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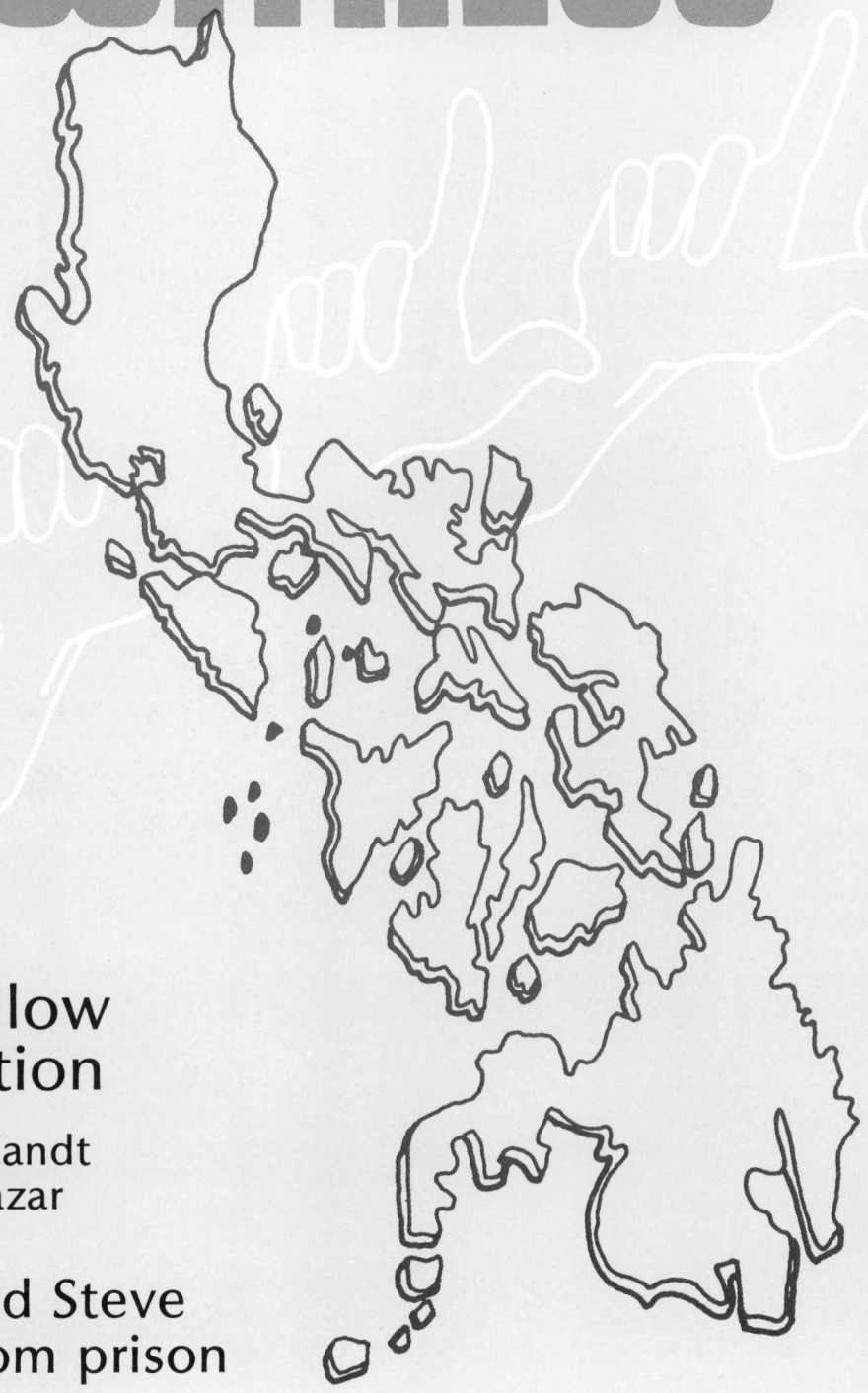
THE WITNESS



The Yellow Revolution

Jane Van Zandt
Alvaro Alcazar

Maria and Steve home from prison

Letters

Culprit not electronics

I read with interest your April editorial concerning legislation brought to General Convention in 1985 expanding the so-called "Civil Rights canon." As you correctly reported, this was "the convention's most hotly debated resolution," and, although it was adopted in some form by both the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies, it never received concurrence, and so it failed to pass.

The amendment adopted by the deputies had to be approved by the bishops for the legislation to pass. The bishops, however, never received a message from the House of Deputies reporting the action, and so they could not concur in adopting resolution C-007. The culprit? If anything, it was the avalanche of paperwork produced during the seventh and eighth days as the end of convention neared.

The General Convention of 1985 was fully computerized. All the actions on resolutions brought to the 1985 convention were tracked through a database, minutes were recorded on the platform on a word processor, electronic mail and communications software and hardware were in place, and all systems were integrated in a highly sophisticated microenvironment that exactly duplicated the system used by the Republican Party at their national convention. Further, the convention was staffed by highly trained data entry and word processing operators, programmers, systems analysts, database administrators, word processing supervisors and information systems managers from the Church Center, to input data and produce printouts on site. Due to the shortened length of convention, computer personnel worked through the night, every night, often working double shifts.

Your editorial suggests that an electronic voting system would be more efficient and accurate, as if the system of tabulating the votes were somehow the culprit in the failure of the resolution to pass through the legislative process.

Besides the fact that votes in 1985 *were* electronically tabulated, other factors must be weighed in deciding whether a showy electronic voting system, complete with buttons at each deputation and a video screen behind the platform, would be cost efficient. First, it is doubtful, due to the complex way in which votes must be tabulated, that the convention would gain more than a few minutes' savings in time on each vote. But instead of having an official bring the results to the platform from the computer room a few steps away, deputies would see numbers flash in a giant image before them. For this, the church would pay dearly.

Equipment used for button/screen voting is so specialized that it isn't used for anything else. If the church bought its own system, the theft, damage and liability insurance on it, plus the shipping costs, would total more than the purchase price. And it would be outdated before the next convention. Costs for an electronic voting service would include salaries for numerous technical staff to program and run the system, their travel, hotel and food expenses for about two weeks, plus a lease on the equipment. We have researched this service before and found the costs to violate the principles of good stewardship.

Certainly, there is room for improvement. At the recent computer trade show in Atlanta, I shopped for high speed printers to be used in Detroit, as well as scanners that will be able to read new resolutions being submitted on site and automatically convert them into texts on the word processor, without keyboarding by an operator! Any computer professional knows how rapidly technology evolves. Budget requests for state-of-the-art computer products, however, must pass a rigorous analysis by our treasurer and others, before purchases can be made.

Your editorial voices suggestions and frustrations that we have heard from other sources as well. Some of them express a lack of awareness about what is already computerized, such as "instant voting results . . . an updated file of resolutions by subject and with current status." These programs were operating in Anaheim. A Status of Legislation is produced daily at convention, both by me and my staff and by the Dispatch of Business office, to remind committees what legislation still needs to be brought to the floor. We should have posted the printouts in a public place. It will be done in 1988.

Other suggestions are absolutely valid, and we thank you for highlighting them. We will set up electronic communications between the computer room and the platform and between the two Houses. And a new procedure must be devised to provide revised texts of resolutions as they are amended.

The Episcopal Church has moved into the computer age decisively yet economically. Thousands of actions on 491 resolutions were tracked by computer during the Anaheim convention, and this record will appear, along with the minutes of the two Houses, in *The Journal of General Convention* in early July 1986. This is the only official record of the actions of the convention, and our feeling is that it is the most accurate *Journal* to date. We hope you agree.

Diana Morris
Information Systems Manager
Episcopal Church Center

We appreciate the work and long hours put in by the information systems staff of 815 and the 491 resolutions they had to process — far more than the data the Republican Convention had to deal with! We did not envision anything so elaborate or costly as an electronic voting system with giant screens. More modestly, our hope would be that in 1988, a system might be set up to insure

that resolutions not be lost and that the public be given full access to their status. This would require competent data entry persons and a verification system, but more importantly, the networking *of information. Minimally we would hope for seven terminals: on the floor of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops; on each platform; one in each secretariate, and one in the visitors' gallery (equipped with Blue Book and numbers assigned to resolutions in committee). Each would receive simultaneous programming and each would maintain an updated status line on every resolution. — Ed.*

Prayer by grandfather

In the March "Short Takes," I was very pleased to see an adaption of a lovely prayer by David Hardman, called "Let Us Pray."

While it's stirring and moving, the prayer is not by David Hardman, and Canon Minifie must have gotten his attribution wrong. They prayer under the title, "Disturb Us, O Lord," was written by my grandfather, the Rev. Addison H. Groff, D.D., in 1945.

David Groff
New York, N.Y.

Actions impulsive

Perhaps Carter Heyward developed her article on "Enforcing male supremacy" without having read that the young man thrown into Kenduskeag Stream in Bangor had made what the boys who threw him in perceived as an improper advance to one of them. And they assumed that he could swim.

Without knowing any of the individuals involved any better than Heyward, my assessment of the scenario — as a minister as well as a grandmother — is that one of the boys was uptight because of his perception of the approach of the gay as a threat to his person. He called on a couple of friends to come to his aid. The three took typically adolescent and primitive means to let the gay know he couldn't mess around with any of them that way — all perfectly understandable in a world where Christ is not Lord. Now our Lord has come into the situation, with healing for four families, in an unintended tragedy similar to what too often happens when drunk driving is involved — or any of a variety of impulsive actions or reactions on the part of characteristically irresponsible youth.

Our Lord expects His ministers who are close enough to the tragedy to be there with His healing. I would not seek out a pastor whose ministry was focused on sexual orientation, whatever hers or his might happen to be. On the basis of a lifetime of experience, 50 years of it with a spouse who shares my views on this aspect of ministry, may I suggest that those who serve the Lord in ministry do it from within their own closets. In Christ's Kingdom, sexual orientation will be that big a deal only to those whose business it is.

The Rev. Gretchen H. Hall
Peaks Island, Me.

Article dogmatic

Having been married for 40 years, I thought I knew everything about heterosexism until I read Carter Heyward's "Enforcing male supremacy" (April WITNESS). Turns out I was wrong. I thought love had something to do with sex. Or maybe she's wrong. Or just plain angry. The subjects are too important to be treated in such an angry, dogmatic way.

The Rev. Richard R. Baker, III
Wicomico Church, Va.

Homosexuality banned

I will not be subscribing to your magazine again. I did not expect to agree with you on most issues. I wanted, however, to see another point of view, to understand the Christian basis of your more liberal opinions. What disturbed me was the lack of any attempt to justify those liberal positions by the Bible.

When controversial issues such as abortion and homosexuality are discussed, opposing views are merely insulted. For example, the only reason given for the presence of opposing views to practicing homosexuality is that of homophobia. Be serious! The Bible clearly condemns homosexuality. This smugness is annoying and pervasive. I will look elsewhere for someone who defends liberal positions, not merely states them as self-evident.

Allen Hairston
Arlington, Mass.

In strong tradition

Thanks for being such a good witness. The magazine reminds me that Episcopalians (Anglicans) do have a strong social justice tradition in spite of the stereotypes and some of the realities of "frozen chosen" suburban churches. I especially appreciate coverage of issues of women, people of color and gay men and lesbians in the church.

Allison Moore
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

Mistaken identity

I wish to correct an item in your May issue. In your article on the Episcopal Urban Caucus "Vision Quest" you credited the Rev. Elyse Bradt with the quote which the Presiding Bishop picked up on: "Stand with us as we go through unemployment and stand in welfare lines. Include us in your church programs. Let us in on decision-making before decisions are made. Don't walk in front of us, don't walk behind us, but walk beside us." This statement was part of the remarks of Eddie Mae Binion, Chairperson of South Side Welfare Rights in St. Louis.

This has been Eddie Mae's theme

Continued on page 23

THE WITNESS

Table of Contents

Credits

Cover, TSI Visuals; photos p. 7, 8 Jane Van Zandt; photos p. 12, 15 Mary Lou Suhor; graphic p. 16, *China Talk.*

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Editorial

A Yellow Revolution parable

Perhaps the best description of the Yellow Revolution in the Philippines was offered by the Rev. Edicio de la Torre, a Catholic priest who had been imprisoned for nine years by the Marcos regime for his revolutionary views.

The Revolution, he said, delivered to the Filipinos a premature baby with unusual features. The baby has a good head, but its right arm is strong and big beyond proportion. Its left arm is weak and tiny, and so is its body.

"The problem is whether this baby is viable," de la Torre said, "and whether we will be able to reduce the size of the right arm and strengthen the left to make the body robust. The trouble is that the baby has a rich and doting uncle who keeps feeding only the right arm, while the head is trying to make the body grow strong."

In the parable the head of course, is Cory Aquino, a new sober president, eager to save the Philippines from the chaos left by Marcos. The right arm is the "reformed military," headed by the former and present Minister of Defense, Juan Ponce Enrile, and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, former head of the Philippine Constabulary who implemented martial law decrees. How they will function in the future is still debatable.

The left arm refers to the New People's Army, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the Christians for National Liberation, the National Democratic Front, etc. — those who tend toward a socialist economy rather than capitalism. The body is the neglected, malnourished masses of the people.

Uncle Sam's nurturing of the right arm only, through its multinational corporations and its Subic and Clark bases are a barrier to Philippine sovereignty, now only potentially evident in a frail body. As articles in this issue reveal, the bases have fostered corruption, dependence and prostitution. Arguments that the bases mean employment for many Filipinos are vitiated by the fact that Subic occupies more than 62,000 acres of Philippine land and water, and Clark robs the people of 158,277 acres of land that could be devoted to production.

Moreover, the perception of these bases as springboards for military intervention in the Pacific makes the Philippines a target for attack. Subic Naval base is a port for U.S. nuclear-capable ships and submarines; Clark Air Force Base for U.S. nuclear-capable planes. These facilities make the Philippines a prime target for nuclear retaliation should there be a conflict between the two superpowers.

Withdrawal of the United States, then, is key to Philippine sovereignty and whether that premature baby delivered by the Revolution will be allowed to grow in wisdom and age and grace. ■

Close-up: Cory's legacy

by Jane Van Zandt

The Rev. Jane Van Zandt, assistant at All Saints Church, Brookline, Mass., spent two weeks overseas with the Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines in March. The program was coordinated on the other side by the Ecumencial Partnership for International Concerns. In the accompanying article, she describes her experiences for THE WITNESS.

Despite a great deal of reading on the Philippines and a thorough orientation program, we could hardly be prepared for a country which had just been through a rigged election, a "snap" revolution, a dictator fleeing in the wake of "people power," and a capable though politically unexperienced woman having been elected president. There was joy; there was unrest. Prisoners were not yet free; killing and torture had not stopped.

Those loved ones we had left behind, and some of our group as well, felt some fear at our going at such a time of change. I felt no fear. Perhaps it was because I was numb from 20-plus hours in planes or airports.

Upon our arrival, our hosts took us on a quick tour of Metro Manila. We were too tired to retain much, but were aware particularly of excessive air pollution and crowded living conditions. Along busy main streets were gutters with dirty water being used for bathing, washing clothes, and cooking. Evident also were the tiny shacks made of scraps, with dirt floors and little if any furniture.

After lunch we went by public bus, then new light rail train to UN station. When we emerged, we looked out on literally hundreds of men, women and children all wearing yellow — Cory Aquino's color — shirts, dresses, and hats. There were all ages from newborn to the very old and bent over — jubilant, smiling, laughing, and talking to everyone. "Welcome to a free Philippines," one woman with a little girl in tow said to us. They glowingly shared the triumph of their bloodless revolution with us.

T-shirts showed a lot of imagination, though all were yellow. One said, "I stood as a human barricade Feb. 22-25" (adults and children who wore this had stood their ground against armed soldiers and military tanks). From babies and teens to the elderly; priests and nuns, teachers and laborers, they had been armed only with prayers, songs and rosaries. They had offered the soldiers sandwiches, cookies, and flowers. And they showed that the love and peace which Jesus taught can change the destiny of an entire country.

Two million people attended the Victory Mass at Luneta Park that sunny afternoon. Cory arrived in a white vehicle with no guards visible. Marcos would have needed an entourage of armed protectors. Fireworks, yellow confetti, balloons, and streamers abounded. We all bought something yellow to wear, to show solidarity.

The Mass itself was chaotic at times. Pepsi, hotdogs and cigarettes were sold throughout. Singing was in English and the native Tagalog — both the Mass music which even the children knew, and songs one might hear at a folk Mass in any country. Lessons were in Tagalog but there was enough English and Spanish interspersed that we could get the gist. I couldn't hold back the tears when we recited the Creed together in English — 2 million Roman Catholic Filipinos and a handful of us U.S. citizens. Cardinal Sin celebrated the Mass and preached in English. He talked about the miracle of Marcos' exile the previous week. A Filipino youth, about 20, was sitting on a pushcart near me. During the solidarity hymn, he and I reached for each other's hands at the same time. I felt so at one with the people.

We had to find our way back to the train during distribution of communion and before Cory's speech. We congratulated everyone, and they hugged us and shook our hands. One nun kissed my cheeks. It felt wonderful to be alive.

From then on, it was back to reality. In a few days, Cory Aquino could not possibly have changed all the wrongs present in a corrupt political and economic system. Yet in many sectors the people were already beginning to grow impatient.

Our trip to Central Luzon helped us see *why*. A tour of Angeles City showed us some of the bars and prostitutes patronized by the men from Clark Air Base. Without the

U.S. servicemen and the businessmen from transnational corporations, prostitution would disappear. It is not part of the family-oriented Filipino culture. Outsiders have made it a thriving business.

Later that day we walked through the fishing village at Mariveles. I remember thinking that neither words nor pictures could describe the living conditions. Malnourished dogs and dirty, naked children, many with the appearance of some skin disease, followed us everywhere. We learned that the number of children in a family ranged from two to 11, the average being seven. Their houses were cardboard cartons with bits of corrugated tin for roofs. These are built off the ground because of the mud and water from the river and the raw sewage, since there are no toilets in the village. We carefully picked our way on narrow wooden planks balanced on rocks, hoping not to miss our footing.

Almost everyone living in the fishing village had malaria. I was aware of every subsequent mosquito bite, knowing that one cannot be immunized against the disease. One little boy wore a stick and scraps of cloth as a splint for his broken arm. There are no drugs or medical supplies and no money for care at the tiny clinic. The people buy water for drinking and cooking. Food is scarce. But despite illness and poverty, the people smiled and welcomed us. Some of our group spent the night with these families, sharing what little there was.

Others of us stayed with workers from BEPZ (Bataan Export Processing Zone). This has been in existence since 1969 and is part of Mariveles on the Bataan peninsula. Basically how it works is this. A foreign company (most are from the United States) decides to locate in Mariveles. The town, near Manila, has a harbor which can accommodate ocean-going vessels. The foreigner is offered land, housing, factories, electricity, low rents, no taxes and cheap skilled labor. Raw materials are imported, which are then processed, assembled, or used in the manufacture of something else. The finished product is exported. The cost to the Filipinos has been great — lost land and houses with little or no compensation; more than 5,000 people forced to relocate, some a great distance from the sea where fishing had been their living.

In the beginning there were 57 companies and about 28,000 workers; when we were there the numbers had dwindled to 30 companies employing about 14,000. About half of the workers were on strike or had been laid off. It is risky to be active in the union or speak out against management; it can mean disappearance, torture, death, or at the very least, job loss. Many Filipinos are waiting for each job, so management has nothing to lose. Some 80% of the workers are women, aged 15 to 24. Women are hired because they are less likely to complain and because they can be forced to sleep with the boss — "Lay down or lay off." Few factories pay even the minimum wage. Although 15% of the workers have tuberculosis or other respiratory disease, nothing is done about ventilation. Other workers display skin diseases from chemicals. If a worker is laid off, there is little or no separation pay.

Commodities cost about 35% more than in Manila, and workers are forced to borrow from loan sharks. Delayed payment of wages is common, as is forced overtime. There seems to be little hope for these exploited people.

In contrast, at the top of the hill stands a luxury hotel which is almost empty. The hospital, too expensive for the workers, is also nearly empty. A large shopping center, built in 1980 looks like something from "The Day After" — a deserted shell with broken windows. The structure will be torn down so that even squatters can't use it. BEPZ seems doomed, thanks to the fighting spirit of the workers and their determination to be treated as human beings. We were all appalled at the familiar names of the corporations there who are guilty of human rights violations — makers of running shoes, toys, designer clothes, cars, electronic equipment. We each owned something made by one of them.

We were not at all prepared for what happened next in our travels. Told we were going to talk with some urban poor, in Olongapo, I got my notebook and camera and climbed out of the van. We were on the edge of the dump for all of Olongapo. It took a few minutes to realize that people live *on* the dump. Not *near* it; *on* it. The community has a name — Pagasa. It means *hope*. No matter where I stood on the garbage, there were flies and rank smells. Trash blew around. Small boys were going through piles of new garbage looking for salvageable pieces of plastic. A skinny cat meowed inside a junked car. A baby being bathed sat in a square metal tin. He cried when I took his picture. Toothless pregnant women

Olongapo children playing on garbage dump

posed for more pictures. "God bless our home" was painted on one lean-to. A UNICEF health care worker told us that the mayor (background — United States) would like to demolish the shacks so the government can convert the site to a tourist area. She said that four times in 24 hours six trucks dump trash there. A person can make 30 pesos per day (about $1.50) going through garbage. Half the income is spent on water, for cooking and washing clothes.

The people have pride and they and their homes are as clean as they *can* be. The community is especially wary about rusty nails and rats because they can't afford rabies and tetanus prophylaxis. The health care worker said, "People come here all the time. They take pictures and they hear our story. But there is no response." No one should live like that in a potentially rich country. It reminded me of Elie Wiesel's *Night* in which he speaks of the silence of God in the midst of the Holocaust. "Where *is* God in the dump?" I kept asking myself.

That evening we spent 2½ hours in the bars and walking along the strip in Olongapo talking with prostitutes, their pimps and the American servicemen from Subic Naval Base who have supported this business for the past 15-20 years. One quarter million people depend on sex-for-sale income. Roughly 7,000 men are stationed here; another 7,500 come in with the Seventh Fleet. Prostitution is legal within the nightclubs; not on the street. Some 16,000 to 20,000 women, children and some men earn their living this way. We were told that the U.S. Navy and the government ignore the problem.

They deny the presence of AIDS, yet 42 cases in the Navy were traceable to the Subic, according to one reliable source. Related to this is the presence of heroin and cocaine, deterioration of Filipino family life, botched abortions and the overall negative impact on the self-image of the Filipino. Lawyers and doctors make money on sex-for-sale also.

Why does the United States maintain military bases there? First, the irreplaceable land area is a subtropical jungle. The underground bunkers, testing facilities, and storage areas for who-knows-what are completely covered by jungle. Second, the bases can hire highly skilled, hard-working Filipinos and pay them sub-standard wages. Third, the strategic location of the Philippines means that the United States has had a complete encirclement of the Soviet Union since 1945. The bases also protect an estimated $4 billion in U.S. investments. The objections of the Filipinos to the presence of the bases are the exploitation, prostitution and its resultant negative effect on the stability of family and the constant threat of being made a direct target for a first strike in the event of nuclear war.

There was a lot to find depressing in the cities. Land is at a premium, rents even in the garbage dumps are high, jobs are few and wages low, health care poor, sewerage systems and clean water don't exist. In the past the government hasn't cared and in fact has been the cause of most of the problems of the urban poor.

The rural poor too have much to struggle against. Some of us flew south to Davao City in Mindanao. Then a four-hour ride on a rickety bus at high speed on narrow mountain roads took us past pretty countryside and exquisite views of the mountains and seacoast. We stayed in Polomolak in South Cotabato at Our Lady of Lourdes parish house. Our contact people, Mindanao Interfaith Pastoral Conference, took us in the back of a pickup truck through the huge pineapple plantation owned by a well-known transnational corporation. I was given a copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, then some neighbors joined the family at the home where I was staying and told me what the conditions are really like.

On paper it sounds good. There is transportation to and from the fields and factory, the CBA says. In fact, this means two trucks which make several trips to pick up hundreds of workers who are crammed standing with no protection from the elements. There is no provision for shade during lunch break; workers wear heavy protective clothing in the hot sun all day. In the factory there is no protection from toxic chemicals (my host's hands and arms were raw and weeping, despite gloves and long sleeves). There is a company co-op, but if a family runs up a bill, or has someone in the hospital, or is trying to pay a loan with interest, they will get a zero amount paycheck until they have worked off the debt. The workers are

seeking humane working conditions, protection from toxins, decent wages and benefits, respect of their rights and attention to ecology and preservation of land.

The legal acquisition of the farmers' land is done in an ingenious though dishonest manner. The company's land doesn't hold water well when it rains; by changing the contour of the land, the company channels water to the peasant's land and his crops are washed away. We were shown several instances of this by farmers who had been forced to sell. The water from the company land also contains chemicals from high-tech fertilizers and pesticides — fine for growing pineapples, but too acidic for rice and corn. Sometimes a company rents land from the farmer for a period of years; upon return, the soil is too acidic and he is forced to sell. Another ploy is "If you sell your land to us, you and your family will be given jobs." They may or may not get jobs; if they do, they are subject to the usual exploitation.

A plus to the rural living is that there is a feeling of more space. Though the homes aren't much bigger, there at least is more land. Fresh air does something for one's spirit and outlook. And the mountains and sunsets are beautiful. One morning my two interpreter/companions and I were walking along a country road just about sunrise. There was a mist across the fields and shadows on the mountains. The air was crisp and clean and I could smell damp soil and the presence of animals. I was still haunted by memories of people living in the garbage dump, and as I walked I was aware of the contrast between the urban poor and the rural poor. I commented to my companions about the beauty and peace surrounding us and one of them replied. "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help . . . " "*That's* where the hope comes from," I said. "Beyond the garbage dump there are the mountains!" Cory certainly has her work cut out for her.

Back in Davao City we went through a barrio to visit and talk with more urban poor. Again we balanced on planks, hoping not to fall in the open sewer (tiny fish swimming in this one). We went to the wake of a 27-year old Catholic lay worker who had been killed four days before. He had been shot twice in the side and three times in the mouth by a paramilitary death squad. His open casket was in his home so we were able to pay our respects to his mother, brother and sisters. No one seemed to know *why* he had been shot; often there doesn't have to be a reason. Anyone who does anything to try to bring about change was a threat to the Marcos government.

Somehow I felt that however indirectly, I had to take some responsibility for his death. I felt responsible for a lot of the negative things I saw on our trip. Not just a feeling that the United States seems to have a knack for supporting the wrong causes in other countries (as well as our own) with my tax money, but rather that as part of the larger human family I must now act on everything I've learned.

The church — Roman Catholic and the denominations that are part of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, is a strong force in creating change. Groups such as the Task Force Detainees (prisoners) have nuns, priests and laity documenting human rights abuses as well as providing education and support groups to families of victims. Religious workers were a strong presence in the human barricade. Since the church has spoken on behalf of the poor, the poor will listen. People tend to look to the church for guidance; when a statement was issued by the church before the election to vote, the people voted. It appears that the institutional church's role is to "be with." The people themselves need to make the changes. In Olongapo, two nuns, a priest and Mennonite lay missionaries work with the prostitutes. There are countless other examples of individual church workers doing work no one else wants to do, or risking their lives for others.

The Basic Christian Communities, which are more prevalent in Mindanao, give people an opportunity to read and study the Bible together, and then as a community, to live the Gospel. They are a powerful force. The Rev. Edicio de la Torre, a priest recently released from prison, posed some provocative questions for us: Though most Filipinos are Roman Catholic, and this church has been in the Philippines for about 420 years, how Filipino is it? Is it simply *in* the Philippines? What is Filipino theology? Does it import someone else's and adapt it?

Whatever its origins, it is no good unless it speaks to the *Filipinos* and answers questions close to *their* hearts. We know it is a theology of struggle; it must be a constantly growing and changing force. Father Ed said that in the growth there will be dying — the death of concepts — as transformation occurs. At some point symbols, realities, people leave one cold as we outgrow them. What we look forward to is the resurrection — there is hope, joy and celebration in the midst of struggle.

Beyond the garbage dump there are the mountains. The health care worker at Pagasa made me squirm. We church people take pictures and interview and write in our notebooks, but where do we go from there? Especially now, with the hope and impatience and needs of the Filipino people so much in our thoughts? We must pray with and for them, write position papers, lecture and use the U.S. media to tell their story. The American people need to know the harm the U.S. bases and transnational corporations are doing. It is not then enough just to know and to tell. The church and human rights advocates need our *active* support or the Philippines will never truly be free. ■

Historical perspective:

The Yellow Revolution

by Alvaro Alcazar

Little recorded history of the Philippines exists prior to the arrival of Spanish explorers in 1521. The inhabitants of the over 7,000 islands that comprise the Philippines had no feeling of nationality and spoke over 80 dialects. They lived in small communities and had little contact with each other.

When the Spanish colonized the islands, they demanded the local chiefs swear fealty to Spain and made them local administrators. The natives, or *indios,* were moved into municipal settlements to better organize them for labor purposes. Local leaders became functionaries of the Spanish government. This position was made hereditary and the family was rewarded with vast tracts of land. They were also exempted from paying taxes.

These *principalia,* or principal citizens, developed into a native aristocracy that would then become an economic elite. They learned well from the colonial rulers the arts of graft and corruption. A Filipino nationalist movement began to grow and culminated with a declaration of independence from Spain. The Republic of the Philippines was proclaimed on Jan. 21, 1899. The infant nation was snuffed out of existence when the islands were annexed by the U.S. from Spain following the Spanish-American War 11 months later.

Amid protest from anti-imperialist groups, the U.S. government bargained with the *illustrados* (intellectuals representing the economic elite) to insure protection of their properties in exchange for a peaceful colonization of the islands. Because of their favored status, the *illustrados* soon monopolized political power in the country.

The U.S. administration attempted to create a democratic government for the Philippines. Political parties were formed. The Partido Federalista was composed of wealthy Filipinos who advocated statehood for the islands. Its major opposition was the Partido Nacionalista, also made up of *illustrados,* which expressed the popular will toward eventual independence. (It should be noted that advocating immediate independence was outlawed by the 1901 Sedition Act.) The Nationalists won nearly every election held during the U.S. regime.

The colonial era was interrupted by the Japanese occupation during World War II. Independence was granted by the United States as promised in 1946 and elections were held with regularity. The Nationalists were opposed by a new splinter group, the Liberal Party, which won the first presidential election of 1946, as well as those of 1949 and 1961. The Nationalists won in 1953 and 1957. For the most part, the government was controlled by the wealthy, land-owning politicians.

There was one exciting exception. In 1953, a revolutionary event occurred in Philippine politics: Ramon Magsaysay became the only president who did not belong to the political elite. He ran against Elpidio Quirino whose administration was so corrupt and inefficient that the Hukbalahap (the precursors of the New People's Army) gained almost total support of the rural population and was in a strong position to seize control of the government. Its power was greatest in the last year of Quirino's administration.

This was the problem that greeted Magsaysay's administration. Magsaysay, as Secretary of Defense during the previous administration realized that the success of the communists had been largely due to the ordinary citizen's loss of confidence in the government. The Hukbalahap leadership, as well as their supplies came from the farmers in the barrios with occasional help from city workers. As president, Magsaysay undercut this support through successful rural development programs. He personally directed the armed forces to engage in projects to help farm folks in constructing rural centers, digging wells, building bridges and rural roads, giving first aid treatments, and providing transportation for the seriously ill to the hospital in town. Above all, he mingled with the barrio people and made them a vital part of national policy.

Before 1953, the barrio masses lived outside of the decision-making processes of national politics. Decisions were made for them in Manila or in the provincial capitals even when these decisions regulated relationships to their landlords, the division of their crops, the interest on their debt, and the schooling of their

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children. The barrio masses were outsiders, virtual foreigners, in the political community of their own nation. Magsaysay changed all that and began to create a government truly reflective of the people. When he died in a plane crash a little over halfway through his term, the Philippines lost a hero and democracy took a heavy blow.

There was an attempt by Magsaysay's followers to create a new party loyal to his political ideals. This was unsuccessful and the presidential politics returned to the "business as usual" of conflicts within the elite. Then, there seemed to be a new hero on the scene. His name was Ferdinand Marcos.

In his 1965 campaign, Marcos promised to create a government based on a radical redistribution of wealth and political power. He was elected by a landslide. Four years later his administration only showed palliative reforms. Marcos had led a crackdown on crime in Manila and averted a crisis in the nation's educational system by reforming its administration. However, he was no where near his goal of dismantling the political dynasties which had plagued the Philippines for years. His experience in power proved intoxicating and drove him to join the very enemy he promised to destroy. He won reelection in 1969, but by a much less comfortable margin.

Dissatisfaction with the Marcos Administration began to build as Marcos became less accessible to the public. In September 1969, thousands of university students gathered in front of the Malacañang Palace. They were protesting the government's indifference to the plight of tenant farm workers whose families were starving due to unfair crop sharing. When the students pressed close to the palace gate hoping to get the president's attention, the soldiers fired upon them and many students died.

Twice again, in January and February 1970, students rallied to protest the government's harsh treatment of the poor.

Bulldozers were destroying the homes of farmers on behalf of mining companies or because the poor had squatted on government property. No provisions were made for those who became homeless. Again, the students approached the palace. Again, the soldiers fired and many students died.

It should also have been clear to the government that the usually uninvolved, indifferent college students had awakened politically. They had taken the side of the abused and the exploited. Instead of listening and responding to the grievances expressed in the street, the government only saw "social unrest and violence planned to sow terror in the streets by communist student sympathizers." Communism was not the rallying cause of the students. The young were fed up with the ongoing plundering of oligarchs. The government responded by declaring that military intelligence uncovered a plot by the New People's Army to foment terror in Manila and neighboring cities and that student members of the NPA had infiltrated the universities.

On Aug. 21, 1971, Marcos suspended the privilege of the writ of *habeus corpus,* pumped iron and cash into the military and began the process of silencing those who were critical of his administration through arrests and detention in the name of "ridding the nation of communist radicals." Many students were arrested and detained. They were questioned and accused of being communist sympathizers. They were also offered rewards for giving the names of co-conspirators in the so-called communist plot to overthrow the government.

A calm settled over the nation. Marcos saw it as the result of successfully eliminating communist agitators. Marcos claimed to have "dismantled the communist aparatus." He was wrong. In February 1972, the students returned to the streets. This time they were joined by the homeless, workers and farmers. Since the communists were supposed to have been locked up, the only other people to blame were the members of the opposition party of which Benigno Aquino was a most formidable leader.

The government did not waste time "discovering" evidence linking Aquino with the communists. Pictures of Aquino with farmers in the remotest areas of his home province appeared in the papers with the captions implying ties with the New People's Army. It was indeed true that Benigno Aquino went to the remotest barrios and villages of Pampanga and the neighboring provinces. It was also true that he had meetings with the farmers, some of whom may have been NPA sympathizers. But truest of all, he was bringing to the barrio masses in the 70s what Magsaysay did in the 50s. He ignored Marcos' charges that he was a communist. Everyone knew that he was a deeply religious man; everyone knew he was an honest leader; everyone knew he was a devoted husband and father; and everyone except Marcos' followers knew that he would be the next president

Continued on page 22

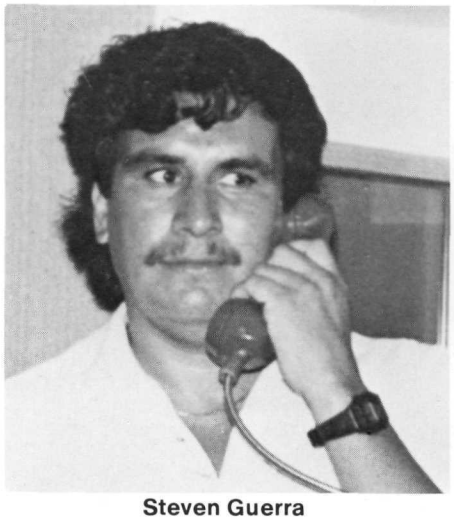
Guerra, Cueto home from prison

by Mary Lou Suhor

Maria Cueto and Steven Guerra returned home to warm welcomes by Episcopal Church bodies recently after serving three year sentences in federal prisons as Grand Jury resisters.

Cueto, Guerra and three other Hispanics — Andres and Julio Rosado and Ricardo Romero — were released over the months of April, May and June with time off for good behavior. All had refused in conscience to testify before a Grand Jury investigating the FALN, an alleged Puerto Rican terrorist group. The five protested that the Grand Jury was being used to intimidate persons and groups engaged in legitimate dissent. The Episcopal Church passed a resolution at its General Convention in Anaheim supporting their position.

The Church of the Epiphany, East Los Angeles, welcomed Cueto home on Pentecost with a Eucharist celebrated by the Rev. Patricia O'Reilly, rector, and four concelebrants: Bryan Jones, Roger Wood, Noble Owings and Richard Gillett. Letters of salutation were read from Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and the Rt. Rev. Robert Rusack of the Diocese of Los Angeles. More than 100 well-wishers gathered afterward for hugs and tears, and a gala reunion, some having traveled from as far as Texas and the East Coast. Margaritas, Mexican food, and a huge cake contributed to the festivity, in a colorfully-decorated parish hall.



Steven Guerra

Guerra was warmly greeted with tears and *abrazos* at the June meeting of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company in New York. Guerra, a member of the Board of Directors, had been awarded the William Stringfellow award in absentia at the ECPC dinner at General Convention.

Looking trim after losing 20 pounds in prison, Guerra said he felt he had conquered jail after experiencing "The Hole," the jail within jail. While there he did push-ups, slept, timed his days by delivery of meals, and "fantasized about everything," he said. "When they've hit you with their best punch and it doesn't phase you, then you can survive anything." His philosophy was, "The hole is only a place, and I've got to be someplace," he said. Guerra, who wrote a number of poems while in prison (see May '85 and March '86 WITNESS) is currently working on a series of articles on repression.

In his sermon at the Church of the Epiphany, Richard Gillett, Cueto's pastor while she was in prison, commended Maria for her courage, serenity and steadfast Christian commitment to her beliefs. "We can but dimly fathom what it must have been like these past years — the loneliness in the night, the playing with one's psyche, the psychological pressures, the doubts as to whether this was all worth the principle of refusing to talk," he said.

Maria Cueto

All the Hispanics except Guerra had served previous sentences for refusing to testify before a Grand Jury. Cueto's position of non-cooperation was first invoked in 1977, when the FBI approached her in New York for information about members of the Episcopal Church's National Hispanic Commission. Cueto, who was director, and her secretary, Raisa Nemikin, spent 10 months in prison after refusing to testify before a Grand Jury investigating bombings attributed to the FALN. They held that responding would betray the relationship of confidentiality necessary to the ministry carried on through the Commission and that testifying would have a chilling effect on their work. The court rejected that position, claiming that the two women were not lay ministers but "social workers" because they were not ordained.

While the National Council of Churches supported the women's stand, then Presiding Bishop John Allin of the Episcopal Church did not. Instead, the FBI

Continued on page 16

'Grand Jury abuse to continue'

— *Maria Cueto*

After her release from prison, Maria Cueto was interviewed in Los Angeles by the Rev. Richard W. Gillett, contributing editor of THE WITNESS magazine, as follows:

Question: Maria, you've been out of prison about two months. How has it felt?

Answer: My May 18 welcome from Epiphany parish in Los Angeles was very exciting for me. So many people seemed happy about my return. But it also appeared to be the end of something: of a prison term for me, but the beginning of lots of work. It was heartening to know that many people understood so much about the issue and why I was there in the first place.

Q: How was your treatment in Pleasanton (Federal prison near Oakland) in general?

A: My entry into Pleasanton was not pleasant! It was obvious that I was going to be treated differently because of my political beliefs. At one point, for example, I had an exchange with the guard captain. I said, "I happen to believe in certain things which you do not understand." He said, "Well, that makes you a member of the FALN" (Puerto Rican alleged terrorist group). I said, "It doesn't make me a member of anything; it makes me a person with convictions about certain political beliefs." Mainly this debate took place because of a high security risk card that I had to carry.

Q: What was that card?

A: It required me to report to the guards my every movement from one point to another, so that they knew exactly where I was at any given moment. And I challenged that policy, because there was nothing in my history that would require that kind of vigilance.

Q: What was the origin of the requirement that you and the others carry that card?

A: When the five of us were arrested in September, 1982, we were labeled by the FBI in a press release as the last of the leadership of the FALN. The prisons were advised by the FBI and the U.S. Attorney that we were "dangerous people." But I also think they felt that I had a lot to say, and that I might be a bad influence on the prison population.

Q: So your access to other prisoners was limited at first.

A: At first, yes. Carrying the card made the other prisoners think that I was a "dangerous" person, that I must have done something really terrible for them to give me the card. Only one other person, who was also a political prisoner, and I carried a card out of a population of maybe 600.

Q: The government charge that you were members of the FALN — did they ever present evidence in court to that effect with any of you five?

A: They attempted to present what they called evidence in our trial. But if it really was credible evidence I'm sure we'd have been indicted on totally different charges. As you know, the only thing we were jailed for was refusing to testify. And my refusal to testify is still based on what I said in 1977. It all stems from the work that I did back in 1977, and the contacts that I had.

Q: What was the government's motive in trying to impute to you and the others the FALN connection?

A: The government had launched a campaign against terrorism. I think they had to show some results. I think they wanted to intimidate us, too. They also wanted, I believe, to check out what kind of support there was for us. But the question of terrorism was major. It was an attempt to begin to "criminalize" certain political views — particularly supporters of independence for Puerto Rico. With our arrest, they saw an opportunity to turn the tide. I think that was key. That was the purpose of our widely reported "grand scale" arrests — in public places, some of us at gun point, all of it highly visible.

Q: How could the FBI label you all as dangerous terrorists and yet be so unprepared that it couldn't convince a Federal judge to hold you?

A: It was a grandstand play intended to have impact on the community. When I was arrested and the FALN press release was issued, the government asked for $1 million bail on me. The judge couldn't deal with that. She simply let me out on my own recognizance.

Q: About the Grand Jury process itself: People still don't

understand that the Grand Jury can get around the protection of the Fifth Amendment right to remain silent in order not to incriminate oneself. What do people need to understand about the Grand Jury?

A: I think the Grand Jury system doesn't belong in a democratic society. It isn't a democratic process. It is staged with a few individuals who I suppose have been instructed by higher-ups. The jury members themselves have in actuality very little to say. In my first trial (for civil contempt in 1977) it was only the U.S. attorney who asked questions, even though the jury members had a right to do so. It's a rubber-stamp process. I doubt seriously that any of the jurors understood what was going on.

Q: In light of what's happening now, in 1986, what significance does the Grand Jury have? For instance, the new proposed Supreme Court justice, Antonin Scalia, is said to have very restrictive views on individual rights as expressed in the First and Fifth Amendments. How does this reflect the current political climate?

A: I think the new Supreme Court justice fits right into the political climate. He's responding to the policies of the Reagan administration. For instance, it's all right to give aid to the Contras and to do all these other things on a global scale because in their view U.S. society has come to have too many rights. It's reached the point of contradiction, I think. More and more, only a few people sit in judgment of those rights. That is wrong. The Bill of Rights was meant to protect certain things within society. What we are seeing is a conscious and deliberate effort by the administration and by conservatives to keep people from focusing on the real issues. There is a large scale effort to nip in the bud the voices who are protesting events in Central America, South Africa, etc.

Q: There was a much more disruptive part of your prison experience. Last August you and the other four prisoners of conscience were transferred to the East Coast by a Federal judge in anticipation that you would be released. He issued a court order in response to a lawsuit filed by your lawyers against the government for denying you five parole at the earliest opportunity. What happened during that period?

A: I want to say first a little bit about that suit. The U.S. Parole Commission had rejected our parole request, saying that the guidelines that normally could have let all of us out sometime last year did not apply to us.

Q: Why not?

A: They said that since we were in for criminal contempt of a Grand Jury investigating the FALN, even though we were never tried for any crime connected to the FALN, their criteria for parole in this case required that we serve our full sentences.

Q: In other words, though there was no proof ever established in your trial of any connection with the FALN, the Parole Commission denied parole because it had decided on its own that there was a connection?

A: Yes. That was the basis of our lawsuit. And we won it! The Federal judge decided that the government's parole action was unconstitutional, and that should have meant our release right then. But we were not released, because the government immediately appealed. We eventually lost the appeal.

Q: Back to your prison experience during those weeks. What happened?

A: The way I was transferred was unlike the other four — the men — had been transferred, in one respect at least. It was a real test of my mental and physical strength. I think it was deliberate. I think they wanted me to understand how they treat people like me — "terrorists."

Q: How did you travel?

A: When we got to the Washington, D.C. area I traveled in a van. Most of the time I was by myself, with two male marshalls, which is against regulations. So consequently they totally ignored my personal needs. I had heard this sort of treatment could happen in other countries, but I was experiencing it here. I was going for 15 hours without using a restroom, or without any water. I was in the van the entire time, with no idea where I was going. At 2 in the morning I was still on the road. It didn't make sense. They only had to drive me 100 miles, from D.C. to Richmond, Va., where the prison was. I would arrive and then be picked up at 5 a.m. just three hours later, for another van trip.

So I went for a long time without sleep, with nothing to eat, with no restroom stops, and with no baths, of course. And I traveled with handcuffs and leg irons on, all the time. In isolation at the prison I was handcuffed any time I was moved.

Q: How long did this "in transit" situation go on?

A: About 14 days, until it became clear that we were not going to be released. Eventually I went back to Pleasanton. Comparatively speaking, it was like home!

Q: At your trial, was the testimony of four Episcopal Bishops (Paul Moore, Robert DeWitt, Roger Blanchard and Coleman McGehee) on your behalf effective in gaining a sentence of three years instead of the 15 the government asked for?

A: That had a lot to do with it. At one point I think the

government asked the judge to clear the courtroom because there were too many clergy and church supporters, and that might influence the jury. He declined.

Q: On the charge of "criminal contempt," I understand that that category, as opposed to "civil contempt," is rarely used in Grand Jury cases other than those involving racketeering and Mafia-type figures, and that your case was one of the first in which this more severe category applied.

A: That's right. It was a "political" application of the criminal contempt category. But another thing was that from the beginning very few people — not even the arresting FBI agents themselves — knew what criminal contempt was. They confused it with criminal conspiracy! They never seemed to grasp the vast difference.

Q: You made a brief reference earlier to Puerto Rican independence. Why is the United States so afraid that Puerto Rico might become independent?

A: Puerto Rico is run as a colony, a U.S. possession. The United States wants to use it militarily and for its natural resources, particularly its minerals, for military purposes. So it is very key. It occupies a strategic position for the United States in the Caribbean.

Q: Maria, you've been subpoenaed twice now before a Grand Jury, and spent two prison terms for refusal to testify. Do you anticipate that the government might subpoena you a third time?

Maria Cueto, center, is pictured at her coming home party at Church of the Epiphany, Los Angeles, with her aunt, Virginia Ram, left, and the Rev. Roger Wood, her former pastor.

A: I think that now the government has had to change its strategy. I think the chance of calling me before a Grand Jury again is perhaps down to nothing. I've run the route on contempt. I think the government will now try to propagandize the population against Puerto Rican independence.

Q: What should the church do now in your case to continue to support you? What should it do to support others whose political and human rights are being violated?

A: I think the question is rather what should the church do to protect *itself.* It needs to educate people about what is happening, about the use of the Grand Jury, because eventually repression will affect more people than we would like to think. I don't mean to be an alarmist, but that something so minimal as what we were doing through the Episcopal Church has been blown up to such great proportions, and changed and threatened so many lives points to the fact that it's coming, this repression.

Q: Would you say that's been proved true with the Sanctuary movement?

A: I think that's very true. In the Sanctuary movement, in the recent trial in Tucson, before anybody could be indicted for any reason, somebody had to go before a Grand Jury. And the fact that the Sanctuary leaders don't speak about that makes me wonder if they themselves understood how they got indicted. Somewhere along the way, somebody had to be called before a Grand Jury for an indictment to take place.

Q: You said that the church should protect itself. Are you suggesting that the church's mission to improverished and oppressed peoples is increasingly going to be in jeopardy?

A: I think the church's mission is going to be challenged more and more by both the community and by the government.

Q: So the church must think of how the government is going to try to intimidate it?

A: I think it has to look at how the government is *already* attempting to intimidate it. Back in 1977, the National Council of Churches learned positive things from our jailing, even if the Episcopal Church at that time did not, at least at the top level. The National Council gave us open support at the time. In our church, a big chill came down, and a lot of the programs were put on hold. "See if this blows over," was the attitude in our church. I hope that's not true any more.

Q: How might things have been different, particularly in your own life, if the Presiding Bishop at that time had prevented the FBI from entry into Episcopal Church headquarters, and backed you in your refusal to talk to them?

A: As I look back, I think it was a question of ignorance. If the leadership had understood that what was happening in our communities was also happening in the life of the church, I don't think it would've taken the position that it did. But it allowed something — part of the church's work — to be completely destroyed.

Q: What difference did it make to you that our church's General Convention finally passed a resolution in support and solidarity with the five of you "prisoners of conscience" in your right of refusal to testify?

A: When they passed that resolution at Convention I was in isolation at Alderson in West Virginia. One of my lawyers got a call through to me and told me. I was all alone there, but it was very refreshing news for me, like a reviving wave of cold water washing over me.

Q: Do you think it meant an educational process was beginning to take place?

A: I think it meant that people couldn't ignore any longer what was happening. I don't believe church people passed that resolution just because it came up. I think it was passed because people like yourself and so many others helped bring it about.

Q: How willing do you think the church is to face up now to being intimidated by the government?

A: I think the big challenges are yet to come. Right now we are giving ourselves too much leeway. We say "This is all right, but that isn't." But increasingly the options are narrowing. We're either for the whole fabric of justice or we're not. Central America, South Africa, Mexico, the works. None of the issues I've mentioned are isolated issues; I don't think that *I'm* an isolated issue. Political repression is very key in all these, and is going to become a term that we will use on a regular basis. Our commitment to issues that we know are going to be unpopular will lead us to be persecuted in one way or another.

Q: *What's ahead for you now?*

A: I'll stay in Los Angeles. I started working here at Epiphany Church in the 1960s. It's ironic that I should come full circle. I'll continue my work in whatever Epiphany Church is involved in, and to involve Epiphany in other things if possible. And go on from there. Personally, I need to find a job and get settled. ■

Continued from page 12

was invited by church leadership after office hours to search through its files, an act which emboldened the government to challenge the women's contention that this was an invasion of the church's mission.

Commenting on the action of Episcopal Church leaders in 1977, Bishop Francisco Reus-Froylan of Puerto Rico lamented that they had been "too eager to help in turning over what amounted to free access to records of the Hispanic and other ministries. It made me wonder if they had been reading the same papers I have been reading for the last 25 years."

The arrests of the five Hispanics in 1982 were interpreted by many as a replay of the effort of the FBI during its 1977 investigations to harass supporters of Puerto Rican independence. The added political dimension, absent in the first round, was the government's citation of criminal contempt instead of civil contempt against the five to elicit a longer jail sentence. (The government sought a 15-year prison term; the court decision was for three.) Further, while the government never indicted the five on charges that they belonged to the FALN, it "leaked" a story to the press before the trial that they were the "unincarcerated leadership" of that group. The media label was to work against them throughout their trial and imprisonment.

In his recent message to Maria Cueto upon her release from jail, current Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning of the Episcopal Church said, "I know that you have faced many dark times when you felt alone and unsupported. You have overcome many adversities at great personal expense. May God continue to bless you as you witness to and help bear the burden of the oppressed."

Release of the Hispanics still leaves unanswered questions for the church. Gillett outlined some of these:

- What are the rights of privacy for the church's increasing numbers of lay ministers who deal with sensitive pastoral matters?
- What is the church's responsibility to its employes arrested when they claim the right to remain silent as a matter of conscience?
- What are the ramifications of abuses of the Grand Jury system, currently under review by Congress? For example, how many times can one be charged for the same offense?
- What are the rights of a group which dissents from the government's position, such as those who seek independence for Puerto Rico or those in the Sanctuary movement?

"Maria Cueto, Steve Guerra and the other Grand Jury resisters have focused attention on these issues," Gillett said, "and as Christians committed to social justice we must seek the answers." ■

Short Takes

Reagan gets it right

Let's hear it for the President! Amid all of his misrepresentations about events in Central America, we can at least give him credit for the accuracy of his characterization of the brutish Contras as "freedom fighters." They are, indeed, freedom fighters, just as physicians are disease fighters and police are crime fighters.

Rudy Simons
***The Progressive*, 6/86**

Whose church?

Churches are firmly rooted in the material existence of their particular society, and while this might seem a perfectly commonplace observation, it is a reality that is acknowledged far more often than it is explored. Any consideration of a particular church must always start with the question of whose church it is . . .

Who staffs the church? From which groups in society does it recruit its personnel? Who are its congregation? Which social groups participate regularly and actively in its rites? How and by whom is it financed? Is it financed by ownership of huge landed estates, by massive investments in private business, by the state, by voluntary contributions? And if by voluntary contributions, from which social groups? What is its relation to the state? Answering these questions is of crucial importance if the politics, and developments in the politics, of the church are to be understood.

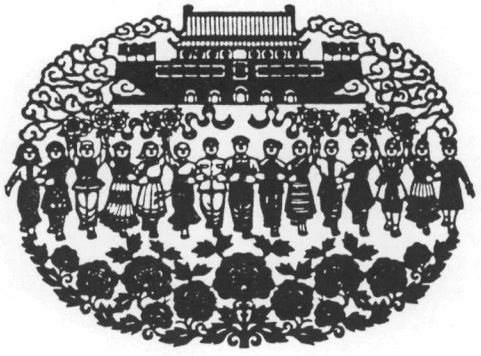
John Newsinger
***Monthly Review* 1/86**

Quotes about AIDS

"Aids is God indicating his displeasure and his attitude toward that form of lifestyle, which we in this country are about to accept." (Rev. Charles Stanley, president of the Southern Baptist Convention)

"The idea of a loving God rooting for a virus that is killing people is absurd. And to picture a just God waging germ warfare on sinners without going to warmakers, polluters, slum landlords and drug dealers . . that's not distorting the faith; that's deserting the faith." (Rev. William Sloane Coffin, pastor of Riverside Church, New York City)

Quoted in *Inside the American Religion Scene* (RNS Newsletter)



Add 50 million Chinese

China's family planning leaders have recently noted prospects for staying within a 1.2 billion population target by the year 2000 are highly unlikely. In fact they now predict 50 million additional births beyond previous estimates.

While the rural Responsibility Systems have engendered much-needed improvements in living standards for many Chinese peasants, they have also fueled increases in the rural population. As peasant families directly contract with local units for crop production quotas, more farm hands enable increased profits which in turn encourage peasants to have more children.

Ewing W. Carroll, Jr., Editor
***China Talk* 12/85**

Toxic injustice

Cigarette smoking inflicts disproportionately high health damage on Black Americans, according to a study by two Chicago cardiologists. They state that the death rate from lung cancer for black men is 40% higher than for white men. In addition to a higher smoking rate, they cite greater exposure to occupational hazards and various consequences of poverty as contributing factors. Cigarette companies advertise intensively among blacks and make well-publicized donations of funds to black organizations, while few anti-smoking campaigns are directed toward this population group. The World Health Organization says that a million persons die prematurely each year from tobacco-related diseases, with growing numbers in the Third World.

MFSA *Social Questions Bulletin*
March/April 1986

Haines first, Doll second

The Diocese of Washington elected the Rev. Ronald H. Haines of the Diocese of Western North Carolina as suffragan bishop May 30. The Rev. Mary Chotard Doll of the Diocese of Southern Ohio ran second in an election which took six ballots. Doll ran in first place with clergy votes on the first four ballots. Tallies for the last ballot showed Haines with 80 clergy votes and 101 lay votes. Doll had 60 clergy, 53 lay. They were followed by the Rev. Christopher Sherrill with 10 clergy, 4 lay and the Rev. William Baxter with 3 clergy and 2 lay. The Rev. William Wendt had withdrawn prior to the first ballot and the Revs. Chamblin and Larry Harris withdrew after the fourth ballot.

Haines, 51, is presently bishop's deputy to the Rt. Rev. William G. Weinhauer, a post he has held since 1981.

Diocesan Press Service

Gem by GBS

To every complex problem there is a simple solution, and it's always the wrong one.

George Bernard Shaw

Pauperization of women

Women are half the world's adult population; they comprise one-third of the paid labor force and they perform two-thirds of the world's work hours. For this they earn one-tenth of the world's income, and they only own 1% of the world's property.

UN Commission on the Status of Women

My heart is moved by all I cannot save:
so much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those
who age after age, perversely
with no extraordinary power
reconstitute the world.

Adrienne Rich
The Dream of a Common Language

Quote of note

A policy of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth will leave the whole world blind and toothless.

Jesse Jackson

A conversation with Ben Bagdikian

Ben Bagdikian, dean of the graduate school of journalism at the University of California, Berkeley, has been called "the Joe DiMaggio of American journalism." Former ombudsman of The Washington Post, he is author of numerous books including *The Media Monopoly* and *The Effete Conspiracy and Other Crimes by the Press*. Recently while on the West Coast, Mary Lou Suhor, editor of THE WITNESS, sought his views concerning today's students, the Reagan administration's style vis a vis the press, and stories most neglected by the mainstream media.

Question: You teach at Berkeley, which was a hotbed of student unrest during the Vietnam War. We hear today that students across the country are conservative. Judging from your experience at Berkeley, have students really changed that much?

Answer: I don't think there's much question that Berkeley students seem to be, in general, more conservative than they were 15 years ago. It certainly showed up in the usual attitude surveys during the last presidential election. There was actually a Reagan for President club here. However, the most persistent and activist demonstrations against apartheid in South Africa were here at Berkeley. So I think there's still a hunger among the student body to do something about compelling problems in society and within the campus itself.

This swing towards conservatism is something I don't see, however, in our students in the journalism school. They seem, as a whole, interested in social problems and angry about the national passive attitudes toward finding solutions.

Q: What percentage of your students are women?

A: The majority of our students are women, which is also true for journalism schools nationally — women are 60 to 70% of the student body. And feminism is a very strong strain among both our men and women students. There are strong feelings here about women's rights, and minority rights, around which our school does not have a very good record. Neither do most journalism schools, or for that matter, American journalism in general.

Q: Will the presence of women reporters affect the reporting of news?

A: Women reporters have already had an affect. Approximately 60% of all reporters hired last year were women. What remains to be seen is what happens when there are enough women high up in power roles. Will they be socialized by their power positions and act like men did? Or will they bring a basically different point of view? I don't think we know that in any clear way yet.

Q. What is the overall ethnic mix in the journalism student body?

A: We have a two-year master's program with 70 to 75 students in all. Last year we had five U.S. ethnic minorities in the program. Hispanics, Blacks and Asians, mostly apply — but not in great numbers — and now and then, a Native American. That's not nearly enough. I'm going to start a program to actively recruit minorities.

Q: Why, do you suppose, aren't there more applications?

A: One of the reasons may be that for those ethnic minorities serious about journalism, the immediate rewards are not very high. It could be that a high-performing college senior of ethnic background may have other more lucrative opportunities. It may also be that newspapers and broadcasting stations don't have the minority representation that any way realistically reflects the population at large. The representation is really pretty low — only 4 to 5% for major ethnic groups.

It is a serious problem. Affirmative action is not a high priority in our society right now. What's given priority is urging people to go out and make a lot of money and not worry about anybody else. Maybe members of ethnic groups then feel that their first priority ought to be to make money. I don't think that's so different from anybody else, especially in this generation.

Still, it's frustrating that members of ethnic minorities who want to work as

journalists because they want to see a better society are not pounding down the doors to get into graduate school.

Even though we give full scholarships to any ethnic person admitted to the graduate school, we see more and more students of all kinds who come to us with huge loan debts — $10,000 to $20,000 — and who then have to acquire more money to get through graduate school. That's a formidable burden and can have very bad consequences for society.

Given the economic status of ethnic minorities in this country, that's a barrier to those students and has its repercussions here in the graduate school. No question, there's a crying need for more minority representation in American journalism, and the schools are one place to start.

Q: You've mentioned your students' sense of social justice. When your graduates find jobs, can they carry this sense of social justice with them?

A: There is some evidence that the younger generation of journalists as a whole are less political and more career-advancement oriented than the generation that came out of the '30s and World War II. I see some impressionistic evidence of that push to get ahead into powerful, high-paying jobs, and less social consciousness than there was, say, 10 or 15 years ago. But even so, I think there's still a significant contingent of journalists who are eager to eliminate some of the injustices of society.

I think that's because in journalism, you're much more likely to see the disparities between the cliches of society and the realities. You will see what happens in the court system, or to people who lose their jobs, and so on, to a greater degree than if you were an ordinary citizen. It's frequently said that journalists are radicals and somehow unable to report fairly on anything. I don't think that's true at all. I think there's a justified skepticism with the official version of things, because journalists are frequently in a position to see the realities behind the official version.

Q: By "official," do you mean the views of the White House?

A: Yes, the views of the Administration. Initial news of new developments in foreign affairs and national security always tends to be from the standpoint of officialdom — that's more or less inevitable. But thereafter, the reporting of the news is conditioned by the same kind of framework, and that's partly because so much reporting is concentrated in Washington and reflects Washington's point of view. But part of the country is on the other side of the Potomac, too. That tends to get lost when you're in Washington or New York, in the power centers where policy is an abstraction. There's not enough reporting of where the people are.

Q: How would you characterize the style of this Administration in dealing with the press?

A: Like all administrations, it puts the most self-serving face on everything. Every intelligent politician and administration wants to do that.

But some administrations have been more sensitive to history, the lessons of history, and their obligations to the public. This Administration is minimally so.

It seems not only ignorant of history and its lessons, but also seems to have an obligation to making good theater that goes beyond any of my experiences with previous administrations. It's good theater linked to right-wing ideology.

There is enormous cynicism and less of a sense of obligation to give the public information. Other administrations wanted to put their best foot forward, but this administration does it to the point of disregarding even nominal requirements that they be honest with the public. They want to stage manage everything, and they go to greater lengths to do it than anyone in the past. And the media has not been very persistent in going behind the facade. It's not enough to do it just once — for example, to come out with one story saying that the official version of the Grenada invasion was untrue in many important respects. You have to do it emphatically and continually in order to make an impression on the public similar to the one that the Administration makes every day with its official releases. Otherwise you just make a little dent, and then it disappears. The media have not been good at being persistent.

Nor have they been very good at pursuing the implementation of programs. For example, there are programs to protect people form toxic wastes and hazards in the work place, and it was discovered that those programs were practically immobilized by the Administration, even though they were on paper and funds were appropriated. The media didn't pay sufficient attention until adversarial groups — unions, church and political groups — forced them to address the problems the Administration had concealed. But the media shouldn't depend on outsiders. Revealing stories like that should be part of normal reporting.

Q: Speaking of stage managing — after the bombing of Libya, there was a poll saying that more than 70% of the people supported the President's decision. Are the people and the President really speaking with one voice?

A: I think the result of polls have to be looked at very cautiously, because they tend to catch the feeling of the moment. I think that the people tend to be supportive when they're told that something is absolutely necessary to do for the country's security, especially when that's *all* they're told, and by the highest authority.

I don't think the American public is stupid or insensitive. But most people

have all kinds of problems and responsibilities, and they can't become foreign policy analysts. They depend on authority figures to be somewhat truthful with them.

Q: Are people being manipulated, then?

A: They're manipulated. The power of authorities combined with the power of television get first crack at the public and tend to condition the people's initial and even subsequent reactions to a story. But, as we learn more about who's responsible for terrorism, what the underlying causes are and what the response ought to be — when the more complete picture is given, my guess is that opinion polls would show other results. I would trust people's reactions once they are given the information in an effective way.

Q: Given the lack of information about vital issues, do we have freedom of the press in the United States today?

A: We probably have more real freedom of the press than any other country. The First Amendment is more effective here than similar press laws anywhere else. It's not that the media lacks the freedom to publish. It's that the mainstream media have multiple goals and some of them interfere with the process of selecting what to emphasize.

The newspaper and broadcast industries are enormously effective moneymakers. They make almost scandalous profits. Because their major revenue comes from advertising, they don't want news content that will harm them as advertising carriers. They don't want to anger or upset people. That makes the news content more bland than it would otherwise be. It means that their range of political and ideological content is very narrow.

Q: What role do you see for advocacy and church journalism?

A: I think advocacy journalism is absolutely essential, especially in our society where the mainstream media are so stringently neutralist in their approach — to a degree that I think is quite unnecessary. It's necessary to be fair, to tell the truth and to present an honest picture of important issues. But the mainstream media takes such a bland, neutral position that journalists frequently don't make clear what's most important, and we are always in danger of falling into "on the one hand, this and on the other hand, that," when, as a matter of fact, the "hands" may not be at all equal in evidence or in importance.

Now, church journalism varies enormously. I think a lot of church journalism is absolutely horrid. I don't like the big TV evangelist publications. Jerry Falwell's literature is an advocate kind of journalism and it's not the kind I like, but he has a right to do it. I think the numbers of those on the other side of the political spectrum are very small compared to the power of the Right, so it is incumbent on people who have strong opposing values and opinions to speak out. I think magazines of commentary, of causes, are where the liveliest and sometimes most useful opinions, values and perceptions come out. I think the mainstream media is more heavily conditioned by the official views than is justified in a society that is as varied and has as many problems, differences and needs as does ours.

Q: What are some of the stories most neglected by the mainstream press?

A: The lack of news about the continued bombing in El Salvador is one. Another is the continuing silence on what's happening in East Timor, Indonesia. The wiping out of hundreds of thousands of dissidents has been going on for quite some time and we've looked the other way, the same way we looked the other way for a long time with Marcos. The East Timor killings go largely unreported, even though they were massive and easily verified. We know from scholars and others that these dissidents were wiped out because the Indonesian regime claimed they were Communists. Using that as an excuse to wipe out the dissidents wholesale doesn't hide the fact that it's really genocide, genocide which is still largely unreported in any substantial way in the United States, although it's been going on for years. We look away because of our support for the Indonesian government. But these stories have no powerful effect on policy until they get picked up by the mainstream media.

Q: What social issues, then, might church journals help their readers to interpret?

A: I think that depends on what part of the population you're thinking of trying to reach. People basically tend to judge the need for social change from the perspective of how they see their own lives proceeding. If the middle class is doing well, that doesn't mean they aren't open to paying attention to a social problem; it means instead that they will react to a social need only if it doesn't seriously go against their own interests. That's generally speaking, but there are always, thank God, individuals who are different.

So once the average American looks, for example, at the plight of the Salvadoran trying to get political asylum, or trying to cease American-aided bombing of El Salvador, there would be a large-scale sympathetic response. But average Americans don't get to see much of the story. I think that the public can be reached, but their information aside from the official line is very meager. Look at the issue of aid to the Nicaraguan Contras. Public opinion polls show that most of the public really has serious doubts about the aid despite all the official propaganda. We do not get much *consistent* reporting on what's going on in Nicaragua or El Salvador. So I don't really blame the public — I blame inadequate and unbalanced reporting in the media. ■

A Luta Continua — the struggle continues

by Barbara C. Harris

Trading Places (around Pretoria)

A couple, three years ago Black comedian Eddie Murphy and White comedian Dan Ackroyd starred in a hilarious farce called "Trading Places." Murphy, an impoverished ghetto hustler gets transformed into a tailored, manicured Philadelphia stock broker with all the accoutrement of such a position. Meanwhile, preppie brokerage scion Ackroyd is forced to live by his wits on the streets. Their eventual pairing to beat the establishment at its own game, while sidesplitting, had a sobering undertone.

With the realization that the current South African regime may be losing its grip, bankers, international business interests, the educational community and even Western governments seem to be jockeying into position to prepare for "South Africa beyond apartheid." Were it not for the fact that we are talking about the lives and empowerment of millions of Black South Africans, the "round dance" in which these interests are now engaged would be as laughable as the Murphy-Ackroyd film. Instead, it's downright scary!

A recent *New York Times* report describes the fear of both government and free enterprise as "apprehension that change could produce a radical Black-led government hostile to the United States" and their programs are focused chiefly to win the minds of young Black South Africa.

The Reagan administration, which recently ordered a high-level reassessment of U.S. policy toward South Africa for a "shift in emphasis," has a purported $45 million educational scheme. Episcopal Churchpeople for a Free Southern Africa (ECSA) reports that Mobil Oil has set up two programs of $10 million each — one for Black education, the other for rural development and small Black businesses — while colleges and universities have created or drastically increased scholarship grants, and foundations are expanding or instituting South African- and Namibia-centered funds. Earlier this year, IBM announced a sophisticated multi-million dollar computerized learning program.

It is believed that at one level these crash programs are aimed at countering the pressure for divestment and sanctions with the deeper intent to shape the future South Africa in a North American/Western European mold. But warns ECSA, "no hasty manipulations from abroad can prevail in the face of a well-rooted popular movement" which Black South Africans have been fashioning for many years, particularly in the decade since the Soweto uprising. Let's hope that assessment is correct.

One corporate program that would seem to have elements of sensibility and sensitivity is the Coca-Cola Company's establishment of a group of foundations called the Equal Opportunity Funds to support Black education, housing and business development as an accompaniment to political equality. The funds, an initial amount of $10 million, will be controlled by a board of independent trustees, prominent South Africans, most of whom are Black. They include Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Rev. Allan Boesak, Sebolelo Mhanjane, chair of the Soweto Parents Crisis Committee; university professors P.F. Mohanoe, A.J. Thembela and Jakes Gerwel and the only White member thus far, Arthur Chaslalon, director of the Legal Resources Centre.

Before agreeing to serve as trustees, Bishop Tutu, Rev. Boesak and professor Gerwel wisely wrote Coca-Cola describing the parameters of their participation. Two key conditions were that no homeland officials or persons with homeland links could be involved and recognition of the African National Congress as an important participant in the movement for change in South Africa. In addition, they said "We would desire that it be abundantly clear that we are not lending support to any effort aimed at relieving pressure for change on the South African government."

A third condition called for Coca-Cola to publicly inform the South African government that it will reconsider continued involvement in that country unless significant steps toward dismantling apartheid are taken within a prescribed time. These include lifting the state of emergency; abolishing pass laws and influx control; release of all political prisoners; repeal of all discriminating legislation; establishment of a single ministry for education; and officially ending the homeland policy.

Coca-Cola's acceptance of this conditional involvement suggests that some other American interests would do well to watch a re-run of the Murphy-Ackroyd film. ■

Revolution . . . *Cont. from page 11*
of the Philippines.

Marcos' obsession with the imaginary communist threat was his justification for the modus operandi that would enable him to eliminate not just "communist agitators" but respected political opponents as well. While his second term was drawing to a close, Marcos' claims of a communist threat grew louder.

On Sept. 22, 1972 someone tossed a bomb at the limousine of the Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile who just happened to be riding in another vehicle. No one was hurt. Many believed the event was staged by Marcos. A few hours after the incident, Marcos declared martial law. Benigno Aquino and other prominent leaders of the opposition were arrested along with thousands of students, farmers, workers and community organizers including members of the clergy. General Order Number 1 permitted Marcos to assume all powers of government. He dissolved the Congress and placed other government agencies at his beck and call. Military tribunals were established; peaceful assembly was prohibited; free speech and free press were totally circumscribed.

In a televised speech a week later Marcos would announce that the declaration of martial law was simply "crisis management." Having eliminated or jailed dissenting political leaders under charges of subversion, he was now ready to resume the building of the New Society. He criticized the Philippine version of democracy as wasteful and licentious, corrupt and paralyzing. He reiterated his inaugural promise in 1969 to continue "to free the Philippines from a politics of cronyism and anomaly, from corruption and oligarchy even if I have to do it alone."

Marcos had several times in the past made public his preference for what he called "constitutional authoritarianism." To those who disagreed he was quick to point out that the economic progress of modern Japan was the result of its previous governments' insistence on a political policy based not on participation but on regimentation, not on freedom but on discipline, not on flexibility but rigidity. He compared his martial law regime to the times when Filipinos were forming a new government after the collapse of Spanish colonial regime. Marcos also seemed thoroughly convinced that the political structure of 19th century Japan under Emperor Meiji and the decisions of the Filipino revolutionary leaders fighting foreign domination in 1896 were the models of government best suited for the Philippines in the 1970s.

From his solitary confinement cell Benigno Aquino would warn the dictator: "Without criticism, no democracy can survive and without dissent, no government can effectively govern."

What did Marcos accomplish under 10 years of martial law? No one disputes the fact that a few hundred farmers, especially those in his home province of Ilocos Norte and its neighboring provinces, became owners of the land they have been farming for generations. Mrs. Marcos' nutrition programs fed hungry children in metropolitan Manila and the Green Revolution resulted in backyard vegetable gardening and in the planting of trees in the balding mountains. It was mostly during the martial law years that a national highway was built connecting the major islands of the Philippines.

A closer look will reveal also that Marcos and his cronies were building a giant financial octopus with tentacles reaching the United States and Switzerland. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 70% of Filipino school children still suffer protein and caloric deficiencies; the Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Philippines points to malnutrition as the cause of 45% of all deaths; 65% of the rural population live below the poverty line of $190; in 1980 the World Bank reported that real wages dropped 25% between 1972 and 1980; the top 5% of the population get 70% of the national income while the bottom 30% must share only 6% of that income; only 9% out of the labor force of 20 million have regular jobs.

It was with solid foundation then that the Wall Street firm of Frost and Sullivan predicted in 1980 that "it is very unlikely that the Marcos regime will survive the next five years." They missed by only six weeks.

Martial law was "lifted" in 1981. Two years later, a pastoral was issued by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines. The bishops recognized some progress of the Marcos regime, but also stated, "a number of its key development priorities, like the heavy reliance upon multinational corporations and its favoring of their needs over the needs of our people; its attention to tourist facilities and services, like lavish film festivals, over services it can and should provide rural areas, do not appear to lessen the number of our poor which is growing daily — their destitution more acute . . . Economic corruption both in the area of public administration and in the area of private business is major, though not the only, cause of the growing poverty of our people, because such corruption not only deprives the poor of benefits due them but also heightens their already much battered sense of justice."

This joint pastoral letter represented a major turning point in the attitude of the majority of Catholic bishops toward the martial law government of Marcos. Pre-

Fund-raising update

We are heartened by the number of subscribers who have put us within $1,000 of the goal by contributing to THE WITNESS' 1986 fund-raising effort. You have our deep appreciation!

And to those who have not yet donated, won't you please help us to reach our goal? Many thanks!

viously, the church had been, to Marcos' absolute comfort, divided between the majority who aligned themselves with the political-economic elite and the minority who stood in solidarity with the poor. The pastoral signaled a coming together of the church as a whole standing with the dispossessed and the dis-powered. Furthermore, it went one step farther; instead of just speaking for the victims, it also spoke in clear language against the monster.

The church also refused to sit idly by and watch the presidential election be stolen from the people. The bishops called on every Christian to act in the name of democracy: "We are not going to effect the change we seek by doing nothing, by sheer apathy. If we did nothing, we would be a party to our own destruction as a people. We would be jointly guilty with the perpetrators of the wrong we want righted." In an outpouring of support the people responded and faced the tanks with nothing but their hearts and God. Corazon Aquino became our president.

February 1986 saw not only the birth of a new government conceived by and dedicated to the cause of the depressed and marginalized citizens. It saw also the birth of a renewed church, a church standing steadfastly on the side of the poor, on the side of justice.

For President Aquino, the challenges ahead are herculean, but already she has shown in her young administration a tremendous capacity for uniting opposing factions. The people she has chosen to hold key positions in her administration, like former senators Jovito Salonga and Raul Manglapus, offer much hope for an effective leadership. In the provinces, it must be remembered that there are hundreds of Marcos' political clones and there simply is no room for all of them in Hawaii. It must be made clear to these provincial leaders that they too are directly accountable to their people, the same people that gave Mrs. Aquino the presidency.

Land reform must be implemented on a full scale. This has been a persistent problem in the Philippines. Previous attempts have only remained on paper. Implementing them would mean a radical rethinking and restructuring of landownership based on the mind of colonial Spain. The failure of land reform programs has been due to the fact that the political leaders called upon to legislate them are either landowners themselves, like the Marcoses, or are supported by rice, coconut and sugar warlords. . .

The new government will also have to reconcile the military and the barrio people. The rural population has suffered much from the government's efforts to rid the country of subversive elements, subversive taken in its broadest sense including legitimate dissent. Magsaysay in the 1950s made the military and barrio people partners in the implementation of rural development programs: they built rural roads together, dug artesian wells together, constructed school buildings together and celebrated fiestas together.

The hundreds of squatters in the area of metropolitan Manila is a constant reminder to the leaders in Malacañang Palace of the poor people in the nation. Immediate attention to the subhuman conditions in which they live by the President whose office is practically next door to their cardboard box houses will be a powerful sign of hope for a better future for them.

Finally, the church has only one challenge: to continue to show herself decidedly and unambiguously on the side of the poor. There can be no doubt that an army of believers, clad in any color, cannot only stop armies, but they can also move mountains of spiritual and physical poverty off the shoulders of the oppressed.

(The above article is excerpted from a longer version which appeared in ***Blueprint for Social Justice,*** *April 1986, published by Loyola's Institute of Human Relations.)*

Letters . . . *Continued from page 3*

throughout her 20-year history of struggle for the rights of poor people. She organized and chaired the meeting of low income persons with the Presiding Bishop, and has been a longtime member of the Urban Caucus Board.

As another member of that Board, I wish to thank you for the coverage and support you have given to caucus activities, from the Rev. Barbara Harris's excellent editorial to this current piece. It has increased our visibility in the church at large. Keep on keepin' on!

Mary S. Webber
St. Louis, Mo.

Wants balanced issues

I feel that the current WITNESS is too "heavy" with the injustice in a suffering world. I'd like a more balanced and readable magazine.

More Episcopal church news would be welcome. More articles on the new Presiding Bishop, the new hymnal, changes in the dioceses and parishes and what these mean would interest me.

I've had it with whole issues on nuclear missiles, overcrowded prisons, feminist grumbling, Central American and South African politics, etc. If you can't publish a balanced magazine, I'll look elsewhere next year.

The Rev. Sumner Walters
Foster City, Cal.

Witness to Zululand

We've really enjoyed THE WITNESS these last three years we've been in Southern Africa. We pass it on to others, for whom it reveals a new reality. Thanks for presenting a strong voice. I'm a minister serving (co-pastoring with my husband) 12 rural and township Zulu parishes of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. It's been quite an experience. We live in a "Black area" (we're White) which has been a blessing to us in our ministry. Keep up the good work.

Ana Gobledale
Zululand, RSA

WITNESS takes 7 press awards

THE WITNESS took five first places and two honorable mentions this year in two prestigious press competitions — the Associated Church Press (ecumenical) awards and the Episcopal Communicators' Polly Bond awards.

Four ACP first place merit awards went to THE WITNESS for:

- Best theological reflection: The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr.'s "Meditation for a nuclear age" (January 1985);
- Best poetry: The Rev. Alla Bozarth-Campbell's "Water women" (September '85);
- Best in-depth series of a current issue: AIDS (August, September '85 — The Rt. Rev. H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., John Fortunato, the Rev. Dom Ciannella, etc.);
- Best news story: Mary Lou Suhor's "WITNESS author loses North Carolina post" (December '85).

In the Polly Bond competition, the magazine took first place for best photograph (The Rev. Jane Van Zandt holding Nicaraguan orphan, by Anne Gilson, February '85); and two honorable mentions — for commentary, the Rev. Charles Meyer's "In vitro fertilization," and cover, by Beth Seka — (both March '85).

A record number of 575 entries were submitted by 71 publications in the ACP annual competition. THE WITNESS took the largest number of awards in the "magazine under 10,000 circulation" category. Another Episcopal publication, *The Communicant*, monthly newspaper for the Diocese of North Carolina, swept the field taking a general excellence award and five merit awards.

Following are the judges' comments about THE WITNESS four first places:

Theological reflection by Moore: "This is a plea for a revisiting of the cruder, more primitive and stark Christian words and symbols to assist us in dealing with the crude and primitive realities of evil in our world. It is comprehensive without wandering, it is infused again and again with fresh language and metaphor. It keeps attention and makes clear its pleas."

Poetry by Bozarth-Campbell: "This poem is characterized by its lyrical language and sharpness of imagery as well as its wit and sense of irony."

In-depth coverage by various authors: "This coverage described the scope of the AIDS epidemic without losing sight of the individual victim. It also linked the church's homophobia and its difficulty in dealing with the crisis."

News story by Suhor: "This article, of the forced resignation of a gay Episcopal priest, succeeds in 1) relating the story with clarity, 2) conveying the pain of the decision to each of the major parties, and 3) communicating the reality of the dilemma, even for a loving congregation, when faced with the open declaration of a priest of his or her homosexuality. At the same time, it communicates by implication a sense of the author's hope that the Christian community will ultimately allow its love to overcome its ambivalence on this issue. It is a sensitive dealing with how difficult this societal issue becomes when it gets enfleshed in a person of winsome and apparently authentic faith."

The Associated Church Press numbers 162 Protestant and Catholic publications reporting a combined circulation of 11.2 million. Awards were presented at the group's 70th anniversary banquet in San Francisco May 12-15.

The Episcopal Communicators competition is in its seventh year. Awards are named for one of the most gifted women in the field of Episcopal communications, Polly Bond, who died of cancer in 1979. ■

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