis, Exogesis?

Concerning "Joseph a Tax Resister?" by Abbie Jane Wells, (March WITNESS), I think a mention of isogesis and exogesis may be in order. The first, most readers will recall, is the practice of using scripture to prove one's point, whereas the latter is the unbiased search for the truth contained in scripture.

Both Matthew and Luke have accounts of Joseph and Mary being in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus' birth. Luke tells of them going to Bethlehem because of the census. Some scholars debate that this may have been a device to have Jesus born in Bethlehem, but the fact remains that whether living there, as in Matthew,

or temporarily there, as in Luke, Joseph could hardly have avoided the census. There is no evidence that he even desired to avoid it. There is more evidence that he willingly complied with it.

The purpose of a census, in large part, is to register the populace for purposes of conscription and taxation. Josephus and other historians support the actuality of that census. On the other hand, the massacre of the infants of Bethlehem by Herod, the flight into and the return from Egypt are reported only by Matthew and are difficult, if not impossible, to confirm. It is also significant to note that none of these events are mentioned by Mark or John.

Joseph, as Ms. Wells suggests, may have been a tax resister but this can hardly be proven or even hinted at by the Gospels. If anything, the indication is to the contrary.

I do not wish to cast aspersions on Ms. Wells' convictions, but I would like to suggest that nearly anything can be acrobatically proven or suggested by use of the scriptures. For example, just as taxes can be shown to be unjust when spent on weapons, tax evasion can be seen as unjust when poverty programs are not supplemented by able individuals. Perhaps it may be more prudent to approach the Word as a voice rather than as a tool.

**William Hodges
Lexington, Ky.**

Ms. Wells Responds

There is isogesis and there is exegesis, William Hodges writes, and then, I would add, in between these two lay all the varieties of "I wonder if's" of all human minds, which make no claim or pretense to be either. And no doubt the Greeks had a word for this, too. Whether a person approaches the Word as a voice

or as a tool, each does it through his or her own mind. The Voice is heard in as many different ways as there are minds to receive it. And so we each flesh out the words of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, about Joseph or Mary or Jesus, in our various ways, whether to prove a point or as a search for the truth or just as an "I wonder if . . .?"

As for "taxes being unjust when spent on weapons and tax evasion being just as unjust when poverty programs are unsupplemented by individuals," as Hodges puts it, I can only echo a friend's sentiment, "And when we have tax structures that really support poverty programs, that'll be the day!" But until that day tax resisters may choose to skip the middle man and administer their tax dollars themselves — funneling them into poverty programs of their choice while keeping them out of all the weapons programs they choose not to support.

The massacre of the infants of Bethlehem and the flight into Egypt, only reported by Matthew, furnishes me with a number of "I wonder if's" — one of which is: I wonder if God warned all the fathers of sons under two as God warned Joseph? And if they had all fled as Joseph did, would there have been any boy babies left in Bethlehem for Herod's soldiers to slaughter? I am not trying to re-write history nor the New Testament, but if I am to believe that God has concern for all God's children, then I am led to believe that God had as much concern for all the boy babies in Bethlehem as God did for Jesus. Of course, this is impossible to confirm! But this is one of the many "I wonder if" questions I intend to ask God about face-to-face.

And I can hardly wait to get a firsthand account from Joseph himself about all the things he was involved with that

Continued on page 14

'No' to Constitutional Convention

by H. Coleman McGehee, Jr.

Should a convention be called to rewrite the United States Constitution? That question, now before the Michigan Legislature, has national implications.

As *THE WITNESS* goes to press, the State Senate has passed and the House is considering a proposal that the State of Michigan petition the U.S. Congress to convene such a Convention, ostensibly to propose the adoption of an amendment to require a federal balanced budget.

If 34 states pass this resolution, Congress is obligated under Article V of the Constitution to convene a convention. Since 32 states have already approved the resolution, national attention now centers on the Michigan Legislature.

Opponents, which include churches, the Jewish Community Council, the American Civil Liberties Union, Common Cause, and the State AFL-CIO, maintain that it is gambling with the integrity of the U.S. Constitution to seek an amendment by convention, rather than the usual, tested, and more careful procedure of an amendment proposed to the

states by two-thirds of Congress and subsequent ratification by three-fourths of the states. Other than the 1787 founding convention at which the Constitution was drafted, this nation has not experienced a Constitutional Convention. There are no procedures — constitutional, statutory, judicial or otherwise — to prevent a convention from becoming a “runaway convention” in which one or several amendments other than the so-called balanced budget amendment might be proposed for inclusion in the Constitution. There is nothing, apparently, that would prevent a convention from utilizing this opportunity to propose amendments, for example, dealing with gun control, organized prayers in the public schools, aid to parochial education, or any other such subject.

Those supporting a Constitutional Convention concede the possibility of a “runaway convention,” but argue that opposition to the resolution is a “smoke screen” for opposition to the whole notion of a mandated federal balanced budget.

Important questions must be answered before any convention is convened to rewrite the U.S. Constitution:

- Who would be eligible to serve as a delegate, and must delegates be elected?

- Would the chosen delegates be committed to cast a vote one way or the other on a proposed amendment?

- May Congress prescribe any rules for the convention or limit its amending powers in any way?

The answer to these questions is unknown, and it is not even clear who would have the authority to answer them: the President, the Congress, the states, the courts, the convention?

Those advocating a balanced budget have alternative, and less dangerous, methods available to them. The President can propose a balanced budget. He has, as everyone knows, proposed unbalanced budgets because of his heavy emphasis on spending for the arms race, and Congress may adopt a balanced budget, or Congress may propose a constitutional amendment to the states.

Let us hope that the State of Michigan plays no part in this irresponsible method of securing a balanced budget, and that the attempt to get 34 states to make possible the convening of a Constitutional Convention will fail.

The Rt. Rev. H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., is Bishop of Michigan and Chair of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

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THE WITNESS

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Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." (Matt. 25: 34-36)

Prison Ministry Needs

The early church saw the care of prisoners as an important part of its pastoral ministry. In Jesus' account of his own ministry (*Luke 4:18*) and that of his followers (*Matthew 25:34-36*), we find specific reference to attending to prisoners.

As American Christians we are diligent in our responses to the calls to ministry in *Matthew 25*. We set up soup kitchens and food cupboards for the hungry; we arrange newcomers' gatherings to welcome strangers. We fall down, however, in our care of the prisoner.

How do we explain our indifference, our neglect?

Partly because of our fear. Police, the press and politicians have indoctrinated us that persons held in jails are a particularly dangerous breed, a violent threat to society. Ghastly crimes are reported in the media and exploited to incite our demand for retaliation. Our response to this indoctrination is to shut away those who are accused or convicted of crimes. We are afraid of them: too afraid to risk care, too afraid to question press reports or learn the truth.

And partly we neglect prison ministry because of our hatred. We identify prisoners as despicable, beyond the pale, unlike "good" people (such as ourselves). Prisoners represent all those feared and untamed parts of ourselves that we bury deep, and then deny. They are our projected self-hatred. They become for us a scapegoat, "pierced for our faults,

crushed for our sins," and yet the punishment we heap upon them does not alleviate our fear or bring us peace, for our own inner violence continues to stir restlessly.

And then we neglect ministry with the imprisoned because of our ignorance and misunderstanding. Most of us know little about our judicial and "correctional" systems. The truth about our imprisoned sisters and brothers lies hidden behind thick walls, behind security devices and surveillance, behind official reports created to assure that all is well. Up-risings and prison violence are hastily translated into symptoms of the violent nature of specific individuals, before the public has an opportunity to identify and question the violent nature of the institutions themselves.

Jail and prison ministries, if considered at all, are viewed by most American Christians as complicated, dangerous undertakings best left to trained professionals, such as chaplains. Yet chaplains themselves rarely have specialized training. Few seminaries offer coursework relating to ministries in the criminal justice system. (A refreshing exception and a sign of hope is Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, which devotes a full semester of first-year ministry studies in this area.) Clinical Pastoral Education programs in jails and prisons are scarce. Professional writings on jail and prison ministries are nearly non-existent and when they appear tend to be simplistic, rarely acknowledging the complex forces at work in the justice "system" and in prisoners' minds and souls.

Finally, jail and prison chaplains tend to be marginalized among the clergy. Active and involved support from their

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New Approach

by Caroline F. Malseed

denominations rarely emerges, and they often become lonely individuals facing mountainous problems in a hostile institution.

A few voluntary, primarily lay agencies exist to serve prisoners — to visit, to assist, to advocate for prisoners and their concerns. These agencies tend to be among the social service agencies which scrap for the few surplus dollars of a strained economy. Usually they are under-funded, under-staffed, and face attempts by “corrections” administrations to discredit them or deny their efficacy. However, they continue to be more lights of hope, bringing flesh to the call to “visit the imprisoned.”

For the present, then, the U.S. church response to Christ’s call to serve prisoners is weak, scattered, and inadequate to the massiveness of need. As this is written, the number of prisoners in our institutions approaches 700,000 and increases daily. But our approaches to ministries in jails and prisons frequently depend on pietistic theologies that were discarded generations ago in other fields of Christian mission and ministry.

Traditionally, jail and prison ministries focus on the prisoner as the object of ministry — an individual who is to be changed, first inwardly, then in outward behavior, as a result of exposure to the Gospel. Prisoners too often have suffered literally as a “captive audience” the harangues of would-be evangelists who are convinced that the prisoner’s poor estate is a result of his or her unsaved condition. Imprisonment stands as a sign of warning or a punishment visited by a vengeful God, too long provoked by this recalcitrant individual.

Therefore, conversion of prisoners often becomes the primary agenda. The minister assumes the posture of having experienced rebirth in the Lord, and sets out to bring the prisoner, too, to this higher spiritual estate. In this view, the purpose of ministry is not acts of compassion or liberation to improve tangibly the prisoner’s situation, but rather to accept the situation (presumably ordained by God) and change the person. The minister thus becomes a peculiar kind of anti-Moses, justifying the prisoner’s slavery under the Pharaohs of our criminal

justice system, rather than trying to lead the oppressed to freedom and the discovery of the God who acts to save the poor.

Often, too, those in prison ministries adopt the language and agenda of the institutions in which they serve and take as part of their task the “rehabilitation” of prisoners, assuming the guilt of the persons concerned (whether they have been convicted or not) and hoping to accomplish the task of making these persons acceptable to society — on society’s terms. The minister may see “rehabilitation” as a sign of salvation, or may even fail to distinguish between the two terms. Jesus, who lived his life among the poor and outlaws and who died as a convicted criminal, might have been shocked by this approach to ministry done in his name.

Both traditional agendas of conversion and rehabilitation betray a lack of acceptance — an inability to love persons with their existing strengths and existing brokennesses. Ministry becomes a venture in the changing of persons to the norms held by the minister. The prisoner is not a



unique, sacrosanct individual but a pawn to be moved and manipulated in directions defined by another.

The traditional approaches also reveal a lack of distinction between sin and crime. Crimes are offenses against the laws of a government, to be dealt with according to the laws of that state. Sin, however, is a state of alienation from God in which all persons share, and which we seek to bridge through repentance and acceptance of our redemption in Christ.

While a crime may or may not be a sin (consider, for example, the cases of those who break laws in ignorance or in gestures of civil disobedience), many jail and prison ministers have chosen to view accused or convicted persons as examples of spectacular sinners, obviously in more dire need of salvation than their free peers. The logic of this approach can certainly be questioned. I propose that any theology behind ministry with the incarcerated which hopes to be faithful to Jesus Christ, must begin by viewing all persons equally as broken and in need of reconciliation with God — prisoners to the same degree as other individuals, no more, no less. Ministers who serve in jails and prisons also should see their role as helping persons to grow in relationship to God and in faithful relationships with others, but not, necessarily, to engaging in the social-psychological tasks of “rehabilitation.”

In the 16th chapter of Acts, Luke recounts a fascinating tale of an encounter between Paul and Silas and the magistrates of Philippi. Jailed for freeing a slave girl of a fortune-telling spirit (and thus reducing her value to her owners drastically), Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns during their night of imprisonment. Suddenly an earthquake broke the prison open, but the prisoners remained. The jailer, assuming his charges had fled, prepared to commit suicide, but Paul dissuaded him with assurance that no one had escaped. Stunned by the power of his prisoners’ faith, the jailer



and his household were converted to Christianity. (Here is where most lectionaries end the tale — but the story is far from ended!)

The next day the magistrates sent word that Paul and Silas should be released, but Paul did a remarkable thing. Outraged, he confronted the magistrates with the violation of civil rights that they had visited upon Silas and himself!

“What!” Paul replied, “They flog Roman citizens in public and without trial, and throw us into prison, and then think they can push us out on the quiet? Oh, no! They must come and escort us out themselves.” (*Acts 16:37-38*)

Thus, at least according to Luke, Paul saw the defense of civil rights and the demand for just proceedings as within the calling of the faithful Christian.

This story challenges our traditional jail and prison ministries, and opens new possibilities for us on two levels. First, we notice that the *jailer* (not the presumably unconverted prisoners) is the one who needs and seeks conversion. Consider his task — the job of locking up human beings, of punishing them, but also being responsible for their minimal welfare, their feeding, sanitation, clothing. Consider the mixed responses demanded of him toward his charges, and the need for a faith that would lift him above his trying tasks.

It might well be that those engaged in jail and prison ministries today should focus efforts on the “conversion” of guards, administrators and other personnel, remembering how they may be oppressed by the nature of their work, how they too are enslaved by Pharaoh, but how they also have the power to work to redeem their situation with new or renewed Christian vision.

Of course, liberation is a key theme in recent theologies and approaches to ministry. Vital to this theme are the concepts of oppressed peoples and their rights to self-determination. At a conference held with Paolo Freire at Cornell University in 1981, a seminar of persons working in various jail and prison ministries and advocacy groups pondered what words like “liberation” and “empowerment” can mean for that most controlled group in our society, prisoners. We were aware that prisoners who attempt to exercise self-determination, much less organize others for strategic collective action, are likely to be identified swiftly by security-conscious prison officials, and to suffer harsh reprisals. Encouraging prisoners to initiate such courses of action, even such apparently innocent gestures as circulating petitions, could prove to be ill-considered and dangerous.

With this awareness in mind, those in jail and prison ministries who take liber-

ation as a base must take the risks of advocacy upon themselves, as much as possible sheltering the identities of prisoners who report injustice or wrongdoing. Such ministers must, therefore, be prepared to hear, believe, and address accounts of injustice.

Hearing and believing are themselves radical acts in the present state of ministry. Prisoners tend to be the least-believed persons in our society, their experiences of injustice routinely discounted. Jail and prison staffs are quick to provide "documentation" discrediting complaints. Yet, the history of incarceration in the United States has been and continues to be bloody, as evidenced by investigations after uprisings at Attica and Ossining, in Texas and Oklahoma, and throughout the country. To be liberators, those who might minister must listen to, and trust, the cries of the imprisoned. We do not have to be prisoners, or ex-offenders, or intimately connected to prisoners ourselves in order to do this. Moses was not

a slave in bondage, but a former member of Pharaoh's court. Any slave who had attempted to liberate the Hebrew people would have been put to death. But Moses was in a position to be able to lead. It remains to God's people outside prison walls to proclaim, "Let my people go," and to struggle for the liberation of captives.

We have allowed prisoners to become severed from the body of Christ. We cannot see them in our churches, of course, and members of congregations who have loved ones in prison are more likely to hide the fact than to call for our prayers and assistance. We do not visit prisoners routinely, as we do the sick; we avoid correspondence with them, so they will not learn our home addresses; rarely do we even pray for them, much less seek to minister with them. Yet without our imprisoned sisters and brothers, as a church we are as incomplete as if we had deliberately amputated one of our own limbs.

Our first response to this situation should be a literal turning around so that we may look and see these thousands whom we have neglected. We will have to search them out, for they are deliberately hidden from us — but those who have eyes to see, will see. In our congregations we could begin to study our justice system, our institutions, and their impact on our brothers and sisters within them. We could consider that the reason many of us have never been arrested has more to do with our race and economic status than our innocence of crime. We could repent, turn around, be reconciled to one another.

And, as congregations, we could "reach in" to those in prison, and to their families. Visiting and correspondence programs, sharing study and worship groups with prisoners (making arrangements through chaplains), support ministries for families of prisoners are all possibilities. However, true ministry cannot be carried out in a posture of

moral or spiritual superiority, but only in humility and the willingness to recognize Christ in the one we serve.

We need to develop a spirit of compassion: an awareness and sharing of the sufferings of those in prison, seeing in them Christ the prisoner — Christ, accused, convicted, condemned. Meeting those we fear, we lose our fear; caring for the condemned, we learn to love that which we condemn in ourselves; striving for justice for others, we gain new justice for ourselves.

As the church we have much to learn about ministry with those in prison. Our prayers, studies and reflections in this area are in fledgling form. We need to gather together to learn from Scripture, from sacrament, and from each other in order to become faithful visitors, advocates, liberators to the captives. It is time to re-examine our approaches. It is time to begin again.

Resources

Crime and Community in Biblical Perspective (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1980) An adult/older youth curriculum, with a leader's guide. Judicial Process Commission, 121 North Fitzhugh Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14614.

Researching Your Local Jail: A Citizen's Guide for Action (Syracuse, N.Y.: 1981) Research tools for concerned citizens investigating local institutions. Safer Society Press, 3049 East Genesee Street, Syracuse, N.Y. 13224.

Overcrowded Time: Why Prisons Are So Crowded and What Can Be Done. Booklet produced and available from: Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Office of Communications, 250 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Books

Marie Buckley, *Breaking Into Prison: A Citizen's Guide to Volunteer Action* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974)

Harold DeWolf, *What Americans Should Do About Crime* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976) ■

PVS Seeks Workers

Prisoner Visitation and Support (PVS) is a nationwide, interfaith assistance program for Federal and military prisoners. It is sponsored by 35 groups, including the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. PVS seeks to meet the needs of prisoners through an alternative ministry that is separate from official prison structures.

The focus of PVS's visitors is on those prisoners with an acute need for human contact: those serving long sentences, those in solitary confinement, those without visits, etc. Founded in 1968, PVS initially visited conscientious objectors, but later expanded its work to include war resisters and others wanting visits.

PVS is expanding its visitor network and is seeking additional people for this work. Write to PVS, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 or call (215) 241-7117.

Sexual Abuse of Women in Prison

by Margaret Traxler

“We are human beings, we desire respect for our bodies. If we resist an officer, we could be sentenced up to five or ten years. So we must stand still and be attacked willingly and submissively.”

So wrote a young woman in Cook County Jail, Chicago, appealing to her Black Muslim minister to intervene on behalf of women who were suffering sexual abuse from male guards.

Her plight is all too clear to any advocate for women in prisons. Some men suffer paralysis of the moral psyche once they are placed in charge of incarcerated women. And the problem is exacerbated when men take advantage of women grieving over the loss of their children. Once behind bars, many of these women become passive, internalizing their grief. Feeling guilty that they have abandoned their children, the mothers try to accrue “good time.” This means that they can reduce their sentences — sometimes up to half — with “good behavior.” But not if a guard reports them. Even when they fall prey to sexual abuse they tend to become submissive and keep silent in a dim purgatory of waiting for release.

Further, since one out of five women in prison has suffered incest herself, this increases apprehension about young daughters left in strange homes, or with semi-hostile relatives who resent the criminal record of the imprisoned mother.

Margaret Ellen Traxler is a Notre Dame nun who is director of the Institute of Women Today, headquartered in Chicago. The Institute is celebrating its 10th year of service to women who are in jail and prison.

Should men, then, be hired to guard women in prison? I would say they should not, but if they are, they themselves should be guarded! No man should be allowed in the sleeping quarters or day rooms unless accompanied by a woman guard. In one federal prison, a male guard who made rounds at 2 a.m. was sexually abusing the women, who reported him through one of the chaplains. When the account was finally sent to the Bureau of Prisons in Washington, D.C., the charge had been trivialized to “he shined his flashlight in the faces of sleeping women.”

In a prison in the Midwest, as many as 26 male guards and other staff were fired when a sex scandal was revealed. On another occasion in this same prison, 14 staff and guards were terminated. At another prison for women, a warden who was alert and professionally exemplary told me that she would have to have a photograph or a tape recording before

she could accuse two male guards whose conduct I brought to her attention.

She explained that Civil Service jobs are so protected that little could be done about workers who abused women and that the union of guards protected the rest. In one particular scandal, the male guards were revealed as having a sex ring. The guards themselves were given “medical retirement” and the warden, although innocent, was asked to resign.

What is needed is extreme sensitivity in personnel placement. Even when this is understood and monitored, women prisoners are sexually vulnerable. The surprisingly high rate of pregnancy among women in prison reveals the need for protection.

In no way is this meant to denigrate the gravity of sexual rape of men behind bars. *All* rape is violent. It is reprehensible that either women or men must be placed in an environment of violence “for the good of society.” However,



when women prisoners become prey to male guards and staff, they cannot resist lest they be ticketed or reported as being insolent or insubordinate. It happens every day. On a prison visit, I overheard a male guard call to a woman across the study area, "Get your ass over here," whereupon I stood up from behind a study carrel, and the man hastily disappeared.

"Thank you," said the young woman. "He takes me every time he finds me alone. Sometimes he pretends I broke a rule and orders me out of line into a secluded corner."

Another flagrant abuse is the strip search, supposedly forbidden today in Illinois. It was introduced in 1952 for women only and could be applied even though they were arrested for minor traffic offenses. It was declared unconstitutional by a United States District Court in 1982, but at the end of 1983, the practice was invoked in the women's division at Cook County Jail. A former male employee admitted, when the case was being examined in the courts, "In the district stations, all the men ran to the closed-circuit TV screens so as not to miss the show."

In the history of strip-search, there was submitted into court record only one analytical survey taken over a 35-day period from June to July, 1965. This took place in Chicago, and of the 1,800 women who had been searched, nine items had been discovered. Not one was a firearm. The U.S. District Court decided unanimously that strip searching of women, while excluding men, was unconstitutional. The court found that it violated equal protection under the Fourth Amendment. The practice must now be abrogated in all states.

Paula Kassell, an editor of *New Directions for Women* asked a cogent question related to these issues. Noting that a California judge and the New Jersey Civil Service recently ruled that

female jail guards must be allowed to watch male prisoners when they take showers or are attending to other bodily needs, Kassell asked, "Must this go on?" She reports that in New Jersey, the ruling includes touching inmates' private parts in the search efforts. Kassell sees this as a serious violation of the Constitutional right to privacy. Wrote Kassell, "Even though women's job opportunities and promotions are involved, let no one imagine that women's cause will be served by allowing opposite sexes to observe showers or conduct strip-searches."

Violation of privacy breaks down the morale of both men and women in prison. A nurse at a large prison said that she worked for three years to get permission for an inmate, Jack, to have the privilege of a private shower. Jack had an ileostomy and carried the bag for wastes at his side at all times. Men in the general shower laughed and teased him. As a result, Jack refused to take regular showers and the nurse tried in vain to obtain necessary permissions for a private bath.

I know of no prisons where there are private showers. In some, the showers

lead onto a corridor where male guards are free to walk. In one, the shower entry faces a glass booth which is open on three sides for all to observe. Linda, a resident at one state prison, said that she was offered an extra hour in the recreation yard if she would take a shower while Bill, the male guard, watched from the observation booth. Further, she was offered an extra hour for each woman inmate she could coax to do the same while Bill was on duty. To refuse, Linda would invoke Bill's resentment and possible retaliation.

On one occasion I was a silent and accidental observer of an encounter between a superintendent of a women's section and two young men dressed in white jackets who came to the women's door. They were pushing a medical cart. "We're going to do pap tests on the women," they announced.

"Just who are you and who sent you?" demanded the woman superintendent. "We're from the infirmary and we were sent to take pap smears," they answered and moved the cart forward.

The superintendent moved in front of the cart and demanded that they head back where they came from. "No one touches my women!" she replied in no uncertain terms. The two young men turned and went back to the infirmary.

Even licensed physicians can be a threat. One federal prison for women had one such. The inmates called him Dr. Goldfinger. When I inquired about this nickname, the reason was accompanied with gentle laughter. They explained, "Even when we have only a throat infection or a broken heel, Dr. Goldfinger wants to begin with a vaginal examination."

Thus corrections officials have a special obligation to guard women and secure their bodily safety. Meanwhile, the current model for incarceration of women makes us ask, "Who will guard the men who are guarding the women?" ■

Reflection

It is but a small matter
that inside Diane Roberts
inside DC Jail
a baby died
Diane Roberts said it mattered
said for five days bleeding
please it matters
but the ones who wield the power
shrewd mimes of Herod's curse
said it really didn't matter

We claim
an article of faith we say
a sparrow's gentle fall is marked
so I would think
this little death
small matter though it is
might break the very heart of God

—Helen Woodson



The Rev. Jean Dementi, priest-in-charge of St. Jude's, North Pole, meets the Pope.

Jimmy Bedford

Woman Priest, St. Jude, and the Pope

by Mary Lou Suhor

The Rev. Jean Aubrey Dementi, terminally ill with cancer, knew exactly what she wanted to say if she met the Pope during his recent visit to Alaska. It had nothing to do with a physical cure, longed for by many of the 200 sick and disabled children and adults with whom she waited. Her concern was for the health of the church.

The Episcopal woman priest, who at 64 has served as a nurse and missionary for more than a generation in Alaska, described how she felt before the event. "I wasn't going there to plead or complain, just to proclaim by my presence and words that there are women priests in the church. I knew that if I did meet the Pope, it would be very brief, so I had handwritten a message on a file card. It said, *'Your Holiness, we women priests*

bring a new dimension of wholeness to Our Lord's ministry.'"

Even though it was a long shot that she would meet John Paul II at the upper room set aside at the Fairbanks airport, her parishioners back at St. Jude's, North Pole, Alaska, remained hopeful. Wasn't their church named for the patron saint of hopeless cases?

Then the moment came. The Pope entered amid an onslaught of security agents, reporters and photographers, Dementi told THE WITNESS.

"The Pope made his way through the young, the aged, the handicapped in the room. There were more than 50 children in wheelchairs in front, then a second line of adults behind them," she said. "He was reaching out to them, in his loving way."

*"Your holiness,
we women priests
bring a new dimension
of wholeness
to Our Lord's ministry."*

As he neared Jean, he extended his hand.

"I had my clergy collar on, and he looked a bit startled. But he put his other hand on my arm and I put my arm on his, then he moved toward the others. It was over in a moment — too brief for words — but as he drew away I slipped the message into his hand. I think he tucked it into his sash.

"I wish I could tell you that when he saw me he said, 'My dear sister, let me embrace you. I've been looking forward to meeting a woman priest. Tell me what it's like.' As it turned out, I doubt whether the cause of women's ordination in the Catholic church was advanced very much."

But Dementi's friends do not write off the encounter that easily. They point out

that the fleeting moment was frozen by Photographer Jimmy Bedford. And Jean Dementi and Pope John Paul ran in full color the next day on the front page of the Fairbanks *Daily News-Miner*.

A woman reporter for an Anchorage paper, noting Jean's collar, had also asked who she was and whether it was special to be blessed by the Pope. "I said yes, because of who he is and the millions he represents," said Jean, "but as a priest, I bless people, too, and I don't think the blessing is any different."

Mary Eunice Oliver of San Diego, a close friend of Dementi's, was overwhelmed. She saw the Bedford photo as depicting "a two-way grace." On the right, she sees her priest-friend receiving "last rites" from the Pope, "whom God brought around the world for that — only the top for Jean," and on the left, she sees "the Pope being empowered to ordain women."

It was Oliver who had first informed THE WITNESS of the "ecumenical circumstances" by which Jean Dementi had been invited to that upper room.

Paula Long, a parishioner from St. Jude's, had gone to the airport some time ago to meet Jean. There, Long, a former Catholic, found an envelope containing \$14,000 in checks in the parking lot. They had been donated toward expenses of the Pope's visit, and distraught Catholic officials had already alerted airport security. "You can bet they were all pleading for help from St. Jude," Dementi laughed.

Long called diocesan headquarters to report what she had found, and officials were jubilant. At the same time, she asked if her parish priest could be included in the celebration for the Pope. They told her there would be no Mass; the Pope would only be visiting with the sick and handicapped.

"When Paula explained that I had terminal cancer, she was assured I would be included," Dementi said. "That's how I came to be in that upper

room; otherwise I would have been standing in the rain in 31 degree weather with the others who wanted to see the Pope."

Dementi also noted that the stole presented to the Pope by the Catholic diocese was "handmade by an Episcopalian, Delores Carroll Sloan, from Ft. Yukon. She handbeaded forget-me-nots, the Alaskan state flower, on moose-skin, and the Pope wore it for the paraliturgy. I was also pleased that Sister Eileen Brown read the first lesson in the paraliturgy, but I don't see that, short of a miracle, there will be a Catholic woman ordained in this generation," Dementi said.

Nevertheless, ecumenical relationships are excellent in her area, Dementi affirmed. "Bishop Robert Whelan, the Catholic bishop, saw me during the Papal visit and gave me a big hug. He and three Catholic clergy came to the dedication of my church. I am accepted here. Catholic women see me and their eyes light up. A lot of Catholic women wish things were different."

For Dementi, the most memorable part of the day came "simply in being among the 200-plus people, ranging from 2 months to 104-years-old, who



Paula Long
She found \$14,000



Jean Dementi on a recent visit to St. Mark's Mission, Nenana, Alaska, where she served 33 years ago.

waited from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. to see the Pope."

"This was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life," she said. "Doctors, nurses, therapists and aides were there to minister to the crowd, and the atmosphere was so calm, loving, and peaceful. I thought, why can't all that love and acceptance be there after we leave through these doors and re-enter the outside world."

It was this concern for the halt and the lame that brought Jean Aubrey from Southern California to Alaska more than 33 years ago. Forsaking sunshine for snow, she has served in both urban and rural areas, and early on gained a reputation as "the missionary who could pull teeth." In Ft. Yukon, she was superintendent of a hospital which she ran for two years without a doctor. Her nursing abilities were particularly tested in Shageluk, when at one time more than 90% of the village contracted measles. There were no deaths, a tribute to her skills and dedication.

In Shageluk Jean Aubrey married Jim Dementi, and the couple moved to An-

chorage where she served as a public health nurse. In 1972, Jean became the first woman in Alaska to be ordained a deacon in the Episcopal Church. She was also the first female candidate for diocesan bishop in the Anglican Communion.

Since 1978, she has served as priest in charge of the North Pole congregation of St. Jude's.

The University of Alaska honored Jean Aubrey Dementi with the degree of Doctor of Humanities in 1983. She was the first person from the religious community to be so honored in the university's 61 year history.

This was the woman priest who modestly handed her message to John Paul II on May 2. The Pope had told those assembled that day, "Openness to others begins in the heart." The people of St. Jude's were counting on their patron saint to remind John Paul of that when he took the file card from the woman priest out of his sash.

Or, as Jean Dementi has been known to say, "True miracles are always continued stories. And so it is with this one." ■

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

aren't even hinted at, much less mentioned in the Gospels, which will include "I wonder if Joseph ever got around to getting enrolled for taxes . . .?"

Meanwhile, I will continue to "wonder if" on the down-to-earth level where I live.

**Abbie Jane Wells
Juneau, Alaska**

April Omitted Jesus

I received a copy of the April WITNESS. To what does your magazine witness? The name "Jesus" did not appear once in your entire issue. The most inspiring article was by F. Forrester Church, "Learning God's Yes." Inspiring because it was the only article which remotely speaks of man's relationship to God. It is clear that Mr. Church is confused about God.

I am not a theologian, but I am saved. I know Jesus personally. God guides me in my walk with Him. Your magazine speaks of all the world's problems and the sin of men. But nowhere do you tell the solution. Please consider articles about Jesus.

**Bruce Skaug
Moscow, Idaho**

Finds Index Helpful

Enclosed please find \$2 for the *Author/Title Index, 1974 to 1981*, which is listed in the January issue of THE WITNESS.

We are indeed pleased that it is available. I am sure it will save us time and will be helpful for our users.

**Grace R. Harvey, Assistant
School of Theology Library
University of the South**

Correction

The sentence in Gray Anderson's letter to the editor on page 21 of the May WITNESS should read, "Our citizens are *not* permitted the advantage of national health care without a job as in other industrial countries."

SHORT TAKES

Challenge to Priests

From Edith Hamilton's *The Greek Way*: The tyrants departed from Greece unlamented, and never to be revived again, except for Plato's rulers, who were to be given absolute power only upon the condition that they did not want it, a curious parallel to the attitude prescribed by the early church. A man appointed to the episcopacy was required to say — still is, perhaps, forms live so long once the spirit in them is dead — "I do not want to be a bishop. *Nolo episcopari*." To the fathers of the church, as to Plato, no one who desired power was fit to wield it.

(Let every priest now sincerely say these words each day, *Nolo Episcopari*.)

— Grant Gallup/*The Integer*

Why Church the City

1. Two thirds of our people live in cities.
2. The moral conditions in the country reflect the moral conditions of the cities.
3. Megacities contain 40 percent of minorities, and the majority of the poor, old and single.
4. The corporateness of the city can mean interdependence, togetherness and co-operation, in and for all of which the church can grow.
5. Cities constantly change. Impermanence promotes insecurity. The church can offer security and service.

— JSAC Grapevine

Classroom Optimism

A teacher in Seattle retells the following conversation she had with her students. "How many of you," she asked, "think there might someday be a nuclear war?" Hands were raised by every child but one. Speaking to the one exception, she asked, "And Sally, why aren't you expecting that?"

"Well, Mommy and Daddy are working for disarmament and I think they are going to win."

— Reflection Guide/
The Challenge of Peace
Pax Christi - USA

The Masks of God

Martin Luther's theology of work included the notion that each occupation and profession was really a "mask" behind which God met various human needs. We were reminded of this by a story which is making the rounds.

A certain priest, stranded on the steps of his church as a swollen river overflowed its banks and flooded the town, refused in turn the offers of help by a passer-by in a row boat, a coast guard cutter and finally, as he clung to the steeple tower, a helicopter whose pilot offered to hoist him to safety. The priest turned down each offer of help with "Don't be concerned, God will provide." The priest drowned. Arriving in heaven he angrily pounded on its gates and demanded of St. Peter that he see God immediately. "God betrayed me, He let me down," he shouted at St. Peter. St. Peter responded, "How can you say God let you down? Didn't He send you a row-boat, a coast guard cutter and even a helicopter?"

—Initiatives 10/83
National Center for the Laity
Chicago, Ill.

Nestle Boycott Over

Grassroots activists celebrated recently when their 6½ year worldwide boycott of Nestle products ended after the company agreed to comply in virtually every detail with the World Health Organization's infant formula sales code.

The agreement hinged on Nestle's acceptance of four disputed points: 1) Nestle agreed to curtail its promotional supplies of free infant formula to hospitals or health care centers in developing countries; 2) It promised to stop providing material favors to doctors in exchange for promoting the formula; 3) It agreed to place warning labels on its packages; and 4) It agreed to include warnings of the hazards of infant formula feeding in its promotional literature.

— INFACT Newsletter

Welcome Gays, Lesbians

The rector, wardens and vestry of San Francisco's oldest Episcopal Church — Trinity — gave official recognition to a gay ministry within its membership recently.

Called *Nostris* (from the Latin: "our kind"), the organization exists to publicly acknowledge and welcome the participation of gays and lesbians in all facets of parish life. The resolution also encourages the group to expand its ministry to the city-wide community and to be as inclusive of lifestyles as possible.

A recent poll in the parish with 138 responding showed 42.75% labeling themselves as a member of a sexual minority.

And 69% of the total number were between the ages of 30 and 39. Of 110 who are newcomers to Trinity since 1981, 45.45% are gay or lesbian.

—The Rev. Robert Crome, Rector
Trinity Episcopal Church

Blacks in Vietnam

Perhaps a more tragic recognition of reality took place when it became clear to me that the war was doing far more than devastating the hopes of the poor at home. It was sending their sons and their brothers and their husbands to fight and to die and in extraordinarily higher proportions relative to the rest of the population.

We were taking the Black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them 8000 miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem. And so we have been repeatedly faced with the cruel irony of watching Negro and White boys on TV screens as they kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools. We watch them in brutal solidarity burning the huts of a poor village, but we realize that they would never live on the same block in Detroit. I could not be silent in the face of such cruel manipulation of the poor.

—Martin Luther King, 1967
Quoted in *Indochina Newsletter*

Cueto, Guerra Begin Prison Terms

Five Hispanic activists, including Maria Cueto and Steven Guerra who have strong ties with the Episcopal Church, began serving a three year sentence April 10 for "criminal contempt" of a Federal Grand Jury.

Cueto, of Los Angeles, was formerly director of the National Commission for Hispanic Affairs of the Episcopal Church, and Guerra, of Oakland, Cal., is a member of the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publishers of THE WITNESS magazine.

The five have never been accused of a crime other than refusing to testify before the Grand Jury, a refusal which they consider to be an act of conscience. Such use of the Grand Jury process to intimidate political activists has been called "American style political internment" by Michael Deutsch in a major article to be published this Fall in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. Defense attorneys for the five believe that First and Fifth Amendment rights are being circumvented by an increasing use of the Grand Jury by the Government, which is being allowed to usurp its subpoena power.

Others incarcerated April 10 were Andres Rosado of New York City, Julio Rosado of Brooklyn, and Ricardo Romero of Denver, Col.

"We consider the imprisonment of Maria Cueto and Steven Guerra and the others to be a grave injustice," said the Rev. Barbara C. Harris, executive director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. "The use of the Federal Grand Jury in this case has served not to further the pursuit of justice but rather to suppress the freedom of dissent guaranteed by the Constitution." Harris added that the Episcopal Church Publishing Com-

pany is evaluating the deeper implications of the case, as well as its implications for other church-related groups and their freedom to advocate dissident points of view and policies. She also criticized the Federal Bureau of Investigation for its attempt to link the five to the FALN, and noted that trial judge Charles P. Sifton had refused to allow the Government to present such testimony in court.

Maria Cueto spent 10 months in prison in 1977 for the same "crime," refusing to testify before a similar Grand Jury investigating alleged terrorist activities of the FALN, a group supporting independence for Puerto Rico. Although she denied being an FALN supporter or having any knowledge of the organization, she believed the Government was using the Grand Jury process to intimidate activists who espoused independence for Puerto Rico. In addition, she argued in 1977 that cooperation with a Grand Jury would endanger the trust which she as a lay minister of the church had established with grass roots Hispanic groups. At the trial of the five last year in New York, four Episcopal bishops were among those testifying on behalf of Cueto and Guerra, and numerous other Episcopal clergy and laity sent letters of support.

The Rev. Richard W. Gillett, of Los Angeles, contributing editor of THE WITNESS, describes in an accompanying article Maria Cueto's last days at home and her early days of incarceration. All five of the Hispanics were assigned to prisons at a great distance from their homes, and efforts to get them nearer were unsuccessful except for Cueto, first assigned to West Virginia but reassigned to Pleasanton, Cal.

Supporters of the activists were asked

to write to The Hon. Norman Carlson to have the others moved closer to their families. (The Hon. Norman Carlson, Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Dept. of Justice, 320 First St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20534.)

Current addresses of the five are listed below, for those who would like to send messages of support:

Maria Cueto 15884-053
Federal Correctional Institution
Unit 1
Box 1000
Pleasanton, CA 94566

Steven Guerra 15888-053
Federal Correctional Institute
Raybrook, NY 12977

Julio Rosado 19793-053
Federal Correctional Institute
Ashland, KY 41101

Andres Rosado 19794-053
Federal Correctional Institute
Texarkana, TX 75501

Ricardo Romero 16208-053
P.O. Box 1010
Bastrop Federal Prison
Bastrop, TX 78602

Resource

Film: *Until She Talks*, a dramatic film about a young woman caught up in the Grand Jury process. Directed and produced by Mary Lampson, featuring Pamela Reed. Color, 16 mm, 45 minutes.

Mary Lampson's *Until She Talks* is based upon Lampson's personal encounter with the Grand Jury system plus interviews with others whom it has touched.

Rental, \$65, First Run Features, 144 Bleecker St., New York City (212) 673-6881. ■

The Surrender

by Richard W. Gillett

There was nothing extraordinary about the way Maria Cueto, former church worker and now “convicted criminal,” began the service of her three-year prison term April 10. The procedure was simple: Go down to the U.S. District Court House, Los Angeles, and surrender as ordered. “It was over in a minute,” said the Rev. Bryan Jones who, along with two others, accompanied her. “She just walked through the door and that was it.”

A couple of hours before, I had dropped by Maria’s house to say goodbye. Her bag was packed, and several boxes cluttered the living room floor for shipment to her parents in Arizona. She was on the phone to Nancy, the wife of Steven Guerra, who was also to surrender that day, clear across the continent in New York City. Maria was remarkably chipper. There was a quality about the scene that vaguely suggested a departure for college.

What Maria appeared to have on her mind as much as anything else that final morning of freedom, was the condition of her aunt, Virginia Ram. Virginia, a former member of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, and long-time stalwart advocate for Hispanics, had been suddenly hospitalized with heart problems. Maria, who lived with Virginia, had shouldered the major responsibility for her hospitalization, and was now concerned that she rest and follow her diet.

This rather unreal atmosphere came to an abrupt end for me just three days later when I visited Maria at Sybil Brand Institute for Women, where she was being held pending transfer to the Federal prison at Pleasanton in Northern

California. Maria, whom I’d seen almost every day during the three weeks preceding — and many times over the last two years — was suddenly Maria the dangerous criminal, or so the FBI and prison officials would have one believe.

This woman, whom former Presiding Bishop John Hines and several other bishops and prominent lay leaders of the Episcopal Church had described for the court as a selfless and dedicated worker and advocate for justice, was now, in these few days awaiting transfer, held in maximum security: a “5000,” they called her. But Maria had never been convicted of, or *even been formally charged* with any crime of violence. Simply the word of the FBI that she was dangerous was sufficient to have her held in a cell block in isolation from other prisoners. And strange indeed, was it not, that the jail should have run out of blankets and sheets so that Maria got none during her first two nights? More standard was the prohibition apparently applied to “5000” prisoners against any phone calls, against any reading material, and against any contact with other prisoners.

When Maria appeared for our visit, it was behind solid glass and through an intercom that she spoke. She was dressed in a prison smock, all she had. They had taken her bag from her at the marshall’s office and given it back to Bryan Jones. Also, for the first few hours, she was placed in a cell whose walls and floor were made entirely of rubber.

Maria was, again, in good spirits. She played down her abominable treatment: “I expected it,” she said, and wanted to know how Virginia was.

Our 20-minute visit ended. I left, then

watched as Maria patiently had her hands handcuffed behind her back for the trip back to the cell block (a totally unnecessary gesture, for the prisoners in the visiting booths are still in a “secure” area locked to the outside). That visual image — of this courageous and long-harassed woman worker for the Episcopal Church submitting quietly and without complaint to the degradation — went straight to the heart, where it now lodges, intermingled with the myriad images and descriptions during Holy Week, of another Prisoner.

To those who in good faith might still be puzzled as to how the government could remain so persistent if there were not *something* incriminating in Maria’s and Steven’s past, I would have to say, suspend your suspicions until you know more. Know more about the grand jury process and its abandonments of constitutional protections; know more about the abuses of which the FBI is capable (remember their treatment of Martin Luther King, Jr., or the Black Panthers, not to mention their other “COINTEL-PRO” activities); know more about the current social and economic reality of life in Puerto Rico which so fuels the passion of these five courageous advocates for justice.

Then perhaps this astounding witness for the sake of conscience might help us remember again the trumped-up charges brought against the Messiah; might remind us how our Advocate for the poor and the forgotten had likewise to be put away. Then, possibly, the example of Maria and Steven, and of Andres, Julio and Ricardo, might begin to take on an empowering — *resurrecting* — quality.



Why We Broke the Law

Civil disobedience and non-violent resistance have been mounting steadily in the peace movement, and the Government has been imposing heavier sentences recently as its domestic and foreign policies are being challenged. What motivates people to risk arrest and imprisonment?

Below, an Episcopal priest makes connections between his arrest, his history in the Civil Rights movement and what is happening in Central America. And a Catholic truck dispatcher tells how the writings of Franz Jagerstatter and other pacifists, plus memories of his father, who had a passion for trains, moved him to stop the white train carrying nuclear components.

Affirming Democracy by Charles C. Demeré

We were arrested while kneeling on the cold marble floor of the National Archives. Over 100 had gathered in the rotunda which houses the major symbols of our republic: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. In the midst of hymns and prayers to affirm our nation's cherished principles of human dignity and liberty, we were ordered to leave. All but six obeyed; we stayed to be arrested.

For each of us it was our first act of civil disobedience — our first arrest. As two policemen dragged me off, I noted a look of consternation on the faces of the tourists who were present but not party to our demonstration; they seemed to ask why we had dared to take this course of action.

I grew up in Georgia, a contemporary of Martin Luther King, Jr. As an Episcopal clergyman I was chairperson of the Georgia Council on Human Relations. My wife and I had lunch with Coretta and Martin in June 1963 at a restaurant that had not yet desegregated. We were served without incident. When I hired a

The Rev. Charles C. Demeré is an Episcopal priest and free-lance writer who resides in Washington, D.C. He describes himself as an ombudsman for Central America.

Black organist for the Christmas Eve service that year, the congregation of our suburban Atlanta church split into two factions. The progressive slate of lay leaders was elected the next month. I won the battle — but lost the war. The effectiveness of my ministry eroded. I resigned a few months later. Subsequently, I marched in Selma. But civil disobedience was not then a live option for me.

During the Vietnam War demonstrations I again marched to express my moral outrage. We took our children out of school one afternoon to deliver protest letters to Congress after the Cambodian bombing. I was still reluctant to defy the law as an expression of dissatisfaction with government policy.

So what led me to submit to arrest? An editorial in *Sojourners* magazine paved the way. As Jim Wallis stated: "God, not Caesar, is the final arbiter of what we owe the government." Non-violent law-breaking can be an act of discipleship and can serve as a witness to the Gospel. As a Christian I am convinced that we are called to be peacemakers, not merely peace-lovers.

On Dec. 2 we were taking part in a 24-hour vigil of prayer and fasting. It began on the steps of the Archives Building

with a service of remembrance. That date marked the third anniversary of the murder of four U.S. churchwomen in El Salvador.

We grieved that our tax dollars pay for weapons of death to that government in spite of their failure to solve the murder of those four women; we grieved, too, for other victims of bloodthirsty death squads and terrorist raids. We grieved that Interior Minister Tomas Borge of Nicaragua was denied a visa to accept speaking invitations at universities in this country. We grieved that our government directed the explosion of a commercial oil storage tank in Nicaragua, endangering the lives of some 23,000 civilians. As Jesus wept for Jerusalem, so I grieved over such policies emanating from Washington.

Why was this demonstration held at the Archives? Because it enshrines the basic documents of our founding as a nation. Our country seems to suffer amnesia; we have forgotten our identity, we have lost sight of our revolutionary roots. We should be sympathetic to other revolutions against oppressive rule; instead we stifle the urge of self-determination. We expect Nicaragua to have a national election four years after their revolution; yet it took us eight years to have our own.

At the vigil our ecumenical group peaceably entered the rotunda of the Archives primarily as a positive protest: to affirm the principles of our democracy. For this we were arrested. It was an awkward experience, teeming with uncertainty. Of course, we were apprehensive. We were handcuffed, photographed and finger-printed. It was tedious to go through the laborious process, answering questions while an officer filled out forms which he had never seen. We were denied freedom of movement for three hours there in the building where we were arrested by federal authorities, then turned over to metropolitan police for incarceration for seven more hours and finally given a citation release at 11:30 p.m. We were decently treated, but were at their mercy. As one police officer remarked, "When you're arrested, you're not a customer." We reported to Superior Court the next morning at 9 a.m. and waited until 1:45 p.m. when, inexplicably, our charge of unlawful entry was dropped. The ordeal had lasted over 24 hours.

The support of the other demonstrators touched me deeply. The meaning of solidarity came alive for me. When the six of us regrouped for the anticipated arrest, the others paused to express their

prayerful support. They continued the vigil outside on the steps where we had a permit for assembly. As we left in the paddy wagon, our sisters and brothers cheered us on. Groups had been stationed at several exits, not knowing where we would depart. They were shivering in the cold. But there they were: faithful friends. Several came to the police station, but we could only communicate with our lawyer through a glass partition in a cubicle that reminded me of a confessional.

While in jail I extracted my pocket New Testament and found where Paul wrote to the Philippians, himself in chains, "Stand firm in one spirit . . . without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you." (1:27-28)

Even the custody was for me an act of prayer. It was an offering on behalf of our friends in Central America; an opportunity to wage peace, to voice my concern that our nation recall its revolutionary guidelines and turn from its military, economic and political intervention. The protests during the Civil Rights Movement and during the Vietnam War demonstrated the power of public outcry. Today the misguided and militaristic policies of our government should challenge people

of religious and moral mettle to protest in righteous indignation. I do not condemn all military intervention. Defense of life or liberty may warrant it (whose life and whose liberty must be weighed carefully), but not merely for protection of pride or property.

I am appalled, however, by our foreign policy toward our southern neighbors. I have been to Nicaragua where I read the Declaration on July Fourth in the town of Jalapa near the Honduran border. I have met their leaders and talked with mothers whose sons were killed by bullets made in the United States, fired by mercenaries paid by our tax dollars. I have prayed here with refugees from El Salvador who are denied their rights because our government falsely claims that they are not political but economic refugees. I trust that our freedoms of speech and action will not be further eroded, that neither visas nor refugee rights will continue to be denied. I pray that freedom is not fading in our land of liberty.

I have been asked what I was trying to prove by this act of civil disobedience. The best answer may be the inscription on a statue outside the National Archives where we made our witness: "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." ■

Our Train to Hell by John Baranski

When I was a child growing up in Chicago, the hub city for this nation's railway system, my father, something of a railroad buff, often took my younger sister and me to a railroad crossing in our neighborhood to watch the trains come and go. It was a simple and

inexpensive way for him to show us a good time.

He was a truck driver but I remember most his intense interest in and love for trains which flickered with child-like fascination in his eyes as he pointed here and there to engines and cars bearing a multiplicity of imprints — Baltimore & Ohio, Milwaukee Road, Soo Line, Illinois Central, Chicago & Northwestern, Norfolk & Western, Rio Grande, Santa Fe, Great Northern, Burlington.

He loved to watch the yard switchers assembling the trains destined for almost

every point on the American compass, and could spend hours, my sister and I were sure, if we let him, peering through a small hole in one of the many dust-crusted windows of the locomotive roundhouse nearby.

And when he heard the whistle of a steam loco (some of which were still around at the time) or the blast horns of one of the newer diesels I sensed that he dreamed of all the far off places to which those trains were hauling their cargoes of steel, coal, beef, corn, and soybeans, places where I'm sure he thought life

John Baranski belongs to both the Portland Catholic Worker and Agape Communities. He served eight days in prison last year for attempting to obstruct the white train. Baranski defended himself during his trial, and the above is excerpted from his testimony.

might be better, especially for his wife and children whom he loved, for whom he lived, and, finally, for whom he died on the job.

As some of you may recall, it was an uncomplicated time, those years of the 1950s — a time when the world, perhaps uneasily, was for the most part at peace; a time when the trains of Europe were at long last no longer hauling that human cargo Hitler and the Nazis dispatched *ad nauseam* to concentration camps, their gas chambers and crematoria. It was a time for prosperity, for having children. It was a time when the most destructive weapon ever built, the atom bomb, seemingly held earth's aggressors at bay, or as hostages.

My father rarely spoke of the horrors he encountered when entering, I believe he said "Buchenwald" with other liberation forces in the waning days of World War II. It was as if, in retrospect, he could not let stories of those awful images and odors, how the trains he loved so much were used, befall our young ears. And I don't believe he ever mentioned *the bomb*, the kind of holocausts it made for the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For one did not casually speak of *the bomb*, as one did not casually speak of God, or salary, or taxes in public, or for that matter even among family members. Nor did he ever speak about alternatives to military solutions in times of conflict, hot or cold, though I'm sure he must have considered the question.

War resistance, nonviolence, death trains, and holocausts, Nazi or nuclear, first came to my mind in the late 60s when as a seminary student at Loyola University I was exposed to the lives and writings of Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Berrigans. It was then that I also came across the book, *In Solitary Witness*. The story was about a young Austrian peasant, Franz Jagerstatter, who was executed for refusing to serve in the army of the Third Reich. Jagerstatter, a Cath-

olic himself and father of two daughters, believed that cooperation with Hitler's war was inconsistent with his Christianity.

The book was particularly striking, one might even say prophetic, at the time with U.S. opposition to the war in Vietnam fervently focused on draft resistance. But I could not have known then just how profoundly prophetic it would be for me many years later, especially in light of the circumstances that have led me into this dock.

For the last year or so now my wife Grace and I and others of the Portland Catholic Worker Community have been observing shipments of missile motors for Trident Sub Base in Bangor pass through railyards just three miles from our home. We have vigiled along the tracks and leafletted railroad workers about the significance of these first-strike nuclear weapons components. And we have tried to negotiate with railroad officials in hopes of stopping them.

Yet it wasn't until the white train in question, what we have called "the nuclear train," passed through, that Franz Jagerstatter's life (and death) had its greatest impact on that train and my actions March 22 of this year.

On the evening after our arrest I happened upon an article about such train shipments by Jim Douglass. In it he refers to the Jagerstatter book and a dream it recounts which Jagerstatter had years before his execution. I might add that Douglass's article was written, ironically, some time before we knew the nuclear weapons train was coming to the Bangor base.

Jagerstatter's dream went like this:

"At first I lay awake in my bed until almost midnight, unable to sleep, although I was not sick; I must have fallen asleep anyway. All of a sudden I saw a beautiful shining railroad train that circled around a mountain. Streams of children — and adults as well — rushed toward the train and could

not be held back. I would rather not say how many adults did not join the ride. Then I heard a voice say to me: 'This train is going to hell.'"

To begin with Jagerstatter saw the train as a riddle. But later he was sure that the dream was a revelation, the train a symbol of Germany's widespread cooperation with and financial support of Nazism.

As a Catholic and as a father Jagerstatter clearly and strongly believed cooperation with Nazism would hinder his salvation. And so he refused the Third Reich his body, for which he was beheaded. Shortly before his death he commented in a written statement:

"I would like to call to everyone who is riding on this train: jump out before the train reaches its destination, even if it costs you your life!"

I believe the train in Jagerstatter's dream is a symbol for me too. As Jim Douglass implied in his article, the shining white nuclear weapons train from the Pantex plant in Texas to Trident Sub Base in Bangor, is our train to hell.

And so with roots at a Chicago railroad crossing and in the Jagerstatter dream, and with the blessing of my wife Grace, I, in a manner of speaking, got off the train to hell and sat on the track which leads to Trident Sub Base in Bangor with every intention of willfully stopping the train in question; no, let *me* not fear naming it — the nuclear weapons train.

Of this you the jury must certainly find me guilty. However, let me assure you that if I had not sat there I would have better spent my time digging graves for my daughters.

One thing more. It does not matter what happens to me personally here today. But if in your heart you too want off the train then find me not guilty, for you have every right to render your verdict based on conscience, to speak up also on behalf of the children. ■



Ministering to the 'New Poor'

by Edward M. Berckman

"If searching the Sunday want ads leaves you depressed, you're mentally healthy."

"To get a job you don't have to sell yourself."

"The normal, functioning adult has 500 to 700 skills. You just have to learn to identify them."

To a hesitant, discouraged or frustrated job-hunter, such statements are good news. They bring the relief of "someone knows what I'm going through" and the promise of "there is a better way to do this."

This kind of good news is beginning to be heard in churches, which, for the most

The Rev. Edward M. Berckman, an Episcopal priest, is editor of *The Church Militant*, publication of the Diocese of Indianapolis, and vicar of St. Stephen's Church, Elwood, Ind.

part, have been totally unprepared to offer knowledgeable help to job-hunters. But churches — if they wake up to the opportunity and learn how — can provide a timely, empowering ministry to many unemployed, and unhappily employed individuals.

That's the vision, already tested in several Indianapolis churches, of career consultant Michael Kenney, a Roman Catholic layman and ex-Jesuit priest, whose agency has trained 1,000 people in career management during the last 18 months — 125 of them in church-sponsored programs.

Participants in those workshops first learned to identify their own skills and the kinds of work and work environments they would most enjoy. Then they learned techniques of networking and interviewing as means to locate the job they want.

This kind of training works. At John Knox Presbyterian Church, all 18 persons who took Kenney's full course in May and June 1982 were, 16 months later, still working, said the Rev. Roger Dean, pastor.

The responses to and results of a four-session workshop with Kenney in March 1983 led the Suburban East Ministerial Association to schedule another for November-December.

That was one of a series of workshops held with funding assistance from Lilly Endowment. The grant enabled churches to offer 12 hours of training for \$30 to persons who otherwise couldn't afford it—training which usually costs companies or individuals \$750 to \$4,000.

Participants were primarily blue collar and clerical workers, not Kenney's usual middle management clients.

"This job-hunting approach was originally developed (by Bernard Haldane, John Crystal, Richard Bolles and others) for a middle-class, professional base," Kenney said, "but it's now used with many people at different economic levels with the same degree of success." Kenney's agency recently signed a contract to assist all hourly employees at Indianapolis' Western Electric plant, scheduled to close within a year.

From his experiences in the church-sponsored programs, Kenney gained some insights into the special problems *and* advantages churches have in helping unemployed and unhappily employed persons.

First, the problems.

- The local church is not typically perceived by the unemployed as a place to turn to.

"It is amazing," Kenney said, "how few clients of mine will list or mention their church or its minister as being a support during this painful time."

- Few clergy or lay members are skilled to know what to do. In fact, the normal response to people in trouble can be counterproductive, as the Rev. Manuel Tamayo of Indianapolis' Eastgate Christian Church learned.

"Usually, we are inclined to sympathize with these people. And this is not helpful at all. (It reinforces the individual's sense of hopelessness, Kenney pointed out.)

"Rather, we must assist them in moving from their depression to positive feelings of self-esteem. And this can only be accomplished by providing these individuals with concrete tools."

Tamayo added that he feels every pastor today needs training in the techniques of organized job-hunting.

- Because helping job-seekers learn to find jobs is seldom seen — even by socially-conscious Christians — as a Christian ministry, it has a niche in very few church programs or budgets.

Churches need prodding. Since those

winter workshops, Kenney said, only one group has moved to replicate the model.

And yet, churches have built-in assets for undertaking such a ministry.

1) As a custodian of moral norms, the church's public involvement with this issue reduces the stigma of unemployment.

"But the church must posture itself as concerned," Kenney insists. "Unless you articulate that concern, you'll still have a lot of hidden unemployment in your parish." He told of one pastor who learned that three members of his governing body were unemployed only when they went out of town for a planning weekend.

2) Many people who wouldn't find help elsewhere will come to a church.

The "new poor," people who have no personal or family history of layoffs, "are the least likely to resource government programs," said Kenney. "And they tend not to have the support system that unionized people do. But they're used to turning to the church for support and can do that with more ease."

3) Resources to help job-seekers are already present in most churches.

Typewriters, copying facilities, a telephone are tools to which individuals on a job search may not have access.

What about money? A rotating loan fund at John Knox Presbyterian helped one family save their house. Some who use the fund are able to repay it.

But individual church members can help in other ways, such as offering child care or answering a phone while the job-seeker is out during the day. At John Knox a car was donated to assist those needing transportation.

4) A potential network of contacts already exists within many congregations.

"A common mindset I encounter," Kenney said, "is 'I don't know anyone.' So I say, over and over: Do you belong to a church? If so, there are tons of people you can call.

"Church bases are eminently secure places to make such contacts. You perceive a person not as a hard-nosed, aloof executive but as a pewmate — someone who's helpful, uncritical, with similar values. That reduces one's insecurity."

And 60% of all jobs, Kenney repeatedly tells his clients, are found through contacts.

5) Churches and pastors know how to deal with deaths and divorced people and can use that knowledge with those suffering job loss — if they make the connection.

What unemployed people *don't* need is one more person pressuring them to just "get out and find another job."

"Be conscious," counsels Kenney, "of the seven typical emotional responses which an unemployed person experiences: disbelief, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance and hope, positive action, and the six weeks slump" (which strikes after the initial period of job search proves futile). The skills to help persons through these stages are likely to be available in or through churches.

Unemployment Kills

Research shows that for every 1% increase in sustained unemployment there will be an additional 37,000 deaths in our society. A 1% increase in unemployment means a 5% increase in suicides, a 7.5% increase in homicides among males between 17 and 24. The nearly 50% unemployment rate amongst minority youth locks a whole generation out of the American Dream, condemning them, while still young, to live the rest of their lives in some twilight zone of worklessness and hopelessness.

Unemployment increases death by heart attack. It increases alcoholism, wife and child abuse, and divorce rates. Unemployment attacks our neighborhoods, causing deterioration in social and physical environments, undermining the community's tax base, and so depriving it of the means to fight back.

—Excerpt From Document
Northwest Interfaith Movement
Philadelphia, Pa.

6) The unemployed can be helped by the most common "stocks in trade" of churches: talk, fellowship, activities.

"The most commonly faced problem for job-seekers," Kenney observes, "is their inability to get *anyone* to talk to them. A core of members who will agree to talk to job-seekers periodically, to simply offer advice and assist in getting them into rooms (to talk) with other people, can be a monumental aid."

Even better would be volunteers trained to conduct helpful, supportive discussions and/or access to others for whom unemployment is (or was) *not* a fate worse than death — perhaps through a job club on the order of Alcoholics Anonymous and similar groups.

Church related group activities and volunteer projects can give the job-seeker something to do, an increased sense of self-worth. "In fact," says Kenney, "any regularly scheduled group activity for those touched by unemployment is immensely helpful."

But all of this touches individuals only. What about the broader problem, the system that produces unacceptably high levels of unemployment, even in times of supposed prosperity? Isn't a ministry to unemployed persons simply a band-aid approach?

Mike Kenney had three answers to that question.

"It is. Helping individuals does *not* hit at the basic need for structural change that would expand the number of job openings. No one's been able to figure that one out yet.

"But these training programs do impact unemployment rates by reducing 'frictional unemployment.' At any one time approximately 3% of all jobs are in turnover, due to attrition, retirements, terminations, etc. Anything that speeds up the process of filling these jobs has quantitative results."

Almost as an afterthought, Kenney added, "There might be a more crucial

problem than unemployment — that's *unhappy* employment.

"Jobs can and do kill people. The unhappily employed we always have with us. And the typical clergy response is to take that on as a psychological problem, give the person coping skills, and never raise the issue of 'maybe you're in the wrong job.' Clergy tend to go with what they know: interpersonal stuff."

What such individuals need instead, he indicated, is assistance in helping them set goals, clarify their desires, interests and skills, and find the job they want.

As a final comment on what churches could do in this area, Kenney spoke of the need for dream-making.

"If the clergy or laity of a congregation spend a great deal of their time discussing how tight the market is out there or asking unemployed people, 'Did you find a job this week?' that's reality confrontation in spades! They know all that.

"If those same helpful people kept deliberately discovering the 'success stories' of the congregation; kept insisting that job searches can be planned and controlled; kept making sure that people got the chance to talk to more people . . . they would be part of the dream-makers."

It is this kind of message and ministry that can be "good news to the unemployed, release to captives of the want ad-resume system and recovering of initiative to the depressed and uninformed job-seekers" — to paraphrase an ancient author.

Resource

Resource persons around the country who offer assistance and training in this self-help job-hunting approach may be located in the "Professional Help" appendix of Richard N. Bolles' *What Color Is Your Parachute?* (Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, Cal.) Each year's edition includes an update of these and other resources. ■

Many Faces of Violence

We recognize that violence has many faces.

There are some countries where the prevailing social order is so brutal, exploiting the poor for the sake of the privileged and trampling on people's human rights, that it must be termed 'violent.'

There are others where a social order that appears relatively benevolent nevertheless exacts a high price in human misery from some sections of the population.

There is the use of armed force by governments, employed or held in threat against other nations or even against their own citizens.

There is the worldwide misdirection of scarce resources to armaments rather than human need.

There is the military action of victims of oppression who despair in achieving justice by any other means.

There is the mindless violence that erupts in some countries with what seems to be increasing frequency, to say nothing of organized crime and terrorism, . . .

<We> call Christian people everywhere

(a) to re-examine as a matter of urgency their own attitude towards, and their complicity with, violence in its many forms;

(b) to take with the utmost seriousness the questions which the teaching of Jesus places against violence in human relationships and the use of armed force . . . ;

(c) to engage themselves in non-violent action for justice and peace and to support others so engaged, recognizing that such action will be controversial and may be personally very costly; . . .

— Lambeth Conference 1978

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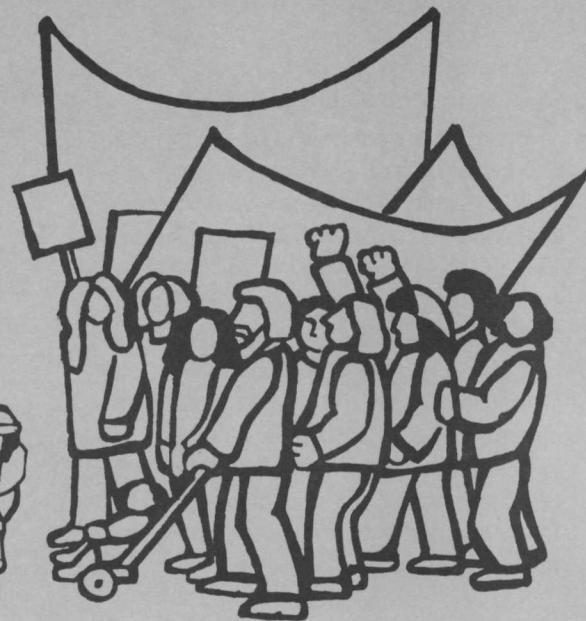


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