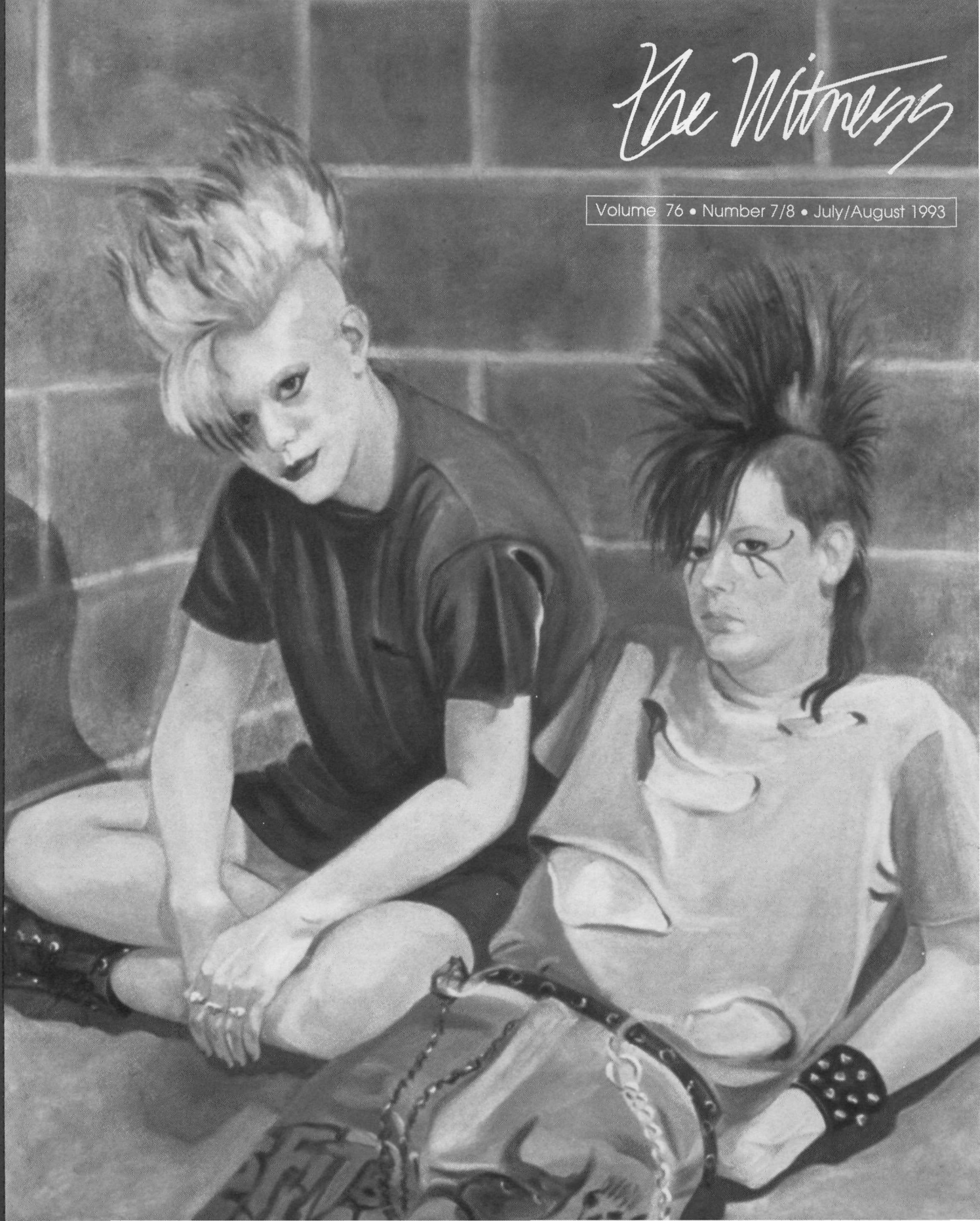
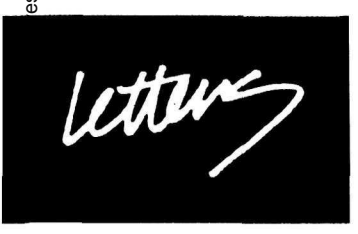
The Witness

Volume 76 • Number 7/8 • July/August 1993



International youth in crisis



Godly sex

ONE OF THE MOST NEEDED and wonderful gifts of *The Witness* is its commitment to presenting various points of view. So I fully concur with the letter of Mr. Engquist in the May 1993 issue. Your editorial decision to be inclusive respects me — and all readers — to have enough intelligence, thoughtfulness, and faith to read, discern, and try to glimpse a bit of the truth — if not mystery — behind some of the most serious issues facing the church today.

Yet in the same issue is the fearful, raging letter of Mr. Barry on the Trinity conference. His letter suggests all the more that the church needs more such dialogues and more publications that get us talking to and learning from each other.

Why? His attitude sadly reflects the alarming rigidity that characterizes the greatest threat to the Body of Christ today: the conservative fundamentalist. Through this rigidity, he can protect what appears to be his unfortunately small, exclusive, punitive deity — suggestive of the spiritual infantilism that underpins the conservative fundamentalism that Mr. Barry propounds.

His self-righteous surgery designed to cut out any flesh or spirit tainted by the beliefs of this group, underscores another dangerous folly of the religious right: they opt out of meaningful dialogue and therefore exclude the possibility of learning and growing, because to do so would be to consort with the devil. This leads to their dysfunctional and dangerous isolationism.

In Mr. Barry's case, perhaps the most frightening aspect is that he is attending seminary preparing for a degree to pastor others. Pray, then for his future flocks, especially for the woman questioning herself because of an anger-addicted husband or the gay teen who seeks out this pastor for counseling because he or she has thought about suicide. The outcome could be quite chilling.

So prayer is needed for him and all like him who prefer to remain in spiritual infantilism, rather than maturing in faith. In this maturity, Christ can be trusted to be the one who draws all persons to him. Even God can be trusted, the One whose creation is infinite and varied — from oceans, stars, deserts, women, men, races, religions, orientation -- the God who creates it all and calls it good.

Barbara O'Neill
Northbrook, IL

THE ISSUE ON GODLY SEX was wonderful! How nice to know there are people in the Church struggling with the same issues that I am.

Margaret Prescott
Princeton, NJ

I REALLY LOVE YOUR PUBLICATION. The poetry, articles and art work really stimulate thought. I particularly liked "Gynergy" by Alla Renee Bozarth and the art feature "Soul Progress." Wow!

I look forward to future issues. It's brave work you're doing. Soul satisfying, too, I bet.

Sandra Redding
Greensboro, NC

[Ed. Note: It is, and we loved your story in our May issue. Alla Renee Bozarth's poem "Gynergy" is published in *Love's Prism*, Sheed and Ward, 1987, and *Stars in Your Bones: Emerging Signposts on Our Spiritual Journeys*, North Star Press, 1990, with Julia Barkley and Terri Hawthorne. The latter is a beautifully illustrated 100-page book filled with imagery for God/dess, relationships between women and healing the earth.]

THANKS for the Ched Myers article.

Jim Schrider
Pacific Palisades, CA

Be ye perfect

I JUST DID A LENTEN CLASS using [Abraham] Heschel's *The Prophets, Part II.* Thank you for the piece from same in the March issue. Most especially, thanks for Katie Sherrod's "I Accuse" in the April issue!

Don Lewis
San Marino, CA

Aging

IT WAS A GREAT PLEASURE to read the January/February issue of *The Witness*, especially the article by Susan Pierce with the wonderful picture of the three female bishops. As many of your readers are continuing to write about the conference held at Trinity Seminary last Fall, this has given me the courage to write, belatedly, about Sue's letter to her mom.

Each reading of Sue's letter has brought tears to my eyes, for with her mom's sudden death on January 15, 1988, Sally Bucklee, the current president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, and I co-chaired Janette Pierce's efforts to have a "women's witnessing presence during the August 1988 Lambeth Conference of Bishops." Sue came and joined us and told Sally and me that one of her mom's dreams had indeed become a reality. Since last November, several more have been realized!!!

I also wish to add a word of thanks on behalf of the students at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific who deeply appreciate the complimentary copies of *The Witness* that are sent to us. CDSP seminarians especially enjoyed the May issue with its profile of Professor William Countryman.

Fran Toy
Berkeley, CA

Witnessing in Croatia?

OUR UNDERGRADUATE theological school which will be preparing Christian workers for Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia has an opportunity to grow into an accredited school. It can only happen if it is recognized by the Public University of Zagreb. With such a recognition, Marusevec School will be able to survive.

For this to happen, we need help from you. This school needs certain periodicals in order to be accredited. With much thankfulness, we are asking you to donate a subscription to us. Although we consider *The Witness* a critical need at this time, we cannot afford the subscription. As an illustration of our tight budget, the monthly wage for the professors in our school is $50.

Drago Obradovic
Croatia

[Ed. Note: It's hard to imagine that a subscription to *The Witness* will satisfy even the academic principalities, but we're happy to help.]

Please cancel

WHEN I RENEWED my subscription in April, I had serious doubts as to the worth of this magazine (I hesitate to call it a journal). The May issue has solved my hesitancy: cancel my subscription and refund my $20.

Larry Wilkes
Kenbridge, VA

Witness praise

FINALLY! Episcopalians with a social conscience!

Lucy Wagner
Houston, TX

I WANT TO IDENTIFY MYSELF with my contribution as one more of your faithful, stimulated readers. *The Witness* has been unfailingly true and a crystal clear voice of reason for me. Please keep up the good work — even when you're not talking from my perspective.

Peg Doherty
Boston, MA

I WISH TO SUBSCRIBE to *The Witness* magazine. Until a good system of national health care becomes a reality, I will rely upon *The Witness* for some relief from the pain of reading right-wing religious publications.

Thaddeus Mozynski
North Miami, FL

YOUR MAGAZINE IS A JOLT of conscience and a comfort of truth. Thank you for speaking so clearly, so plainly about that land where the spirit bids, the troubled regions of politics, society, community.

Edward Dougherty
Bowling Green, OH

Renewing

OOPS! WE MISS YOU. Enclosed please find a check for a year's subscription to a great magazine.

Judith Mosley
Baltimore, MD

SINCE JOINING THE FACULTY of Bexley Hall, I have been receiving a complimentary copy of *The Witness.* Since I appreciate your magazine and value what you are doing, I would like to enter a sustaining membership.

A.J. Van den Blink
Elmira, NY

Mary Adelia McLeod elected first woman to head a diocese

Clergy and lay delegates to a special June 5 convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont elected Mary Adelia McLeod, 54, to be the ninth Bishop of Vermont and the first woman in the U.S. church to be elected as diocesan bishop. She was elected after three ballots, from a slate of five candidates. McLeod reportedly said that the election of a woman diocesan is important but "incidental" to the diocese's search for a new, well-qualified, leader.

McLeod is currently rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Charleston, W.V. "I'm speechless," she said when reached by phone with news of the election. "I accept with all my heart. I am ready to live my life among you. I have fallen in love with you and with Vermont and I am ready to join with you all in doing our Lord's work."

The bishop-elect's election must now be ratified by a majority of all diocesan standing committees and by a majority of diocesan bishops. Once consecrated (the service is tentatively set for late October), McLeod will become the third woman elected bishop in the Episcopal Church, U.S.A. Bishops Barbara Harris of Massachusetts and Jane Dixon of Washington, D.C., are both suffragan (assistant) bishops. Penelope Jamieson of New Zealand was the first woman in the Anglican Communion elected to head a diocese.

Mary Adelia McLeod

No yankee, McLeod is a native of Birmingham, Ala. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama. After many years devoted primarily to being a homemaker and mother (the McLeods have five grown children), she attended seminary at the School of Theology of the University of the South, in Sewanee, Tenn. She then served as co-rector of a parish in Athens, Ala., with her husband, Henry ("Mac"). Her current parish, St. John's, is also a Jubilee Center with numerous outreach ministries, included a meals program, a ministry of emergency assistance and an AIDS Hope and Help Center and Hot Line. She is also serving as archdeacon for the western region of West Virginia, where she has been involved with a cluster ministry, support of rural deans, clergy deployment, parish vacancy consultation, parish development and pastoring of clergy. She was a deputy to the General Convention in 1988 and 1991.

—based on reports from Episcopal News Service and from Anne S. Brown

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Since 1917

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Table of Contents

Features

Departments

Cover: *Heather and Wesley*, Royal Oak, Mich., oil on canvas, by Lin Baum.
(Artist Lin Baum says she did this portrait to learn about punk culture. While she found Heather and Wesley quite wonderful, Baum says, "I was saddened because I didn't see anything in their culture that had to do with social consciousness. There was a lot of sexual exploitation, death-orientation and almost hopelessness. Unlike my generation, they were not anti-establishment so much as anti-culture and values.")

Transforming despair

This issue is dedicated to 12 small children in Detroit. These children who run in a pack are cousins to one another and an assault to my neighborhood.

I am stunned by my powerlessness and lack of imagination. I cannot tame 12 children. Our attempts at setting limits only attract them to our door, because — even when we are saying no — we are paying more attention to them than they get in their three extended households.

For our goodwill, we sometimes get glimpses into their irrepressible resilience. Other afternoons we come home to find our garden uprooted, our children's sandbox emptied, a cat killed with our garden hoe.

Bottom line they, and we, are angry at their parents. Parents who toss them out the door and leave them to raise themselves. Parents who subsist in the poorest city in the nation. Parents who rage over drugs and sex at three in the morning, presuming the street's a stage and not the core of a neighborhood.

Teachers and well-meaning neighbors can't touch the forces that are eating the lives away from these children. And my own impotence-turned-to-rage when one of them shoves my three-year-old off her bike springs back onto me as an indictment. When I cannot find a way to reach them, I feel as though I am adding my weight to the forces that consign them to death or jail.

Our neighborhood is contested by Latin Counts and Cobras. The rivalry doesn't involve the 12 directly, but several months ago a woman in her teens was shot dead on our block in a drive-by shooting. More recently a Puerto Rican family that anchored our neighborhood moved away after gang members shot out their windows.

We can move. And we think about it. The city bulldozes 6,000 homes a year as people flee.

Last November, during one afternoon, 11 students were shot by other teenagers in or near three separate city high schools. The *Detroit Free Press* interviewed the youth who were present.

Jasmine Bridgeman, who got caught in crossfire on a school day, now skips school often. She stays home. "If I stay in, I stay alive," she says.

Sonceria Cooperwood, whose brother was killed last year, is head of her school's National Honor Society. "If it's meant for me, I'll get it," she says. She excels nonetheless. "However long my life is, I want people to say, 'That C.C., she really did something.'"

Detroit's ombudsman, Marie Farell-Donaldson, made headlines this spring when she proposed relocating families whose blocks have been decimated and then fencing vacant blocks, creating no-man's lands that will no longer require city services.

I keep hoping something will shift.

After a trip to the Ivory Coast and to Ghana, another set of Detroit high school students stressed two things. They saw fathers taking sons to the fields and whole families going to market together. And they heard no gunfire during the night.

A heritage and political context seems to be what youth need today whether they are in South Africa, Ireland or the U.S. In all the countries profiled in this issue, youth face unemployment, grandiose material expectations and despair. In many, addiction and suicide prevail.

The poverty, racism and brutality that teenagers face is not new but the submission to commercial values and wholesale, petty vengeance is. Cornel West insists that the Left agenda of social programs is needed but inadequate. He says we need a politics of conversion, a politics with a spiritual dimension (page 6).

The church has something to say, even though — as Kwasi Thornell notes — for more and more youth the church has *never* been a part of their lives and persists in neglecting them (page 8).

Last month, gangs in Cleveland signed a truce. Throughout the process ecumenical Christians talked to gang members, found outlets for their rage, urged them to take leadership roles in development and defense of their communities (page 6). There are indications that they are coming to see that genocide against one another serves a master they don't choose.

Part of the effort, according to Baptist Carl Upchurch, is passing on the legacy of Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael and the Black Panthers.

We need young leaders who can identify the structures of oppression and speak to them with authority. Youth who have built empires for drug-dealing and murder have, along the way, accumulated

remarkable organizational skills. When they are not driven by market forces to kill one another for status clothing, what might they do? Cornel West defines market forces as selling comfort, convenience and sexual gratification. Each of these, he says, invokes neither past nor future.

Our children need both.

JeanieWylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness.*

Laying down colors: the national gang summit

"It's becoming clearer and clearer who speaks for urban America," Carl Upchurch, director of the Council for Urban Peace and Justice in Ohio and a former gang member, told *The Witness.*

Upchurch was national coordinator of the gang summit recently held in Kansas City, Mo., to commemorate the L.A. riots and to bring "defense ministers" of various "nations" together to pray and talk about community development and protection.

At that summit, gang leaders redefined their organizations as "nations" and worked out a list of changes they believe must happen in the U.S.

"We are not the problem," one participant remarked. "We are the solution for America."

"The traditional civil rights leadership is threatened," Upchurch said. "Those in the Memphis, Atlanta and Birmingham tradition are looking askance. But Ben Chavis brought the support of the NAACP to the summit and we have not yet met with any opposition [among gang members]."

Six months ago, a truce was forged in Chicago and recent media reports indicate that homicides are down 20 percent citywide and 65 percent in the most affected communities. A similar truce was just signed in Cleveland June 5th.

Ken Sehested of the Baptist Peace Fellowship, who attended the summit's closing service, which drew 164 gang members, says, "I beheld one of God's wondrous works. A gang member came forward at the hymn of invitation to 'drop his colors.' Picture a highly decorated military leader renouncing medals and uniform," he added, "and you begin to get the significance."

Most of the meetings during the summit were closed to outsiders and the press partly because of police and media hostility, even to the event itself. Participants began to discuss ways in which they felt larger powers wanted them to commit genocide.

"Whites no longer have to hang us up on trees, we do that for them now," one speaker noted.

Those present, representing 10 nations (including Bloods and Crips, Vice Lords and Disciples), church and union representatives, community activists, former gang members, youth counselors and women from 26 cities, concluded, "[We call] for African Americans and Chicano communities, and other people of color, to affirm that we are our best and greatest resources for finding solutions to all the problems we face."

Their recommendations called for commitments to:

- economic development programs that meet employment, housing and service needs while recognizing the problem of absentee ownership of urban resources. Specifically they requested that 500,000 jobs for at-risk youth be allocated from the infrastructure budget for the rebuilding of America.
- expose police brutality through community-based patrols and an executive order to Attorney General Janet Reno to make public the status of 15,000 police brutality cases. They demanded that dogs no longer be used against minorities and that President Clinton appoint an independent commission, comprised of people of color, to monitor police brutality.
- the just treatment of women in society and in the home. Women at the summit committed themselves to honoring their ancestors and teaching their children community empowerment. They also demanded better representation of women at future summits and inclusion on the steering committee.
- self-determination through understanding their cultural heritage, restoring traditional values, building emotional and spiritual self-esteem, respecting women, strengthening patenting, taking control of and protecting neighborhoods, demanding U.S. social services, creating healthy and safe neighborhoods, getting youth involvement in Congress and holding neighborhood institutions accountable.

"What we are trying to achieve is to say clearly to this world, this state, this nation and this city that the killing must stop," Ben Chavis, newly-elected head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), told reporters. "The NAACP is here today to make a firm commitment ... to see the truce movement grows in every city in the U.S."

The United Church of Christ (through Ben Chavis), the Southern California Ecumenical Council, the American Baptist Churches and the National and World Council of Churches and *Sojourners* took the lead in raising money to underwrite the summit. TheMustard Seed Foundation and the Domestic and Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church also gave substantial support.

—Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann
(Ken Sehested and Paula Womack of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America and Sammy Toineeta of NCC contributed to this report.)

South Africa Poem

by Gloria House

O Children of no childhood
claiming freedom over fear
carrying your fallen
on rivers of trotting and chants

(for Nelson and Winnie Mandela;
Hana Khadafy and children on
the frontlines everywhere.)

Caskets are floating
on rivers of children;
caskets are bobbing on waves of children,
caskets of children carried
by children
on rivers
of trotting and chants.

Their fists reach high
like oars on the rivers,
and their voices soar
as from one great heart
Mandela! Mandela!
They drape their buddies
in black, green, gold,
make every funeral
a fighter's call,
Amandla! Amandla!

The river runs through occupied Palestine,
where teenagers' rocks
meet Israeli tanks.
There the children's shoulders
hoist their martyrs' coffins
coffins of children
carried by children,
in fighters ranks,
trotting and chanting
with fists high like hope.

Though they hobble on crutches
they've put horror behind
Uprooted and hungry, they hang on
from Angola to L.A.,
from Guatemala to the Nicaraguan hills.

Child contras abroad are cocaine kids at home — with
buckets of bucks and designer-souls,
kill their cousins and die
for gangsters in government places.
O Children of no childhood
murdered as a policy of state,
we bury your slender coffins in lakes of tears,
but our fists pound the air like oaths.

Gloria House, poetry editor of *The Witness,* was married June 8 to an activist in the African National Congress. We send love and prayers, raising up this poem because it is indicative of their mutual commitments. "South Africa Poem" is published in her book, *Rain Rituals*, Broadside Press, 1989. Photograph by Kadir Von Lohvizen, Impact Visuals.

Poetry

"Things Ain't Supposed To Be This Way"

by Kwasi Thornell

Kwasi Thornell left a position at the National Cathedral last summer to tour the U.S., talking to youth about their lives. His goal was to learn what would prompt kids at risk to take lives or to put themselves in a position where their own lives could be taken. Thornell suspected it was more than an economic or social-political problem.

Thornell spoke individually with 75 youth and listened to hundreds of others. He also spoke with police chiefs, youth workers, clergy, parents, teachers, counselors, people in court systems, people in community programs and bishops in Washington, D.C., New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis and Los Angeles.

After his trip, which was funded by the national church and the Diocese of Washington, Thornell returned to work in the local community, in one of Washington, D.C.'s highest crime-addicted areas. As Thornell says, he's gone from "the hill to the 'hood."

credit: Jim West

It was in the undercroft of St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York City that they gathered. This was their meeting place. They were city kids, African American and Hispanic mostly, involved in a creative youth program, the Manhattan Valley Youth Project.

One after another, they told stories of friends or relatives being killed or dying from AIDS, or committing suicide because they just couldn't live this life anymore. They told how it was happening so much that they didn't know when they said goodnight to each other if they would see their friends the next morning. They said that their feelings were becoming numbed to death because it was happening so much.

"You all may understand all this, but I don't," objected one young sister whose close friend had just died. "Somebody gonna have to explain it to me. I just don't understand it. I just don't understand it."

I agree with the young sister. I just don't understand it. I am a priest. I am supposed to be about life and creation and telling people about God's goodness and his liberation to live life to the fullest.

I hear story after story of young kids killing and being killed. I listen to the hopelessness, "I don't feel I am going to live to be 21." I see children with AIDS and others saying, "Life has no value to me" and they commit suicide at 14, before they know what life is all about. Others are trying to find love or hold onto what they believe is love by having babies when they are 15.

The brothers drop out of school because it isn't doing anything for them, gives them little attention and offers, they believe, no way out of the cycle of life they see around them each and every day. For some, as Jesse Jackson says, jail is a step up in the world.

Twelve million children live in poverty in the richest, most advanced nation in the world. Youth in Los Angeles have to stand in classrooms because there are not enough seats. They have to share books. And yet, there is money to build the five new prisons for which California has plans. There is money to build B2 Stealth bombers at $2.2 billion each and a space station called "Freedom" at $2.1 billion.

What disturbs me most and what drove me to seek some answers over last summer was what seems to be a changing value system for youth that is not at all like the value system that we profess to live by.

There are thousands of kids who are really trying hard to make life work and are indeed enjoying being children, but the reality is that large numbers of youth of all races are struggling with life in a system that has not set our youth as a priority nor life as sacred. These are children at risk and they are everywhere. They live by values we do not fully understand, but have had a large part in forming. Society says respect comes from power. They will tell us that having a gun brings power and therefore respect.

In an opening scene of "Grand Canyon," Danny Glover says, "Things ain't supposed to be this way," to a young man he is trying to convince not to hurt somebody. The young man asks, "Do you

Kwasi Thornell is assistant rector at Calvary Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.

respect me 'cause we having this conversation or because I have this gun?" Glover replies, "If you didn't have that gun, we wouldn't even be having this conversation." To which the young man replies, "I thought so." The gun brings respect in this young brother's eyes. Things ain't supposed to be this way.

Over 100,000 youth carry guns to school each day of the year. Consequently 160,000 skip classes because they fear physical harm and 40 are hurt or killed by guns each day (*Time* magazine,6/16/92).

If we are working on a value system that is guided by a reality that is not theirs then how can we expect them to conform to ours? The major institutions in any community that have the responsibility to transfer values are irrelevant to these young people. Families are often dysfunctional. Schools are holding operations. Churches play no role at all. Why?

I know the Diocese of Los Angeles has worked with gangs, but most dioceses are ignoring the issues of youth, much less youth at risk.

Consequently, there is a whole generation which feels that God is not relevant to their lives. They have no positive experience of the Church in their lives and no awareness of the values which the Church lives by when it comes time to make decisions about life. This is decidedly different than days past.

For many today God is not in their thinking or experience of life. Their world is totally secular. There is nothing outside of themselves which drives their world view. This is at the heart of the tragedy and the difficulty in turning this around. If we are not present and youth are on the back burner in terms of the priorities of the church, then why should young people believe in what we profess to believe in?

Jesus' witness makes me say, things "ain't supposed to be this way."

When the church is present, there are signs of hope. TW

Turning one's soul: a politics of conversion

by Cornel West

We must delve into the depths where neither liberals nor conservatives dare to tread, namely, into the murky waters of despair and dread that now flood the streets of black America. To talk about the depressing statistics of unemployment, infant mortality, incarceration, teenage pregnancy, and violent crime is one thing. But to face up to the monumental eclipse of hope, the unprecedented collapse of meaning, the incredible disregard for human (especially black) life and property in much of black America is something else.

The liberal/conservative discussion conceals the most basic issue now facing black America: *the nihilistic threat to its very existence.*

The liberal structuralists fail to grapple with this threat for two reasons. First, their focus on structural constraints relates almost exclusively to the economy and politics. They show no understanding of the structural character of culture. Why? Because they tend to view people in egoistic and rationalist terms according to which they are motivated primarily by self-interest and self-preservation. Needless to say, this is partly true about most of us. Yet, people, especially degraded and oppressed people, are also hungry for identity, meaning, and self-worth.

The second reason liberal structuralists overlook the nihilistic threat is a sheer failure of nerve. They hesitate to talk honestly about culture, the realm of meanings and values, because doing so seems to lend itself too readily to conservative conclusions in the narrow way Americans discuss race. But this failure by liberals leaves the existential and psychological realities of black people in the lurch.

As for the conservative behaviorists, they not only misconstrue the nihilistic threat but inadvertently contribute to it. This is a serious charge. Conservative behaviorists talk about values and attitudes as if political and economic structures hardly exist. They rarely, if ever, examine the innumerable cases in which black people do act on the Protestant ethic and still remain at the bottom of the social ladder.

The genius of our black foremothers and forefathers was to create powerful buffers to ward off the nihilistic threat, to equip black folk with cultural armor to beat back the demons of hopelessness, meaninglessness, and lovelessness. These buffers consisted of cultural structures of meaning and feeling that created and sustained communities; this armor constituted ways of life and struggle that embodied values of service and sacrifice, love and care, discipline and excellence. In fact, until the early 1970s black Americans had the lowest suicide rate in the United States. But now young black people lead the nation in suicides.

What has changed? What went wrong?

Two significant reasons why the threat is more powerful now than ever before are the saturation of market forces and market moralities in black life and the present crisis in black leadership. The recent market-driven shattering of black civil society —black families, neighborhoods, schools, churches, mosques — leaves more and more black people vulnerable to daily lives endured with little sense of self and fragile existential moorings.

Arguments and analyses are indispensible. But a politics of conversion requires more. Nihilism is not overcome by arguments or analyses; it is tamed by love and care. Any disease of the soul must be conquered by a turning of one's soul. This turning is done through one's own affirmation of one's worth -- an affirmation fueled by the concern of others. A love ethic must be at the center of a politics of conversion.

Cease-fire at work

by Sandy Lejeune

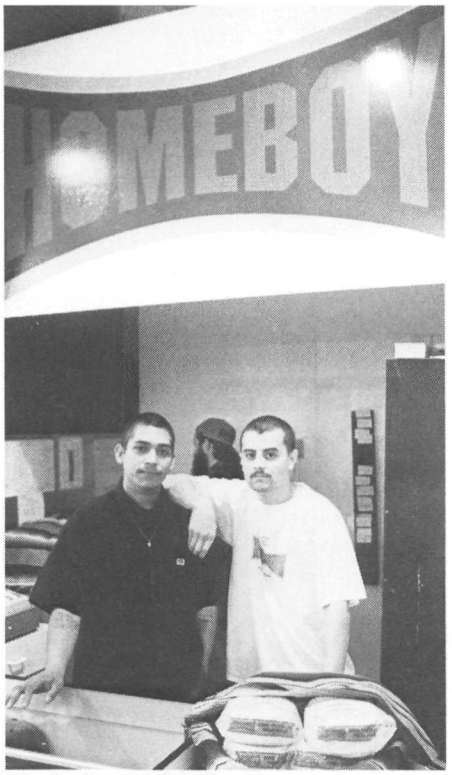
Just 20, he bears on his body the many marks of his life as a gang member: scars from fights, bullet wounds, and on each forearm, prominent tatoos identifying his street name and gang set: "Smiley, Utah Street Cutdowns." Underneath his name there is one more tatoo, this one in Chinese: "Trust no man."

To his left stands "Shadow," who is 24. Like Smiley, he wears the oversized Dickies pants that balloon down from his waist and black Nike sneakers favored by gang members. His street name, a scripted tatoo located at the base of his skull, is barely visible above his white T-shirt collar; his gang affiliation, "*Pico Nuevo*," hides just below.

They are archetypal Latino gangbangers, or gangsters, in every sense of the word. But these days you won't find them hanging out with their homeboys, looking (or waiting) for trouble; both Smiley and Shadow work full-time for Homeboy Tortillas, a small food-processing company that employs gang members and youth at risk of joining gangs. Though they are sworn enemies on the streets, they become a team as they catch and sort the more than 1200 dozen tortillas they and their fellow workers churn out every day from their small factory in downtown Los Angeles.

The business, originally conceived by Greg Boyle, formerly priest at Dolores Mission Church, and John Shegarian, a local real-estate investor, got its start last fall. At that time only Smiley and his two Utah Street homies, Flaco and Bug, were employed there. But with nine gangs active in the mile-square community that surrounds Dolores Mission, it was clear that members of other gangs would want in, too.

At Homeboy Tortillas, the plan was to mix Bug, Smiley and Flaco — all older, more mature members of Utah Street — with Bear and Joker, two similar members of the rival Pico Nuevo gang. The ground rules were simple and straightforward: Show up for work on time, be willing to learn how to make tortillas, and check your gang affiliations at the door. Anyone "claiming" their neighborhood over another's, anyone caught "tagging" (writing gang names and slogans), "dising" (showing disrespect for a rival or his 'hood) or "hitting up" (challenging to a fight) would be fired.



"Smiley" and "Bug." George Rodriguez

For two weeks in early October, the two enemy neighborhoods scrubbed walls, laid tile, and spit-polished the stainless steel tortilla oven alongside each other without incident. Then two nights prior to Homeboy's opening, Shooter, Smiley's closest friend and homeboy from Utah Street, was shot in the chest by a gangster from Pico Nuevo. Though he survived the shooting, and though Smiley, Bug and Flaco knew that neither Bear nor Joker were involved (they had all been at work together the night of the shooting), emotions — especially Smiley's — ran to fever pitch. Miraculously, however, no trouble between them erupted.

After three months in business, it was time to hire another worker from Pico Nuevo. Joker had since moved on to another job, and Bear was eagerly making suggestions for his replacement. After a couple of Bear's homies decided they couldn't "hang" with the Utah Street workers, Shadow got the call. As is the custom at Homeboy, all employees are consulted in what is obviously a delicate hiring process. Bug said he didn't know Shadow (usually a green light among gang members), but Smiley's response was, it seemed, a sure blackball: "Shadow — that's the fool whose brother shot Shooter."

Bug rolled his eyes. "I guess that does it for Shadow."

"Nah, it's cool. He can work," Smiley said.

Smiley was lying. It was Shadow, not his brother, who had shot Shooter — a fact that would remain hidden for almost two months.

Today, Smiley recalls his thinking at the time: "Before the incident with Shooter, I had seen Shadow, but I didn't really know him. So I said, 'If he works here we'll become sort of like, friends. That will give him confidence to start passing by my house again.' (Shadow lives less than a block from Smiley. However, one block north of their houses is turf controlled by another rival gang; Shadow's only safe route home passes

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Sandy Lejeune is the manager of Homeboy Tortillas.

directly in front of Smiley's place.) 'Once he starts passing by,' I thought, 'I'll catch him. After awhile, he wouldn't expect me to shoot at him.' That was my plan."

But Smiley hasn't shot. Why? "I guess from talking to him, the grudge I had started going down. I'd start thinking, 'Can I let this go?' Then I thought, 'Well, maybe we could get along.'"

The enemy had gained a human face, and the results were remarkable. Not only had Homeboy gone four months without a single violent incident, but now revenge — demanded by a gang's code of honor and planned within the context of the tortilleria — had been set aside. Indeed, when one considers that Smiley's decision not to retaliate was unmediated, the developing peace was something just short of a wonder.

It lasted two months. One day after work, Smiley and a couple of his homies were walking to a corner grocery store when a car approached loudly from behind. "I didn't recognize the driver or the guy in back," Smiley recalls, "but Shadow was riding shotgun. I was just looking at him; I didn't expect him to shoot at us, 'cause I was there; I guess I thought that, since we work together, it wasn't like that.

"He saw all of us, and we waited, quiet. Then all of a sudden, his whole face changed. And that's when I saw him taking out the gun. He started pointing at us, and I just dropped. And I thought, 'Damn, you're a fool for trusting him.'"

It is now seven months since Smiley started his job at Homeboy Tortillas. In that brief span, he maintains that Shadow shot his best friend, and fired at him on two occasions. Against heavy odds, at this writing the two still stand side by side five days a week, six hours a day making tortillas.

"I try to ignore it," Smiley says of the situation. "But I still hear the voices that say, 'You should get him for what he did.'

"But really, I would like to forget about Shadow, forget about all the bad things. I can't go anywhere without running into trouble — a fight, other gangs, the cops. And I wonder, 'Am I always going to live this way?' I don't want to, but I guess it's just the gangster in me."

As he speaks, Smiley doodles on a page of my open notebook. He draws a circle, then writes the words "Gang Member" inside it. Then he draws another circle of equal size, and two smaller ones. I ask him what these circles represent.

"This one here is always crying," he says, and draws some teardrops inside one of the smaller circles.

"This one" (the other small circle) "drinks too much, trying to find ways to get rid of the stress. And this is the Dreamer," he says, writing the word inside the other large circle, "who wishes he could have a chance."

And then he adds, almost as an afterthought, "Maybe it would be the mature thing not to get Shadow — try to find another way to deal with it. Sometimes I think it would."

Smiley knows there is no magic pill that can wipe away what has been, and there are no guarantees that his shaky peace with Shadow will last. But he is unafraid of the struggle going on within himself. "Talking allows me to release stress in less brutal ways. It's teaching me that I am not just one way. And that gives me hope that I can change." TW

Socially responsible manufacturers

Wal-Mart has just joined Levi Strauss & Co. and Reebok in imposing standards for their vendor partners overseas. This action followed a *Dateline* NBC show which revealed children in Bangladesh working in the factories that produced Wal-Mart shirts.

Wal-Mart's standards now prohibit vendor partners from using forced, prison or child labor. Vendors must pay employees fairly, require no more than 60- hour work weeks, compensate for overtime and allow one day off in seven.

Levi Strauss has cut off about five percent of its vendors since March 1992 for noncompliance with similar standards.

—*condensed from* Franklin's Insight: Investing for a Better World, *4/93*

Religious cleansing

The views of Benedictine Sister (and *NCR* columnist) Joan Chittister, it seems, are no longer "orthodox" enough to appear in a diocesan newspaper. A local theologian found them to be "theologically incorrect," so the associate publisher, over the objections of staff, killed the Chittister interview.

It matters not that Chittister was "correct" enough to have headed her religious community. It matters not that she was correct enough to head the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, umbrella network of U.S. women religious communities. It matters not that she is one of the most sought-after U.S. Catholic speakers.

Too often censorship in the name of "orthodoxy" has far less to do with gaining a greater grasp of the substance of belief than with preserving the coziness of the status quo. Welcome to the world of self-serving, small-mindedness, the intellectual "Bosnia" of religious cleansing.

A censored Catholic press is not the answer. In the end, it represents a greater threat to an informed and living faith.

— Editorial,
National Catholic Reporter, 6/28/93

Demilitarizing kids in El Salvador

by Josie Beecher

The shooting has stopped in El Salvador.

But I remember 14-year-old Nelson who stayed with us in El Salvador for three weeks while he was having medical tests done for what was probably an ulcer. He came the six-hour journey from Santa Cruz alone because his mother had recently incorporated into [El Salvador's revolutionary] FMLN after the government killed his three very young brothers and sisters.

Nelson spent his days playing with my five-year-old daughter on the swingset and slides in the local park. On his return, he was killed in an army ambush. Nelson was not an uninvolved, accidental casualty. At 14, he was a veteran of the war who was much respected and valued by his "*compañeros*" for his ability to sneak into ongoing combat to retrieve guns and other military equipment from wounded or dead soldiers for the FMLN.

Now, with peace accords, the shooting has ended.

But the only Salvadoran young people who understand what we usually mean by youth are the privileged, upper-class children who escaped the war by being sent to the U.S. and Europe. Some have returned since the peace accords.

These young people have returned from all the material diversity and options in the First World to the harsh reality of a sub-developed country with a devastated economy and a culture to which they no longer really belong. A few want to use their desperately needed technological advantages for the betterment of the country but the majority feel alienated and removed from the historical moment in which they find themselves.

Nelson

Reunification

Perhaps the most satisfying change has been the reunification of families split apart by the war. I know of dozens of mothers in the FMLN whose children were in church-run orphanages or with aunts or grandparents who are now reunited. While this is very satisfying, it is also difficult.

Marina Isabel, 20, asked her mother to raise her first son who is now five. Isabel left the FMLN army when she became pregnant with her now 18-month-old daughter because the signing of the peace accords was in sight and FMLN policy was to try to demobilize any pregnant women so they might try to start a "normal" family life. Although Isabel now lives with her mother, brothers and sisters in the community where she was born, her son still thinks of his grandmother as his mother and carries a lot of distrust towards his mother.

Aid to ex-combatants

Ex-combatants, who are primarily young people, face tremendous financial and physical difficulties. Mauricio, 19, saw his father hung from a tree and skinned alive. Later his uncle and three cousins were killed by the Army. For the last five years he has been a combatant of the FMLN. Now he is trying to reintegrate into civilian life. According to the Peace Accords, ex-combatants of both armies have the right to a scholarship or to land. His brother opted for a scholarship which hasn't come through yet. He opted for land. On that land are his mother and three siblings. He is theoretically the main support of the family. But his fertile land must be paid for and is currently covered with a 12-year growth of trees and brush. Meanwhile, he is studying to be a veterinary technician with me. He is eager to help the communities, but if nobody can pay him, how can he support his family and pay for his land?

The war-wounded of both armies, many of them young, have been promised aid, but it has not materialized.

Episcopal Bishop Martin Barahona has taken a particular interest in disabled ex-combatants.

["I am looking for human and material resources for developing the cities with jobs," Barahona said during the Episcopal Urban Caucus conference in Buffalo, N.Y. last winter. "We have at best two years to do this. It is a crisis."]

Education

Opportunities for schooling are materializing. While loans or scholarships for advanced studies are not coming through, there has been a significant effort to give

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Josie Beecher works with the Lutherans in El Salvador. Beecher notes that all the names used in this story are real, a freedom she couldn't have exercised in the past.

Travelling with (East) German skinheads

[In the 3/93 issue of The Witness, *Thurid Pörksen wrote of her attempts to reach out to neo-Nazi youth in Sassnitz, an island which was formerly part of East Germany. Pörksen is pastor of a Lutheran church there.]*

Months have passed since some young skinheads and I met in the parish hall to speak about their problems and their desperate, cruel visions.

Out of that meeting came the idea of acquiring and renovating an old trawler as a place for them to gather .

Now they have their ship and are working hard to make it seaworthy.

The church in Bremen donated the money to buy it. The employment office in Stralsund pays the wages for a captain, an engineer and two teachers, who had all been unemployed. A shipyard in Bremen helped with painting and equipment.

Coincidentally, the name of the ship is "Sophie Scholl."

Sophie Scholl and her brother, Hans, were killed by the Nazis 50 years ago. They had been members of the resistance group *Weisse Rose* in Munich.

Now, again, Sophie Scholl will help to find a way out of error and desperation.

I recently received a phone call from a man who had lived in Sassnitz during the war. He, too, had been a member of *Weisse Rose,* and a friend of Sophie and Hans Scholl. He has copies of the court records from their 1943 Munich trial, and will come here to tell the young people about his experience in another situation of conflict, resistance and little hope.

Perhaps he can join the crew on its first journey in June.

"Sophie Scholl" will sail to Moen, our Danish neighbor-island, where we will meet with people from all around the Baltic Sea. For the first time in their lives the boys and girls from Sassnitz will meet foreigners as foreigners themselves — and this might change and broaden their hearts.

The "Sophie Scholl" project is one sign of hope. And there are more.

Unemployed people are rebuilding an old hotel which was given to our church after the war. It will be named "Grundtvig-House," after a 19th-century theologian who developed a school system for adults, especially unemployed farmworkers. Grundtvig knew that people who cannot read and write will always remain dependent and be treated as inferior, but if they can read and study their rights they can struggle for independence, equality and self-confidence.

He was not a German but a Danish teacher — and they know better that laughing, singing, the knowledge of art and nature, and human respect are necessary components of education.

We hope that Grundtvig-House will become an international meeting place and a well of happiness, good ideas, knowledge and humanity.

— Thurid Pörksen

courses and exams for high school equivalency. Maria Mirtala Lopez, 23, who appeared in the pages of *The Witness* last year [12/92] when she was in flight from death threats because of her work with the displaced, recently framed her high school graduation certificate. She hadn't attended school formally since third grade but studying nights during recent months, she was able to pass her High School Equivalency and now hopes to go to the university. How she will pay for that, find time along with the work that she continues to carry out for her people, and somehow resolve her greatest concern, which is buying land or a home for her mother in Chalatenango, remains to be seen.

The future

I spoke with Delmy, 16, who lives in San Salvador, about her experiences and hopes for peace. We spoke on the telephone, something which we never could have done a year ago. She says she feels relieved because she is not constantly being told by her mother that she can't go out at night, that she can't go anywhere alone, that she has to make sure she isn't being followed.

She feels there are more possibilities of a future for her. But she knows the struggle isn't over. She knew people from her parish who were assassinated. The father of her younger sister was "disappeared." She knows the injustices which caused the war have not changed.

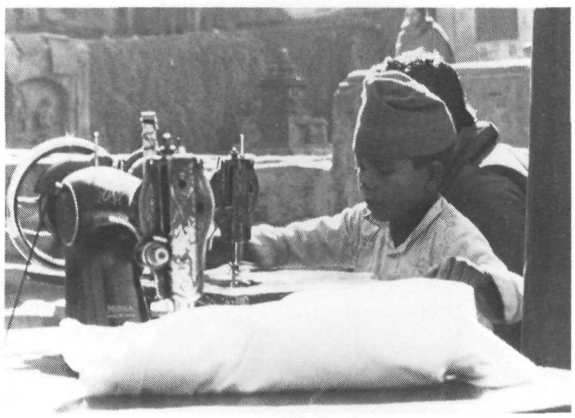
Delmy also spoke of the "*maras*," gangs of young people who have become a serious problem in the city. She says that as a young person she and her friends from church, school and other groups have to invite these "*maras*" to participate in constructive activities. But she knows that the basic problem is that there is no employment and that they are stealing to be able to eat and to take something home.

"The Peace gives me hope but it all depends on them," Delmy says. "If they don't make changes that will allow for justice in this country, the war will just start again."

The young, who already assumed tremendous responsibilities during the war, are prepared to continue with that responsibility. They are well aware that the weight of the future of their families and their country is on their shoulders. TW

Fault lines in India

by Kiran Nagarkar



David James

Every country has man-made fault lines. They are the sites of discontent and abuse, of conflict and conflagration and of humanity's infinite capacity for inhumanity. Often the original causes of enmity may be forgotten. Animosities may lie dormant for decades and then flare up. The younger generation inherits the sins of their fathers. Without a chance to think things through, they carry the torch of blind rage into the nights of violence.

There are many killers in India, heat not the least among them, but as catalysts go, it is the crushing poverty and the sheer pressure of population which are perhaps the worst. We are a subcontinent of 1,000 million people; 250 million of whom are under the age of 20.

There are other fault lines. The caste-system, which goes back several millennia, is a primary one. Hindus are divided into four castes: the *brahmins* or priests; the *kshatrivyas* or warriors; the *vaishyas* or traders and the *shudreas* or laborers. Each caste has subcastes. Outside the caste system fall the outcastes of Hinduism, the untouchables. They are the scavengers, the carriers of night soil or human excreta, the tanners and the leather workers. There is, one may add, a pecking order and elaborate caste-system among the untouchables.

The constitution of India gives the backward classes, as they are sometimes called, the same political, economic and social rights as other citizens. But old habits die hard, perhaps they never do. While 30 percent of all government jobs and places in graduate studies are putatively reserved for the outcastes, in truth they fill up job quotas only in the menial job categories because they have not passed secondary school.

In Bombay, one-third of the ten million residents live in poverty. Like almost everything else, sex is a hurried, furtive act. You start early and become parents before you have outgrown your childhood. The young men drift. The anchor is the woman. She'll work, sell garlands of flowers, to support the family.

At the other end of the spectrum, the young have to contend with too much too soon. This is a five-star culture where ostentatious consumption is a mark of status. When you turn 18 your parents give you a car. You party lavishly and every summer you go abroad to buy jeans, bras, a bottle of scotch and sun-glasses. Your one ambition is to join some school in the States.

The source of the parents' wealth is India's parallel economy: illicit money made under the table. How can you blame these young people if they grow up thinking that money is an end in itself? While dating and the other artifacts of late teen and post-teen America may be commonplace with this class of Indians, sex is still a grey area that parents would rather not acknowledge or confront.

The middle-class in India is the quintessential battleground between western education, culture and mores and traditional Indian values. The youngsters in this group must rate among the most repressed species on the planet. In the India of yore, you got married early. Today you wait till you are 25 or 27. Till then, all you can do is dream of sex or pinch bottoms while getting out of a crowded train.

Attitudes about sex are only one of the great divides among Indians. It is odd that another is the former colonizer's language. India has 16 major languages, each with its own script, but those who speak English compose a new super-caste that cuts across class and caste barriers. Those who have English are the haves, those who don't are the have-nots.

Government ministers, politicians, industrialists, clerks, secretaries, rickshaw drivers, everybody wants to send their children to schools with English as the medium of instruction. Getting into a good school — even a non-English one — is a major hurdle. By the time your son or daughter gets to the tenth grade, the competition is killing. In Kerala, where there is nearly 100-percent literacy, students who get 90 percent will end their lives because engineering and medical colleges require 95 and 97 percent marks.

(When there's talk of increasing quotas for outcaste opportunity, caste-Hindus and non-Hindus with the highest grades riot and strike, pursuing arson and violence. A few years ago, a few caste-Hindu students lit and immolated themselves. This was a rare occurrence. It is the untouchables who are routinely baited, brutalized and torched in some of the regressive states of the country.)

The next fault line is the great Hindu-

Kiran Nagarkar is a novelist, playwright, screenplay writer and critic who makes a living in Bombay, India, in advertising.

Muslim divide. There are seven or eight Hindus for every Muslim in India. To put the picture in perspective, while they are a minority, India boasts the second largest Muslim population in the world.

Historically, Muslims conquered parts of India in the eighth century. It was the first in a long series of invasions. Some Muslim kings lived amicably with their Hindu subjects, others were strident, imposing extra taxes on non-believers.

The current spate of Hindu-Muslim violence can be traced back to a mosque that Babar, the Mughul (Mongol) (who established the most powerful Muslim dynasty in India in the 16th century) is said to have built on the site of a Hindu temple celebrating the birth-place of the Hindu god Rama. The facts may be lost in the mists of history but on 6 December 1992, hundreds of thousands of extremist Hindus converged on the Babri Mosque in the city of Ayodhya. It was their intention to build a new temple to Rama. What they succeeded in doing was razing the mosque and igniting the worst series of Hindu-Muslim riots since the partition of India earlier this century.

Did the youth of both communities spearhead the riots and the mad killings across the country? (In Bombay and a few other cities the carnage was repeated on the 6th of January. For almost seven days, the police and the state governments watched while hundreds of men, women and children were murdered.) No. But perhaps for the first time in post-independent India 14- and 16-year-olds from the poor and middle class participated in the carnage. Some did so because the provocateurs of mayhem and murder gave them free booze and free meals. The greatest incentive of course is the sense of power the weak and powerless feel when another man or woman's life is in their hands. India is a secular state. But every time I have heard the teenage children of my friends speak about Muslims in the last few years, they have said that they hate Muslims and would like to see them thrown out of the country. My friends' children, of the affluent new middle class, are neither disaffected nor deprived. Economic gains and affluence are supposed to relax people, make them more tolerant. My friends are as foxed as I am by the stridency and excess of their sons' vocabulary and sentiments.

Gandhi is nothing but a name to today's younger generation.

Perhaps the greatest irony is that India invented nonviolence. Buddha made nonviolence the principle axis of his faith. A contemporary of his, Mahavir founded the Jain religion and took nonviolence a step further. He not only forbade eating meat, he prohibited the killing of all living creatures whether they were mosquitoes, cockroaches or ants and proscribed the consumption of root vegetables like potatoes for fear of hurting insects. It is curious that within ten centuries after the rise of Buddhism, it spread to China and Japan but was almost totally wiped out from the bosom of its mother country.

We have always done violence to our most cherished ideas and leaders.

In the 1920s and 1930s Mahatma Gandhi refined his doctrine of a nonviolent freedom struggle. The grandparents of today's young men and women either followed Gandhi's multi-cultural and multi-religious ideals of society or were rabidly anti-Muslim.

It took the British a long time to understand how tough, tenacious and indomitable this weak man called Gandhi was. Within a matter of a few years he had raised a haphazard army belonging to all classes of Indian society. Thousands of students gave up their studies and stood against the might of the British empire on which the sun never set. The British fired on the nonviolent fighters. They beat them and broke their heads and yet they kept coming back in wave after nonviolent wave. By 1947, the British had packed their bags and left.

Almost simultaneously Gandhi's nonviolent revolution collapsed. The partition of the country into Pakistan and India led to the massacre of millions of Hindus and Muslims. Within two years a Hindu extremist shot Gandhi.

Every main street in India is named after Gandhi. The country calls him the Father of the Nation. His teachings and writings are on every syllabus and yet Gandhi is nothing but a name to today's younger generation. His name is constantly invoked by the most corrupt and feckless politicians. As a result, his name, along with the cotton that he hand-spun, the cap that he wore and his egalitarianism and love of the down-trodden and Muslims are all suspect in the eyes of the young and considered simple-minded.

To say that Hindu extremism is merely a response to the Islamic fundamentalist wave that started with the Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran is to over-simplify matters. And yet the image of the wave may bring back a sense of perspective. There is a tide in the affairs of humankind. Violence like viruses reaches a crescendo and then ebbs away. Until that happens one must fight the battles of peace. Young people need breathing space to think and query what is going on. They want to be exposed to other ways of thinking from those of their parents and teachers. This is more easily said than done. But Buddha, Christ, Gandhi and Martin Luther King did it. However much of a cliché it may be, while we are already disappearing into history, the future belongs to the young. Only they can stop history repeating itself. TW

Earl Neil, an American Episcopal priest, now works at the Department for Justice and Reconciliation in the Anglican Church in South Africa and is based in Johannesburg. In this interview he contributes the perspective he gained working with the Black Panther Party between 1967 and 1974. While rector of St. Augustine's in Oakland, Calif., Neil served as spiritual adviser to the party by interpreting the program, goals and needs of the Panthers to varying constituencies, bridging the Panthers and the wider community; assisting in implementing community programs of the Panthers, including free health clinics, food and clothing distribution and prison visitations. With Panthers and members of the congregation, Neil designed and coordinated the Free Breakfast for Schoolchildren Program. He also officiated at several burials, including those of Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter, and Jonathon and George Jackson. From 1986 until 1991 Neil served as executive for National Mission (later Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries) at the national office of the Episcopal Church in New York.

Q: What's your role in South Africa?
A: For two and a half years, I have worked for the Department of Justice and Reconciliation in the Anglican Province of Southern Africa. I coordinate an ecumenical program which trains church workers in townships in conflict resolution. There's also an initiative for Education for Democracy which includes preparing people in townships and rural areas for elections.
Q: What do you see currently with youth?
A: From 1976, with the Soweto uprising, the youth are very, very politicized. Their efforts have been to dismantle apartheid. A by-product of that has been to try to change the whole educational system. A lot of them are alienated from that process.
Q: Rightly so?
A: Rightly so in that the education they have been getting is grossly inferior to that of whites. It has not prepared them for jobs or to be productive members of society.

On the other hand, there's a strong plea for young people to return to school so they can begin to be equipped with basic skills so when there are changes they will be on track. But the whole environment of violence in the townships has seriously impaired their ability to study. Electricity can be turned off, sanitation breaks down — this is not conducive to studying. Bullets whizzing around your house and bodies lying on your street in the morning ...
Q: In Detroit, we have some of the same problems, but youth have no political perspective. Do South African youth have astute politics or are they floundering?
A: Most youth are aligned with an organization, be it AZAPO (Azanian Peoples' Organization), PAC (Pan Africanist Congress), the ANC [African National Congress], various student organizations. They have a very astute political ideology. They are not floundering at all.

With the violence in the townships — most of the self-defense units are comprised of young people, 11-years-old and up. They are alleged to carry guns. They've taken it upon themselves to defend the townships from manipulation and attacks by the "Third Force" which includes hit squads, ex-Koevoet (Namibia) and Renamo (Mozambique) soldiers, agent provocateurs and the white right wing. The youth receive training from the various liberation organizations that I've mentioned.

Last Sunday there was a massacre of 19 people in Sebokeng, a township just south of Johannesburg. Young people dug trenches in strategic places to prevent easy access to the township. They will stop and search all vehicles. If drivers do not live there, often times they are turned away because they are regarded with suspicion and rightly so. Young women are full and equal partners in the self-defense units.

Now having said that, there are a lot of young people who in spite of all of these obstacles stay in school. Even though they may be members of the self-defense

Students taking a list of grievances to the offices of the S wall of policemen. Boysen Reserve, south of Johannesbu

Self-defense in Sou

a view informed by t

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

JeanieWylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness.*

African Dept. of Education are stopped by a human
March 20, 1990. Avigail Uzi, Impact Visuals

h Africa:
Black Panthers

units, they are trying to further their education. (Forty-five percent of black students now graduate from school, which is an increase.)

Q: What about despair? Are there youth who don't participate in the resistance?

A: It is quite a mixture. A recent survey conducted by the Joint Enrichment Project found that only 12 percent of youth are actually card-carrying members of Liberation Movements, while 85 percent are active in churches. Of course, there is some overlap. Also, just like in the States, there are young people who say, "Why go on to school?" and sell dope.

In the urban centers there are street children. A lot of these may be orphans with no extended family who can take care of them and children who've run away from the townships to avoid the violence there. They come together in groups. You see eight or nine sleeping on the sidewalks. They are easy prey to adult criminals and the police.

Q: Are they politicized or are they just surviving?

A: They are mainly surviving. There are organizations that are ministering to them — community groups and churches — providing shelter, food, clothing, and education through schools or tutors.

Youth here are struggling for identity, for some kind of hope, some vision for their lives. Others are just resigned that the times seem hopeless and they live just for the day. The ones who are more politicized here, who belong to liberation movements, have more of a focus and see more light at the end of the tunnel. Others are just groping. To find role models is a challenge because so many adults are trying to survive, too.

Q: Is suicide an issue?

A: It doesn't seem to be. What happens is some youngsters get caught up in fratricide. A lot of the violence, too, is perpetrated by the security forces, by the police or South African defense force.

The young people here are not violent but they are in a violent society. Rather than giving up, rather than committing suicide, they are fighting it.

Apartheid has taught people that if you don't like something you blow people away. We live in a culture of violence over here and unfortunately in the U.S. as well.

Q: Are there similarities between the situation youth confront in South Africa and the work you participated in with the Black Panther Party?

A: When I was involved with the party from 1967 to 1974, I was in Oakland. The mood of black communities and young people in urban centers was increasingly characterized by growing anger and outrage over the structural violence perpetrated through the racism in the political, economic, educational and social institutions in the U.S.

Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, students at Laney Community College in Oakland, harnessed the anger by organizing the Black Panther Party. Those involved with the party had a sense of justice and trying to bring change into the social system. They had a focus and were willing to risk their lives. They had something they were fighting for. They also brought in youth who were out there trying to survive.

Q: Say a little about violence — did it need to be used? I think of Chicago when Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were assassinated.

A: The Black Panther Party's original

Q: Are there similarities between the situation youth confront in South Africa and the work you participated in with the Black Panther Party?

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name was Black Panther Party for *Self-Defense*. They had a program, modelled on Matthew 25:35 and 36, that called for housing, decent education, a system of justice which was not criminal. Nine of the points called for social change that other organizations like the NAACP, Urban League and CORE advocated. The only difference was point 7 which said that — when they are trying to effect positive programs in education, housing, criminal justice, employment — when the violent forces of American society would act against them, they exercised the right to defend themselves and the community.

The media wrongly projected them as initiating violence while ignoring the violence of institutional racism.

I personally don't think they were on the wrong track in terms of self-defense. It is a God-given right to defend ourselves. Now, nonviolence is a tactic that may or may not operate in certain circumstances. It depends on the nature of your oppressor. I was in Chicago in 1966 and participated in Dr. King's open housing movement. The position that SCLC eventually came to, with Dr. King's blessing, was "on the picket line you are nonviolent, but then you get back home the best way you can."

Q: What's your sense of what brought the power of the party to an end?

A: They came against the full force of the U.S. government, the FBI, the COINTEL program, dirty tricks, assassinations, infiltration, agent provocateurs. They came under the violent weight of the security forces of the U.S. They wiped them out. They would infiltrate and create suspicion, mistrust. It's documented that they sent letters to spouses suggesting affairs. The organizational structures of the party couldn't withstand such an onslaught of the government's violent power.

But the spirit of the party has continued in individuals.

When Huey was murdered in Oakland in 1989 or 1990, I went back. I was one of the speakers at his funeral. It was something to see everyone, former Panthers — educators, some in business, but yet the spirit and the commitment is the same.

The structure was brought down, but they couldn't quench the spirit and commitment that is burning in their hearts and souls.

"The bottom line is that we are an Easter people. We've got to draw sustenance from that reality, believe in it and act on it." —*Earl Neil*

Huey would always say, "The spirit of the people is greater than the man's technology."

Q: Are there lessons for youth in South Africa from the party?

A: There's a yes and a no to that. Yes, in that protesting for what you know is right and trying to bring down an unjust system is critical. One major difference is that here people have no recourse to the law. The constitution in South Africa does not include black people, whereas in the U.S. we could always appeal to the constitution. Here black people do not have the right to vote. They do not make the laws.

Q: I know this is cynical, but even with the constitution racism is fully operational here.

A: Once there are elections and a new constitution there are going to be whites who are going to borrow strategies from the U.S. and from Europe to learn how to get around laws. When there is a bill of human rights, they're going to find ways to get around it.

You're not cynical, just realistic. In Baptism we say, "Name this child" — name this evil. We get tired of naming the evil of racism, but we need to.

Q: Do you have any words for the kids of Detroit?

A: I would say "Don't give up. You are beautiful. You are intelligent. Remain in school. Use your minds and knowledge for upbuilding your community, families and friends. You are the present and the future. A sense of history is absolutely critical — understanding who you are in that." For most youth in the U.S. it's a blur — that kind of psychological violence is devastating.

I'd say, "If you're going to die, die for something like Jesus did. Don't give up your life for nothing."

The bottom line is that we're an Easter people. The power of the resurrection means nothing can stop us. We've got to draw sustenance from that reality, believe in it and act on it.

Julie A. Wortman named managing editor

Julie A. Wortman, on staff at *The Witness* for 15 months, is the new managing editor.

Wortman worked as staff writer for *Episcopal Life* for nearly two years and as an editor in the Communication Unit of the national church before that. She is also editor for *Claiming Our Roots*, a Roman Catholic religious feminist history project.

Wortman, an architectural historian by training, for many years worked professionally as an historic preservation specialist. She is also a rubber stamp artist. (See the June cover.)

She is much loved by the staff for her irreverence, honesty and humor. Her editing skills are real good, too.

Capitalism unleashed in China

New economic options are altering the goals of youth in China, says Zhang Qingsong, executive director of the Independent Federation of Chinese Students and Scholars, an organization of approximately 40,000 Chinese students at American colleges and universities.

"After the Tiananmen massacre [in 1989], the government relaxed the economic structure," Zhang says. The promotion of private enterprise is a change he celebrates.

"Traditionally in China, young people had strong pressure to study hard and get into college," he says. But now, "getting into college is not as important as in the past. Even people without a degree can operate their own business.

Despite reports of children working long hours in sweat shops, Zhang says that "for ordinary students, life is easier. There are more opportunities for them; they can choose their own career. In the 1980s, the government usually assigned jobs to students. Right now there is the early stage of a labor market. If they are not hired by the government, they can try to get work in factories run by foreign investment."

But Zhang concedes that "it is harder for youngsters with political aspirations. The government pays closer attention to political activity. Not many openly challenge the government; since 1989, the government has had a very tough policy against these activities."

An American history scholar at the University of Virginia, Zhang has hopes of returning to China to teach or serve in government. For now, he says, he will stay here "as long as the government continues the political oppression and human rights abuses."

He feels confident that change will come.

"The government is heavily influenced by the old Red Guard," he says. "In several years they will die, and the younger generation will be more open-minded."

Other observers are more skeptical about the effects of conversion to a capitalist economy.

Elizabeth King, president of the Michigan branch of Human Rights for China, says that Chinese youth today are "torn between value systems.

"On the one hand there is the idealism that was expressed in Tiananmen Square; on the other hand, making the fast buck.

"In the past Chinese youth never worked — their primary occupation was to keep up with their studies. The goal was to accept a job or profession to help people. Now it's making money and having fun. Everybody wants amenities — TV, jeans, electronic equipment. It has been very disconcerting to us in this movement to see the corrosion of values."

— Marianne Arbogast

Children at risk

Toyland

• Some 52 million toys today are produced annually for export by China, the Philippines, Bangladesh and India — most of them by child workers.

In China, girls as young as ten work 15-hour days in toy factories at salaries ranging from $10 to $31 a month.

Workers often are forced to put in marathon shifts to fill the Christmas holiday rush, sleeping two to three to a bed at the plant, while the production line grinds away overhead.

Many of the Asian-made toys are marketed in the U.S. They include such items as Big Hauler toy trains, Matchbox cars, Muppet Babies, Hot Wheels, California Raising, and Rambo, Mickey and Minnie Mouse dolls.

• State officials in New York estimate that at least 7,500 children work illegally in the garment industry in New York City.

• A number of U.N. reports indicate the use of child labor is endemic in virtually all developing countries. In Morocco, for example, girls as young as five are commonly "employed" in the carpet industry. In India, an estimated 50,000 children work in glass and bangle factories unprotected from blasting furnaces and air heavily polluted with smoke and dust. In Thailand, hundreds of thousands of children are sold by their families to the owners of Bangkok sweatshops.

Preying on children

• In northeastern Brazil, girls — some even seven or eight years old — are forced into prostitution. Federal police raided the gold-mining village of Cuba-Cuba in the Amazon rainforest and freed 45 females, including 22 minors, forced to sell themselves to work off "debts."

• In Argentina, there are prostitution training centers for children ages eight to ten who are then sold in the United States and Arab countries.

• In the poor villages of northern Thailand, girls are pampered and kept from arduous work in the hope that they may mature as elegant and desirable women. In the raid of a Bangkok brothel, Thai police rescued 18 girls ages 14-19. Seventeen tested HIV-positive.

• India has the largest incidence of child prostitution in the world. According to the Indian Journal of Social Work, 20 percent of the estimated one million prostitutes in Bombay alone are minors.

• In the Philippines, estimates place the number of child prostitutes in Manila today around 40,000, twice UNICEF figures from 1987.

—information compiled by Church World Service's Children at Risk curriculum, Office for Global Education

***Sak,* T.B. clinic, Don Rek, Site Z Camp North, Thai-Cambodian Border, by Lin Baum, 30" x 36", oil on canvas.**

Portraits of pain

By Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

art and society

Lin Baum is an artist who, in many ways, could be called "traditional." Her images are readily recognizable: portraits skillfully crafted in oil paint on stretched canvases. But rather than painting the likenesses of the rich and powerful (kings and queens, corporate executives or government officials), Baum portrays the poor and the powerless — an undertaking decidedly "untraditional" for the genre.

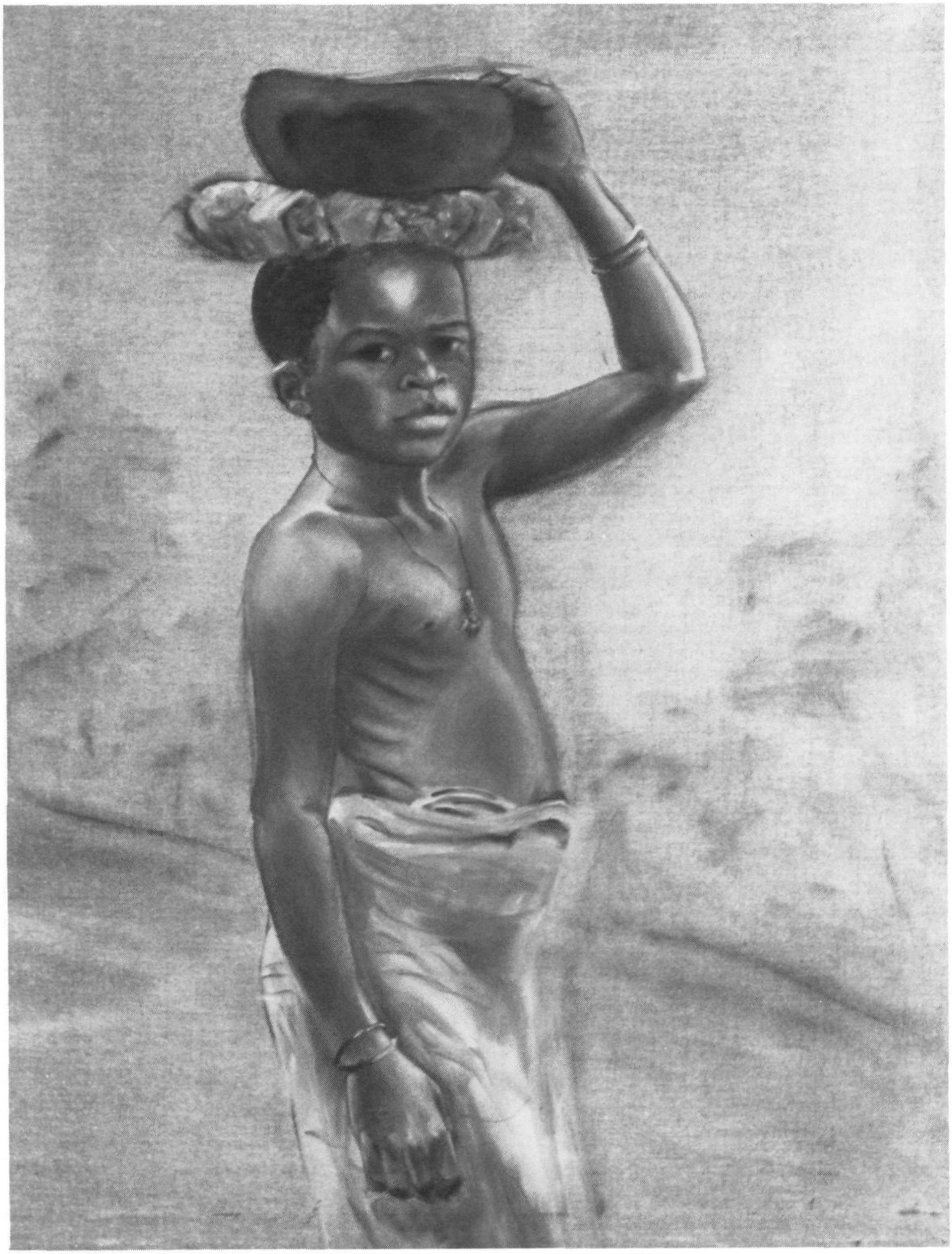
Baum studied painting at the University of Michigan School of Art and Wayne State University in Detroit. Her artwork began to take this unusual direction when she began sketching the patrons of a Catholic Worker soup kitchen. The substantial amount of time that it took to render an image by hand allowed her to interact with her subjects and to learn about their lives. For this reason, she continues to prefer working from life and to eschew the use of a camera.

Her "Children of War" series put the spotlight upon what is perhaps the most powerless segment of society. Since the early 1980s, Baum has painted the portraits of children in war-torn areas around the globe. Her travels have taken her to Gaza and the West Bank, the Thai-Cambodian border, Northern Ireland, Mozambique, Nicaragua and then back to inner-city Detroit. Carrying all her materials with her, she set up makeshift studios wherever she could and usually found herself in the midst of an attentive and inquisitive audience. In addition to the professional hardships of improvising workspaces under less-than-ideal conditions, she has had to deal with everything from detailed baggage searches to advancing RENAMO troops.

Baum has always gone out of her way to learn enough of the local languages to be able to converse with the children. She often tries to encourage their active participation, perhaps through naming all the colors in their native tongues or having them paint on sections of the canvases. She has also attempted to send color photographs of the finished portraits back to the children and their families — a process that has not been completely successful (especially in refugee areas where people are constantly being relocated). The paintings have been brought back to the U. S., where they are displayed along with detailed explanations of their political and social contexts.

By exhibiting portraits of these very real young victims of adult violence, Lin Baum hopes to remind us that these children have individual names and singular identities, and that each one is precious in the sight of our God. TW

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*



***Helena,* A Luta Continua Relocation camp, Nicoadala, Mozambique, by Lin Baum, 30" x 38", oil on linen.**

Twentieth anniversary of 1969 deployment of British troops in Northern Ireland.
Bill Biggart, Impact Visuals

"No more war. No more injustice." A cry from North Ireland

by Craig R. Smith

"These days it's not God determining the worth of the human being, it's the factory: If you're not working, you're nothing," says Des Wilson, a Roman Catholic priest in Belfast, Northern Ireland. He established Spring Hill Community House 21 years ago as a multifaceted education project. They serve teens and adults who have rejected school—or been rejected by school—offering both formal education with preparation for university, and informal education through theatre, writing, and workshops.

"We're trying to show that God has made people with dignity, that we shouldn't allow the industrial complex to determine our worth."

In Belfast the unemployment rate for males is about 80 percent; the greatest stress teens face, according to Wilson, is "coming to terms with a life without the prospect of a job. They're being told, in effect, that they're not important, that everyone can get along without them. So you've got to revitalize people's spirits and keep their morale up. If you can do that, people are capable of creating initiatives, creating businesses, creating wealth—capable, in fact, of doing anything that's necessary. We cannot build an economy on waiting for the next factory to open. We call it waiting for Grundig, which is just as futile as waiting for Godot. Capital will always be galloping around the world in search of profit, of course, but if you don't have a native, grassroots economy, you have nothing." Accordingly, Spring Hill also houses a development agency for job creation, and encourages the community to provide space for new businesses.

Asked about the political troubles in Ireland, Wilson answered, "We've had armed revolution against the government on these streets for the past 20 years. Let's not soften it with a euphemism like 'the troubles.' You can be stopped on the street and put in prison without cause. The police can raid your home at any time of day or night and confiscate anything they deem might be used for terrorist purposes, even a screwdriver or coffee jar. The youngsters have grown up with that; they've never seen any other way."

Wilson tries to get teenagers to channel their anger by giving them a voice, "particularly," he says, "since the church has turned a deaf ear." Spring Hill freely offers young people space to hold meetings, even for openly political discussions. They've also taken a cue from South Africa's use of theatre as an expository and educational instrument, and begun their own theatre projects to let young people express what is important to them. "We're helping

Des Wilson tries to get teenagers to channel their anger by giving them a voice, "particularly," he says, "since the church has turned a deaf ear." Spring Hill freely offers young people space to hold meetings, even for openly political discussions.

Craig R. Smith is a freelance writer living in Silver Spring, Md.

people achieve their objectives through paths they haven't explored before. For example, when there's been an abuse of power by the police, we encourage people to initiate a Citizen's Public Inquiry on their own instead of waiting for the government to look into it."

People are learning to "create their own morale" in Belfast. While depression is a problem because of the extreme poverty, the suicide rate is surprisingly low, largely because of the lively political life. "There's an aura of excitement and change, especially among teenagers — they're volunteering in record numbers in political campaigns which, in turn, raises their self-esteem: at last someone is saying, 'We need you, we want you.' "

"We're helping people achieve their objectives through paths they haven't explored before. For example, when there's been an abuse of power by the police, we encourage people to initiate a Citizen's Public Inquiry on their own instead of waiting for the government to look into it."

— Des Wilson

Wilson sees hope in the teens themselves. "I look at people coming together, youngsters full of vitality and life, quite happy to do things we would not have dared to do — like confronting bishops and university chancellors and politicians over important issues. This generation of youngsters has more toughness, principle and uplift — and less fear and hesitation — than we ever did. They will not let political parties, the government or the church stand in the way of political progress and equality."

In a climate in which traditional authority is being questioned, commitment to the church has waned enormously. "At the same time, young people have a deep and strengthening faith, not only in God but in themselves, in family, in people. It used to be that if people helped their neighbors, they did it to become a better person. Now they do it to help their neighbors become better people. It's not a case of young people not measuring up to the ideals of the church, but the church not coming up with an idealism worthy of the youngsters. They're the ones who are saying, 'No more war, no more injustice, no more unfairness,' and fighting for the equality of all people — women as well as men, homosexuals as well as straights, Catholics as well as Protestants. They're the ones who have the idealism. It's the church that's been lagging behind." TW

Below the border

Rumor has it Irish highschool graduates receive emigration information with their diplomas.

Previously most of Ireland's emigrants were unskilled and relatively uneducated, but, according to Sinn Fein representative Neil Forde, Irish graduates now make up a significant percentage of those leaving the country. As has been true for more than 200 years, the reasons for emigration are British occupation of the north, land clearances and political oppression, he added.

The curricula for college and university includes foreign language, principally to encourage emigration. Colleges overproduce graduates in order to temporarily lower the unemployment rate. Since Irish employers prefer graduates *with* work experience, emigration becomes a near requirement.

"Graduates are portrayed as a viable export" to the European Common market, Britain and the U.S., Forde indicated.

"There can be no solution as long as the system believes that its policies tackle the problem.It is an acceptance of the problem, which actually perpetuates rising emigration," Forde concluded.

Robert McGovern

Marable to head new institute

Manning Marable, long-time contributing editor of *The Witness*, is leaving the University of Colorado to create and direct a new Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University and to chair the undergraduate African-American studies program.

It comes as a surprise to some that, to date, Columbia has not had an African-American Studies department. But we applaud their choice of Marable.

"The study of the black experience is of significance to all students, regardless of their race or ethnic background," Marable said. The program will focus on history (memory, biography, consciousness), theory (critiques of social, political and cultural thought) and policy.

Episcopal fact-finding in the Philippines

by William W. Rankin

[This past spring, one of the Witness' *contributing editors, William W. Rankin, and other members of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Peace with Justice journeyed to the Philippines on a fact-finding visit to that country's Episcopal Church congregations in the moutains of northern Luzon, an area of the country where government forces are fighting the leftist National Democratic Front (NDF) and its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA). The following is Rankin's account of some of what he saw and heard.]*

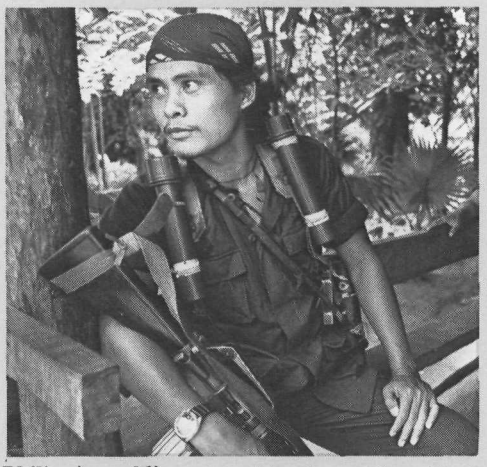
In April 1993, our group met in Honolulu with Filipino expatriate clergy and with the Consul General of the Philippines. Most of the priests were originally from the mountain province, where the leftist insurgency is presumably centered; this is where we were headed. The issues, we were told, included the economic and political implications of the recent closure of the two major U.S. bases, the large number of Amerasian children fathered by U.S. military personnel, electrical blackouts, the tremendous diversity of the Filipino people which makes national unity so difficult, the disparities of income and the "total war" policy of the government against the NDF and NPA.

They said the problem for the Episcopal Church in the Philippines — which we were to verify later for ourselves — is how to minister among people who are caught between the government forces (the army, paramilitary and national police) and the NPA. Both sides infiltrate religious services to see what is being said and by whom. One priest said his family was terrorized by the NPA, but that some of his friends had joined them "because they were treated better — they had food."

After arriving in Manila, our first stop was Episcopal Church headquarters, where we were told that the Episcopal Church is supporting President Ramos' mediating National Unification Commission as a crucial first step for peace. But the church's principal tactical concern is to try to avoid an alignment with either the government or the NPA.

Regarding current U.S.-Philippines relations, our hosts focused on the $30 billion foreign debt the Philippines now owes — mainly to the U.S., Japan and the U.S.-led World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

"Our 1993 Gross National Product is lower than it was last year and 40 percent of our national budget goes to service the debt," one staff member said. "This makes development all but impossible."



Philippine soldier Robert Grumpert, Impact Visuals

An April 1992 church policy statement states: "The greater bulk of the debt has not redounded to the benefit of our people [but] has only enriched the coffers of the few ... the saddest [thing is that] every one of us is now asked to pay for all these monetary obligations. Herein lies the immorality of the debt problem."

The church's northern diocese is based in Bontoc, which we reached by a treacherous, mostly single-lane, dirt road. The mountains are jagged, clad in lush green foliage. Cut into the slopes are the endless rice terraces. We learned that by government decree all lands on a slope greater than 18 degrees belong to the government — as a result, most of the region belongs to the folks in Manila.

There is a heavy army presence locally and heavy paramilitary and NPA activity as well. There are raids by both sides, roadside ambushes, assassination, arrests and detentions. In the village of Aguid, the local Episcopal church was "desecrated" when the army used it as a garrison.

The paramilitary is set up by the army to control the local situation; this frees the army to move on, in accordance with a counter-insurgency philosophy for "low-intensity conflict" learned from U.S. advisors. There are over 150,000 paramilitary personnel now operating in the country.

Another village, Sagada, had once tried to be a violence-free zone, but the army eventually moved back in.

The people seem tired, patient, nervous, hopeful and fatalistic all at once. The army recently objected to the local hospital treating people regardless of political affiliation. Accusing two doctors of aiding the NPAs, the government has blocked medical shipments.

During a visit to the regional military headquarters in Bontoc the commanding officer, Colonel Lardizibal, an Episcopalian, spoke repeatedly of the church's "anti-government activities." Askedwhat they were, he said, "Criticizing the government. Influencing people to join leftist organizations."

Back at diocesan headquarters, Bishop Robert Longid said that the church has been critical, especially regarding abuses of human rights. "We protested, with the people, an enormous dam project that would have placed this entire city under water. This whole region has been drained of its natural resources to benefit the wealthy. They have taken our gold and copper deposits. All these resources have been extracted and nothing is put back into this region.

"In this office we settle tribal differences ... we have staff workers for social concerns and for economic development. The church must help the people, but for this we are accused of being NPA."

Back in Manila, as we headed for the airport in the dark, early-morning hours, our vehicle's headlights illumined the mudflap of a Jeep in front of us. On it were the words, "God save us."

Calling for success

"Shaping Our Future: A Grassroots Forum on Episcopal Structures" scheduled for this Aug. 12-15 in St. Louis has been attracting a lot of speculation and interest around the church in recent months — videos plugging the event have gone to every one of the more than 7,300 parishes in the Episcopal Church.

The "grassroots" referred to is East Tennessee Initiative, Inc. (ETI), folks from the Diocese of East Tennessee (including the diocese's bishop, Robert Tharp, and ETI's executive director, Jon Shuler) who promise that forum participants will be challenged "by some of the world's most renowned theological and business management experts — exceptional people who are coming together to help us focus on what the church needs to be successful."

Evidence of the church's current failure, according to ETI, is that, despite a steady increase in U.S. population over the past 20 years, various categories of church membership and participation (baptisms, confirmations, Sunday school attendance) have declined over the same period — as contrasted with increases in monetary giving and ordinations.

This is supposed to mean, apparently (the aura of church capitalism is strong here), that sales are down and production costs (not to mention the number of white-collar positions) are up.

Luckily, the ads say, there are "healthy pockets" in the church (they don't say where) that are "excelling and succeeding," so there will be a chance to learn "what is going right" and how the church should reorganize (or eliminate?) itself to foster more of the same.

From the outset there have been those who said they smelled a rat in the midst of ETI's slick rhetoric. For one thing, almost all the "experts" ETI initially lined up to speak at the forum happened to be white male clergy. For another, many identified those most enthusiastic about the forum with a "Father Knows Best" vision of corporate and family life. Finally, ETI's apparent interest in shifting authority from national to provincial and local structures has been interpreted as a ploy to wriggle free of a national leadership considered too liberal on a host of social justice issues.

Scrambling to respond to negative reaction, ETI has now added some women and people of color to the roster of speakers.

"I've been told that the forum will have a right-wing agenda," commented one of the additions, Washington's suffragan bishop, Jane Dixon. "[But] I decided to participate because I think I have something to say, even if it may not be the same thing other speakers will be saying." Her presentation, she said, will address *inclusivity in church membership.*

Other presenters include George Barna, the head of a marketing research company with clients such as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Campus Crusade for Christ; Nan A. Peete, canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Atlanta; Bishops Peter J. Lee (Virginia) and Roger J. White (Milwaukee); ethicist Timothy F. Sedgwick (*The Crisis in Moral Teaching in the Episcopal Church*); organizational expert Loren Mead (*The Once and Future Church) ;* businessman and former White House advisor George Lockwood; and public relations consultant Karen Kelly (W. Michigan).

As of early June, registrations had just topped 500, with the largest contingents coming from Tennessee, Florida, Kentucky, Texas, Louisiana, and Missouri. But ETI will have to come up with something in the range of 2,000 to meet its financial commitments. The proposed budget for the meeting is somewhere near $1 million.

An ESA resolution worth passing

Even though the Episcopal Synod of America's (ESA) Jack Iker has now been safely consecrated Bishop of Fort Worth, the ESA is renewing its call for a non-geographic province to further protect so-called "traditionalist" Episcopalians opposed to the ordination of women and/or the 1979 Book of Common Prayer from what the group calls "a progressively sectarian Anglicanism."

One way the ESA is pressing the issue is with a resolution to the 1994 General Convention stating that "no person shall be ordained to any of the three orders— bishop, priest or deacon — unless that person accepts as valid the ministry of all persons ordained in this church."

According to Episcopal News Service, the ESA says it would regard passage of this resolution a sign that the church "wishes to exclude those who hold to the 2,000-year tradition of ordaining only male candidates." If the General Convention *defeats the resolution, on the other hand,* the ESA would take that to mean "all persecution of traditionalists will cease." Finally, if the General Convention refuses to put the resolution to a vote, "the ESA could only understand such actions as a clear move to exclude its members" from the Episcopal Church, probably forcing them to leave if they don't get the separate province they'd like.

It looks like the only way the ESA will feel "included" in the Episcopal Church is if the General Convention categorically affirms gender discrimination in the ordination process. Given that the 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis is supposed to be dedicated to celebrating women's ministries (both lay and ordained), deputies and bishops should be reluctant to uphold the ESA's insistent sexism.

Still, after the experience of the Iker ratification, prudent church women will do well not to pull out their party hats until the voting is over.

— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

Peace in Israel/Palestine?

by Craig R. Smith

Eleanor Mill

"There's fear and anger on both sides," says Rabbi David Forman, a member of Rabbis for Human Rights. "The reaction to all the terrorism has been extreme: after each new atrocity, they say, 'You want us to make peace with these people?'"

Forman, who often speaks on behalf of Palestinians, says the change in government has made people warily hopeful.

"The question right now is how much land to give back in the Golan. If Yitzak Rabin makes some military guarantees, the populace would rally. But it's hard to make peace after such long hostility. As Jews, we feel besieged, and our historical memory is very sharp. By the same token, the Palestinian wants to sit in Lud in Haifa, when the reality is he's sitting in Hebron. It's very difficult for everyone."

But "we're talking peace again in Washington, which is the most hopeful of signs — anything as long as we keep talking! Our agreement with Egypt, our most implacable enemy, still maintains itself. Now we're hearing rumblings from our Arab neighbors that they also want peace. We've all had enough."

Jews and Palestinians in Israel and the occupied territories are afraid to send their children out on the streets. Teenagers are especially afraid. *Hamas,* an Islamic fundamentalist group, has been threatening young Israelis on the *kibbutzim* and elsewhere. Palestinian youths are afraid of *Hamas* as well, Forman says: "They fear *Hamas* will call them collaborators and gouge their eyes out, or worse — the bodies of teenage boys have been found with their gonads cut out and stuffed in their mouths."

But, he acknowledges, most of the human rights violations have occurred in the occupied territories, committed by Israeli soldiers. Rabbis for Human Rights, which has 100 member rabbis, goes into the occupied territories.

"We visit and make condolence calls to victims of terrorism," he said. The group also speaks out in the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), writes letters and appeals to the judicial system. "We keep vigils around the holidays, at which we link human rights issues to the themes of the holidays. And we sponsor public forums and debates, and supply educational materials for both the Israeli army and for schools — particularly for Jewish kids, who need to learn that protecting one group's human rights will protect the rights of all."

> *"We sponsor public forums and debates, particularly for Jewish kids, who need to learn that protecting one group's human rights will protect the rights of all."*
>
> *— David Forman*

This is a new way of thinking for many Israeli teens.

"We have taken groups of Israeli teenagers into the occupied territories to meet their Palestinian counterparts, in hopes that they won't let the bitterness of this long conflict impinge on their human rights views. One teenager, who later went into the army, found his trip a seminal event and refused to serve in the territories." Many military commanders are allowing soldiers who have such objections to be quietly reassigned.

In Israel, military service is compulsory. While conscientious objectors as such are rare, increasing numbers of reservists are refusing to serve in the occupied territory. *Yesh G'vul* ("There is a limit") is a 180-member organization of soldiers and reservists who refuse to serve in the occupied territory. Much of the problem stems from the fact that many young people have never known anything but war.

"In the territories, the occupation is not that old," explains Forman, "but it's old enough that 50 percent of its people have been born into occupation. Most did not experience the Jordanian occupation which lasted until the 1948 partition agreement, and many have no history before 1967. They were born into occupation by Jews. The Jordanians who had occupied them before 1948 were, after all, Muslims. Under Israel they feel they're being occupied by a 'foreign element'— though Jews don't see it this way, of course. Young Palestinians, accordingly, have an enormous sense of disenfranchisement; they feel they can't affect

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Craig R. Smith is a freelance writer living in Silver Spring, Md.

their lives, and there's a lot of despair.

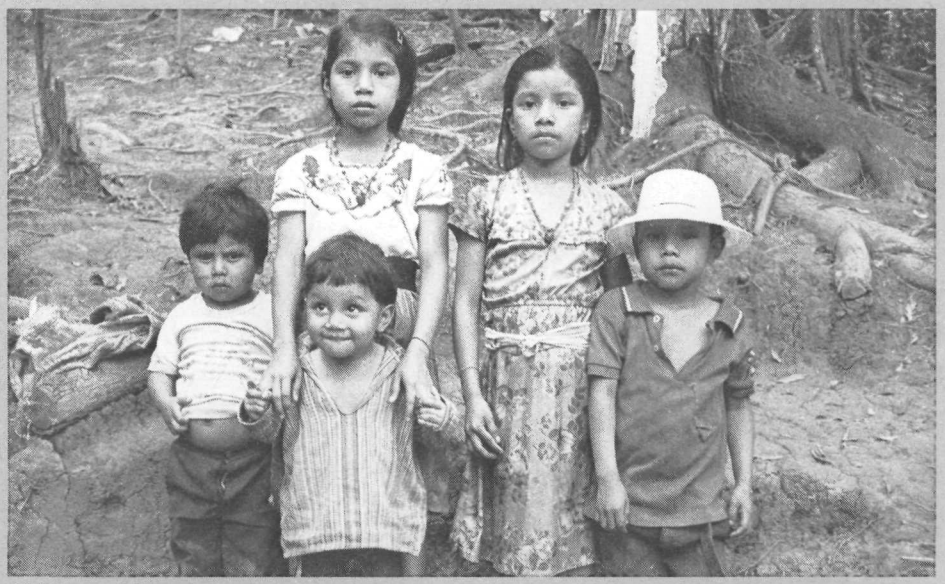
"In the territories you also have a tremendous uncertainty about your daily life — about schools being closed for months at a time, about meeting basic needs, about meeting curfews (even if they're justified), about the possibility that you might be hauled off at any time or that any other measures might be taken upon you, that people might come into your house at night to do a search. Having someone else determine where you can go based on events in an other part of the city is incredibly unnerving.

"You also don't know who might be part of the various terrorist cells: they may be members of your own family, and family unity may be broken at a moment's notice. It makes young people very nervous and jittery. Before the closure of the occupied territory, at least, things were economically more viable; but now, after the closure, because of the increased violence and stabbings of innocent Israelis by Palestinians, they've had their economic status stripped out from under them: not only is there the threat of starvation, but even where there *is* food there's often severe malnutrition."

The resulting stress is handled in a variety of ways. "Palestinians deal with it through the continued *Intifada*. There's also a lot of stone throwing."

For Israeli Jews, "We're still a volatile people, very emotional and expressive, and it comes out in our interpersonal relations. Professional psychologists have been called in to help young people deal with all the stress, particularly on the *kibbutzim*."

Drug abuse is not a problem among Jews or Palestinians, but suicides have increased, particularly in the Israeli army. "This may be related to the rise of the *Intifada*. There's tremendous expression of solidarity to the state in Israel — if you vary from that politically, it can cause tremendous stress." TW



Children of Mayalan Jim Schrider

Guatemala's children

In February my wife and I joined a pilgrimage into the northern Quiche jungle of Guatemala to visit the *Comunidades de Poblacion en Resistencia (CPR)*. The *CPR* were created by their 24,000 inhabitants as an alternative to flight abroad during the government's "scorched earth" program of the early 1980s and the current military program of model village development. During the 1980s the Guatemalan military razed over 400 Mayan villages, killed thousands and created hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Guatemala has the highest infant and maternal mortality rate in Central America and the lowest ratio of doctors per inhabitant. The church estimates that there are 250,000 orphans in a total population of 9,000,000 Guatemalans. Nearly half the population is under 14.

We traveled on foot to Mayalan, a remote *CPR* settlement of 400 Indians in the Ixcan rainforest, accessible only by helicopter and over a newly blazed trail.

Most of the inhabitants were children, many of them sick and most undernourished. Many of the women were widows. The community has suffered frequent army attacks by air and land.

The *CPR* are organized as cooperatives. Everyone over the age of 14 votes on policies and programs. Committees are structured to oversee farming, security, education, and other community activities. Life is hard in these communities but there is an intention to alleviate individual burdens by group sharing.

During an afternoon weekday Mass, the celebrant offered to bless the children. The little ones present ran out excitedly to bring their friends back to share in the blessing. The parents told us that none of the *CPR* inhabitants would have made it without strong faith in God.

The power balance in Guatemala is in flux. On May 25 Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano announced that he was abrogating the Constitution and ruling by decree; one week later, he was ousted in a military coup. For the time being, the country's human rights ombudsman, Ramior de Leon Carpio, is temporary head of state. The cries of Guatemala's widows and orphans call for justice.

— Jim Schrider is an Episcopal priest in Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Britain: youth in transition

By Kenneth Leech and Trisha Mata

The Thatcher years brought depression and gloom as the prospect and the reality of unemployment hit young people in the thousands. Within two years of the Tory victory of 1979 we experienced youth rebellions in most cities, and tension remains.

We still experience the impact of those years as the recession continues. Many young people leave school early, convinced that they have no hope of work, often finding themselves later involved with youth training schemes which do not meet their needs (though they keep the official unemployment figures down). By the end of this year one-third of the three million unemployed will be under 25. There have been cuts in income support and unemployment benefits, while homelessness among the young has increased dramatically. Young beggars were unknown in London before the 1980s; now they are common. Youth workers, too, are unemployed: the youth service budget has been severely cut, leading to more youth on the streets. Some writers claim that the entire youth service could collapse in the next few years. Many other parts of the voluntary sector are in similar states of crisis.

At the same time the 1980s was a decade when many young people became, or aspired to become, affluent. For many working-class kids, holidays came to mean not Southend (an East coast seaside resort) but Amsterdam, Ibiza and the Greek islands. TVs and videos became almost universal. A combination of money mania and loss of hope became the dominant flavour.

In these years a different kind of drug culture emerged, quite unlike that of the 1960s when drugs (other than alcohol) affected mainly middle-class drop outs. Today heroin and cocaine are far more widespread among ordinary youth in the inner cities and the suburbs. As in the U.S., the term "underclass" is bandied about with little precision, though here the racist connotations are less evident. The concentrations of long-term unemployed — and often drug-using — young people cut across racial divisions, and are most evident in the north of Britain where black people are fewer in number. Yet throughout the cities today there is an atmosphere of destruction, of hopelessness, of resignation if not commitment to the market forces which we have all been taught to accept as our new god.

courtesy Kenneth Leech

The area where we work is one of the most depressed and deprived parts of the U.K. In this area is the largest Bangladeshi community in the world outside of Bangladesh itself. This community, entirely Muslim, has been transplanted from rural Sylbet into the urban life of London. The fastest growing section of the population is that of young Bangladeshis, and the Young Muslim Organization is one of the biggest youth movements. There are serious problems of racism as well as many examples of multi-racial living and cooperation. The role of both Islam and Christianity within a secular urban culture is a major issue for the 1990s, and there has been much creative activity in the multi-faith area.

The changed multi-racial character of Britain is increasingly reflected in music. Thus Apache Indian brings together Asian, Afro-Caribbean and white youth with his fusion of Bangra and raga music. As black musicians gain access to TV and radio, their influence on the majority population grows. Writers such as Paul Gilroy and Phil Cohen emphasize the cultural dimensions of anti-racist work. Yet some would argue that the computer game has replaced pop music as the mass culture of the 1990s. This is the age of Super Mario and Sonic the Hedgehog; Nintendo and Sega have taken over from Columbia and Decca. There is little serious political rock today as dance music takes over from lyric.

Both black and white youth in all British cities feel the impact of unemployment and of the terrible attack on social provision which has been central to Tory policy since Thatcher. It has eroded community, undermined hope, created alienation and turbulence. Its effects will take many years to overcome. Even in Galbraith's "culture of contentment" in the "leafy suburbs," young people are bored and without vision, and crime increases rapidly in suburbia, sometimes faster than in the inner areas.

And yet we are not painting a picture of total gloom. Beneath the surface there is much anger and discontent, and we could well see a new youth rebellion. TW

Kenneth Leech is an Anglican priest working at St. Botolph's Church in the East End of London; **Trisha Mata** is a youth worker in the East End.

Brazil: war on children

by J. Antonio Ramos

***Brazil: War on Children*, by Gilberto Dimenstein, Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1992, 81 pages.**

The plight of millions of children throughout the world has become a primary area of concern and action for the international community. On Sept. 30, 1990, 71 Presidents and Prime Ministers gathered at the United Nations in the First Summit on Children at which historic occasion the governments committed themselves to promote the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted in 1989, and set seven objectives to be achieved by the year 2,000.

The Plan adopted called for: the reduction by one-third of infant mortality (14 million children under five years old die yearly, most of them of preventable diseases); the reduction of maternal morbidity by 50 percent, (500,000 women die during pregnancy); the reduction of malnutrition by 50 percent (one out of three children cannot achieve their physical and mental potential because of persistent malnutrition); access to drinking water and sanitary services (one third of all rural families do not have access to drinking water and half do not have adequate sewage systems); access to universal education and to at least primary school to 80 percent of school-age children (only 55 percent complete fourth grade); the reduction of adult illiteracy by half in a world where 900 million cannot read, the majority being women; and the protection of children in specially difficult circumstances (80 million children suffer labor exploitation and 30 million are surviving on their own means in the streets of major cities, and many others are victims of war or other forms of violence).

In Latin America, the magnitude and severity of children's plight cannot be more evident and shocking than in Brazil where, of a population of 150 million, an estimated 25 million children are severely deprived, with seven to eight million on the streets of its mega cities, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Recife.

In this very concise book, Gilberto Dimestein portrays, with personal stories and graphic information, the daily struggles of children whose families have inundated Brazil's major cities' favelas *(slums).*

Gilberto Dimenstein, one of Brazil's outstanding young journalists, has documented dramatically the plight of these Brazilian children, especially those in and of the streets, who suffer not only deprivation but violence and death, living shelterless in a world of drugs, prostitution, thievery and gangs. These children often are trained by adults to become criminals. Even the police demand money from them.

In this very concise book (81 pages), Dimenstein portrays, with personal stories and graphic information, the daily struggles of these children whose families have inundated Brazil's major cities, in *favelas* (slums) by the millions. They are attempting to escape rural poverty in a nation where "the richest ten percent of Brazil's 150 million earn over half of the national income" and "the poorest ten percent receive less than one percent." The author analyzes the causes of this situation linking it to the government's economic policies of the 1950s and its industrialization program which created this huge urban sprawl, "the periphery model (of *favelas*)." It is the product of "a strategy of maximum capitalist accumulation" and of Brazil's extreme concentration of land ownership. The military regimes "wanted people to move to the cities where they were more easy to control and could provide cheap labor needed for the generals' industrialization program."

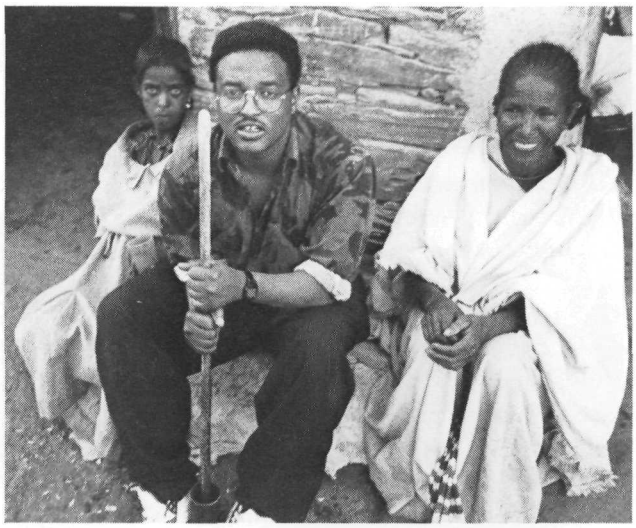
The author's intention is to focus primarily on those children who are victims of violent deaths, especially by brutal acts of the police. He concludes that, in spite of the promises and efforts made by the central and state and local governments, these merciless killings continue, with hundreds of children found dead every month.

In 1991, I visited Passage House, referred to in the book. It is one of many efforts underway to reach children. This one is for street girls abused sexually and physically, and/or prostituted. I was able to witness the truth of Dimenstein's reporting which, shocking as it is, needs to be widely circulated, so that appropriate measures are taken to bring to an end to this war on children. TW

book review

J. Antonio Ramos, former Bishop of Costa Rica, is Regional Coordinator for Latin America, Christian Children's Fund.

"The material compensations [in the U.S.] could never make up for my love for my God, country, family and friends, and for the dignity, respect and unconditional love I receive in my homeland."



Tadesse Wuhib, visiting relatives in rural Adwa, Ethiopia.

Healing in Ethiopia

by Marianne Arbogast

Tadesse Wuhib grew up in Ethiopia during a time of virulent civil war. Nephew of an imprisoned Ethiopian Orthodox bishop, Wuhib lived his teen years under government terrorism. At age 17, he fled his country on a student visa to the United States.

This May, Wuhib received his M.D. from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland. He plans to return to his own country as a healer.

When he was a child, Wuhib says, the communist revolution of 1974 overturned decades of oppression under Emperor Haile Selassie I. Land was nationalized, illiteracy was reduced from 93 to 38 percent, and health services were improved dramatically.

"Training institutions and the numbers of trained personnel doubled during the revolution," Wuhib says. Also, "people's consciousness was raised in regard to women's rights and ethnic equality, recognizing forgotten tribes and customs."

But the gains were short-lived.

"A few years later, the provisional military government transformed itself into a dictatorial regime with Mengistu Haile Mariam as head, and communism only as a tool of propaganda," Wuhib says. "The government stripped the people of their freedom to worship, to associate, to bear arms, to speak, to write, to a trial, to discuss, to disagree. Anyone who disagreed with the policy of the government was either put in prison or shot without any questions asked.

"The youth who continued to fight for the establishment of communist democracy were abandoned. The 'red terror,' a war waged against the 'white terror' of the youth movement, claimed thousands of innocent lives. Their bodies were displayed on the streets with revolutionary messages written on them, and some were dragged along the streets by tanks, as a lesson for others. Mothers were not allowed to cry and had to pay for the wasted bullets to collect corpses of their young."

Resistance escalated, but so did government repression. Agriculture, development projects, and social services were neglected as the nation's wealth was poured into a war that would cost millions of human lives. Famine devastated the country and created a million refugees.

Wuhib, whose father died before he was born and whose mother could not support ten children alone, was cared for by his uncles. When Bishop Paulos, Wuhib's uncle, resisted government control of the church, he was sent to prison for seven years. Persecution of his family continued.

"Armed soldiers used to come to our house twice a week, usually after midnight, to abuse and terrorize us," Wuhib says. "One would stand up on the table and shout at us while the other soldiers pointed automatic weapons at us.

"Besides going without enough sleep and dreaming about the horrors of everyday life, I worried daily about who would be taken from our family next to be tortured, imprisoned, or killed."

When the bishop was released, he continued his resistance activities, but in 1983 he fled the country when he learned the government planned to arrest him again. The government retaliated by evicting his family from his home.

After lengthy negotiations by Tom Scholl, a Baptist pastor in Georgia, and World Council of Churches representatives, Wuhib and his cousin, Hiwot Berhane, were allowed to leave Ethiopia in January, 1984.

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

"I arrived in Albany, N.Y., on a student visa, penniless and with only the clothes on my back," Wuhib recalls. "I entered the College of Saint Rose (which provided a full scholarship) the very next day, sleepless and troubled, unable to speak the language, unaccustomed to the ways of this side of the world, and still worried about the family I had left behind.

"I had never written a research paper, given a speech, performed any experiments in high school, or even heard of computers."

Despite these obstacles, Wuhib graduated magna cum laude three-and-a-half years later, first in his class among natural science students. (He also founded the school's hunger awareness week and the International Students Organization.)

Wuhib's medical training has included research with children in Brazilian *favelas* and AIDS patients in Brazil and in Ethiopia, which he visited last August for the first time since his departure.

In May of 1991, a coalition of Ethiopian liberation movements ousted Mengistu Haile Mariam and set up a new transitional government. Wuhib is encouraged by this development, but says the political situation is still tenuous.

"Our major problem is the irresponsible opposition to a political process dictated by narrowly-based ethnic motives and run by power-hungry individuals," he says. "Because many of the liberation movements are established along ethnic lines, this opposition threatens to divide the country into various parts via a civil war or wars.

"We are a country that has never experienced democracy and that just got out of war. We need to unify in matters of importance to our country, disposing of our ethnic prejudices and self-assumed rights to political leadership."

Wuhib sees employment and health care as top priorities.

"The youth are frustrated by the scarcity of educational and employment opportunities," he says. "I was saddened to see more than a thousand applicants, most with a high school diploma, for six janitorial positions at a hospital.

"Jobs are so scarce that even university graduates are unable to find work. Professionals continue to flee to other countries in search of more opportunities and more money."

Ethiopia's health profile is very poor, Wuhib says.

"Ten top diseases were almost all infectious and preventable," he says. "Our hospitals lack medical instruments, diagnostic facilities and medications. Up to 90 percent of our population resides in rural areas where basic hygienic conditions like sanitary facilities and clean water continue to be luxuries."

Wuhib is committed to finding solutions.

"The material compensations [of life in the U.S.] could never make up for my love for my God, country, family and friends, and for the dignity, respect and unconditional love I receive in my homeland," he says. "I am more interested in making a life than making a living.

"We must remember the *earthly* relevance of faith. The gospel deals with the whole person, soul and body, spiritual and material well-being." TW

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church needs help establishing orphanages. Checks made out to the church can be sent to Tadesse Wuhib, 1620 McElderry St., #533, Baltimore, Md., 21205. Toys would be welcome.

Tillie Taggert by Andrew Wyeth

Courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Gift of Mrs. Christy Tiffany Nickerson in memory of her two brothers Nicholas Jarrot Tiffany and Lt. George Shepley Tiffany.

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