

THE WITNESS

Bus Stations • Judith Moore

VOLUME • 67
NUMBER • 7
JULY 1984

Radical
Religious
History:
Fragments
of a legacy
Robert L. DeWitt
Gordon Greathouse
Paul Buhle

Letters

WITNESS not Christian

In responding to your recent invitation to become a regular subscriber to THE WITNESS, I have some observations after having read the February and March issues.

My first reaction was that THE WITNESS was a publication of either the National Council of Churches or the World Council of Churches. The copyright is by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. The tradition and history of the Episcopal Church is as much or more biblical than any other denomination. THE WITNESS is so far left, liberal, anti-United States and lacking in biblical truths, I question if you can be Christian.

One thing you liberals are consistent about is that you seldom learn from the lessons of the past and are always having to reinvent the wheel; i.e., "Demystifying the Russian Threat" by Richard W. Gillett in the March issue.

I pray for your enlightenment and a fair opinion of the issues.

**Dr. William R. Hooper
Ellensburg, Wash.**

Cow, horse different

I am sorry to say that most of your articles I can read in advance. They give no new ideas, and they just reflect the sentimental, confused religious social trend of the Western World which I am constantly meeting from the time I arrived in this beautiful land of America.

Of course such statements sound offensive. But really there is no offense in stating (as a simple vulgar example) that the cow and the horse are different, although they have common elements like a head, a tail, four legs. The desire of your writers to reform the world is so intense that they seem to lose track of the reality we live in. (Last example, the article on Russia in the March WITNESS, where Richard W. Gillett confuses the Russian people with their internationally

minded Communist oppressors!) May our Lord give you Wisdom and Love and Light.

**The Rev. Andrei Urusov
Research Center
of Christian Russian Culture
Trail, Ore.**

Gillett responds

The letters of William R. Hooper and the Rev. Andrei Urusov, while undoubtedly sincere, must be seen in the context of anticommunist hatred of the Soviet Union that is rising to alarming levels in our nation. People and politicians who are determined to see the U.S.S.R. as "the focus of evil" will not easily be persuaded that history shows that the Russians can and do accept periods of accommodation with other nations.

The United States has signed a number of international treaties with the U.S.S.R. which, in their detail, they have kept about as well as we have. During Khrushchev's time, cultural exchanges flourished; under Brezhnev, detente reigned for several years. Despite Reagan's policies of hatred toward the Soviets, they have offered to negotiate a mutual and verifiable freeze on nuclear weapons, and have pledged not to be the first to use them. Yes, there have been the Korean airliner disaster, the detention of Andrei Sakharov, and the Soviet withdrawal from the Olympics, and other things that rightly have disturbed us over the years. But from their side the Soviets see a recently announced U.S. strategy for global superiority, the revelation of plans to fight and win a protracted nuclear war, the U.S. intention to wear down their economy in order to create an internal crisis, and a clear hands-off policy in allowing numerous organizing efforts by fringe groups in California to embarrass and disrupt them during the Summer Olympic Games (including a publicly announced target by one group to obtain

200 Soviet defections during the games).

One might therefore ask whether, over the last four years, their behavior and their intentions towards us have changed radically? Or has the constant drumbeat of negative propaganda coupled with hostile actions generated from the Reagan White House succeeded in changing our perception as viewers considerably more than the Soviet reality has changed?

Beyond this is the deepest moral issue: our bounden duty to preserve this planet both for ourselves, and for life into the future. *Not* to talk, not to proceed to relate to the Soviet Union and its people as fellow passengers on space ship earth, is, for religious people, a sin against all life: a collective death-wish.

**Richard W. Gillett
Los Angeles, Cal.**

Perspective needed

In the May issue the editors correctly castigate Democratic party defense of the needs of capital at the expense of the poor. This includes, of course, support for Washington's war against peasants and workers in Central America. Setting aside the war of words about the amount or form of aid to the dictators or *contras*, what Democrat has said (s)he supports the rebels in El Salvador or the popular government in Nicaragua?

We are faced not with "Reaganism" but with a retrenching capitalism. Concerned Christians must do more than question the attacks on the poor. We must join forces with workers, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays and other oppressed both here and abroad who are moving or ready to move. We ought to come armed with a perspective that calls for independent political action as the principal form of struggle to fight for a workers' and farmers' government in the United States.

**Robert Schwartz
Chicago, Ill.**

Fan since 5¢ a copy

Congratulations on the 10th anniversary of the reborn WITNESS. I read Bill Spofford's old WITNESS when it was five or ten cents a copy (and a weekly) for many years and had it available each week on the table in the vestibule, and also occasionally wrote articles for him.

I have enjoyed the new WITNESS for much the same reasons. It provides me with information not otherwise available, except perhaps in *Christianity and Crisis*, and it keeps me awake to current and future happenings. Keep it up.

Randolph C. Miller,
Executive Secretary
Religious Education Association
New Haven, Conn.

Advocate needs repair

The special issue of THE WITNESS for the 10th anniversary of women's ordination was excellent. In the article by Susan Pierce, "Courage, Longtime Hallmark of Rector, Ordination Site," she wrote that when Paul Washington was asked about "burnout" he said, "God is inexhaustible. You just have to look up." His whole life in the diocese has been one of looking up. When many of us were discouraged, frustrated, angry, he was a source of inspiration and hope. But now he needs help to renovate his church, which is falling apart; \$1.5 million is needed for restoration and this money must be raised by the end of the year.

I first became aware of the plight of the Church of the Advocate when I read an article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Shortly afterwards I learned that WDAS, a local radio station, was forming a group to Save the Advocate.

Recently I attended a press conference at the church. It was moving to hear one person after another get up and testify that Paul Washington and the Advocate had had a profound influence on their

lives. Someone said that the Advocate really lived up to its name because it has been the champion of the poor and oppressed of our society. Many community groups are rallying to the cause and planning to raise money to help the church. Now I can't help asking, "What is the diocese going to do about it?"

I would hope that the more "affluent" churches would feel moved to help save a church that is not only a beautiful historical building but more importantly, a place where so many of God's children have found comfort.

Mary Austin
Philadelphia, Pa.

Seeks aid for video

Many thanks for the special issue of THE WITNESS celebrating the 10th anniversary of women's ordination to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church. It's a splendid issue.

I am producing a video documentary on the ecclesiastical career of the Rev. Betty Bone Schiess, which will explore the series of events that led her to that historic moment in Philadelphia.

I would appreciate hearing from WITNESS readers about any photographs, slides, video tapes, 8 or 16mm film available. Please contact me at 4502 Broad Road, Syracuse, N.Y. 13215, (315) 469-3902. Many thanks for your assistance.

Joseph Agonito
Professor of American History
Onondaga Community College

Sick of 'women's lib'

I gather that THE WITNESS favors, and has favored the ordination of women. I hate to be caught in the position of being opposed to a probably superior publication over a single-issue stand, but this is so fundamental, I must. I am sick

to death of listening to arguments about women's lib. Every time I waste time on an evening of TV, I know in 20 minutes why I am opposed to the very idea of ERA and NOW and women have only themselves to blame.

The Rev. Charles Johnson
Denver, Col.

Tribute appreciated

"A Different Kind of Obit" in the May WITNESS was beautiful — you did a fine job of writing about Jo and we will all treasure it.

Jo's association with THE WITNESS staff and his interest in the publication never lagged, and if he could read your tribute to him it would be one of those times when he would be "moved to tears and pull out his handkerchief and wipe and blow." Love to all in my name and his.

Virginia Shannon
West Port Pt., Mass.

Mountaineer's road map

Here I am, an aged old West Virginia hillbilly, 74 years old. I am just recovering from pneumonia, a very sick old mountaineer.

Now about THE WITNESS. In my estimation it is the very, very best in a battle for freedom and human rights. And your church has some very clear road maps on how to find and locate Jesus Christ. Pray for me, I need it very much.

Emory R. Bays
Charleston, W.V.

Oops!

The Volume Number on the June issue of THE WITNESS should read Vol. 67, not 62.

America's Wailing Wall

A simple, moving memorial in the center of Washington, D.C., witnesses as a sobering corrective to the patriotic and militaristic jingoism coming out of the Administration in recent months. It is the Vietnam War Memorial, to be completed this year with the addition of a sculpture.

The memorial presently consists of slabs of highly polished black granite set into an embankment. The meandering path through Constitution Park seems to come upon it without warning. But as people near it, they grow silent. They talk in whispers, if at all. The black wall looms above, every inch of surface inscribed with more than 58,000 names of those who died or are missing in action.

Every now and then someone gasps or murmurs upon recognizing the name of a relative or friend. Some take pencil rubbings. Many feel compelled to run their fingers across the slab, feeling the inscriptions. As they reach out, they touch their own reflection, looking back from the mirror-like granite.

For a brief period, one is in the midst of those 58,000 men and

women who gave their lives in a war that lasted 16 years. That war also left 300,000 wounded and 75,000 permanently disabled. The first casualties were two advisors killed in 1959. Five years later, there were 20,000 soldiers in Vietnam.

The latter statistics have a familiar ring. They match disturbingly the U.S. troop deployment in Central America. Some 33,000 troops were on land and sea during recent "war games" in Honduras, and the number of advisors in El Salvador keeps growing. Are we being led down a path to face another black wall?

It is a heartbreaking experience for those who stand before the Vietnam memorial to see the smaller, more personal tokens left by friends and relatives — flowers with cards, notes and photographs taped near a name. People gather here in a community of suffering and loss, and for many, there is no peace, no resolution. Surely there is no denying the courage of those who died in Vietnam, but that they died to maintain the delusions of grandeur of a military industrial complex is sad beyond bearing.

In this season of Pentecost, the season of community in the spirit and a time of communication, U.S. Christians would do well to ponder the current dangerous and divisive actions of our government. Echoes of the futile Vietnam war reverberate louder every day in the mountains and jungles of Central America. Reports that napalm and phosphorous bombs were being used against the people of El Salvador prompted one reporter to observe that the U.S. military had a lot left over from Vietnam.

During Pentecost, Christians might reflect how we are linked to people of all nations and cultures. When the divinity of each individual is forgotten, people can be labeled as leftists or rightists, freedom fighters or terrorists, until the Babel becomes so towering that a peasant with a Bible is more dangerous than a soldier armed to the teeth.

We must say no to napalm, mined harbors, death squads and all the other horrors. Otherwise we will stand before yet another wall of names and weep for lives lost because of lessons that were not learned. ■

THE WITNESS

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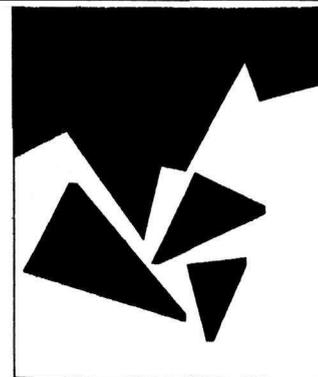


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1964-1974:

Decade of crises in a stormy see

by Robert L. DeWitt

The frenetic decade of 1964-74 in the Diocese of Pennsylvania reflected problems in the greater society centering around racism, sexism and peace issues. The Rt. Rev. Robert L. DeWitt, who headed the diocese then, recalled the turbulent period in a lecture (excerpted below) during the bicentennial celebration of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

DeWitt spoke in the ambience of a historic exhibit of 200 items, including a Church of England prayer book used before and during the American Revolution (with the prayers for the King crossed out); and a Book of Common Prayer edited by Benjamin Franklin.

Some observers have compared the DeWitt years with those of Pennsylvania's first bishop, William White, when "everything was up for grabs." Full text of the address may be obtained from Philadelphia Theological Institute, Remington and Dover Roads, Philadelphia, PA 19151, for \$3.

Recently I came across a box of family photos. With such a discovery, one is in a situation comparable to sitting down near a dish of peanuts — it is almost impossible to stop at one. So I found myself looking at one after another of those pictorial representations of what once was. My parents, brothers and sisters, wife and children all confronted me from both my near and distant past. And I found myself trying to recall what it was like then. What was going on in our common life? What were we thinking of back then? What were the things that moved us? What dismayed us? What lifted our hearts?

Gibson Winter, speaking to us both as individuals and as a community, suggests that if we don't remember what we have been, we don't really know who we are.

What were you doing during the years 1964-74? For all of us those years were an intensive experience in rapid social change, national crises, shifting values, new horizons, challenges to many of the ways we had been both looking at and reacting to events. I would like to focus

on five issues of those years which were central to the Diocese of Pennsylvania: racial strife, the Vietnam tragedy, the institutional life of the diocese, its relationship to the national Episcopal Church, and the ordination of women.

The first day I was on the job as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese, several of our clergy were in jail, arrested because they had been involved in demonstrations in that racial powder keg known as Chester, Pa. In the days, months and years that followed, I was to learn the authenticity of the title of the landmark book by Gunnar Myrdal on racism in America, *An American Dilemma*. Race riots more than a decade earlier in Detroit had been for me a baptism into a consciousness of racism. But Philadelphia was to be my confirmation. My instructors were Paul Washington, Layton Zimmer, Mattie Humphrey, Clayton Hewitt, Cecil Moore, Stanley Branche, Jim Woodruff, Barbara Harris, Jesse Anderson — and a host of others, including Frank Rizzo.

When North Philadelphia came apart in a great racial demonstration in 1965, I

asked a Black woman whom I knew what she thought about the riot. "Riot?," she questioned. "That wasn't a riot. That was just a coming-out party!" The gulf between the typical Black and typical White reactions to the unfolding events was enormous. In some respects, unbridgeable. Truly, an American dilemma.

The Girard College situation was perhaps the most vivid, most contentious focus the racial issue had in my years in Philadelphia. Stephen Girard had written a will generations earlier under which a school was established, well-endowed, for the benefit of poor, White, male orphans. And it now found itself situated in the heart of the enormous Black community in North Philadelphia. When Cecil Moore and others of the NAACP began organizing protest demonstrations at Girard College, calling for its being opened up to Blacks, an electric shock went through the whole metropolis. And then, when the Episcopal Diocese supported the picketing, it was seen as adding blasphemy to outrage.

Said many, if not most, of the White community, "Wills are sacred and in-

violable.” Said most of the Black community, “Wills are not sacred, and this one is illegal!” The legal point involved was that a person, dead, may not do through the terms of a will what that person would not be allowed to do if alive. I will always be grateful to Attorney William Coleman for his cardinal role in taking that case to the Supreme Court and getting a favorable ruling. But that was after much agony, alienation and the politicizing of the diocese.

And yet for the diocese there was no moral position to take other than that which it did. The diocese had at that time, as I recall, some 18,000 Black constituents. The issue involved “our” people. And beyond that, deeper than that, was the clear claim of justice, a claim the church could ignore only at the cost of surrendering its vocation, relinquishing its call to be the people of God.

And then came the Black Manifesto, and its demand for reparations for generations of injustice done to Black people by Whites. It was a bold, imaginative effort. And bold and imaginative was the local spokesperson for the Black Manifesto, Muhammed Kenyatta. I will never forget when he intruded into a communion service at Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square. After interrupting the service and speaking to the demands of the Manifesto, he strode to the altar and picked up the alms basin. He flung the money on the floor of the sanctuary, dramatizing the sacrilege of a religious offering to God which belied and denied the weighty matters of the Law of God, such as racial justice. That was religious poetry acted out, worthy of a Jeremiah.

Thanks to Kenyatta’s persistence and unlimited imaginativeness, the issue of reparations was kept alive. And finally the diocese faced it squarely at a special diocesan convention. A commission had been appointed to submit a proposal. It called for a serious response to the ethical issue central to the Manifesto.

The Rev. Jesse Anderson, astute, veteran of many conventions, member of the Standing Committee, Rector of the Black congregation of St. Thomas, made a speech. Said he, since the word “reparations” is a stumbling block to so many, I propose we not use that word, but rather substitute another word, hallowed by centuries of usage in the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. That word is “restitution.” And he so moved. And the convention by a wide margin approved the program!

Then the issue of White racism took another, very dramatic turn. Vietnam. And for the diocese it was as though Caesar and Christ came center stage, and had a very earnest conversation. It was a pretty one-sided conversation for quite a while. Caesar had the speaking lines, and in time of armed conflict Caesar is good press.

But David Gracie had come to town. Quiet, dignified, scholarly, devout, he nevertheless came to be caricatured in the press as a man possessed by monomania — the burning of draft cards. The storm that arose over his principled

and conscientious opposition to the war was misplaced outrage over his challenge to a false patriotism. Repeated efforts were made at successive diocesan conventions, and between conventions, to force his resignation. But he was needed. I recall a testimonial dinner given in his honor at the Unitarian Church, near Rittenhouse Square. Hundreds in that ecumenical gathering attested to his leadership. That event was — in effect — a Unitarian contribution to a Trinitarian Episcopal Church, just as Gracie’s ministry was an Episcopal contribution to the whole Philadelphia community.

In the early stages of the opposition to the Vietnam War, almost nobody who was anybody was in the ranks of the dissenters. I still have in my files a clipping which states: “They cast a net of conscience over American youth and gathered in a mixed bag — young people wise and witless, God-inspired and beat, reformers and social renegades. The catch recalled the self-descriptive words written by an abolitionist 100 years before: ‘We are what we are. Babes, sucklings, obscure men, silly women, publicans, sinners, and we shall manage this matter just as might be expected of such persons as we are. It is unbecoming in abler men who stood by and would do nothing, to complain of us because we could do no better.’” Actually these words were written of the young people who engaged in the civil rights struggles of the earlier ’60s. But they apply with equal validity to the participants in the mounting pressure against the war in Vietnam.

But it was hard for the diocese. Hard on the diocese. Hard on the bishop! The thing which convinced me I should not resign at that time was my growing awareness that those beatnik peaceniks were right. They would say the most outrageous and unfounded things about the government’s prosecution of the war, about what was really going on. Time



after time I discounted the protesters' protestations, only to learn not long after that they were correct. The Pentagon Papers later documented this.

Some time later the Freedom of Information Act revealed that FBI files on many people, prominent and obscure, vindicated what people in the peace movement had been alleging. Where the peace activists got their facts I never knew. But I learned where the official so-called facts were coming from. They came from a pool of statements that officialdom wanted people to believe. Sometimes they happened to be true. Often they were tragically false. Someone once stated: When war is declared, the first casualty is truth. I was late in realizing that. But I have been reminded of it often in recent times with reference to Grenada, El Salvador, Nicaragua.

I would like now to turn to the Diocese of Pennsylvania as an institution. The diocese is a rather awesome administrative assignment. In existence for 200 years, it has accumulated myriad committees, commissions, trusts, policies both written and unwritten, and a veritable host of diocesan institutions. Because it is an Episcopal diocese, the bishop has an ex-officio relationship to most of those committees, commissions, institutions. It is no exaggeration to say that a bishop in this diocese could, if he wished, have a full time job simply attending meetings of those institutional entities. In any one given year there can be anywhere from 1500 to 2000 confirmations. Custom calls for the bishop personally to sign each of the confirmation certificates. Is that the most responsible way for him to spend that considerable amount of time?

Administration is necessary to any institution, and thus to the church, too. A bishop is a priest, a deacon, an administrator, a pastor, general utility figure-head. He signs things, he attends things, he has his picture taken. But what is his central task, the focus of his work? I

recall once when David Gracie came into the office and reported that he had been re-reading Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, and had suddenly realized what a bishop's role is. Since I expressed interest, he continued that in one scene in the book a general is on horseback watching the battle, as soldier after soldier runs up to him out of the confusion of the fray and asks where to go, what to do. The general, as confused as the rest, nevertheless draws his sword and with great decisiveness points this way or that. The soldiers salute and charge back into the chaos. The church, too, said Gracie, needs someone who tells us which way to go, even if he doesn't really know either!

It has been said that a bishop's role is to represent God to his people, and to represent his people to God. Bishop Emrich of Michigan, with whom I had served as suffragan, often added that on *issues* the bishop is not called to be representative of the people, but to represent God. This is not arrogance. The same vocation pertains to every Christian. We are not called to be crowd pleasers, but to be faithful. But how does one know what faithfulness requires? St. Augustine said to the gnostics of his time, with whom he was engaged in a great controversy: "Let those be angry with you who do not know with how great toil truth is attained, or how difficult it is to avoid mistakes. Let those be angry with you who do not know what sighs and tears are needed if the real God is to be known — even in the tiniest degree. But for me to be angry with you, is utterly impossible . . ."

I would freely admit — as I have many times before — that being Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania was too big a job for me, alone. How can one person, against many, insist that he or she has the truth? That is why Augustine's words speak to me so eloquently. At the same time, I would also say that with the staff help I had during my years as diocesan,

there are very, very few things which, given a chance, I would do differently. What a staff! — Charlie Ritchie, Jack McCarty, Al Vail, Sue Hiatt, Dave Gracie, Jim Woodruff, Jack Hardwick, Layton Zimmer, and many others. I shudder to think of my days in Philadelphia without them.

I spent untold hours with the staff discussing issues, comparing points of view, assessing possibilities, striving for consensus. I recall no decision arrived at this way that I ever regretted.

Another bonus was the presence of the Philadelphia Divinity School and its dean, Ed Harris. On many occasions I appealed to them for theological help on some of the strident issues of the day, and was never disappointed.

One last observation about the diocese as an institution has to do with the meaning of democratic processes in the life of an absolute monarchy. For not the bishop, but God, is the ruler of a diocese. And God's edicts and statutes are not subject to democratic review. I think this theological point is fundamental. At the same time it is true also that our *perceptions* of the will of God are debatable, and profit by debate; and that the courses of action which may follow from those perceptions of the will of God are also debatable, and profit from debate. This is the basis of the legitimacy of democratic processes in the life of a diocese. But as with any democratic institution it puts a heavy premium on education. For a diocese, it calls for people's being educated in the faith, schooled in the church's theological assumptions. Jack Hardwick held the responsibility for much of the educational concern of the diocese, and many hours we spent discussing this problem. In a time of racial struggle, in a time of war, the voice of a majority of the people is not necessarily the Word of God. Too tragically often the voice of the majority is an expression of prejudice, chauvinism,

Continued on page 23

Celebrations to mark women priests' 10th year



How do you celebrate the 10th anniversary of the “irregular ordinations” of women to the priesthood — that event which a decade ago on July 29 challenged the patriarchy and changed the face of the Episcopal Church? Well, it depends.

The institutional church will ignore it. Many in the Episcopal hierarchy question the “appropriateness” of celebrating the July ordinations, to the point that in some areas, plans to celebrate have been quietly smothered.

Nevertheless, announcements of public and private celebrations have been popping up across the country, and the event in Philadelphia, site of the first ordinations, promises to carry on in the iconoclastic tradition of a decade ago. At the service of thanksgiving scheduled July 29 at the Church of the Advocate, a call will be issued for the election and ordination of women bishops. (See box.)

The Eucharistic service will utilize inclusive language, and celebrants will be the first women who were ordained in Philadelphia and Washington, whoever among them can attend. The service will include lessons from the Feast of Martha and Mary, and the long awaited festive procession, postponed for security reasons 10 years ago, will wind through nearby streets preceding the event. Preaching will be the Rt. Rev. J. Antonio Ramos, one of the four bishops present at the

ordination a decade ago. Bishop Ramos is currently Associate Director for the Caribbean and Latin America, National Council of Churches.

Lay people, clergy and bishops from all over the country are expected to attend. The offering will go toward the Church of the Advocate building fund, since the edifice badly needs renovations.

Syracuse, N.Y., also has big plans to celebrate. The Rev. Betty Bone Schiess of the Philadelphia 11 says of the service to be held at Grace Cathedral, “It will affirm that it takes a lot of blood, sweat and tears to change things for women in the church. Readers and other participants

will be people who were part of the struggle for women’s ordination in this diocese.”

Schiess credits strong support from an organization of lay women, the Episcopal Society for the Examination of Feminist Issues, for giving her the strength to pursue her call and carry out her vocation. She says of the group, “It was organized in 1968 by women touched by the feminist movement and interested not only in women’s ordination but in pushing for systemic change. Since the group was founded they have drafted two resolutions calling for pay equity for women in the church.”

Call for wholeness

The following call for the ordination of women bishops in the Episcopal Church will be issued at commemorative services for the 10th anniversary of women’s ordination in Philadelphia’s Church of the Advocate July 29:

We, the undersigned, are keenly aware of the incomplete and divided nature of the ordained ministry because there are no women bishops in the Episcopal Church.

Therefore, we call upon the Episcopal Church, its laity and clergy alike, to proceed urgently and with dispatch to the election and ordination of women to the episcopate in order to bring whole-

ness to this order of ministry, which exists to “lead, supervise and unite the church.”

We pledge ourselves to pray and work diligently for the prompt accomplishment of this healing and fulfilling action, so that the whole world “may see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up . . . and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

(Readers wishing to add their names to the above should drop a postcard to THE WITNESS, Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002.)

The day before the anniversary service, a symposium of clergy and laywomen from the Diocese of Central New York will take place at the Cathedral in Syracuse. "We'll brainstorm about the future of the diocese," Schiess said. "On the agenda are problems regarding racism, sexism, and diocesan pay equity and personnel policies. The laywomen have decided to move ahead for change. If this happened in every diocese, things might change."

Dr. Charles Willie, Harvard professor and long-time supporter of Schiess, will preach at the Syracuse service, as he did at the ordination 10 years ago in Philadelphia. Willie resigned his post as president of the House of Deputies after the Philadelphia ordinations to protest the church's attitude towards women. The Syracuse service will be sponsored by the rector, wardens and parishioners of Grace Church and by members of the Episcopal Society for the Examination of Feminist Issues.

Other smaller but no less significant celebrations will take place in parishes and gatherings around the country, from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., and Boston.

The Philadelphia service is scheduled at 4 p.m. at the Advocate, and a press conference will follow.

The Syracuse service on July 29 at the Cathedral is scheduled for 3 p.m., according to the Rev. Judith Upham, rector.

Other groups across the country are celebrating the anniversary by sponsoring a one-woman play, "Solo Flight," based on the life of Jeannette Piccard, noted balloonist who was ordained in 1974 at 79 years of age. The play, written by Phyllis Poullette is a warm tribute to Piccard, who died in 1981. "Solo Flight" is being performed in the Midwest by Molly Culligan, and in the East by Roberta Nobleman. Culligan can be reached at 475 Laurel Ave., St. Paul, MN 55102 (612-291-0195), and Nobleman at 110 Beacon St., Dumont, N.J. 07628 (201-384-6181). ■



Passover

*Ten years so far
in the wilderness,
ten summers and hundreds
of spring storms since
we few ventured out
into the vast heartland.*

*How quickly it happened,
only a few days' notice
for some of us:*

**Pack nothing.
Bring only
your determination
to serve and
your willingness
to be free.**

**Don't wait for the bread to rise.
Take nourishment for the journey,
but eat standing, be ready
to move at a moment's notice.**

**Do not hesitate to leave
your old ways behind —**

Alla Bozarth-Campbell was one of the first women priests to be ordained in Philadelphia in 1974. She reflects on the past decade in the poem/prayer above.

fear, silence, submission.

**Only surrender to the need
of the time — to love
justice and walk humbly
with your God.**

**Do not take time
to explain to the neighbors.
Tell only a few trusted
friends and family members.**

**Then begin quickly,
before you have time
to sink back into
the old slavery.**

**Set out in the dark.
I will send fire
to warm and encourage you.
I will be with you in the fire
and I will be with you in the cloud.**

**You will learn to eat new food
and find refuge in new places.
I will give you dreams in the desert
to guide you safely home to that place
you have not yet seen.**

**The stories you tell
one another around your fires
in the dark will make you
strong and wise.**

remembered

by Alla Bozarth-Campbell

Outsiders will attack you,
and some who follow you,
and at times you will weary
and turn on each other
from fear and fatigue and
blind forgetfulness.

You have been preparing
for this for hundreds of years.
I am sending you into the wilderness
to make a way and to learn my ways
more deeply.

Those who fight you will teach you.
Those who fear you will strengthen you.
Those who follow you may forget you.
Only be faithful.
This alone matters.

Some of you will die in the desert,
for the way is longer than anyone
imagined.
Some of you will give birth.

Some will join other tribes
along the way, and some
will simply stop and create
new families in a welcoming oasis.

Some of you will be so changed
by weathers and wanderings
that even your closest friends
will have to learn your features

as though for the first time.
Some of you will not change at all.

Some will be abandoned
by your dearest loves
and misunderstood by those
who have known you since birth
and feel abandoned by you.

Some will find new friendship
in unlikely faces, and old friends
as faithful and true
as the pillar of God's flame.

Wear protection.
Your flesh will be torn
as you make a path
with your bodies
through sharp tangles.
Wear protection.

Others who follow may deride
or forget the fools who first bled
where thorns once were, carrying them
away in their own flesh.

Such urgency as you now bear
may embarrass your children
who will know little of these times.

Sing songs as you go,
and hold close together.
You may at times grow
confused and lose your way.

Continue to call each other
by the names I've given you,
to help remember who you are.
You will get where you are going
by remembering who you are.

Touch each other
and keep telling the stories
of old bondage and of how
I delivered you.

Tell your children lest they forget
and fall into danger — remind them
even they were not born in freedom,
but under a bondage they no longer
remember, which is still with them,
if unseen.

Or they were born
in the open desert
where no signposts are.

Make maps as you go,
remembering the way back
from before you were born.

So long ago you fell
into slavery, slipped
into it unawares,
out of hunger and need.

You left your famished country
for freedom and food in a new land,
but you fell unconscious and passive,
and slavery overtook you as you fell
asleep in the ease of your life.

You no longer told stories
of home to remember
who you were.

Do not let your children sleep
through the journey's hardship.
Keep them awake and walking
on their own feet so that you both
remain strong and on course.

So you will be only
the first of many waves
of deliverance on these
desert seas.

It is the first of many
beginnings — your Paschaltide.
Remain true to this mystery.

Pass on the whole story.
I spared you all
by calling you forth
from your chains.

Do not go back.

I am with you now
and I am waiting for you. ■



Bus stations:

Crossroads of poverty

by Judith C. Moore

Bus passengers are scraping the bottom of the U.S. economy's barrel. They are the elderly; the young, suddenly bankrupt families; the emotionally disturbed; people of color; Vietnam veterans; young enlisted servicemen. But more and more, they are difficult to distinguish from the homeless street people who wander in from the depressed, "tenderloin" areas of big cities.

Early this spring, I spent 10 days in San Diego, one of the fastest growing cities in the United States, to do a story about bus travelers. During that time, I visited the terminal during each of a day's 24 hours. I heard some cheerful stories, but not many.

San Diego's 50-year-old Greyhound terminal stands under the long shadows of new glass-front bank towers. The city's dispossessed huddle on patches of grass at the base of these 20 and 30-story giants. They panhandle, chat with and comfort one another, tipple wine and share food wrested from streetside garbage cans. At noon each day I heard a blue-suited preacher offer these people salvation. "Repent," was the crux of his message, his voice carrying on soft sea breezes.

At night, the street people ramble in and out of the bus depot. Sitting sprawled or upright on benches and chairs, leaning and slumping against walls, chain-smoking and bumming cigarettes, staring: everyone, then, looks dazed, tired, and confused — passengers and street people

alike.

Blue-uniformed Greyhound employees walk between benches with push brooms, sweeping up cigarette butts, paper cups, an odd sock, newspaper. The Pinkerton guard moves around the room's edges, watching for trouble. At 4 a.m., the depot seems more like the open ward of a mental institution than a waiting room, with exhausted bus travelers holding heads in hands, street people mumbling, and an extravagantly-dressed prostitute striding through on four-inch heels, her bosom bared in a red blouse. A tall, thin Mexican woman, her arms scrolled with amateur tattoos, fights off the attentions of an obviously non-Marine who had draped his narrow shoulders in a green Marine overcoat.

Early in the morning, families — father, mother, infants and toddlers — began to stumble off buses from north and east. Fathers toted diaper bags and styrofoam coolers stuffed with food. Mothers carried babies. I asked the dayshift guard why so many young families were arriving. "They come here looking for work," he answered. "We see lots of them."

I talked with Ron, a bearded, long-haired 26-year-old father. I held his freshly-diapered and fretful daughter while his wife stood in line to buy milk. "We rode two days and three nights," Ron said. Around his feet were stacked green plastic bags packed with everything they owned. They came on the bus, "because the loan company took back the car." Yes, Ron had come to find work, construction work, and they had chosen San Diego because, "We figured at least

nobody could freeze us out by turning off the utilities when winter came." His hands shook when he stuck his daughter's pacifier back into her mouth.

I visited with 29-year-old Aldo, a Black man born in Georgia and raised in an orphanage after his mother died in childbirth when he was nine. His teachers thought he was retarded, Aldo said. "All it was was I was broke up." No one taught him to read or write. For the past seven years he had worked in a Manhattan sweat shop, sewing on raincoat collars and sweeping and cleaning toilets. When the boss died, he told me, the boss's wife took over and fired Aldo. So Aldo, who said he liked to travel, took his savings and came to California by bus.

He said he had been in Los Angeles for five days and didn't much like it. So he thought he'd hang around San Diego and then head back to Manhattan. "I miss that city," he said, "like she was my baby."

Aldo was handsome, strong and friendly, and although he could not read or write, was marvelously, melodiously articulate. In the course of our conversation I asked him if he had ever been married. His brow furrowed. "No," he said. "I'd like to be married. But I can't. I don't have nothing to offer a woman." He got lonesome, he told me, and often considered getting a dog. During the last two days in L.A., he said, "a brown mutt-dog followed me around. When I said goodbye to him" Aldo gazed at me with raised eyebrows, "he looked like I'd kicked him. I'd have liked to bring him along."

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

It was the day that Gary Hart had swept New Hampshire and I asked Aldo who he would like to see for president. "Ain't nobody," Aldo said, "ever raped a woman so bad as Reagan he raped this country. I don't have any more hopes. I just have dreams."

Bus passenger luggage is made from cardboard cartons laced with twine, from green heavy-ply garbage bags, from paper shopping bags. Older travelers carry 30- or 40-year-old battered suitcases and I saw two elderly women dragging suitcases by ropes attached to handles. Often, as in the case of Ron and his family, everything they own is with them.

The depot's steel lockers cost 75¢ for 24 hours. Street people store belongings in them as do recent arrivals looking for work. In the economy of these men and women the 75¢ per day represents a large chunk of money, and I would see them, at attention by their lockers, waiting for the very minute the time was up before inserting another three quarters.

Very few passengers have friends or family waiting when they arrive. Downtown parking is expensive. Buses are often late. When men and women get off buses they go to the pay phones and call someone to come pick them up.

Bud, 22, had just hauled his suitcase and a box tied with clothesline from the pay phone to the bench and taken out his brown leatherette Bible when I sat down next to him. The San Diegan had arrived from "up North" and was waiting for his sister. When I asked where he'd been, he said, "I've been trying to be born again. But it's awful hard work." What he meant, he continued, was that he had just that afternoon returned from two months in a drug rehabilitation facility.

Bud grew up in a part of San Diego where poor Whites had migrated before and during World War II. His parents broke up when he was 9, and when he was 10 he started smoking marijuana. He graduated, he told me, to alcohol, then to

cocaine and crystal methedrine, "speed." "Praise the Lord," he said, "I never stuck a needle in myself and I never got busted."

For the first time in 10 years Bud was "all clean," he said. "No booze, no dope, no cigarettes." And he felt scared, scared he couldn't *stay* clean and scared to see his old friends. "Out there on the streets," he pointed toward the depot's entrance, "is a mean hungry army, people turned to wolves that will eat you alive."

Bud's round face was freckled and his wide green eyes regarded me with almost grave interest. He told me he had gained weight at the rehab center. His plaid flannel shirt pulled across his belly.

He said he had been studying the Bible. "Los Angeles reminds me of Sodom and Gomorrah." Except, he said, "Sodom and Gomorrah were two cities. Twin cities, like St. Paul and Minneapolis. We're in the last days," he said. He felt *sure* of that. "I want to get myself straight before the end."

What were his hopes?

"I'd like to get a big fishing boat and make a home on it for people to get away from the rat race." And he took my hand in his, which was sweating, looked into my eyes and said, "Thank you for talking with me."

Lois told me she was 48. The elderly leathery man, carrying a paper sack on top of which I could see a folded bathrobe, took a seat on the other side of Lois and laughed, saying, "Not hardly she ain't." Lois, at five foot two, weighed at least 200 pounds and wore her dyed auburn hair in a pompadour held in place with bobby pins and hair spray. Her left eye had been blackened and a fist-size bruise on her cheek had turned greenish-blue. Dark red lipstick outlined her mouth and she was entirely without teeth.

After asking if I had a cigarette, she explained she had come from a nearby rural town to stay at her mother's in San Diego. Her boyfriend, she said, had smashed her dentures with a rock. In

retaliation she had poured a cup of sugar into the gas tank of his pickup truck.

Lois had not had any teeth since she was 23. A dentist pulled them all, she told me, also addressing the elderly man, who as Lois talked, continued to laugh and to shake his head. "The dentist," she said, "he gave me false teeth but they never did stay in right. I shoulda sued him. I think most of my teeth weren't spoiled." She had gotten dentures twice from welfare, but they never fit.

Drawing her heavy-bosomed frame up straight, Lois told us she worked as a country-and-western singer. The elderly man cackled. "Sure as . . .," he said, "you never been no singer except to yourself." Lois cursed him loudly and stood, hefting up her scratched suitcase, and walked away hunched and waddling on swollen feet in terrycloth scuff slippers, her gait almost graceful.

Stories about men and women who are usually voiceless in this society abound in the bus depot. Everywhere I went with my tape recorder and notebook, I was always keenly aware of my own dependence "on the kindness of strangers." Charity exists between us and a terrible nakedness. After we talked, these strangers almost always thanked *me*. Yet, it was they who had often poured out the essence of their lives.

Skip church one Sunday. Go to your Trailways or Greyhound bus terminal. Wander. Watch the long lines form. Look at passengers, stiffened by hours in cramped postures, limp into the bright-lit depot. Help someone carry his or her luggage. Sit down on a bench and visit with a young mother or father. Stand at a lunch counter. Drink coffee and ask the person next to you, "How far did you come today?"

The travelers will give you the Gospel in their own words. You will hear God's voice in the stories of God's people. You will be anguished. You will also, peculiarly, be inspired. ■

Historical turbulence of Scudder, Spofford years

Earlier in this issue, former *WITNESS* editor Robert L. DeWitt reflected upon the stormy political decade of 1964-74 during his tenure as Bishop of Pennsylvania. The following pages reveal the turbulent history lived by the *WITNESS* editor who preceded him, the Rev. William B. Spofford, who was harassed during the '50s by the House Un-American Activities Committee for his political activism. Equally as prominent during the three decades covered, beginning with 1920, was the noted Episcopal laywoman Vida Scudder, who organized the Church League for Industrial Democracy.

Radical Christian history, recalling how Christians dealt with the relation between faith and politics in their lives, is frequently missing from library shelves. The following segment by Gordon Greathouse is taken from the study guide, *Which Side Are We On: Christian Commitment for the '80s*. (See back cover.)

BEGINNINGS

The Church League for Industrial Democracy (CLID) came into being shortly after a group met in May, 1919, in New York City under the leadership of Vida Scudder — a prominent Episcopal churchwoman who had been active in the Socialist Party as well.

A writer and somewhat of a mystic, Vida Scudder was deeply concerned over the claims of the social gospel, and possessed an unusual organizing ability. As a professor at Wellesley College, she had a wide network of friendships and was alert to the fact that a specifically socialist organization could no longer gain a wide following in the middle class.

Vida Scudder felt that church social action organizations had to be based in the middle class to be realistic and her greatest fear in the years following the first World War was that the middle class would support anti-left repression. Thus, when the group

met in New York City, she effectively argued for forming an organization with broad middle class support by uniting liberals and socialists who would work for civil liberties and industrial reform without explicitly favoring socialism.

CLID's watchword was "industrial democracy," which meant that democratic principles should be extended to the workplace. CLID held that, unlike the U.S. government which is supposed to be of, by, and for *the people*, the industrial system is of, by and for *its owners*. Thus, CLID chose to respond to the new developments of an "un-Christian industrial and economic system" in order to create a more Christian society that "substitutes fraternal cooperation for mastery in industry and life."

By selecting the phrase "industrial democracy" CLID members also accepted the viewpoint that the conflict between labor and capital was the central issue of social concern. Although not blind to racism and sexism, they felt that these could not be overcome until the competitive economic system was transformed. For them, once the possibility that some can advance by dividing and exploiting others

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was eliminated, racism and sexism would fade away.

Throughout the summer of 1919, meetings were held in several eastern cities in order to form a



Vida Scudder

national organization. In October, when the Episcopal General Convention met in Detroit, CLID emerged as a visible movement by holding public forums in the evening at which prominent labor leaders and social activists spoke. These activities continued throughout CLID's history. At some Conventions, they were expanded to having social activists give sermons in local churches. The purpose of these forums was to raise delegates' consciousness about social issues, and sometimes they were regarded as more interesting than the Convention itself.

ACTIVITIES OF THE 1920s

During the 1920s, CLID focused its activities in three areas: (1) civil liberties, (2) church education, and (3) corporate responsibility. In its first year of activity, CLID took up the fight against government and church repression of Episcopal teachers and ministers who "incurred persecution through advocacy of social change." The defense of civil liberties continued to be an important concern of CLID members,

and one of its Presidents, Bishop Edward L. Parsons of California, was later a national Vice President of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Educating church members about labor issues was always a central purpose of CLID. From its first meeting, many voiced the concern that seminary curricula acquaint students with social and industrial problems in order that they could "know, preach and practice the social gospel." Thus, efforts were continually made to have CLID organizers speak to seminary communities. By 1921, two-thirds of the Episcopal Theological School and Berkeley Divinity School faculties had become members. In 1926, a "Students in Industry Project" was set up in which seminarians took industrial jobs during the summer and met together on weekends with social gospel leaders, businessmen, and labor organizers to discuss how their experiences related to their faith and to church programs. This project continued into the 1930s in a modified form.

In an effort to educate church membership, CLID speakers led discussion groups at summer church conferences and spoke to university and church meetings. Joint conferences were held with the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order in several cities. Its field representatives worked closely with Y.M.C.A. groups and often were invited into pulpits in order to inform local churches about social problems.

In 1924, the Rev. William Spofford, a former Secretary of the Church Socialist League, became Executive Secretary of CLID. At this point its activities were greatly expanded, especially in the Midwest. His contact with all types of political and labor groups, along with his ability to interpret economic issues to church audiences, made him an invaluable leader. Under his direction, CLID membership passed the 1,000 mark and *The Clipsheet*, a quarterly publication, was started to keep members informed about League activities. At the same time, William Spofford was the Managing Editor of *The Witness* magazine which often carried news and advertisements about CLID and provided a current social analysis for a broader audience. Spofford was also very active in developing and promoting employer conferences, student workshops, and church-labor leader meetings.

The third area of CLID's activities during the 1920s was corporate responsibility. During this decade, the middle class by and large had a satisfactory standard of living. Those with social consciousness wanted to be assured that their life style was not the result of exploiting the working class. Thus, many church members read Vida Scudder's pamphlet *Christians and Investments* and tried to invest in "responsible" corporations.

During this period, hope still lingered that if corporate and labor leaders could just understand each other, industrial disputes could be avoided. Thus, a couple of conferences were called to get both sides together, but this idea was soon dropped.

Most members of CLID were sympathetic with labor, feeling that justice was on its side, particularly in the railroad, textile, and coal industries. One of the first attempts to assist labor was by providing food money for striking coal miners so they would not be starved into submission. This action brought the praise of seven Anglican bishops whose letter of appreciation arrived in time to be read at the 1922 General Convention.

In later years, CLID leaders played fact-finding and mediating roles in such labor disputes as the Patterson Silkworkers Strike (1925) and the Passaic Textile Strike (1926). For a period in the early '20s, they took out ads in major newspapers setting forth their position about industrial disputes. These and other activities won them the respect of many labor leaders and their members were frequently invited to labor meetings. A number of union newspapers praised the League for its concern about social justice and for its support of labor.

These efforts did not occur without resistance. From the very beginning, publications such as the *Manufacturers Record* of Baltimore carried articles criticizing the League. In 1925, opponents of CLID submitted a memorial to the House of Bishops to condemn the League as well as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Civil Liberties Union. When this failed, they brought a resolution against "Politics in the Church" to the 1928 General Convention, but it also failed.

The stock market crash in 1929 created an entirely new atmosphere. During the "Roaring '20s" many members of the middle class naively believed that

prosperity would remain forever and its benefits would gradually pervade society. The working class was not so easily deluded since the 1920s for them were "The Lean Years." Nevertheless, the Great Depression once again made capitalism the central issue, and capitalist defense of its privilege through fascism became a chief danger.

1930s AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The Depression also gave rise to three important people's movements: The Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and the United Front against Fascism. Each of these movements joined together liberals and radicals in the struggle for economic justice and democratic rights. In later years, participation in these coalitions became the focus for bitter criticism and persecution, but at the time, they were the avenues for meaningful activity for socially-concerned Christians.

During these years, CLID's activities were greatly expanded and its membership grew. Its struggle for economic justice and democratic rights throughout the previous decade were now regarded with pride by Episcopalians. Soon it had a dozen chapters in the East, Midwest and West and more than 3,000 members spread across the country. Its activities now took on a new form and intensity.

Throughout the '30s, an important part of CLID's program continued to be educational activities. The summer intern jobs were expanded and drew together students from nearly a dozen seminaries. As seminary students took various types of jobs in Cincinnati, they were able to come together and share their reflections on how religious values might be applied to the workplace. In 1931, a School for Social Ethics, a mini-university, was started at Wellesley College where prominent church leaders taught summer courses throughout the '30s.

In addition, CLID continued to play an important role at Episcopal Summer Conferences as well as at General Conventions. Some chapters developed public seminars while others participated in Conferences for Seminary Students. Literature and study programs were developed for all members who were interested and at some points CLID cooperated with organizations such as the People's Institute of Applied Religion in leadership training programs. In



William Spofford

all these and other activities, their primary concern was helping Christians live out their faith by engaging in activities for social justice.

By the beginning of the 1930s, CLID had dropped its discussion about corporate responsibility. As unemployment grew and working conditions deteriorated, its activity in investigating labor conditions and supporting strikers took on a new importance. In 1931, CLID joined with other groups to provide relief funds for striking textile workers in Danville, Virginia and in the following year they sent 21 members of the clergy to investigate working conditions in the Kentucky coal fields.

By the second half of the 1930s resistance to the Depression had reached a higher level. Industrial and tenant farmer unions were rapidly gaining strength and the United Front had a broad base of support.

CLID, too, was developing with and responding to these advances. Strike volunteers were organized to join picket lines and teams were sent across the country to preach the social gospel.

Throughout this period, CLID took an anti-capitalist position and presented a positive view of socialism. Nevertheless, its primary concern was to develop support around particular issues rather than raise consciousness about how these were caused by capitalism or how socialism might eliminate the problem.

Few, if any, of CLID's leaders were members of the Socialist or Communist parties, but they had no qualms about cooperating with anyone who was honestly working for social justice. The issue was support for a particular cause rather than party affiliation. This was a cause of much persecution during the McCarthy Era, with its sweeping denunciation of "fellow travelers."

Many of CLID's activities in the second half of the 1930s were done in cooperation with other organizations in the United Christian Council for Democracy (UCCD). UCCD was a federation of left Christian groups which came together in 1936 under the leadership of Reinhold Niebuhr. While each organization maintained its own orientation, all rejected the "profit-seeking economy and the capitalistic way of life." CLID was a member of UCCD together with the Fellowship of Socialist Christians led by Reinhold Niebuhr, the Methodist Federation for Social Service led by Harry F. Ward, the Rauschenbusch Fellowship for Baptists, the Reformed Council for Social Reconstruction, as well as other groups of Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Evangelicals. In the years immediately after World War II, CLID held annual meetings with these other organizations in order to share perspectives. While the Council was never more than a federation, it did make important contributions in civil liberties and labor relations by bringing progressive Christians together.

STRUGGLES AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM

During this period, CLID was active in three areas. CLID's primary focus continued to be support for labor struggles. In this period that meant assisting sharecroppers in southern states to organize themselves into the Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU). STFU developed under the leadership of the Socialist Party and CLID helped by raising funds and sending field workers. In 1936, for example, funds were sent to help Arkansas sharecroppers who had lost their land, and a field worker was sent to the Delta Cooperative Farm in Mississippi.

Supporting labor struggles also meant aiding the development of industrial unions through the CIO. CLID understood the need for organizing the unorganized as well as joining workers together in industrial rather than trade unions. Thus, CIO organizers

were frequently asked to speak to church groups and were regarded as a leading force in the working class.

A second area of CLID's activities in the second half of the 1930s was the struggle against foreign and domestic fascism. Fascism arose in Italy in the early 1920s, and it gained strength in Europe and the United States as capitalists backed it to protect their interests and stifle domestic protest. CLID realized that unless people were organized to stop it, fascism would continue to grow and eliminate democracy. Thus, they saw the Spanish Civil War as a crucial conflict between fascism and democracy, and supported the loyalist cause. They sent funds for orphans through the friends of Spanish Democracy and tried to educate congregations through articles in church publications and pamphlets.

A third area CLID became involved in during this period was the struggle against racism. Although their activities in this area were greatly expanded in the post-war years, during this period they saw reactionaries using racism to divide and weaken the labor movement. Thus, they issued a number of pamphlets to raise members' awareness, and endorsed programs to eliminate racial discrimination in government and to combat lynching.

As CLID became more active in all these fields, it again became the focus of attacks by conservatives. At the 1937 General Convention, Merwin K. Hart led the Church Layman's Association in an attack on CLID for being a Marxist organization. With support from Bishop Manning, they were able to get a resolution passed in the House of Deputies to bar CLID from future Conventions. This resolution was overwhelmingly defeated by the House of Bishops but the fight arose again at the 1940 Convention with the same result. Similar attacks were mounted in Congress — in 1938 by the Dies Committee and again in the 1950s by Senator Joseph McCarthy's redbaiting.

In the 1940s, CLID expanded its activities to include support for relief projects in China and the Soviet Union. With the end of World War II, a new and broader program was drawn up that included on the domestic front a call for full employment and a guaranteed annual income along with opposition to the closed shop, the poll-tax, and legislation that deprived women of equal rights. On the international front, they called for support of the Dumbarton Oaks Conference and "people's movements in lib-

erated countries," and opposed any relations with Franco's regime in Spain.

ELSA, EXPANSION AND REPRESSION

In order to reflect this broader program, the name was changed to the Episcopal League for Social Action (ELSA) in 1946. This expanded emphasis, however, was built on a weak foundation. In the post-war years, the term "industrial democracy" lost its power to draw people together in common cause. As industry boomed with European reconstruction and the production of long-awaited consumer products, most members of the middle class lost interest in industrial issues. At the same time, William Spofford, who had led CLID for the last 20 years, was no longer able to continue his activities as both Managing Editor of *The Witness* and Executive Secretary of CLID. Thus, for the next two years his son (now Bishop) William Spofford, Jr. carried on these activities with ELSA. He in turn was succeeded by three other Executive Secretaries.

In the early 1950s ELSA succumbed to the repressive atmosphere of the McCarthy period. As church radicals were attacked within the church and without, many shied away from organizations such as ELSA. In addition, without a unifying issue such as industrial democracy, many joined other organizations to further their social concerns. Finally, without a unifying leader it was no longer possible to maintain an active organization, and ELSA slipped into oblivion. Thus, in effect, ended the three decades of the turbulent life of CLID.

Whether a movement in the Episcopal Church will soon emerge which will bring together these different concerns and commitments, grounded in a cogent analysis of the present-day systems and structures of injustice, is yet to be seen. That possibility is dependent in large measure on whether the church is willing to build upon and learn from its own history.

However, we must be careful not to canonize our history. Throughout the last 200 years we see the same forces to be resisted — sexism, racism and imperialism — but their structures and forms have changed through time. Our analysis and strategies must change as well. By recovering the vitality of our tradition, we can work and dream in our own time. ■



Radical religious history: fragments of a legacy

by Paul Buhle

I visited with Willard and Ruth Adlard MacLennan Uphaus to tape them for my Oral History of the American Left archive just a few months before Willard's death at age 91. Willard was already a legendary figure in Protestant radicalism; he epitomized one era of religious commitment and looked forward to the next. His 1983 talk at the World Fellowship Center had been entitled, "Integrating Mysticism and Social Revolution."

We had discussed the subject excited-

Paul Buhle, who directs the Oral History of the American Left at Tamiment Library, New York University, is seeking to interview other "religious radicals" active during the 1920s-50s. All tapes will be available (depending upon the wishes of the interviewee) for listening at Tamiment.

ly, ruminating over the legacies of the Gnostics, Cabbalists, Sufis, Tantric Buddhists, Hopi seers and their meaning for the Radical Reformation's current heirs. We had been profoundly moved by liberation theology and its poet-philosophers' aim to recuperate pre-Columbian culture, to grasp at truths long relegated to the margins of Western history.

All but a few of my other American Left respondents would call themselves atheists — aging Jews, Finns, Hungarians, Poles and Italians. They broke from religion in their youth, or came from parents who had already made the break. Yet they devoted every available energy to a vision of a cooperative society just as "spiritual" and hardly less other-worldly than the Radical Reformation's earthly

millennium. They organized the unions, initiated protests against racism, led the battles for Social Security and against the Cold War. What had brought Willard and Ruth among them, decades before liberation theology pointed toward a reconciliation of radical faiths?

Willard had felt close to his German-American grandfather and the Reformation energy the old man had passed on. For one historical moment still reverberating today, Protestantism had expressed an almost primal thirst for communalism, for the oneness of humankind, nature and the cosmos. Willard recognized the lingering traces in his own life's mission, keeping alive the dissenting voice of socialist Christians.

Two distinct traditions can be identi-



fied in American Protestant radicalism, both intertwined in Willard Uphaus.

One stems directly from the memories of the Radical Reformation sustained by the French Camisards, the German followers of Jakob Böhme and scattered others. Many European sects viewed North America as a last hope for heaven on earth.

A single, remarkable example may stand for the others. German-American Pietists led by Johann Conrad Beissel founded the colony of Ephrata outside Philadelphia in the 1730s, a settlement which soon supported the most prolific book-publishing center and the most creative writers of new hymns in the future U.S. territories. The aging John Greenleaf Whittier, Poet Laureate of post-Civil War America, rightly saw them as the neglected alternative to a materialist destiny. Perhaps we can understand their contribution better today than at any other time in U.S. history.

The second, less mystical and more practical tradition flourished among ministers within mainstream denominations. They played some role in preparing the ground for the American Revolution, but their modern presence gained force around the sorely oppressed — mill workers, Black slaves and free Blacks — who so badly needed a redemptive message.

For example, at Pawtucket, R.I., the site of the first “family system” textile mills in the Americas (and the site of the first labor strike involving women workers) a Baptist minister in the 1820s took this characteristic text: “Do not rich men oppress you? Woe to ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you.”

The local millowners turned him out of the church, a common result of such outspokenness. And yet, in the abolitionist press, Black and White, and in the populist, labor and socialist press to follow, a religious voice was almost always heard. Many ministers established “Free” churches, or abandoned pulpit altogether to become editors, circuit-riding lecturers, organizers.

Thousands of them rallied to the banner of railroad unionist-turned-socialist, Eugene V. Debs. From his first government persecution in 1894, Debs was depicted popularly as a Christ-like figure suffering for the common people. (A poem published on his imprisonment for leading the Pullman Strike read in part: “A beam of light fell o’er him like a glory ’round the shriven/And he walked the dusty pavement as it were the pass to heaven.”) In 1920, his last presidential campaign, nearly a million Americans voted for the jailed anti-war martyr. Oral memories of oldtimers recollect sobbing in the streets of blue-collar neighborhoods across America when Debs died in 1926.

One of Debs’ personal friends and literary executor to Walt Whitman,

Horace Traubel, embodied the more mystic aspect of Christian Socialism. Traubel, editor of the Unitarian magazine, *The Conservator*, ceaselessly preached the gospel of socialism as the essential Good News and the Socialist Party as the bearer of the mission.

Traubel died in 1919, and the mystic confidence in American cooperative destiny lay mortally wounded. So much of Anglo-Saxon America had turned to Billy Sunday, the Ku Klux Klan, anti-unionism and xenophobia.

The Bishop Brown incident of the 1920s marked a sea change in Christian radicalism. William Montgomery Brown of Galion, Ohio, retired Episcopal bishop of Arkansas, author of prominent apologies for the faith, had turned political with a tract on Black rights. He went over to the Left with both feet in his 1915 *Communism and Christianity*, a much-translated and reprinted personal appeal for the new “religion” of revolution. He sold hundreds of thousands of copies of such books and became a *cause celebre* — too much so. In May 1924, he was declared a heretic and stripped of his office. Today the site of his Brownella College in Galion is an official state museum.

For decades, foreign-born radicals in the United States had been anti-clerical because of their experience with reactionary views of their respective clergies, and because “scientific socialism” offered believers the doctrinal basis for an alternative faith in the destiny of humankind. They rarely acknowledged the extent to which their own workers’ songs, theater and iconographics had borrowed directly upon Judeo-Christian themes, and how many uneducated activists in their ranks quietly held to their own personal versions of religion.

At any rate, the eclipse of Protestant radicalism and the triumph of the militantly atheist Russian Revolution gave cause for a new level of intolerance, particularly within the assembling Com-

munist Party. Ideology had less influence at the local level, where especially by the later 1930s many pro-labor priests and ministers could be found, and many more church members among the CIO unionists.

Communist seekers of social justice in the '30s often found themselves unable to reach constituencies of all kinds — Protestant, Catholic, Jewish — with a tone and language that would have been effective. Militant church people, often playing important practical roles, found themselves locked out of intellectual dialogue. This cost a generation of radicals dearly.

The smaller Socialist Party, led by former Methodist minister Norman Thomas, symbolized for many the renaissance of conscience among middle-class Protestant denominations. It recruited freely from the YMCA and YWCA, activist church youth organizations and college campuses. A handful of popularists such as Kirby Page, editor of the influential religious-radical *World Tomorrow* magazine, reached far into this constituency. Ruth MacLennan Uphaus recalled to me her use of Page's meditations as she grew from Ohio public school teacher to Socialist Party militant and Farmer-Labor Party candidate for Congress. And yet the latter-day Socialist Party had little in common with the natural Protestant constituency, the Southern Whites and Blacks then streaming into factories, north and south. The socialists, for all their sincerity and dedication, remained a missionary sect.

At the margins of radicalism, other religious personalities shone: A. J. Muste, who passed through Marxism to found the Fellowship for Reconciliation; Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin and their followers in the Catholic Worker milieu; and militant southern activists in labor, religion and culture — Don West, James Dombrowski and Claude Williams. Of all the Christian radicals in the 1930s, perhaps only Williams developed a full-blown,

practical theology. Other Christian radicals from Bishop Brown's day onward had been essentially reacting to Marxist hegemony over the Left.

A hell-fire Presbyterian minister in Tennessee, Williams enrolled in contemporary religion at Vanderbilt and took up the task of integrating religion with modern problems. Over the next few years, Claude and his wife Joyce worked with miners resisting layoffs until cashiered by his Presbytery. He went on to lead the unemployed, organize sharecroppers, direct Commonwealth College and multitudes of other activities. In the late '30s, he and his wife were active in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

Largely as a result of their association with the STFU, Claude and Joyce Williams established a People's Institute for Applied Religion to train religious leaders as activists. In effect, Williams re-interpreted the Bible in terms familiar to the Radical Reformation or to Black

emancipation movements. Much like the old IWW, which taught semi-literate workers their power through a chart describing the industrial government of a social order, Williams devised charts which described the betrayal of God's Word and the regathering of the righteous forces.

Williams recognized the danger of a domestic fascism preying upon people's frustration and confusion. He insisted that "in this mass religious movement there is one of the most terrific democratic dynamics in America." The poor in the South, "by a penetrating instinct and an unsophisticated realism sense the emptiness, the sham, artificiality and hypocrisy of our formal religious services . . . Herein is heard the present-day Macedonian Call."

For the rest of his life, Williams paid for the insight. Hounded from place to place, threatened with KKK terror and government harassment, he was eventually removed from his pastorate and





convicted of heresy — the only such case in 20th century Presbyterianism. Toward the end he could still be found holding Bible classes in Fungo Hollow, Tenn. — classes which resembled the communal reinterpretation of Scripture held by Ernesto Cardenal among the campesinos in Nicaragua.

Willard Uphaus looks back to association with Claude Williams as one of the most stirring and transforming moments in his life.

Uphaus emerged from a rural Indiana background and rose to prominence as a religious leader of the CIO while Williams grew to fame in the South. Willard recalled attempts the two men made to probe the other's faith, Williams having (as Uphaus said), "to rub my Yale nose" in the reality of southern poverty and hope; Uphaus helping to bring Williams back to a transcendental element he had almost lost in his practical struggles.

In the next generation, Martin Luther King, Jr., placed Christian commitment back toward the center of radicalism as it had not been since abolitionist days. By the 1920s, the curiously tangled theological doctrines of Marcus Garvey and his "Back to Africa" movement had

stirred race pride and a boldness never seen before in urban Black America. During the 1930s Father Divine, rallying huge forces for survival of Blacks through the Depression, emerged briefly as a major social figure with strong radical connections.

But King possessed an intellectual sophistication which none of his spiritual predecessors, and indeed, few of the trained Marxists, approached. Like Marx, King drank deeply from the well of Hegel's philosophical discourse. "A final victory is an accumulation of many short term encounters," King reasoned, and the failure to appreciate the up and down waves "underestimates the value of confrontation and dissolves the confidence born of a partial victory by which new efforts are powered."

About Rosa Parks, who ignited the bus boycott that brought the militant Civil Rights movement to national and international attention by refusing to move to a segregated area, King wrote:

She was anchored to that seat by the accumulated indignities of days gone by and the boundless aspirations of generations yet unborn. She was victim of both the forces of history and the forces of destiny. She had been traced down by the Zeitgeist — the spirit of the time.

At almost the same historical moment that King took leadership of the unfolding political movement, the Krushchev revelations about Stalin and the Hungarian workers' uprising against the Russians shook the old Marxist self-confidence to the core. Marxists everywhere, including the United States, were about to undergo the kind of wrenching doubts earlier radical Christians had suffered, and not a few became agnostic or atheistic toward *their* familiar Marxist faith.

The final decade of King's life saw Vatican II, the stirrings of liberation theology, and growing Protestant opposition

to American Third World policies, especially the Vietnam War. The stage had been set for a synthesis previously unimaginable.

As we watch the unfolding events — in the Christian martyrdom of Latin America, the rousing of U.S. Catholic bishops against nuclear arms, the increasing engagement of local religious figures and laypersons on issues of deindustrialization, impoverished families, unemployed or disabled workers and political refugees — the significance of the fragmented history comes better into view.

On the mystic-spiritual side, popular literature such as Elaine Pagels' *Gnostic Gospels*, feminist history and anthropology, and the poetic expressions of Sandinista leader Ernesto Cardenal have inspired the widespread sense of timeless nature-religion which elements of Christianity have absorbed and now return to light. We may be sure that the Shakers and Ephratans would find sisters and brothers here.

On the other side, material aspirations of Christians and radicals of all kinds for a cooperative society seem more in tune than at any time since the dawn of so-called "scientific socialism." One believes that the mill village rebel preachers, the Black spiritual community leaders, circuit-riding socialists and militant labor priests knew the day would finally come.

"The traditional Marxist and Freudian critique of religion are simply irrelevant in the face of its role against the nuclear state," concludes Marxist-Freudian Joel Kovell. "The Enlightenment and its traditions," he goes on to say, "are unable to comprehend the life-saving value inherent in the appropriation of the sacred. If the current age is survived, this rapprochement of religion with emancipatory practice will stand as one of its major features."

One can only add that our friend, Willard Uphaus, had the rare privilege of self-consciously living out the vigorous dialectic in our amazing age. ■

1964-74 . . . *Continued from page 8*
group egoism and vindictiveness. That voice needs constantly to be tutored in the wholeness and the holiness of the will of God.

One of my privileges during most of my years as diocesan bishop was to serve on the Executive Council of the National Church. That this happened to coincide with John Hines' being Presiding Bishop was the working of a peculiarly beneficent Providence. Sitting on the Executive Council and engaging in its deliberations and debates was of great help to me in gaining perspective on the issues confronting the Diocese of Pennsylvania, for they were the same issues.

Perhaps most helpful to me and to the diocese was the clear and strong position taken by the national church under Bishop Hines' leadership on the whole issue of racial justice. That he gave it precedence over more customary things such as canons and liturgy and other more churchly matters was leadership in and of itself. It sent an important message to the dioceses, ours included.

The ordination of women to the priesthood occurred on July 29, 1974, after I had resigned as bishop. This culmination of a long effort by many, many women was not a part of my ministry in the diocese. I do like to think of it, however, as a part of my ministry as a bishop.

My interest in the ordination of women was undoubtedly formed and informed mostly by Suzanne Hiatt, one time suburban missionary for the diocese. Few women had given more thought and study, concern and enterprise to the issue than had she. As to bishops, including this one, she was several light years ahead in her perception of what could and should be. She was also something of an unofficial bishop to scores of women who shared her aspiration for ordination.

Having known Sue Hiatt, I also came to know many of the other women as-

pirants who were bitterly frustrated at being kept in an ambiguous, "ladies-in-waiting" role. I saw their hopes dashed at two consecutive General Conventions where the issue was a canonical change which would clearly warrant the ordination of women. I was now familiar with the theological and ecclesiastical objections to such ordinations. But I came to feel that the theological question was settled in my mind, and in the mind of the church as well. Test votes in the House of Bishops had indicated a clear majority in favor of the ordination of women. It was obvious that a majority of deputies to General Convention also were in favor, though the technicalities of counting votes in the House of Deputies had effectively frustrated this evident will of the convention.

Ten years earlier, in 1964, the House of Bishops had issued a position paper on "Christian Obedience." It said, in part: "The church recognizes the right of any person to urge the repeal of unjust laws by all lawful means, including participation in peaceful demonstrations. If and when the means of legal recourse have been exhausted, or are demonstrably inadequate, the church recognizes the right of all persons, for reasons of informed conscience, to disobey such laws . . ." The irony of this is that the paper just quoted was occasioned by the concern over racial justice, not the rights of women. And a further irony is that the unjust laws it had in mind were civil laws, not ecclesiastical canons. But Christian obedience toward one is the same as toward the other, and sees no distinction.

My personal estimate is that eventually the 1974 ordination will have made a considerable contribution to what I feel will be the ultimate and inevitable coming about of the Roman Catholic Church on the question of the ordination of women. That would perhaps be justification enough. But meanwhile the ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church has

been enriched by scores and scores of talented, well-trained women.

Looking back from the vantage point of today to the 10 years' tenure of the 12th Bishop of Pennsylvania, what conclusions can be drawn? The regnant issues are still with us. Those years did not settle the question of racial justice either within the diocese, or in the communities which lie within its jurisdiction. As to war, Vietnam has given place to Latin America and the Middle East — and to the overarching threat of nuclear war. The fact of women having access to the ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church leaves untouched the larger questions of abortion rights, the ERA, and the role of women generally in a stubbornly male-dominated society. I even dare to guess that the administrative life of the diocese is in many respects still refractory and unmanageable.

So to what end do bishops and others raise issues which will not be settled, and tackle problems which outlive what at the time seem to be the solutions? I think there are two responses. The first is the matter of faithfulness. God is the saviour of the world. We are not called to save the world, but simply to be as faithful as we can to what we understand God's will to be, in the time and at the place we find ourselves. In this world our model is a crucified Lord. We are not required to be successful, but to be faithful. Faithful to a Kingdom which is not of this world, but which does undergird this world, envelopes it, permeates it, and will outlast it.

And this would be my second point — that in our attempts to be faithful we will ever and again see signs of that Kingdom. We will, as it were, see Satan falling from heaven. Not victory — that is for God alone — but signs of encouragement which serve as intimations of that Kingdom we serve, and to which we belong. I saw many signs of that Kingdom during my ten years as Bishop of Pennsylvania. What Christian could ask for more? ■

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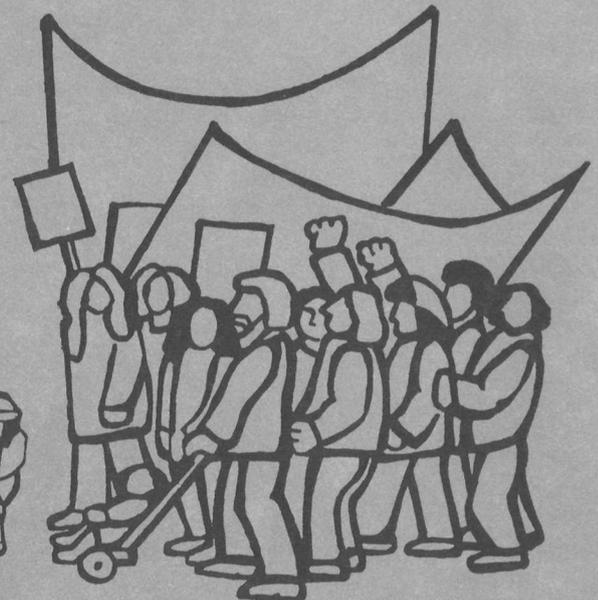
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