WITNESS MAGAZINE

The Witness

GLOBALIZATION:
for the common good or ill?

VOLUME 83
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WITNESS MAGAZINE

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on the cover

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Since 1917, ***The Witness*** has been examining church and society in light of faith and conscience — advocating for those denied systemic power as well as celebrating those who, in theologian William Stringfellow's words, have found ways to "live humanly in the midst of death." With deep roots in the Episcopal Church, we are a journal of spiritual questing and theology in practice, always ready to hold our own cherished beliefs and convictions up to scrutiny.

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Remembering Anglican roots

This letter should have been written weeks ago to tell you how much my wife, Nancy, and I appreciated the new format for *The Witness* — and additionally how much we both want to express our gratitude for the articles in the March 2000 issue by Ian Douglas and Bill Countryman. Both help us to remember our roots in Anglicanism. Ian's article about Mark Dyer's ideas has been long overdue in some media — and we are grateful *The Witness* carried it.
Walter C. Righter
(VII Bishop of Iowa, ret.)
Ashland, MA

By whose authority?

Congratulations!!! A superb issue. It's great to have you all talking about authority from so many perspectives. Our baptism invites us to identify, explore and claim what this means for all of us, individually and in community. You helped flesh this out. You offered readers examples of ministering communities instead of communities gathered around ministers. These are enriching and empowering alternatives (and faithful reflections of the earliest Christian communities) to the centralized, top-down model the church has been espousing for too long. Every one of the articles was really important and my thanks goes to all the contributors. Particular thanks also to Ian Douglas for his article on power, privilege and primacy in the Anglican Communion. It helped to have this look at recent worldwide Anglicanism.

I have to confess a bias born of serving in dioceses that understand and encourage total ministry/baptismal ministry!!! How the community grows when everyone understands that our primary ordination is our baptism! That we ALL are ministers ... not only those of us who are clergy.

I've ordered copies of this issue for a group I'm mentoring as a way of fleshing out their glimpses of what the church *can* be. Thanks for your gift of wisdom to us all.
Pat Colenback
Hebron, CT

The Papacy: a problem for Christendom

I was impressed by your issue on "Authority." However, I was struck dumb by the discussion of the Virginia Report [by Ian T. Douglas] with its suggestion of an "Anglican Pope" in the form of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and, of a concomitant "College of Primates."

That is the most inane thing I have heard since I left Rome!

One of the least discussed difficulties that Christianity faces is the continuing (indeed, increasing) lack of credibility of the Roman Church due to the intransigence of the Papacy. Notice that I say "Christianity." The Papacy is not just a problem for the Roman Church itself. Rather, the Papacy is the one institution within Christendom that is actually capable of sinking the entire ship.

"Upon this rock ..." may not mean a whole lot to most Protestants. But it does mean something. Orthodoxy speaks of the Pope as "First among Equals." And, the Archbishop of Canterbury has referred to the Pope as the "Prime Spokesperson."

The problem: The Pope can only be "so wrong" until he can make all Christians look like fools!

Whether or not Roman Catholic bishops will ever find the courage to correct the Papacy is their problem. They are the only ones with the power to do it, whether or not they have the will to exercise their power.

What should be obvious is that it would be a mistake for the Anglican Communion to head in the same direction. For all the bumbling along that Episcopal bishops do, they at least try to be charitable; and, for that matter, even just.

Rather, we might do well to pray that Roman bishops emulate us!

One thing is certain. I would hate to see

the day when Anglicans were waiting to see a Canterbury die the way some Romans do some of their Popes.

John Kavanaugh
Detroit, MI

Guard against easy stories

Awhile ago I did not renew because your "new" format of topic issues did not deal with current concerns and it seemed to me that *The Witness* had lost its cutting edge. There seemed to be no controversy needing discussion. Now after a year or so of not having *The Witness* I am renewing because of my need for some in-depth material to read.

The Witness, however, like the *New York Times*, needs to guard against the temptation to easy stories that are too often centered in Detroit.

I invite you to Northport, Mich., which has a very cooperative association among the Christian churches in the area. The Episcopal parish, St. Christopher's, uses the physical plant of the Roman Catholic church, St. Gertrude's. There is also a protestant Native American congregation close by.

And the Native American poverty issue — has it been solved?

Janet Dickerson
Omena, MI

Orlando Barr, Jr.

My husband, Orlando Sydney Barr, Jr., 80, a retired Episcopal priest, biblical scholar, educator and author, died Sunday, March 19, 2000 in Glen Arden Life Care Center in Goshen, N.Y. He was a contributing editor for *The Witness* many years ago, and was always a great enthusiast for the magazine.

Born in Haverhill, Mass., he attended Phillips Andover Academy and Yale University, from which he graduated in 1942 and subsequently obtained his doctorate. In 1952 he joined the faculty of The General Theological Seminary, where he taught New Testament and Greek for 26 years. He was the Glorvina Rossell Hoffman Professor of the Literature and Interpretation of the New Testament at the time of his retirement.

A veteran of World War II, he served in the Army Air Corps with the Intelligence Division and then as an assistant to the historical officer of the 14th Air Force in China. Immediately upon discharge, he entered Berkeley Divinity School in New Haven, Conn., from which in 1948 he graduated *magna cum laude*. He was ordained priest in the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut.

As a New Testament specialist, my husband was especially interested in the relevance of the Bible for contemporary thought and action. This led to his first book, *From the Apostles' Faith to the Apostles' Creed* (Oxford University Press), in which he examined the history in New Testament times of each affirmation of the Apostles' Creed. The same concern for relevance led to a later book, *The Christian New Morality: A Biblical Study of Situation Ethics*.

Although always stressing the importance of past history and tradition, my husband insisted that history is an open-ended, ongoing process, constantly subject to the overriding prompting of God's Spirit. The Bible, he maintained, is not an officious, divine rule book to be slavishly idolized, but an invitation to share the life-giving experience of Jews and Christians down through the centuries. A firm believer in human rights, he was strongly condemnatory of every kind of religious, racial, gender and sexual discrimination as totally contrary to biblical principles, and an early supporter of the ordination of women to all three orders of the ministry.

We were married 57 years and are the parents of three children, Margaret Barr Hoover of Lanse, Penn., Joyce Manley Barr of North Brooklin, Me., and Mark Sydney Barr of New York City. To contribute to an understanding of creation, life, death and the training of a new generation of doctors, my husband donated his physical body to the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, The Bronx, N.Y.

We request that gifts in memory of the life and work of Orlando Sydney Barr be given to The Building Fund of The Daniel Pierce Library (PO Box 268, Grahamsville, N.Y. 12740) or to The Orlando Sydney Barr Scholarship Fund of The General Theological Seminary (175 Ninth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011).

Marylin Barr
Grahamsville, NY

Mumia abu-Jamal

I wish to ask *Witness* readers to join the religious community across the nation in calling for a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal and opposing his execution.

A long-time critic of police brutality and abuse of governmental power in Philadelphia against the poor and African Americans, radio journalist and writer Mumia Abu-Jamal became a target for prosecution by the police and the Philadelphia authorities. In 1982, in court procedures replete with suppression of evidence, distortion of facts, intimidation and bribery of witnesses by government officials, in a blatant miscarriage of justice, Abu-Jamal was convicted of killing a police officer and has been on death row since.

Seiichi Michael Yasutake
Chicago, IL

[Yasutake is an Episcopal priest and executive director of the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S. Along with 185 others, he was arrested in a civil disobedience action protesting the death penalty and in support of Abu-Jamal's request for a new trial in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. on February 29, 2000.]

Donning the face of liberty

by Peter Selby

The Episcopal Church in 1994 went on record as supporting the biblical imperative of debt relief for the world's poorest countries and in 1998 the Anglican Communion's bishops also wholeheartedly committed themselves to this cause. Still, church members remain largely mystified by the implications of embracing Jubilee as a way of life which brings liberation, but also requires responsibility, as Susan Keller reminds us (p. 28)

As Ann Pettifor of the Jubilee 2000 campaign urges (p.8), we will find clues about what is involved the more we openly engage our most taboo subject — money — and the dominating role it plays in our lives. We will also benefit from schooling ourselves to see the often disturbing connections between personal or community decisions and the health and welfare of environments and people we may never visit, but whose well-being depends on our placing human values above money.

We may find ourselves taking to the streets in the process — reclaiming a Gospel imperative to place our bodies on the line. Such a body politics may well be the only way to ensure a down-to-earth common good in a globalized world of disembodied greed.

— Julie A. Wortman, publisher and co-editor

IT IS MORE THAN A YEAR and a half since 70,000 people gathered from all over the world to surround the G7 Summit meeting in Birmingham, England in mid-1998. But I haven't forgotten the faces. Thousands of people, almost transfigured. The G7 summiteers thought they had got away by making their escape to an out-of-town hotel. But they didn't escape the force of people who'd had enough of debt.

People with banners came from all over — people who had never been to any kind of demonstration before, people from countries with huge burdens of debt repayments, children with their grandparents. A priest from our diocese paddled her coracle up the Worcester-Birmingham canal to be there (a coracle is a round boat made of skin that you can carry on your back — Cuthbert and other ancient missionaries used them).

The faces were the faces of liberty. I walked along the miles of people holding hands, a human chain to confront the death-dealing chains of unjust debt that, in the way we run the world, bring slavery. Afterward, people went home and wrote letters to governments, to the International Monetary Fund and to the World Bank, asking that this crisis be brought to an end.

A year later in Cologne, Germany the faces were there again, wearing the gentle smile of liberty on the way to triumph. By Christmas the talk was of real gold sales to clear some of the worst cases of indebtedness — and of the domino effect that had begun as governments had to listen to the united and determined voice of their people. Oh yes, there are many dominoes yet to fall, and much understanding yet to be shared. But a process is underway, and you can see it in people's faces.

Yet, the problem goes ever so much deeper than we dare face. For the global economy lives on debt and believes that debt is

beyond controlling. In fact, all our money now is promissory notes, IOUs that we cheerfully pass round and round. And we are passing it around at ever increasing speed, no longer in notes but in pulses on computer monitors. And nearly 19 dollars in every 20 that pulse their way round the world's banking system don't find their way into new equipment or resources; they're just going in search of higher or quicker returns.

The debt crisis with which Jubilee 2000 set out to deal is a system of an economic order gone out of control. If the faces on coins and notes are to be exchanged for the faces of freedom — the face of Jesus Christ — a decision has to be made. "Globalization," we say, "is the way ahead." But which form of globalization do we want, the one that is created by ever faster-moving quantities of money or the globalization that comes from the gentle and committed love of Christ?

Getting governments to take the debts of the poorest countries seriously was a hard struggle for the Jubilee 2000 campaign, and we are not home and dry yet even with that. Getting the economy to be human, to wear the face of liberty, is going to be the hardest test of all. People of goodwill are beginning to ask the questions that need to be asked about a global economy that exists as an end in itself and not for the benefit of people. As that questioning gets louder so we shall have to discover ways of banding together, not just, as in Birmingham and Cologne, to confront the debts of the poorest, but also to question the priorities of the richest.

We shall have to bear the cost in standards of living which will not steadily grow all the time; but our faces will be the faces of liberty. As we stood by the canal to send Jeni off in her coracle one thing that was said stays in my mind: "This is about the lightness of a feather and the might of the nations." So it is. And it is about the freedom of Christ for all. ●

Peter Selby, the keynote speaker at The Witness' *General Convention reception on July 9, is the Bishop of Worcester, England, and author of* Grace and Mortgage: The Language of Faith and the Debt of the World *(1997), <bishop.peter@cofe-worcester.org.uk>.*

Planting seeds of transformation on the streets of Seattle

Jim Friedrich

[Jim Friedrich, a priest who lives on Whitbey Island, near Seattle, was one of the protestors on the streets of Seattle last year when the World Trade Organization met — or attempted to meet — in that city.]

At 12:30 pm, we took to the streets, marching up Fourth Avenue, to join the thousands more who were already downtown. It was a wonderfully diverse procession: there were people dressed as Santa Claus, sea turtles, trees and even death. But it was not some crazy fringe out there. As one writer put it, "These were the kids at UW, the ladies from church, the guys at Boeing. It was Seattle that was marching this week."

As in all street rituals, there was a playful, carnival atmosphere. Richard Shechner, in his book, *The Future of Ritual*, observes: "When people go into the streets en masse, they are celebrating life's fertile possibilities. ... They put on masks and costumes, erect and wave banners, and construct effigies not only to disguise or embellish their ordinary selves, or to flaunt the outrageous, but also to act out the multiplicity each human life is. ... They protest, often by means of farce and parody, against what is oppressive, ridiculous and outrageous. ... Such playing challenges official culture's claims to authority, stability, sobriety, immutability and immortality."

In other words, we were exhibiting the same spirit — dare I say "holy spirit"? — of playfulness, cameraderie, irony and subversion that was seen 10 years ago at Tiananmen Square and the Berlin Wall and, during biblical times, at the Red Sea and the Triumphal Entry on Palm Sunday. And as faith tells us, the world doesn't stand a chance against the foolishness of God.

There were people on stilts, people carrying giant puppets, babies in carriages and grandparents with canes and walkers. I stuck close to the Anti-Fascist Marching Band, which played soulful New Orleans versions of "America the Beautiful," "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and Bob Dylan's "Masters of War." We all just danced up Fourth Avenue.

We made quite a sight. In the Advent section of his Christmas oratorio, W.H. Auden writes:

The Real is what will strike you as really absurd.
Unless you exclaim, 'I must be dreaming,'
it must surely be a dream of your own.

Official culture is always uneasy at the chaotic upwelling of life in such happenings, and it tries to dismiss their significance, calling them silly or kooky. But they are powerful rituals of liberation, for they mock the pretensions of the old order even as they lift up the possibility of a new way of being. For a few hours on that Tuesday, no one was a stranger. Everything was a You and nothing was an It, to quote Auden again.

If you looked someone in the eye, they didn't look away. Smiles and conversation came easily, and the barriers of money and education and race and age and lifestyle, all the things that segregate us one from another in daily life, these were nowhere in sight. We were one in the Spirit, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah on the streets of Seattle: "A highway shall be there and it shall be called the Holy Way. ... It shall be for God's people ... and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their faces; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isa. 35:8-10).

Like a liturgy, it was a ritual experience — and though ritual experiences are very real, they cannot be indefinitely extended without returning to the less sublime transactions of ordinary existence. But they can plant the seeds of transformation, out of which God's future may grow. ●

The War Continues

by Cherríe Moraga

Flesh is full
of holes.

It is made
to breathe
secrete
receive.

It is nothing
against
bombs
and
bullets.

It is not meant
to be a barrier
against
anything.

But this dark flesh
will resist you flee
you who believe
you are not made
of the same
skin
and
bones.

The following is reprinted from The Last Generation: Prose and Poetry by Cherríe Moraga *with permission from the publisher, South End Press, 7 Brookline St. #1, Cambridge, MA 02139.*

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JUBILEE 2000 AND THE GLO

An interview with Ann Pettifor

by Julie A. Wortman

ANN PETTIFOR is co-founder and director of Jubilee 2000. Raised in South Africa, she has been working on issues related to the debt crisis for many years and is the author of several publications on the subject.

Julie A. Wortman: People have been stunned by the progress the Jubilee 2000 campaign has made since 1998. How close are you to achieving the goal of the campaign — "the one-off cancellation of the unpayable debts of the world's poorest countries by the year 2000 under a fair and transparent process," to quote from Jubilee 2000 Coalition literature?

Ann Pettifor: We are still some way from that goal. At the beginning of this year I spoke with someone from the U.S. Treasury who assured me that we'd already achieved our goal, because we'd persuaded the U.S. to write off 100 percent of the debts owed to the U.S. by 25 or so of the poorest countries. Unfortunately, while that is true, that cancellation is only a part of the debt owed by those poor countries. It's only the debt owed to the U.S.; it's only the bilateral debt, the government debt. It doesn't include the debt owed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. We haven't got 100 percent cancellation of that yet.

BALIZED WORLD OF DEBT

Also, the creditors are insisting on focusing on only a narrow group of countries. We're calling for more countries to be included. The poorest countries do not yet feel their lives transformed by the decisions that have been taken.

JW: Where are you focusing efforts?

AP: At the beginning of this year the creditor nations, the governments of the West, said they expected 11 countries would have some debt cancellation by May or June. So because we realized that the creditors were not offering enough and were holding back, we began intensifying the pressure on, in particular, Japan, France and Italy, which had been dragging their feet and making very little contribution to this debate. This spring we've been campaigning in France and Italy, working with celebrities, churches and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). And in Japan we are now lobbying very heavily and preparing for an event or an action around the July G7 summit at Okinawa.

JW: What about people who worry that forgiving the debt is unrealistic?

AP: In Jubilee 2000 we don't talk about forgiving the debt, because the word forgiveness in this context implies that the debtor is entirely at fault and needs to be forgiven.We make a very strong point that debt is both the responsibility of the lender and also of the debtor — both sides are responsible. Every day on Wall Street banks have to write off debts. It's a matter of economic reality and is absolutely vital to the economic health of the nation that banks accept that some debts will never get paid and that some businesses and some individuals just simply have to be given a chance to start again.

But although in everyday life this is something we take for granted, in the international financial system there is no law governing regulations between debtors and creditors. So creditors can keep debts on the books ad infinitum. And just as in Dickensian times it was possible to put people in jail and starve them to death if they didn't pay their debts, so today, instead of having debtors' prisons for people, we have debtors' prisons for countries. When we did it in the 19th century we found that it was economically counter-productive to starve people because the effect was that we were unable to collect the debts. Furthermore, they did not play a productive part in the economy. In exactly the same way it is unproductive to drain the poorest countries of all their resources, because we will still never collect the debts and they will never be able to play a productive part in the global economy.

JW: Is the debt crisis one of the negative results of our current form of globalization or a by-product?

AP: Debt is a necessary by-product of globalization. Despite all the hype, globalization boils down to one thing: the opening up of markets — capital markets in particular. Globalization is driven by bankers and creditors and other financiers who want to open up capital markets around the world so they can lend money and thus make money from money. They've been opening up capital markets in Southeast Asia, in Africa, in Latin America. The result has been disastrous because when the companies and governments in these countries have borrowed foreign currency for their projects and have then been hit by, for example, the devaluation of their own currency, they have then found it impossible to repay those foreign debts.

The reason for this is that you've always got to repay foreign debts in dollars, or yen, or sterling and you cannot use a Thai baht or Mozambiquan meticals to repay your debt. To find those dollars, you've got to be able to have sturdy exchange rates or else you've got to be able to export goods that earn foreign dollars. But all of these debtor countries are

Advocacy works

by Mark Barwick

LAST YEAR, strategists at Bread for the World, the Episcopal Office on Government Relations and other partners in the national Jubilee 2000 movement agreed on the importance of reaching Spencer Bachus for his support on international debt relief. A conservative Republican by anyone's yardstick, Bachus had just been appointed to chair the key House subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy. To garner Bachus' support early on in the campaign would be a significant step toward achieving the goal of debt relief for the world's poorest countries. So a group of four Bread for the World members from Birmingham, Ala., which is in Bachus' district, was enlisted to visit the congressman at his office in Washington, D.C.

The two women and two men were guided into Bachus' office. They had been briefed on the issue and the legislation that was being considered. They sat down, surrounded by advisors and legislative aides. "It was very intimidating," delegation member Elaine Van Cleave recalls, noting that Bachus gave them a noncommittal look and said, "Pretend that I know nothing about this issue. Convince me. Why should I do something about this debt situation?"

Van Cleve paused, then spoke up. "Mr. Bachus, I am aware that tens of thousands of children in developing nations die every day for hunger-related reasons, reasons that are entirely preventable. I am a mother, and that upsets me. I often feel so helpless and don't know what I can do to

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"Debt relief is not an end in itself; it is a means to an end. It is not a total solution to poverty, hunger and disease, but it is a necessary first step. ... We in America have been blessed with a period of almost unparalleled economic prosperity. Never in our history has one country had so much progress, wealth and luxury. Now at the start of the new millennium we can do so much more for the 700 million of the poorest at such a small cost to each of us. ... We have the responsibility, we have the obligation, and we have the direction as to what is the right thing to do. For whether you are a Muslim, whether you are a Christian, whether you are Jewish, all the religions give us a moral imperative in such a case, and that is to act. And to me there is really only one decision."

— Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL-06), speaking on June 15, 1999, before a House Banking Committee hearing on H.R. 1095, the "Debt Relief for Poverty Reduction Act of 1999."

engaged in primary commodities like coffee, cocoa, sugar and copper. And the prices of these are now at historic lows. So their income for repaying foreign debts has collapsed. But nevertheless they've been encouraged to borrow through these open capital markets.

JW: At the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle last year there was a huge outpouring of popular concern about the effects of globalized economics, so it seems a lot of people understand at least some basic aspects of what is going on.

AP: Yes. It is as simple as balancing your own household budget. But so much of the time — in the churches, especially — economics is still a taboo subject. It's as if this is something that gentlemen in pin-striped suits can discuss, but no one else can. We have to lift the taboos about economics because there are elites in our country and in other countries who are using their understanding of economics to hurt our interests, and unless we understand what they're doing, we're not going to be able to determine our own futures and act as responsible democratic citizens should.

JW: You make the connection with household economics. If someone is going to take the Jubilee 2000 call seriously, what are some of the things they can do individually?

AP: Well, in our personal lives we have allowed money values to be superimposed on human values and we elevate money values above human values almost in everything that we do. We value everything in terms of money and we devalue that which is not worth money and which cannot be valued in money terms. So I think the first thing we have to do is to turn that around at the personal level and begin to say it is not important that I have money. It is not important that I have more money than the person next to me. It's not important that I wear this designer label and not that designer label. It's not important that I have this car and not that car. But what IS important is how I feel and how I act towards other people and how I value human life and animal life and ecological life — above money.

The second thing we have to do is to realize that we are the victims of a credit culture. Not a week goes by in my house but a credit card application doesn't come through the door. I have two young sons who are just out of university and who are struggling to make a living and they are literally swamped with credit cards. But we have to start resisting this. We have to question the way in which the banks throw money at people. Of course, we know why they do! Making money from money is much easier than, for example, making money from tomatoes. To grow tomatoes I have to rely on the sun; I need rain; I need water; I need soil; and I have to wait over a period of time. With money, I just lend money, charge a decent price, which is called interest, and I make more money. We are becoming a society where making money from money is becoming one of the major sources of income. But it's also the major source of exploitation. So I think we need to question the easy credit that is a function of our society.

JW: I'm always noticing in the Episcopal Church's national newspaper a prominence of headlines about people in other countries suffering because of natural disaster or civil strife. What connections do you make between such headlines and the debt crisis?

AP: We tend to take a fatalistic view of the world and believe that when a hurricane strikes that, A, nature wants it to happen and B, there's very little that we can do about it. Well, for a start, we know that there's an increase in the rate of these kinds of natural calamities and it has very much to do with what we're doing to the environment. And what we're doing with the environment has very much to do with economics. And what our economics are has very much to do with our values. Our values revolve around the belief that making money is the most important things we can possibly do. And when that's the most important thing that we can do, then destroying the environment is subordinated to the most important thing that we can do (i.e., making money) and we end up with more hurricanes.

Also, when there's a hurricane in Florida people's lives are not destroyed. They are very severely damaged and many people

might lose their lives, but the impact on a state like Florida is very different from the impact on a poor state like Honduras or Venezuela, where a whole economy can be undermined by a natural disaster because there aren't the resources to recover. So it's a way of not facing reality when we blame these kinds of disasters on nature or on forces beyond our control. They are very often very much within our control, we simply choose not to do anything about it.

JW: And with respect to civil strife?

AP: It's my strong view that both in the case of Rwanda and Yugoslavia, the civil and social disintegration rested on what happened first — economic degradation. Rwanda was an economy wholly dependent on coffee exports. In 1979 President Reagan and Mrs. Thatcher encouraged coffee producers to end the coffee agreement which had guaranteed prices of coffee to some of the poorest countries producing coffee. It had meant that in the richest countries we might have had to pay a little bit more for our coffee, but what we were paying for was stability — economic stability in those poor countries. In 1979 we voted for cheaper prices of coffee for ourselves, for the consumer, and we voted at the same time for, in my view, social disintegration and economic disintegration in those countries wholly dependent on that single commodity.

Rwanda, for example, was dependent on coffee. When the price of coffee collapsed, the first thing that happened was that the IMF moved into Rwanda and she recommended economic policies which she has since acknowledged did not take into account the impact on that society. Privatizing industries meant sacking people from their jobs, which meant that Hutu employers had to decide whether to save a fellow Hutu's job or the job of a Tutsi. This, then, exacerbated existing tensions. It also led to higher prices for electricity. It led to farmers' pulling up their coffee plantations in despair. It led to a collapse in tax revenues for Rwanda. So the government then could not provide health services and other kinds of services. This led to very rapid economic degradation. What followed was civil degradation and social degradation and disintegration.

In Britain, for example, we are very smug about this and you often hear people say, "Well, of course, those Rwandans, those Ugandans, those Yugoslavs — you know they are natural fighters. They have this kind of civil war and murderous behavior in their blood, not like us decent, upright folk." Well if Britain's GDP had collapsed at the rate that Rwanda's had done, or Yugoslavia's had done, I'm pretty sure that the Welsh would have been at the throats of the English and the English at the throats of the Scots!

JW: Many people who remember the founding of the World Bank after World War II find it difficult to hear that the World Bank and the IMF are part of the problem.

AP: The World Bank and the IMF are two institutions made up of very well-qualified, assured and in many cases really well-intentioned civil servants. Many of them are absolutely superb at their job. However, these institutions are also used by governments to implement foreign policy objectives. Of this there is no question. President Clinton and Mrs. Albright recently admitted complicity with warlords and tyrants in Africa during the Cold War. They admitted to it and I think that was extremely gracious of them and honorable. But the fact is that we know that the corrupt elite of Zaire was given $12 billion by the IMF, the World Bank and the American government and the British government to purchase Cold War aid. Now that corrupt elite has gone and the poor have been left to pay the debts of that Cold War battle, which we won.

JW: Are the decisions about debt relief also political? The current example is Uganda, Mauritania and Bolivia getting relief ahead of other countries such as Guyana and Nigeria.

AP: Well, the system works very, very unfairly. The American and British governments have argued that as part of the debt cancellation, countries should produce a poverty reduction program. But they have also said that these countries have to fulfill macro- economic criteria — set by the IMF! Now the case of Guyana is a classic example. Guyana is a very, very poor country. Several months ago she was caught in the grip of a

Advocacy works

continued from page 9

help. But I have come today, because I know that you have the power to do something about it."

The conversation then flowed, with group members explaining how debt relief would free resources poor countries urgently need for basic human services. They also presented Bachus with hundreds of signatures on Jubilee 2000 petitions that had been collected the previous Sunday in Birmingham churches.

Then, says Van Cleve, the Alabama congressman did a remarkable thing. He stood and said, "I want to do this. It's the right thing to do." He then made a commitment, as chair of the House Banking subcommittee, to introduce the legislation along with a wide spectrum of other House members, both Republicans and Democrats.

Since that day, Spencer Bachus has distinguished himself on Capitol Hill as a passionate and articulate defender of debt relief for poor countries. The national press has taken notice of his conversion. Some of his conservative House colleagues regard him as a curiosity at best — or perhaps someone who is simply out of touch with the realities of global economics. In any case, Bachus is not easily dissuaded. A practicing Baptist, he has frequently made reference to his Christian faith as the reason why he is devoting so much energy to this issue.

Sharing a similar sense of deep commitment, there are now four Bread for the World members from Birmingham, Ala., who have a new sense of the power of face-to-face advocacy. ●

Mark Barwick is the Southeast Regional Organizer for Bread for the World, a Christian citizens' movement that lobbies our nation's decision makers on matters of importance to hungry people. You can get more information about BFW by calling 1-800-82-BREAD or by visiting their web site at <www.bread.org>.

general strike. It was, if you like, an internal shock to her economy. The government wanted to settle the strike at 12 percent, but an independent arbitration panel recommended 31 percent for civil servants who are already very, very low paid. The IMF assured the president of Guyana that this would be acceptable. So on the basis of this agreement from the IMF, he reluctantly settled on a pay settlement of 31 percent a year. That meant that his macro-economic targets of fixing his budget moved into deficit. And he was clear that the IMF would understand that was a very likely thing to happen if they settled on the 31 percent figure on the advice of the IMF. Instead, the IMF said, "Yes, you may have reduced poverty by increasing the living standards of a huge portion of your population, but you've failed on your macro-economic target and your budget deficit is rising; therefore you will have no more debt cancellation."

What we see here are the contradictions between the macro-economic strategy and the poverty-reduction strategy. They're built into the system, and that is unfair. What is also deeply unfair is that all of this was negotiated between the President of a country — the elected President of a country — and a civil servant who threatened that President and told him that he was not going to get debt cancellation. And that President cannot go to the board of the IMF and argue his case! He has to rely on the civil servant putting that case for him. That gives that civil servant immense power over the poorest countries.

JW: I understand you are working on alternative processes for debt cancellation?

AP: Yes. We say that the international financial system is profoundly unfair because it is dominated entirely by creditors. In our domestic system, when Macy's goes bust, she is able to go to the law to seek protection from her creditors. When Mozambique goes bust, she doesn't get protection from her creditors. Instead, her creditors move in and take over the shop. We say this is unjust. Creditors act as the interested party, the witness, the plaintiff, the judge and the jury in their own court case for debt cancellation and that undermines all of the rule of law. It's against the very fundamentals of the rule of law that you can't be judge in your own court. So we want a more independent process.

We want an independent body to decide whether or not Mozambique can pay her debts, whether or not the lenders that lent her money made wise decisions and whether they should lose their money or whether they should have some repayments. It need consist of no more than three people: one a person nominated by the debtor, one a person nominated by the creditors and the third person would be one that would be agreed by them both. And those three would act as arbitrators and would decide on how much debt should

Lynn Ross/Anglican World

James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, defends the international institution's policies to Anglican bishops at the 1998 Lambeth Conference.

be canceled and who should make losses and on whom should liabilities be landed.

But the other thing is that the whole process of deciding on debt cancellation through arbitration should be done publicly and transparently with the involvement of local citizens who should be invited to monitor and set conditions to insure that the money released from debt cancellation goes to the poor. Now this already happens in the U.S. It's called Chapter IX of the bankruptcy law code and it's what happened to Orange County. When Orange County went bust, of course she wasn't liquidated, her debts were worked out in a proper and orderly way, so that citizens in Orange County don't suffer for those mistakes. Creditors get some of their money back and the debtor also has to hand over some assets, but it's done in an orderly way. In the international financial system there is no order. The whole thing is governed by creditors. Creditors don't want to cancel debts, which is why they never have and when they do cancel them, they do so in their own favor.

JW: How would you win acceptance of a proposal like that?

AP: Well, we're going around the world trying to persuade everybody that a form of arbitration, a form of insolvency would be a very good thing, because it would introduce discipline into relations between debtors and creditors. Right now if I lend money to a wicked dictator, I need never have fear of losing that money. International financier George Saros has said that lending to sovereign governments is the most profitable business you can do. You never lose! The corrupt dictator might go to pot and might disappear like President Suharto or President Marcos, but in the end the taxpayers in his country will repay the debt. And the same with dictators; they know they never have to repay those debts because those contracts are signed in secret.

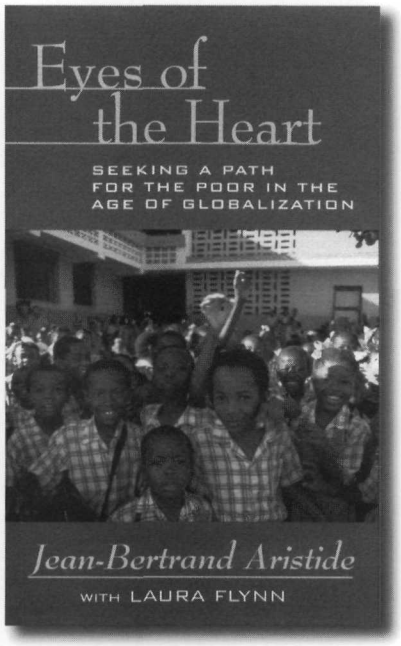
JW: Do you think you really will close up shop December 31, 2000?

AP: Well, the campaign comes to an end at the end of December 31, and we either will have succeeded or we will have failed. If we've failed, then we will need to do something different. Next year is not the year of Jubilee. And if we fail, and I hope very much that we won't fail, then we may have to think about a post-Jubilee campaign. Right now, I want to succeed and I want Jubilee 2000 to succeed so we can close up shop at the end of the year knowing that we've canceled the debts of the poorest countries. ●

For more information about the Jubilee 2000 campaign, including news about activities in the U.S., check <www.jubilee2000uk.org>.

Eyes of the Heart

by Kazi Joshua



Eyes of the Heart: Seeking a Path for the Poor in the Age of Globalization

by Jean-Betrand Aristide

ed. Laura Flynn

Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2000.

The one-time president of Haiti and former priest, Jean-Betrand Aristide, begins this small 80-page book by declaring, "Behind this crisis of dollars, there is a human crisis. ... We have not reached the consensus that to eat is a basic human right. This is an ethical crisis. This is a crisis of faith." Don't be misled by the book's length. This is a focused, intense and carefully written narrative analyzing the condition of the poor in developing nations. It does not celebrate the globalization of markets, nor the liberalization of trade between countries who exercise hegemony and monopoly over the conditions of trade and the scale of production. Instead, Aristide frames the book as a series of testimonials or letters from the heart of the poor in Haiti to the heart of global capitalism, to its imperial center in the north. Woven through the critical analyses are stories of real people and historical events that have affected Haiti's people in the advent of globalization. The stories become a prophetic denunciation of global inequities and an annunciation of what the poor are doing in spite of the forces lined up against them.

Aristide describes global capitalism as "a machine devouring our planet," documenting carefully its effects on the ecology, community life and the politics of Haiti. In a situation where 20 percent of the population now owns 86 percent of total wealth, the logic of global capitalism is inadequate for the majority of the world's population. Accounts of the systematic displacement of locally grown rice and pigs by imported products which become scarce and unsustainable raise critical questions about the role of international aid agencies and lending institutions. With such concrete examples, Aristide demystifies globalization and paints a real face of the victims of the economics of accumulation that does not have human and ecological well-being at the center of their practices.

The power of the book, however, goes well beyond analysis of the poor as victims of globalization. Aristide points to the power of the poor when they come together and put humanity at the center of all relations of exchange. This is what Aristide refers to as "the third way," that intermediate position between global capitalism and state-run socialist economies. He describes a collective kind of economics where, by pooling their resources, the poor develop credit unions, establish a university, open a people's store selling goods at a fraction of market price, create a children's radio station giving them voice in a society that marginalizes them. These heroic acts, born out of economic necessity, give rise to political and cultural organization which refuses to be bought off by the seduction of global capital. Aristide demonstrates not only what is wrong, but also what is possible, if only we will listen. Will we?

This book ought to be required reading for all students of economics and business and elected officials in the Congress and Senate. It shifts and concretizes the debate about "aid" and "free trade" in a way almost impossible to imagine in the affluence of the North. *Eyes of the Heart* is also a challenge to all those who struggle for justice and ecological sustainability, to support alternatives that are actually working and initiated by the poor. Aristide sums up his argument in the words of the UN Human Development Report of 1997 "... Poverty is no longer inevitable. The world has the material and natural resources ... to make a poverty-free world a reality in less than a generation."

He adds, "The time has come to create a world that is more human, more stable, more just. Eradicating poverty everywhere is more than a moral imperative and a commitment to human solidarity. It is a practical possibility."

This little book is a big act of faith, a response to the "human and ethical crisis" we all now face. ●

Kazi Joshua, originally from Malawi, is a doctoral student at the University of Chicago and an associate pastor at Progressive Community Church on Chicago's south side. He directs Nurturing the Call at the Seminary Consortium on Urban Pastoral Education.

UNDERSTANDING

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A key first step in working for the common good

by Camille Colatosti

"WE'RE IN the global economy — whether we like it or not," says Charles Kernaghan, director of the New York-based National Labor Committee, an independent human rights organization that has spent nearly 20 years investigating sweatshop conditions both in the U.S. and around the world. "Sixty percent of the apparel we buy is imported; 80 percent of toys and sporting goods are imported; 90 percent of shoes and sneakers are imported. This is the reality."

The Liz Claiborne suits we wear, the Reebok sneakers we put on our feet, the Barbie dolls we buy for our children — all of these items and more are made in factories located in El Salvador, China, Burma and Bangladesh, where workers earn 9 to 80 cents an hour.

"I've been to these factories," says Kernaghan. "They are hidden, surrounded by cinder block walls and rolls of razor wire. The entrances have thick metal gates. When you pass through the gates, you are greeted by armed thugs. And in the factories, by and large, the workers are young women. They are 17 to 25 years old, and when they reach 25, they're used up. Then they're fired."

In El Salvador alone there are 225 apparel factories that employ about 70,000 women. They send 587,000 garments a year to the U.S. "Despite everything," says Kernaghan, "there is not one single union in a garment factory in El Salvador, and the wages of 60 cents an hour do not meet the cost of living."

The situation is the same in factory after factory and in country after country. The factories are subcontracted by multinational corporations. The people who work there do not know the names of the companies they work for. The women in El Salvador, who earn 20 cents for each shirt they sew for Nike, do not know that the garment retails for $75 in the U.S. Adds Kernaghan, "The workers haven't the slightest idea of the role they play in the global economy."

A global shift in power from nations to investors

In that respect, El Salvadoran workers are similar to American workers: We do not understand our role in the global economy, either. Yet, understanding this is key, says Terry Provance, director of the World Economy Project at the Washington, D.C.-based

GLOBALIZATION

Preamble Center, a research and organizing institution. Globalization has everything to do with our jobs, our wages and our lives. Globalization concerns not only the products we buy, but also the values we hold. Do we want to live in a world that values profit above all else? Or do we want to be part of a world that promotes equality, fairness and hope for everyone?

Globalization means that national governments no longer are in charge of their economies. The U.S. government, just like the El Salvadoran government, no longer controls the way business is conducted within the country's borders.

As John Hooper, of the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice, explains, "We've turned our national economy into a global economy by opening up all the channels by which money, resources and business decisions flow." This is not bad in and of itself, Hooper says, but "the thrust seems to be to avoid or override the decisions that individual nations make related to their economies."

Because it dismantles national barriers to trade and investment, globalization allows investors to drive the process and to move money around the globe without pause. This means that corporations make products where wages and costs are lowest.

This also means that transnational corporations, rather than governments and countries, are making the rules for national economies. Investors can make or break a country by pouring money into it, or refusing to do so.

The World Economy Project's Provance acknowledges some positive aspects of "the internationalization of life today: the facility and ability with which we can communicate and travel." But, unfortunately, these positive elements are "driven by a corporate process which deregulates trade and investment and concentrates power in the hands of corporations." In fact, power is concentrated in the hands of just 100 transnational corporations, who control 75 percent of world trade.

This process did not happen overnight. As Provance explains, "Globalization is the result of a trajectory of several hundred years. Through war in the Philippines and interventions in Latin America and Southeast Asia, the U.S. has gained advantage around the world. Now, instead of using armies to gain advantage, we use another weapon — the market. This market, just like an army, can interfere with and change life."

In an educational video recently developed by NETWORK, a national Catholic social justice lobby, Amata Miller, IHM, notes that globalization has the potential for "creating interdependent and cooperative initiatives across geographic distances and national, ethnic, cultural, gender and racial diversities." Close links among nations, she says, could lead to prospects for peace, for sharing resources, and for fostering human dignity. But the potential is not being fulfilled.

A race to the bottom

During the past 20 years, Miller explains, as globalization has expanded, we've seen a "widening inequality and the exploitation of workers." We've seen "cultural traditions undermined, local communities destroyed, hostility to refugees and immigrants increased, the environment degraded, and secret government negotiations to advance finance capital."

"The problem," says the National Labor Committee's Kernaghan, "is that there are no standards or rules to govern this in terms of human rights, women's rights and on. We've unleashed a race to the bottom over who will accept the lowest wages and the least benefits and the worst conditions."

In fact, globalization has increased the burdens placed on the developing world. In the Philippines, deforestation by the lumber industry has caused a food crisis. Per capita income in Latin America is lower today than it was in 1970. And life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to reach an all-time low in 2010 of only 33 years of age.

Some of these inequalities result from the controversial structural adjustment programs imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, powerful international financial institutions largely controlled by the U.S. government. Structural adjustment programs are forced on developing nations as preconditions for financial help. These programs generally require devaluing national currency, raising interest rates, reducing government spending, increasing taxes, privatizing public services and shifting agricultural and industrial production from food staples and basic goods for domestic use to commodities for export. Sometimes these measures improve the government balance sheet, but more often structural adjustment programs increase income inequality, poverty and debt.

Jubilee 2000 — a worldwide movement led by religious organizations "to cancel the crushing international debt of impoverished countries" — argues that these programs "hit people living in poverty the hardest." Programs increase unemployment, decrease wages, and increase taxes.

According to the Boston-based United for a Fair Economy, developing countries are worse off today than ever before. From 1982 to 1990, developing countries in the South received approximately $927 billion in aid, grants, tax credits, direct investment and loans. But they paid $1.3 trillion in interest and principal, not including royalties, dividends, repatriated capital and underpriced raw materials. In 1990, the South was 60 percent deeper in debt than it was in 1982.

Worldwide poverty is on the rise. In 1974, one-quarter of the world's population lived in poverty. Today, more than half of the world is poor. More than half of the world's six billion people, states Kofi Annan, secretary general of the United Nations, "eke out a living on $3 a day or less."

The WTO: fighting 'discrimination' in trade

The decreasing ability of the developing

world to protect the lives of its citizens becomes clear when we consider this fact: According to the Institute for Policy Studies, of the world's 100 largest economies, 49 are nations and 51 are corporations. Wal-Mart, with its annual sales of $137.6 billion, has a larger economy than over 100 countries, including Portugal, whose gross national product is $104 billion; Israel, with a gross national product of $88 billion; and Ireland, with a gross national product of $66 billion. How can small or even medium-sized countries influence these corporations?

With the advent of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the international organization that governs trade, the developing countries' situation has become even worse. As Mike Prokosch, coordinator of the Globalization Program at United for a Fair Economy, explains, for 50 years or so, since WWII, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade or GATT treaty negotiated lower tariffs and barriers on goods crossing boarders. GATT also eliminated other regulations that slowed down global trade. "But," says Prokosch, "GATT had no teeth. It was nicknamed 'Gentlemen Agree to Talk and Talk.' The WTO replaced GATT, and it has teeth. It also has a much broader charge than GATT."

The WTO administers treaties and expands trade into new services; it also makes binding decisions. Representatives to the WTO, usually a nation's trade minister, are not elected but are appointed by each of the 135 member nations. While the founding statements of the WTO expressed its goal of "sustainable growth and development for the common good," in reality, explains Dave Dyson, of the People of Faith Network based at the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, the WTO seeks to end what it calls "discrimination" in trade by overriding any trade rules that might favor "human rights, community interests, or environmental safety."

Business over the environment and labor

For instance, in 1996, the WTO found a U.S. Congressional requirement for cleaner gasoline to be "discriminatory to Venezuelan and other refiners" who produced gasoline that did not meet U.S. environmental standards. When the European Union banned hormone-treated beef due to health concerns, the WTO said the ban violated corporate free trade. When the U.S. attempted to block imports of shrimp caught in nets that also capture and drown endangered sea turtles, the WTO called the block "arbitrary and unjustified." In 1997, the WTO ruled that Europe's trade preferences for Caribbean bananas grown by small farmers with little pesticide was unfair to large corporate plantations. The WTO has, in every environmental and labor dispute, sided with business.

Decisions to evaluate "discriminatory" trade practices are decided by a WTO panel of judges, whose identities are secret and who meet in secret. Their proceedings are not disclosed to the public. In fact, as Lucinda Keils of Groundwork for a Just World — a Detroit-based social justice organization — explains, "There is no requirement that meetings be open to the public in any way, or that the public or press have access to any documents, meetings, or decisions." Representatives from environmental, religious, community and labor groups do not have access to the WTO. The protests outside the WTO meetings in Seattle in December 1999 tell an important story. More than 1,500 non-governmental organizations registered with the WTO to express their concerns about trade and globalization. None were allowed access to the meeting.

According to Paul Hawken, a participant in the Seattle protests and author of "What Really Happened at the 'Battle of Seattle'" (*BioDemocracy News*, Jan. 2000), "WTO rules run roughshod over local laws and regulations. It relentlessly pursues the elimination of any restriction on the free flow of trade, including how a product is made, by whom it is made, or what happens when it is made. By doing so, the WTO is eliminating the ability of countries and regions to set standards, to express values, or to determine what they do or don't support. Child labor, prison labor, forced labor, substandard wages and working conditions cannot be used as a basis to discriminate against goods. Nor can environmental destruction, habitat loss, toxic waste production and the presence of ... synthetic hormones be used as the basis to screen or stop goods from entering a country. Under WTO rules, the boycott of South Africa would not have existed."

Under the rules of the WTO, adds Prokosch, "only countries can sue. Environmentalists, labor unions, human rights organizations do not have access to the WTO court."

A first step in changing the rules: demanding disclosure of factory locations

Ultimately, solutions to the problems that globalization generates will come from changing the rules of international trade. As the National Labor Committee's Kernaghan explains, "We have to put a human face on the economy. We need internationally recognized human rights. We work with people and workers all over the world. They tell us that they need jobs; they are willing to work hard, but they should have rights — the right not to be hit, the right not to be paid starvation wages."

In the U.S., says Kernaghan, "we purchase 36 percent of all of China's exports. We purchase most of the garments made in El Salvador. This should give us a say over what and how goods are produced. We're the market for these goods. As the marketplace, we can be the voice for people locked in these factories, people who aren't given bathroom breaks and have taken to wearing adult diapers. Our work is all about this."

Kernaghan adds, "The American people are enormously decent and wouldn't buy products made by children or people earning starvation wages if they knew." The trouble is that the multinational corporations refuse to disclose the locations of the factories with which they subcontract. This information is secret. In China alone, Wal-Mart is estimated to use 1,000 factories, but their location is kept hidden.

Kernaghan continues, "We have said to companies, 'Will you give us the name and address of the factories that make the goods we purchase? We have the right to know in which specific factory goods were made.' But companies say they won't give up this information. They claim this would be a violation of trade secrets, but that's a lie. In any given factory, multiple labels are produced next to each other. Nike is being produced next to Reebok; the same worker at the same factory sews Liz Claiborne and Kathy Lee Gifford labels into garments. The companies know where their competitors' products are made. They just don't want the American public to know."

One of the first steps, then, to end sweatshop labor, to put a human face on globalization, is to demand that corporations

reveal where their factories are located. "We need full disclosure," says Kernaghan. The National Labor Committee distributes "I Care" shopper cards. These index cards, which can be given to cashiers at Wal-Mart, read, "I like shopping here, but I am worried about where your products are made. Will you disclose this information?"

"Individuals have more power than you think," says Kernaghan. "Companies have told us when they receive a phone call from a consumer, they assume that 250 other people feel that way. When they receive a letter from a consumer, since a letter takes more time than a phone call, they assume 500 others feel that way."

Kernaghan continues, "People who are part of religious congregations have enormous power because companies are afraid of religious people. A company can look at a union and say, 'Well, the union is paid to attack us.' But the company can't dismiss a parish. What people of faith do is one of the most important forces needed to make this a better world. Imagine the impact of a letter to Wal-Mart, signed by all of the members of a congregation!"

'WTO: Fix It or Nix It'

Along with consumer response to globalization, other reform strategies focus on changing the rules of the WTO. A recent campaign, called "WTO: Fix It or Nix It," seeks overhaul of WTO decision-making. The Preamble Center's Provance describes efforts to implement minimum wages for people throughout the world. In addition, he hopes to implement minimum environmental standards. Most important, says Provance, is to empower civic governments, nations, to have a say over the way trade affects their country.

Along with the "Fix It or Nix It" campaign comes a national and international effort to build a broad coalition. "Challenging globalization and the WTO is a huge task," says Prokosch of United for a Fair Economy, "but Seattle was a really good beginning. We saw what we can do when we are united." (An estimated 40,000 to 60,000 people took part in protests at the December 1999 WTO meeting in Seattle to oppose the loss of human, labor and environmental rights around the world. Despite some news reports to the contrary, activists who participated in the protests all seem to agree with Hawken, who states, "This is what I remember about the violence. There was almost none until police attacked demonstrators ... There was no police restraint, despite what Mayor Paul Schell kept proudly assuring television viewers all day. Instead, there were rubber bullets, which Schell kept denying all day.")

"Seattle," continues Prokosch, "created an enormous confidence. We saw our strength and our numbers." An April 9 demonstration to "proclaim Jubilee" and "cancel the debt now" was expected to be an equally inspiring event. "This demonstration against the International Monetary Fund and World Bank is crucial," says Prokosch. "Those organizations are pushing countries into the global economy because of their debt. Until we can help other countries break out, they will keep getting pushed down and we will get pulled down with them."

Around the country, says Prokosch, "there is extraordinary seriousness about building broad coalitions. I've been at this 30 years and I've never seen a moment like this. This kind of confidence, maturity and optimism is inspiring and is going to fuel me for another 20 or 30 years." ●

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MORE INFORMATION

Globalizing civil society

(Open Media Pamphlet Series,
Seven Stories Press, 1998) 80pp. $5.95

THIS POLEMICAL LITTLE TRACT by David Korten, prominent voice in the "Battle of Seattle" WTO events and author of *When Corporations Rule the World*, is both broadside and primer. It is eminently suited for study in community group or congregation. Korten writes in plain language, using memorable and quotable facts: Of the world's 100 largest economies, 51 are now corporations; the combined net worth of 447 billionaires equals the annual income of the poorest half of humanity. Such like. But above all he makes sophisticated analysis accessible, like building on a distinction between the "money world" and the "living world." In the former, capital moves electronically in a virtual reality, stock markets function like gigantic casino games, and "growth" is the only logic and imperative, all in complete ignorance and indifference to the latter, the "living world," where human beings make their lives socially in relation to the ecosystem. In the living world, endless growth is a malignancy and health manifests itself in balance, diversity, sufficiency, and sustainability.

Most remarkable is the spirit of hopefulness which infuses the book. Korten genuinely believes it is possible to reclaim the power we have yielded to global institutions and to reconstruct local cultures and economies. He suggests ways to think about "social capital" and how to generate it. (In the study group of which I was part we lingered long over this question.) For example, how do we move from jobs to livelihoods?

On behalf of the living world, he outlines basic principles for the new millennium, beginning with sustainability, equity and civic engagement. He provides concrete clues for thinking these through in terms of our own lives and lays out foundations (economic, political, material, spiritual) for a just society. Korten is not a theologian, but the section on the spirituality of money is really about idolatry, all but named.

Church folk need this book. With a mustard seed or kindom text, it will even preach. — *Bill Wylie-Kellermann*

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CHEAP

Maquilas and the search

by Lou Schoen

OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, The Episcopal Peace and Justice Network for Global Concerns (EPJN) has been studying the social and economic impact of the *maquiladora* industry in Mexico and Central America with the aim of educating ourselves and the church about the issues involved. *Maquilas* are factories where workers make products for huge foreign-owned firms. They use parts or materials made elsewhere — often in the U.S.

As our work progressed — in addition to visiting *maquilas*, their workers, labor organizers and church and community leaders in Mexico, Honduras and El Salvador, EPJN members toured chicken farms in Delaware and Maryland and met with living-wage activists in Los Angeles (see *TW* 1/2 2000) — we soon became aware that the subject was broader than the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the relationship of the U.S. to its southern neighbors. Today's interconnected, interactive, mutually reinforcing global economic reality encompasses *maquiladoras*, minimum-wage policies, legal and illegal immigration, racism and xenophobia. Our site visits to Mexico and Honduras convey something of the range of issues and challenges we encountered.

Matamoros

Matamoros, Tamaulipas, lies across the Mexican border from Brownsville, Tex. Here our delegation witnessed young children scavenging the smoking solid waste dump for recyclable trash to sell and for building materials to strengthen the shacks in which their family lives. We were shocked by the scene, repelled by the toxic stench.

This family at the dump had been attracted to Matamoros — as have hundreds of thousands more to other communities lying northwestward along the 1,951-mile U.S./Mexico border — by the mushrooming *maquilas*. Jobs near the border comprise a powerful magnet for families whose traditional livelihood, dependent on farming or fishing, has been undermined or destroyed. Hog, cattle, poultry, fruit, vegetable, fishing, textile and

LABOR

for cheap labor in a globalized economy

timber industries in this globalized economy increasingly seek vertical integration to control and minimize costs of supply, processing and packaging. Producers favor mechanizing production and keeping the various components in close proximity — unless they can find labor that is cheap enough to offset the costs of equipment and/or transportation. *Maquilas* provide such a labor force. Here workers often earn less for an entire day's work than a U.S. minimum-wage employee makes in an hour, an amount far less than a sustainable income. The widespread fear is that if they try to force an increase in these wages, or if the *maquilas* are required to improve working conditions or limit pollution, the companies owning the plants or using their products will take their business to Asia.

The mass migration from rural areas to the border has overwhelmed public services in 14 pairs of cities across the U.S./Mexico border. On the Mexican side, the newly arrived migrants' hope for a productive new life is quickly replaced by despair as they take up life in squatter settlements and compete for jobs that are restricted mostly to women between 18 and 30, whom managers regard as more compliant and as having greater finger dexterity. Many soon see brighter prospects across the border in *El Norte*. High proportions of workers in food-related and other industries throughout the U.S., in fact, are recent immigrants, many of dubious status under U.S. immigration laws. Some, from points as distant as the Balkans, South America or East Asia, as well as from Latin America, have paid huge fees or deposits to labor brokers to help them get green cards certifying legal residence. This process takes years, however, for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has an enormous backlog of requests. Many are readily sold on the alleged ease of bypassing this tedious system by hiring smugglers to deliver them to a workplace.

Richard Kerner

Settlement where maquila workers live outside of Matamoros, Mex.

Smugglers have been known, however, to abandon illegal migrants in remote places after taking their money — often with fatal results. Bodies are regularly found in the mountains and deserts of the southwest, as well as in the Caribbean and in holds of ships bound from China. One smuggler was convicted in Texas of taking the cash and killing his client.

The INS has an aggressive catch-and-deport program, increasingly well-funded by the current Congress. Its detention centers are usually filled to capacity and, like one which EPJN visited near Harlingen, Tex., expanding rapidly. Children are separated from their families during detention, and placed in nearby foster homes where their language may or may not be spoken.

San Pedro Sula

We sat in a circle of chairs at the edge of the nave in the Episcopal Cathedral at San Pedro Sula in Honduras. A nervous reserve characterized the five young Hondurans assembled by their pastor from a nearby suburb to describe to us their *maquila* work experiences. Their anxiety was transparent as the tales unfolded. Although conditions were variable, they complained of high pressure, verbal abuse from supervisors, physically harmful job environment, sexual harassment, highly variable supervisory behavior, intense performance pressures including mandatory overtime (with overtime pay a constant source of dispute), lack of support for education or career growth, inadequate medical care, dismissals during pregnancy, and lack of public enforcement of legal labor

Developing a theology of work

Let Justice Roll Down: American Workers at the New Millenium is a report issued by the Task Force on the Theology of Work of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles in December, 1999. "As we move into the Third Millennium of the reign of Christ," the report asks, "what are we to make of the widespread use of working people as implements to make the economic machine run more efficiently? And how do we begin to think theologically about work and the economy?"

Focused primarily on the situation of low-wage workers in Los Angeles, the report shows why "a living wage" with adequate health care is called for if church members are "to respect the dignity of every human being."

Copies are available for $4.50 (includes postage) from the Diocese of Los Angeles (make checks out to Treasurer of the Diocese), PO Box 512164, Los Angeles, CA 90051.

standards. When one of the workers complained to a supervisor, he was told, "There are lots of others outside the gate who want your job."

Another summarized: "They want you to give up your life while you're young."

Our pastor-host admitted that she feared speaking out about such injustices lest she impair her son's work opportunities. "We could have the whole country here, giving witness," another of the workers said, "but they're afraid of losing their jobs."

But labor leaders continue to work for change. Our delegation was able to meet with more than 30 plant organizers, eager to present a similar list of complaints.

"This is the first time a group of North Americans has come to listen to us," they exclaimed, pleading for international support.

Collective bargaining, however, while making progress, is doing so slowly. Labor federations are in place (sometimes competing for members, as unions often did in their early development in the U.S.). With few exceptions, mainly in Mexico, most bargaining agendas are limited to working conditions and have not yet gained wage contracts. An official union, sanctioned by the Mexican government, is widely seen as a tool of management, not truly representing workers — although they have to pay it dues. Strikes have had mixed success. Local union and activist leaders and workers acknowledge the need for the jobs *maquiladoras* provide.

Promising signs: the Gap and the churches

In an attempt to answer charges of poor working conditions, former U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich initiated a code of conduct in collaboration with the apparel industry, which dominates *maquilas* in Central America. It calls for an independent monitoring process, but this is most often controlled by manufacturers, using public relations and accounting firms. Recently, however, the Gap, a major customer of apparel-making *maquilas*, has stepped outside the industry norm. It is working with independent monitoring groups in Honduras and El Salvador, the majority of whose members are representatives from local non-governmental organizations including churches and human rights groups. The Episcopal Diocese of Honduras employs the monitor there. Initial results in both countries are limited, but look promising.

Numerous churches continue to engage the power structure in Central America. Leo Frade, the Bishop of Honduras, is facing down regional officials to build a housing development for victims of Hurricane Mitch. Medardo Gomez, the bishop of the Salvadoran Lutheran Synod, supports a human rights ministry and was a leader organizing an international pilgrimage to mark the 20th anniversary of Archbishop Romero's assassination on March 24.

The bitter byproducts of economic globalization tend to be hidden from the investors who profit handsomely and from consumers who save money at the expense of millions of families living on the edge or dropping over. Global trade policies will support this process until international institutions advancing labor and environmental agendas are empowered to balance the business trading agenda.

Leading activist groups for justice in this new environment include the American Friends Service Committee, the National Labor Campaign, Global Exchange, the Fair Trade Certified Coffee Campaign, and others. Many groups collaborate in the Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras, which focuses on the Mexican context, and Sweatshop Watch, which also follows experience in Central America and elsewhere. The Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility is a point group for faith communities seeking leverage against corporations and public policy. Each group is accessible on the world wide web. ●

Lou Schoen is a Minneapolis consultant and writer who represents Province VI in the Episcopal Peace and Justice Network for Global Concerns, one of the networks associated with the Episcopal Church's Peace and Justice Ministries office, <LOUSCHOEN@aol.com>. Photographer Dick Kerner, the convener of EPJN, lives in Dallas, Tex. EPJN is preparing to a detailed report on its maquiladora *study and multi-media resources for church-based study groups that will be available from the national church.*

Is it time for Christians to think locally?

by Michael Schut

I WORK FOR EARTH MINISTRY, a Christian environmental non-profit. Part of our work focuses on helping individuals and congregations understand the impacts daily lifestyle and consumer choices have on ourselves and the earth.

The main tool we use in that work is a book and study-guide called *Simpler Living, Compassionate Life: A Christian Perspective* (SLCL). In a world dominated by the global economy and seduced by the idol of economic growth, one section of SLCL, "How much is enough?: Lifestyles, Global Economics, and Justice," is particularly helpful in framing Christian economic thinking.

The links between over-consumption, poverty, and ecological degradation are simple and direct. The reason they do not necessarily appear so is also simple: Our economic system does not see itself as embedded in the larger world of nature. We futilely hope that the waste — referred to as "externalities" by economists — created in economic processes will be assimilated by the earth. However, we have obviously already exceeded earth's assimilative capacities. The pollution our consumptive habits creates today show up tomorrow as increased cancer rates, birth defects and oil-soaked birds. As Philip Sherrard says, "We are treating our planet in an inhuman and God-forsaken manner because we see things in an inhuman, God-forsaken way. And we see things in this way because that is basically how we see ourselves."

Christians, however, believe that the earth is God's and that to degrade it is wrong. We also believe that we are all created in God's image, that we are all sacred and that human beings live most fully when they understand themselves to be part of a community, not as individuals-in-a-market — which, as theologian John Cobb points out, is the perspective by which our globalized world is operating.

The validity of Christian understanding seems to be supported by the findings of researchers such as Alan Durning, executive director of Northwest Environment Watch. Durning's work, which reveals the inordinate impact Americans' consumptive habits have on the earth, also gently uncovers the emptiness many of us feel. Despite the phenomenal growth in consumption and economic output, he says, "Repeated opinion polls of people's sense of well-being show that no more Americans are satisfied with their lot now than they were in 1957."

In light of global economic relationships, many believe Wendell Berry points in the direction we must move — from abstract global concerns to concrete local actions — to create a more compassionate and just economy. Berry suggests it is "preposterous" to think that any of us can do "anything to heal the planet." Instead, the scale of our competence is to work to preserve each of our "humble households and neighborhoods." Were all such neighborhoods preserved, he says, it is possible that most planetary problems would disappear.

Let's consider our food choices as one small example. The average morsel travels 1,200 miles to reach our plate. The agri-business industry consumes at least nine calories of fossil fuel energy to produce one calorie of food energy. Following Berry's suggestion, we would take care of our neighborhood by buying locally grown produce. We would care for our soil and water by purchasing organics. Notice that through focusing on local, everyday choices, we also concurrently address a significant global concern. In this case, buying locally shortens supply lines, thereby decreasing carbon dioxide emissions and a portion of our own contribution to greenhouse gases.

But although individual choice, rooted in caring for local people and places, is crucial, there is more. Individuals must also join together to create political will for societal change. For example, organic food is often more expensive than non-organic. But that is because the price is wrong! The price of non-organics, in other words, does not include the externalities associated with growing them. If the costs of water and soil contamination (from pesticides and fertilizers) were internalized, non-organic costs would increase while organics would decrease. Getting prices right will require communities working together to both educate the public and create the appropriate policies.

Increasing economic growth is perhaps our most powerful cultural idol. If growth were the answer, however, the disparity between rich and poor would not be growing. While many in the world today certainly require more material wealth, others of us need to ask the difficult question of how much is enough? ●

Michael Schut coordinates Earth Ministry's Simpler Living Project, <www.earthministry.org>; 206-632-2426. To order SLCL call 1-800-824-1813 or a local independent bookstore.

WHEN A GLOBAL GIANT

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A small city debates a supercenter

by Murray Carpenter

YOU COULD BE ANYWHERE in the U.S. here, listening to the specials over the loudspeakers, walking through the miles of aisles of inexpensive merchandise. This is but one of 2,500 Wal-Mart stores scattered around the country. But step out into the expansive parking lot, walk around back and slip past a few red oaks, and you'll smell the salt air and see a large bay full of lobster boats. It's the coast of Maine, Rockland to be precise, where Wal-Mart has turned into a flashpoint for a rapidly changing community. In dispute is the corporate giant's plan to abandon this 90,000-square-foot facility and build a new "supercenter," twice as big, across the street.

Here, as elsewhere, the question being asked is: Do local citizens really want an expanded presence in their still distinctive community of a global retailer with a cookie-cutter, cheapest-knows-no-limits mentality?

At this Wal-Mart on a sunny Wednesday in February, the answer is, apparently, yes. By noon there are well over 100 cars in the parking lot, ranging from sport utility vehicles with cell phones and vanity plates to little old Japanese beaters. A few cars even sport lefty stickers, including one advertising the local grassroots radio station that frequently runs shows criticizing corporate America and rampant globalization.

Why the mad rush to Wal-Mart? Cost,

COMES KNOCKING:

shoppers say, and convenience. Indeed, things are cheap as heck inside. Fashionable earth-tone t-shirts made in Peru cost $7.94; button-down, 100 percent cotton, pinstriped shirts made in Gatar fetch $15.94; and a fleece "Ozark Trail" vest made in Taiwan goes for $11.94. Leather children's shoes made in China cost less than $10, and steel-toed rubber boots with a U.S. label bring $14.97.

A large sign in the rear of the store reads, "Bring it home to the U.S.A." And just inside the front door on a little table covered by a tablecloth reading "I (heart) Wal-Mart" and covered in smiley faces, a sign asks, "Do you support a Wal-Mart Supercenter? Sign here." Next to the loose-leaf binder is a bouquet of roses, wrapped in plastic. A few of the comments:

"Just what we need."

"I think it's a good idea."

"I'm all for it."

"We need a bigger and better Wal-Mart."

And, "Need it bad."

This type of enthusiasm has propelled Wal-Mart to its position as the largest retailer in the world — and the largest private employer in the U.S. Wal-Mart spokesperson Keith Morris reports that Wal-Mart had $137 billion in sales and $4.4 billion in net revenue for the year ending in January 1999. And the retail giant keeps getting bigger, adding more services. Recently, in fact, Wal-Mart issued its own private label credit card.

A contentious local debate over the Rockland Wal-Mart has focused on taxes, traffic, aesthetics and the zoning change the city would have to approve for the new supercenter. But there are broader concerns about the effects of globalization simmering just below the surface. These local and global issues often come up for discussion at the Good Tern Co-op, a health food market in a white clapboard building near the heart of Rockland's downtown. It's just a five-minute pedal south of Wal-Mart.

"This is kind of the potbelly stove, cracker-barrel center of a lot of this debate," says Good Tern employee Lizzie Dickerson. She is among many locals who say, "The Wal-Mart we have is Wal-Mart enough," and has led a petition drive opposing the zoning change. In a nutshell, Dickerson says, "For a lot of people it's like the antithesis of their life, why they live here."

The Good Tern is certainly the antithesis of Wal-Mart. The contrasts are dramatic. Wal-Mart is designed to accommodate shoppers who arrive by car, not foot. Its traffic-clogged Route 1 location is unwelcoming to pedestrians at any season, but especially in the winter when the sidewalks remain unplowed. Downtown Rockland, by contrast, is a walker's dream, being a compact set of retail blocks with good sidewalks and easy-to-negotiate crosswalks. Wal-Mart is an enormous windowless box, but morning sunlight streams in through large storefront windows at the tiny Co-op, the whole of which could fit in the small cafeteria just inside Wal-Mart's entrance. Most strikingly, the line between customer, employee and owner is blurred at the co-op. As Dickerson says, "We pay 20 bucks and we're [instantly] co-owners."

OF THE WORLD'S 100 LARGEST ECONOMIES, 49 ARE NATIONS AND 51 ARE CORPORATIONS. WAL-MART, WITH ITS ANNUAL SALES OF $137.6 BILLION, HAS A LARGER ECONOMY THAN OVER 100 COUNTRIES.

But it's not just the increased traffic and required zoning changes that make her oppose the new store, Dickerson says, it's what Wal-Mart represents as a global power.

"Wal-Mart is the symbol of schlock: Buy cheap, build it cheap at any cost, including labor practices that are questionable," she says. "These sorts of businesses are causing the erosion of the standard of living of the people of this country, while at the same time saying they are trying to improve it."

Dickerson isn't the only Wal-Mart foe downtown. A block north, on Rockland's narrow Main Street, sits Goodnow's Pharmacy. This morning Arthur Johnson is sitting at the soda fountain counter, as he does most mornings. What does he think of the planned supercenter? "I hate it," says the retired cabinet maker, who used to visit Goodnow's for ice cream sodas in his youth. "You can see the damage they've already done up there, the asphalt jungle I call it. I've been here 71 years, what do I know? But if they pass it, something's wrong somewhere."

But even in Goodnow's, the quintessential Main Street business to which Wal-Mart is supposed to be the death knell, Johnson's feeling's are not universal. Patty Young, tending the till, said, "I like Wal-Mart — one-stop shopping." Another woman agrees, "I think it would be excellent for the area. I go to Augusta, Portland or Boston to shop because there's nothing here." But when Johnson suggests perhaps Young would like to get a job at Wal-Mart, she responds that they'd never pay her what she makes at Goodnow's. He nods, "See?"

Two doors down from Goodnow's, Skip Thompson is holding a sale to liquidate the inventory from Coffin's, a longtime downtown Rockland outlet for clothing, footwear and cosmetics. Thompson ran the store for 20 years, and says his closing down is related to Wal-Mart's showing up.

"In a general sense," he says, "Wal-Mart drains local economies — it costs every-

Bangor takes on sweatshops

From a small brick building on a quiet street in downtown Bangor Me., the Clean Clothes Campaign is quietly but effectively challenging the inequities of the global economy. Last fall the group persuaded the Bangor City Council to adopt anti-sweatshop purchasing resolution.

The resolution states that Bangor will, whenever possible, purchase apparel and other items from ethical manufacturers. Bjorn Claeson of the Campaign feels it's a simple, effective tactic for using tax dollars to end the problems associated with the sweatshops where millions of workers, worldwide, toil daily in brutal conditions.

Claeson said working at the local level attains two goals at the same time: helping workers around the world, and helping local democracy. "Until we have a more responsive democracy on the federal level it's what municipalities will have to do," said Claeson. Bangor is not alone, he said. Over 30 cities and towns nationwide, including New York City, now have anti-sweatshop procurement policies in place.

As the World Trade Organization becomes increasingly powerful, Claeson is concerned about procurement agreements prohibiting governments from using anything other than economic factors when awarding contracts. But any such WTO policies will be facing increased pressure from the grass roots, and all the communities that are adopting selective purchase agreements. This is an international effort, and Claeson has fielded calls from all over the world.

As the WTO exerts pressure from the top down, it will be meeting more and more resistance from the Clean Clothes Campaign, and other such efforts working locally, from the bottom up.

The Campaign, which grew out of a group doing sister city work with Carasque, El Salvador, has also drafted a *Clean Clothes Shopping Guide*. The guide features information about various clothing manufacturers, and lists local clean clothes retailers. The guide names Wal-Mart — along with Disney, the Gap and Nike — among its seven corporate campaigns.

Claeson said Wal-Mart is "emblematic of the polarization of economies." He said the store is often targeted, like Nike, because "if you can persuade Nike or Wal-Mart to change, then maybe the others will change as well." The Clean Clothes Campaign has also drafted an organizing guide, complete with a model resolution, to help other cities and towns go clean.

For a copy of the organizing guide or shopping guide contact: Clean Clothes Campaign, at PICA, 170 Park Street, Bangor, Maine 04401, 207-947-4203.

©Jim Levitt/IMPACT VISUALS

body."

When Wal-Mart shows up with cheap goods at cheap prices, Thompson says it is understandable that people will shop there, but small businesses suffer.

"The little guy's going to take the heat," he says. "That $20 million or so has to come out of someone's hide."

Globalization is evident in Coffin's too. On a table along one wall are Hathaway dress shirts, union-made in Maine. But on a rack just inside the door are sweatshirts made in Russia, emblazoned, in California, with a "Maine" logo. But Thompson feels the global economy can "definitely improve conditions worldwide. It's a question of advocating for people in third world countries so they're not at starvation levels. It means the wealth is going to spread."

After the liquidation sale, Thompson and his wife are looking at a "major life change," but don't know exactly what it will be. They have applied for the Peace Corps.

What will become of downtown Rockland when Coffin's, and Thompson, leave?

"I think what we'll end up with is shops like we have here, " says Thompson pointing across the street at the Wine Seller, one of many upscale businesses that have moved in near the expanding Farnsworth Museum and its new Wyeth Center. "I think the downtown will be fun, and the outskirts will be necessary."

But Thompson doesn't speak for everyone downtown. A few blocks further north, in the insurance office where he works, Mayor James Raye is nothing but boosterish about Wal-Mart. When businesses are looking to move to Rockland, Raye says, there's that window of opportunity, and he wants to make sure that window is open.

"Wal-Mart is very successful. They buy by the truckload when other businesses around here buy by the boxload," says Raye. "Do I subsidize the downtown merchants? This is still free enterprise, isn't it?"

Wal-Mart, Raye says, is bringing a payroll of $5.5 million, 350 jobs, and a 401K plan, "along with an opportunity." Wal-Mart is also chipping in for municipal erosion and drainage studies.

"We are not in a position to throw away tax dollars," Raye says, citing recent expenses in cash-strapped Rockland. Grabbing a calculator he quickly tallies $16 million or so, for roads, schools, sewers, that Rockland's 7,900 residents are having to shoulder with one of the highest tax rates in the state.

With respect to the proposed supercenter, Raye says that, for him, only four items are of concern: traffic, the appearance of the building, the buffer, and runoff. If Wal-Mart can meet the city's conditions, he'll vote for the zoning change. If two of the four city councilors agree, the deal is a go.

"I would say 75-85 percent of Rockland wants Wal-Mart out there," he says, adding that he has seen 800 signatures of Wal-Mart shoppers who want the store. As for the old building, Wal-Mart has assured Raye "it won't see a dark day," and he hopes another "big box" retailer, perhaps Home Depot, will move in.

Raye, whose wife has a downtown store selling Hallmark Cards, believes Wal-Mart won't have any effect on downtown business.

"We spent a lot of money to get the Hallmark franchise. Now Wal-Mart sells Hallmark cards and I'm fighting for it. Each and every year since they've been here, we've grown," Raye says. The businesses cannot only co-exist, but can also help each other, he claims. Downtown business owners will "just have to sharpen their pencils.

"To each his own. There are people that shop the Wal-Marts and people that shop downtown," says the mayor. "We need to have some balance. A lot of people would like to have it be a tourist town. What we need is more stores like Wal-Mart that draw people here. They'll take a stroll downtown and say 'Hey, this is nice.'"

Keith Morris, the Wal-Mart spokesperson, agrees.

"The downtown has not died since Wal-Mart opened." Morris says the main difference with the supercenter is a new 40-45,000 square foot grocery store. Since there is no longer a large grocery store in downtown Rockland, this new grocery store will be competing with Rockland's two other supermarkets, both located in shopping centers with large parking lots on the fringes of the city. Shop 'n Save, Wal-Mart's direct competition, says it will expand to meet the supercenter challenge. The Shop 'n Save chain, until recently owned by Maine's Hannaford Brothers, was bought out by Delhaize America last year. So Wal-Mart is competing most directly with another global power retailer.

While he claims the supercenter won't hurt downtown, Morris is pretty clear on another point: If Wal-Mart does not get approval to build at the Rockland site, they will likely take their business elsewhere, and "that's going to have a detrimental effect on business locally." Already some residents of the neighboring town of Thomaston have started a petition drive inviting Wal-Mart to build there.

Morris takes criticism of the corporate giant in stride. How about the claims of censorship, Wal-Mart refusing to sell some CD's and dictating sexual morality by refusing to sell the so-called morning-after pill? Morris responds in broad terms: "We do have a responsibility to adhere to our company standards and customer standards. There's just certain things (such as magazines that come in plain brown wrappers) that are not in line with our company philosophy, and our customers have told us, overwhelmingly, that they feel the same way."

How about matters of global equity, and the conditions in the sweatshops manufacturing for the Wal-Marts? "We have what we call a statement of vendor standards," Morris says. "Every company we work with has to sign that agreement and adhere to it." The agreement encompasses fair compensation, reasonable work hours, and forbids child or forced labor. Morris claims Wal-Mart performed nearly 1,000 surprise factory inspections last year, and has stopped doing business with hundreds of manufacturers due to poor working conditions.

But Bob Ortega, author of *In Sam We Trust, the Untold Story of Sam Walton and How Wal-Mart is Devouring America*, found children working in Guatemalan factories manufacturing clothes for Wal-Mart and other retailers. Most recently Wal-Mart and 16 other retailers, have been subjects of a class action lawsuit over sweatshop conditions on Saipan, a Pacific island in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

While the global issues get tossed around occasionally, the discussion in Rockland is usually about the intensely local aspects of the supercenter: traffic, zoning and taxes. Over at the Good Tern, Dickerson says, "People are naturally concerned about what's around them. Globalization is a difficult issue, it's too big." As Dickerson stands next to the organic produce, one co-op member is stocking five-pound bags of fairly traded Equal Exchange coffee. Across the aisle a small hand-lettered card next to some colorful placemats reads, "Place mats are made by a woman's cooperative in Nepal." Dickerson looks around and says she believes it's possible to improve the global economy, "a little bit at a time."

It's the same approach Dickerson is taking with Wal-Mart. "People come in here and say we'll never be able to stop this, and I say, 'Yes we will.' We do have the power to do something. We're doing what we feel is right." ●

Murray Carpenter is a freelance writer who lives in Belfast, Me., <romy@acadia.net>.

Send a Letter to Wal-Mart

(A campaign of the People of Faith Network and the National Labor Committee)

Wal-Mart reaches annual sales of $137.6 billion a year and $7.6 billion in operating profits, yet pays workers 9 cent an hour in Bangladesh, 43 cents an hour in Honduras, and 12 cents an hour in China.

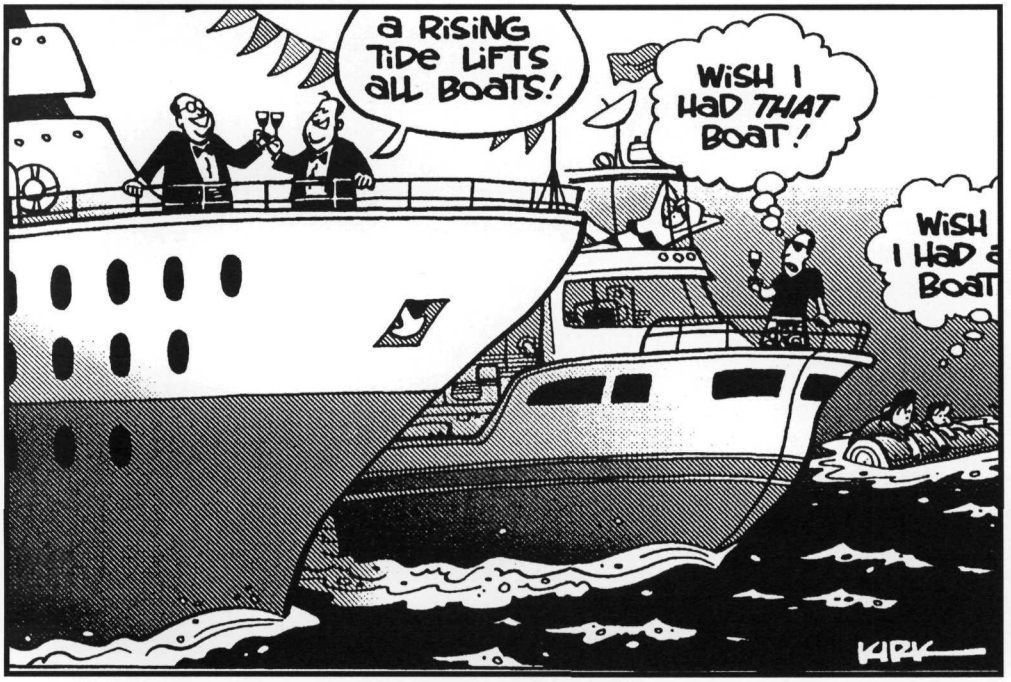
In the U.S. territory of Saipan, Wal-Mart forces young women migrant workers to work 70 hours a week, firing and deporting any worker who becomes pregnant or complains about forced overtime.

Wal-Mart refuses to provide the American people with the names and addresses of its factories, while hiding 1,000 sweatshops in China alone.

Wal-Mart needs to know that you are concerned. Please take the time to write. Letters on the letterhead of your organization will command attention. Personal letters are also effective. Please send copies of your letter to the People of Faith Network.

Address your letters to:
Mr. David Glass, CEO
Wal-Mart, Inc.
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, AR 72716
Fax: 501/273-4329

Send copies of your letters to:
People of Faith Network
C/o Lafayette Avenue
Presbyterian Church
85 So. Oxford Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
Phone: 718/625-2819
Fax: 718/625-3491



Center for American & Jewish Studies

Baylor University recently announced the opening of the Center for American and Jewish Studies, with Mark H. Ellis as director. The mission of the Center is to create a forum for the discussion of religion and public life and to create the leading center for the study of Judaism and Jewish life among Christian-identified institutions of higher learning. According to Rosemary Ruether, the Center "is the first Jewish center that takes Jewish relations to Palestinians as a central ethical challenge."

The Center's Inaugural Conference will take place Nov. 1-3, 2000 at Baylor University. Speakers include Richard Rubenstein, president of the University of Bridgeport; Mahmoud Ayoub, of Temple University; Rosemary Radford Ruether of Garret Evangelical Theological Seminary; Lawrence Carter, Dean of Martin Luther King, Jr. International Chapel, Morehouse College; and Ram Cnaan, University of Pennsylvania.

People's campaign for nonviolence

From July1 through Aug. 9, 2000, hundreds of peace and justice groups will gather in Washington, D.C. to call for disarmament and justice. The People's Campaign for Nonviolence, sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, will include 40 days and 40 nights of public vigil and protest, nonviolence training, peace education workshops and gatherings for prayer and reflection. Special events include a July 1 panel discussion featuring Daniel Berrigan, Helen Caldicott, Jim Lawson, John Dear, Marian Wright Edelman, Arun Gandhi, Mairead Corrigan Maguire and Jonathan Schell; a July 29-30 weekend of workshops and worship sponsored by The Episcopal Peace Fellowship; and a protest with Martin Sheen at the White House on Aug. 6, the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and the 10th anniversary of the economic sanctions on Iraq.

San Romero de las Americas

We gathered in the Plaza El Salvador del Mundo on Friday the 24th, for the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, commonly called *Monseñor Romero*. Little by little the crowd gathered to celebrate the Eucharist outdoors beneath the monument of Christ, the Savior of the World, the patron of the Republic of El Salvador.

By the time of the beginning of the Mass it was dark, and about 5,000 people had gathered for what was to be the beginning of a long night of celebration and story-telling.

The Mass was well organized. Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the city with the most Salvadorans outside El Salvador, was the celebrant and homilist. Archbishop Fernando Sáenz Lacalle, Archbishop of El Salvador was there too, along with many Salvadoran clergy. Lacalle is a Spaniard, with little previous experience in El Salvador. He was appointed by Rome over a couple of strong Salvadoran candidates, to keep the lid on the progressive, "people movements" in the church.

The celebration lacked the energy and passion that one can find among the Salvadoran people when they are encouraged to celebrate their deepest truths. The official church in El Salvador is ambivalent about *Monseñor Romero*. He represents the church of the people, of the struggle against poverty, oppression and inhumanity experienced still by the poor of the country, those who represent the vast majority of Salvadorans.

Romero is in the process of canonization, of becoming a saint, officially. But the saint that was celebrated that afternoon in the Plaza El Salvador del Mundo was the saint of miracles and conservative, individualistic piety. This saint had little to do with the saint that was to be remembered and celebrated later on that evening, *San Romero de las Americas*, St. Romero of the Americas, saint of the people, already canonized in the hearts of the poor.

After the Mass, about 8:30pm, we (my wife, Stephanie and Christina from the L'Arche community in Honduras) began the pilgrimage march from the plaza to the Cathedral, a distance of about four miles. By this time the crowd had grown. Estimates were that at the height of the celebration about ten thousand people were gathered.

We all had candles in the procession. Small trucks playing the music of the "popular" church were interspersed among the pilgrims, traveling along the wide and beautiful Alameda Roosevelt, the main boulevard of

San Salvador. We could see far down the boulevard, thousands of candles moving slowly toward the Plaza Civica and the great Cathedral. The energy and passion of the people, important for the celebration that was to continue in front of the old cathedral, began to emerge along the procession. People were singing. Shouts of *Que viva Monseñor Romero! Viva!* Long live Monsignor Romero! May he live! The saint of the Plaza El Salvador del Mundo was becoming the saint of the people again, the beloved of the poor, the prophet who was assassinated for his boldness and his truth: *San Romero de las Americas.*

We arrived at the Plaza Civica about 10pm. I was brought to the platform built on the front steps of the Cathedral, to represent the Episcopal Church in the U.S. and the Anglican Church of El Salvador. Originally our bishop, Martín Barahona, was to play a major role in that night's Vigil in the plaza. But he was taken to the hospital in the morning for tests and rest. He was exhausted by the high physical and emotion cost of his work in El Salvador.

On the platform with me, before the great multitudes in the plaza, were Monseñor Ricardo Urioste, well known and loved by the Salvadoran people, and the person in charge of the celebration; Bishop Medardo Gómez, Lutheran Bishop of El Salvador, somewhat of a folk hero in El Salvador for his courage and accompaniment of the people during the war; a couple of other Ecumenical leaders; Bishop Pedro Casaldáliga (Dom Pedro) of the Diocese of Sao Felix, Brazil, famous for his fight to preserve the Amazon Basin and the indigenous people who live there; Bishop Samuél Ruíz, Bishop of the deeply conflicted area of Chiapas, Southern Mexico — prophets, all of them. It was an honor beyond imagining to sit with these people who for years have been spiritual heroes of mine.

On March 24, 1980, while celebrating Mass in the small chapel on the grounds of a hospital for people with terminal cancer, the place where Romero lived in a small three room house, Romero was killed. His murderers have never been caught or judged. There is a mountain of evidence, enough for a trial, that Roberto D'Aubuson, founder of the ARENA party, the party now in power, was the organizer, in collusion with the military, of the assassination. D'Aubuson has never been put on trial. Ironically he died in the mid-1980s of cancer.

The evening in the plaza continued throughout the night with music, a video of the life of *Monseñor Romero*, with cultural events, dancing and much celebration. For me, and I'm sure for others, it was hard to imagine a celebration, in peace, in the Plaza Civica, of the life and witness of Oscar Romero. It was in this plaza during the war that people gathered to hear Romero, to voice their challenges, protests and hope before the government and military, and to bury their beloved padrecito Romero. It was in this plaza during almost all these gatherings that the El Salvadoran military threatened and killed countless *Salvadoreños*. And here we were in peace, together, honoring Romero, *San Romero de las Americas.*

Mostly unspoken were the thoughts many harbored, that the present reality in El Salvador has changed little since the war. In some sense things are worse. The voice and witness of Romero is still much needed. The few on the top of society are wealthier, the poor at the bottom are poorer. Human rights abuses continue with little redress. Violence in the country is worse than during the time of war. Most young people see little future for them in the country. Corruption and disregard of the rule of law abound.

In El Salvador, just as in many parts of the world, as in Guatemala, Haiti, and East Timor, there are millions of human beings who are slowly dying because of the injustice of poverty, and who die violently because of political and military repression. In a strict sense they are not dying because of their Christian faith, nor for announcing the Reign of God, as did Romero. They die innocently, indefensibly, without the freedom to escape death.

If they kill me, I will rise again in the Salvadoran people. (Msgr. Romero, 1980) ●

Richard A. Bower (Bower is Dean, St. Paul's Cathedral in Syracuse, N.Y. and a member of the board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publisher of The Witness.)

Betty LaDuke

JUBILEE

Wrapped in a mantle of freedom and responsibility

by Susan S. Keller

IN THE LAST YEAR, Jubilee has become a familiar word for millions of Christians around the world. As an African American, I recognize Jubilee as a central thread woven into the fabric of African-American spirituality. Jubilee is a biblical reality grounded in the will of God for justice and liberation.

The thread was spun (two strands) and dyed during the time of slavery. This was the time of the "invisible church," when slaves met in secret to worship God, praise Jesus and rejoice in the power of the Spirit. The Spirituals of this period are Jubilee songs. As Gwendolyn Sims Warren relates in *Ev'ry Time I Feel the Spirit* (Henry Holt, 1997), these songs of the enslaved are Jubilee songs because in the midst of despair they found faith in God, fortitude and hope. Many spirituals had double meanings (such as "Steal Away to Jesus") for use in escape to freedom. Not only music, but stories and craft work as well. Quilts were created with different designs used in an intricate system of the underground railroad. The wagon wheel pattern was used to indicate the start of a journey. I can imagine women, working late in slave cabins, stitching a wagon wheel pattern while singing, "Ezekiel saw the wheel, way up in the middle of the air ..." For me the wheel affirms the presence and providence of God and the wheels of justice rolling to freedom.

African-American Jubilee spirituality understands liberation as a communal event. Salvation is the gift to individuals, for the life and health of community, that the community may live as a witness to power of God. Therefore individuals have the moral obligation to live in harmony, that the community may survive and thrive as a Jubilee people.

During slavery times Jubilee offered the affirmation of blacks as a people of worth. After Emancipation and during Jim Crow, the Jubilee emphasis was for social uplift, education and striving for excellence in all enterprises. Despite segregation and violence, Jubilee spirituality strengthened the people for survival and progress. And during the Civil Rights era, Jubilee spirituality empowered the people to awaken a nation to unjust practices while empowering the poor and oppressed to be agents of change.

Enduring aspects of Jubilee spirituality

Individualism is a strong current in American culture. Jubilee spirituality, however, understands the individual person primarily in relation to kinfolk and the wider community. A good person is one who contributes to the life of the community. Community life, in turn, provides individuals with encouragement, a sense of identity and boundaries of right and wrong. Community practices of celebration, physical health, economic health, political participation and education give individuals a sense of participation, honor and destiny. Measures of community health, according to Joyce A. Ladner in *The Ties That Bind: Timeless Values for African*

American Families (John Wiley, 1998), are the way the community treats its children, its elderly and its outlaws.

Flowing from this emphasis on kinship and community, Jubilee spirituality's moral virtues are beneficence, forbearance, practical wisdom, improvisation and forgiveness. Beneficence is the art of hospitality, love and service. It is the quality of living for the well-being of others.

Forbearance is the art of patience — of biding until the proper time for action. Forbearance includes reflection and waiting. Forbearance strengthens the art of non-violent resistance and is not to be confused with submission or capitulation. It is the art of standing in place at the crossroads in order not to act impulsively or unjustly.

Practical wisdom is the art of creative, proverbial thinking that guides good actions. It is the advice, given from the experience of elders and the wise. Practical wisdom should be nurtured in children through mentoring and teaching in intergenerational settings.

Improvisation is the art of creative expression. It is invention in the face of poverty. It is art in the face of despair. It is the unpredictable variation on a theme that widens our perception to embrace a wider unity. Improvisation is multi-rhythmic expression that enhances our senses to experience beauty.

Forgiveness is essential for the ongoing life of community because hatred takes a greater toll. Accepting and giving forgiveness in appropriate channels opens the mind and heart and gives life to our spirit. Our moral responsibility is to build relationships, so forgiveness is an important spiritual tool to bring healing, restoration and balance within the community.

Celebrating liberation, remembering history

Jubilee celebrates liberation, liberation understood in the context of community. As persons, our destinies are intertwined. The Leviticus scriptures also state that Jubilee is a time for return; each to their own property and to their own family. Jubilee spirituality thus calls us to "know where we come from; to reach back to our ancestors and roots." To explore the Jubilee traditions, culture and values is in itself a time of return and restoration. In returning we can honor and improve our relationships with extended family, we can lift up the values that helped us to survive and excel. We can celebrate the lives of women and men. In returning we can reflect upon what was meant by justice and emancipation then, in order to inform our acts of justice and hope for freedom now.

I am reminded of an experience with Christian college students a few years ago. In a discussion between African-American and Anglo students, the question was asked why it seemed blacks focused on slavery. One student remarked, "We tell the story not to enrage, but that we might never forget and that it not ever occur again." The Anglo students viewed the discussion from an individualistic viewpoint, with the remembering seen as an accusation of current individual racist practices. The African-American students viewed the discussion from a communal viewpoint — for them the healing included the remembering in order to guard against continuing systematic practices.

Jubilee spirituality remembers that we were once enslaved. It keeps in our hearts that our lives today are due to people who were poor and oppressed. In times of economic prosperity, to ignore injustice and oppression would be to cut us loose from our past and heritage.

Affirming connections between communities

One of our greatest contemporary challenges is the issue of diversity and multiculturalism. Jubilee spirituality affirms God as the creator of all life and all peoples. Jubilee affirms each person's dignity and worth and each community's value and responsibility. Relations between different communities start from the affirmation of the creative impulse of God that produces a variety of languages, cultures and skin tones. Jubilee spirituality affirms the earth and the multiplicity of peoples as good, because God has so proclaimed. In a Jubilee context, justice between communities begins first with God and continues through our understanding of responsibilities, forgiveness, mutuality, common points and reconciliation. As injustice occurs between groups, communities need agreement on common points to be able to act with justice and healing restoration. Jubilee spirituality wraps us in a mantle of both freedom and responsibility.

One of my favorite spirituals says, "Over my head, Over my head, I hear music in the air, Over my head I hear music in the air, Over my head I hear music in the air, there must be a God somewhere." Jubilee spirituality's most basic affirmation is the presence and providence of God. That is the essence of the motto for the urban youth program I work with on Sunday evenings: "A Godless Life is a Hopeless Life." And so, in a spirit of Jubilee, we are attempting to give these young people what every person needs to survive and thrive: a community that affirms their worth, that provides a safe place, that anchors them in a Jubilee heritage, that teaches them values and life skills and celebrates Jesus' liberating word. ●

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Probing global richness and diversity

by Marianne Arbogast

TRAVELING IN THE SOUTH in the summer of 1951, Betty LaDuke discovered that she could "pass" for black. Suntanned after working in a cotton field, the 18-year-old daughter of Russian and Polish immigrants to the Bronx had walked into a Memphis café where white people didn't eat, and was taken for a light-complexioned African-American. For the rest of the summer, she maintained that identity, riding in the back of buses and using public facilities designated as "black-only." The experience "opened up a new world" to her, LaDuke says.

It was the first of many worlds that LaDuke was to enter and then open to others through her artwork. LaDuke's vision transcends borders of culture, nationality and religion. But the images, colors and symbols in her artwork are grounded in her experiences of the very particular people and places she has visited in a lifetime of travel. Through her journeys, she has contemplated "an amazing unfolding of our world, how complex and rich and diverse it is," LaDuke says.

"That's why I hate globalization in the sense of trying to make McDonald's everywhere or make us all look alike in jeans."

From her childhood, LaDuke's life has been characterized by diversity. Growing up in a multi-ethnic neighborhood, she spent summers at an inter-racial Workers' Children's Camp. Her first art mentors were Charles White and Elizabeth Catlett, African-American art counselors at the camp. They communicated to LaDuke their sense of art as connected to community — different from the "art for art's sake" perspective she would later encounter in school. Since they had both spent time in Mexico, LaDuke set her sights there as well, winning a scholarship her third year in college to study at the Instituto Allende in San Miguel.

LaDuke stayed in Mexico for three-and-a-half years, moving from formal studies to independent work. She spent one year painting murals on one-room schoolhouses with the Otomi Indian people. In government-sponsored exhibitions, LaDuke was counted among the "new generation of Mexican artists." In Mexico, she also observed the close relationship of people to the earth, which would become a continuing theme in her own work.

When LaDuke returned to New York, she met her first husband, Sun Bear or Vincent LaDuke, a Native American political activist. They moved to Los Angeles, where LaDuke continued her education, gave birth to her daughter, Winona LaDuke, and separated from her husband. After earning her Master's degree, she joined the faculty at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, Ore. There she met and married Peter Westigard, an agricultural scientist, and had a second child, Jason Westigard.

With her first sabbatical in 1972, LaDuke traveled to India — the first of a series of journeys which would deeply impact her work.

"I'm a woman, I'm an artist, I'm a teacher," LaDuke says, "and when I traveled I would try to meet my peer group and see what their lives were like, their social situation, their issues that they dealt with in various art forms in various media. There was a tremendous focus in the 1970s on western women's art — which was necessary and important, but I realized there was a big gap between western white women's art as opposed to the art of people in third-world cultures."

LaDuke developed two new courses — Women and Art, and Art in the Third World. She also published six books.

"The writing became an outgrowth of the travel and a way of honoring these women, making them visible to my students and to the larger community," she says.

"I'M A WOMAN,

I'M AN ARTIST,

I'M A TEACHER."

Her most recent book, *Women Against Hunger: A Sketchbook Journey*, came into being after Freedom from Hunger — a nonprofit working with women's credit associations and health education — sent LaDuke to the regions where they sponsored projects.

"I saw the different ways their programs functioned on four continents, and that was pretty amazing," LaDuke says. "Allowing the women to develop their own projects and pay back the money at very low interest, and also receive health education, was a wonderful way to build community, to strengthen women's position in the villages and to strengthen their economic bases."

LaDuke has seen first-hand the devastating effects of the global food market.

"The thing that's saddest is that, so often, people aren't producing the food that they themselves need for survival," she says. "A lot of the products get exported, and the stuff that does sustain families is done by women on a more difficult basis."

In recent years, LaDuke has traveled extensively in Africa.

"I have a tremendous appreciation for the local cultures and the tremendous diversity," LaDuke says. "Africa is so rich in that sense, and much of the culture is still intact, through language, through village life, through traditions that are centuries-old. I find a great deal of beauty in these day-to-day traditions that people share and I want to catch that, rather than to emphasize the negative that is so much a part of the media.

"The popularization of American culture all over is pretty strong, but there are a lot of choices, too. Folks in Africa love the Jamaican music and Bob Marley and a lot of the political lyrics — plus, they

have their own stars who are really touching upon issues. And some countries have a tremendous amount of pride and limit imports — of fabric, for example — to maintain their own identity."

LaDuke has been elated to find that her work has had some tangible effects in the lives of some of the women she has visited. In Mali this past summer, she learned that her book, *Africa Through the Eyes of Women Artists*, had helped one of the women she wrote about to expand her mud cloth production.

"The book brought people from around the world to her doorstep, visiting and buying her work. It enabled her daughter to stay in high school, rather than be married at a young age, and her sons are working for her, doing the technical aspects of mud cloth painting. Her house now has electricity, and her husband who sells fishing nets now has a little motorbike."'

She is also proud that a women's weaving collective in Zimbabwe is using her artwork as patterns for their weavings. "I had left them notecards, then I sent them some posters, and they felt my work was very African. I felt very honored."

LaDuke's deepest connections have been in Eritrea, where she has spent time yearly since 1994.

"I taught there and I did a workshop there, and I got to know the artists very well," she says.

"Eritrea has been one of the most ambitious countries to make improvements for the people and there is a tremendous sense of self-determination."

Working with the Asmara School of Art, LaDuke produced a video called *Eritrean Artists in War and Peace*. The royalties — along with half of her poster royalties — go to the art school.

"I came at a time of peace, and then war renewed between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998. I'd never been to refugee camps before, I'd never been to a war zone, I'd never seen displaced people. But what caught me about these two countries was their Coptic Christian religion. People on both sides of the border have this close link, especially in the war area, and I visited churches on both sides of the border. Here these mothers are sharing the equal misery of families broken up because of the war."

LaDuke's most recent series of paintings, "Eritrea-Ethiopia, Prayers for Peace," reveals the deep impression these mothers made on her.

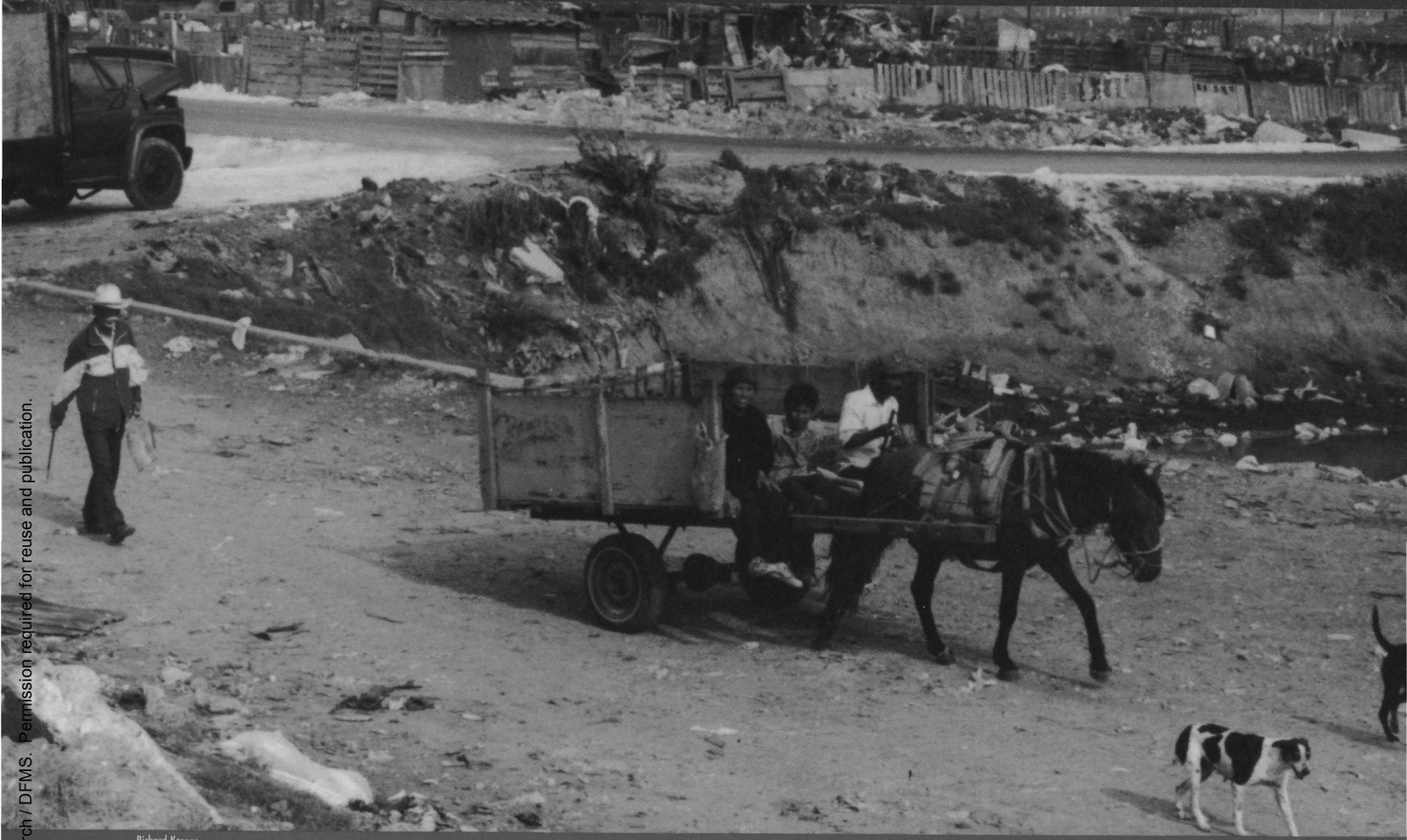
"Angels were a dominant theme in some of the ancient churches in Ethiopia," she explains. "I loved the angel forms and the fact that they had different personalities. They weren't all serene and politely smiling. Some of them were passive, but some of them seemed to be downcast, angry with people for their follies and almost judgmental. So I did a parody on it. I connected them with people, and mothers, especially, who are making this effort to bring the war to an end and bring their families home again."

LaDuke sees the spiritual themes in her work as "an honoring of many different religions and religious experiences." She describes her own spirituality as "an awareness of a tremendous energy that keeps us all connected and going, a timeless kind of energy, and the importance of just honoring life."

Her own family embodies the diversity that she celebrates.

"My daughter is very much steeped in Native American tradition; my son is married to a woman whose parents were born in Ireland, and their kids are getting baptized in the Catholic tradition; my present husband came from a tradition that was probably Episcopalian. Then my parents are Jewish — I grew up speaking Yiddish and learning a great deal about Jewish culture, but not with a religious focus. So we've got this great multi-cultural mix, and I feel happy with it and see the common threads that link human beings together." ●

Betty LaDuke will be receiving the Vida Scudder Award at The Witness' *July 9 reception at the St. Francis Center during the Episcopal Church's General Convention in Denver, Colo. LaDuke's artwork and schedule of exhibitions can be found at <www.bettyladuke.com>. Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of* The Witness, *<marianne@thewitness.org>.*



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