

CHARITABLE CHOICES

NUMBER 10

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on the cover

Gate Church in Detroit

©Jim West

People pick up donated food just

before Christmas at the Straight

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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LETTERS

Reimagining faith and action

Another great issue!! (TW 7-8/01) The 10 copies disappear quickly from my Peace and Justice table at All Saints, Pasadena. We have several groups studying David Korten's "Post Corporate" world. Many thanks!!

Robert Miller Duarte, CA

Colombia report

In the 1800s native people were being moved to what was later called Oklahoma. There were many who had lived on the same lands for many generations, actually thousands of years. They didn't want to leave. The troops killed them. That was when the Platte River ran red with blood.

In March 2001, I joined 10 others from the Fellowship of Reconciliation/Global Exchange on a delegation to Colombia. I am a member of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In Bogota and Medellin we met with human rights groups, families of the detained and the disappeared and then we went into the mountains of northern Colombia where the indigenous people live. They live very simply in peace and co-op communities. Their land is rich in mineral wealth and they are under continuous attacks by right-wing paramilitary forces who are private armies of the transnationals to drive the people out. Just a few days before we were at this one community, the paramilitary had come down the river with army helicopter support. The community ran into the jungle and many of their homes were burned.

There is a movement to legalize the paramilitary. I am reminded of the historical reports of when the Platte ran red. I am originally from Missouri near there.

We met with the army general in the district who supported the actions of the paramilitary. He told us that he had been trained at the School of the Americas and the Petroleum Institute.

We were told by labor unions that the FLAA would be devastating to labor in

Colombia. It would further cheaper labor and devastate human rights.

Jim Pence Vancouver, BC

Hugh White

I just recently learned of the death of Hugh White, an associate editor of *The Witness* in the 1970s and 1980s. The enclosed check is a donation to the magazine in his memory.

I knew and frequently worked with Hugh while he was in Detroit and I was with the church's Joint Urban Program in the 1960s. The industrial-missions network was very much a part of that national effort and Hugh was of course a major influence and inspiration for me and many others. We became good personal friends until dropping out of touch a dozen years ago. I know how important *The Witness* was to him. This small gift is to help keep that voice strong

Thanks for your work, too. Anthony Morley Minneapolis, MN

Let's push for change

We cannot simply read Mark Hertsgaard's provocative, encouraging article, "Global Greening? The time for a 'Global Green Deal' has come," and shake our heads in wistful resignation to the status quo (*TW* 4/01). I'm sending copies of it to my two Senators and urge every subscriber to do the same.

It's the first time I've read anything about our environment that speaks positively and specifically to BIG GOVERNMENT, BIG BUSINESS and other nations that "we have in hand most of the technologies needed to chart a new course." He cites companies that have cut their greenhouse gas emissions in half, while enjoying 50 percent and higher returns on investment through improved efficiency.

Let's push for change. "We have no time to lose."

Mary K. Rouillard Fort Edward, NY



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Shifting from charity to change

by Charlie Bernstein

Reclaiming jubilee

Last June the board of the Episcopal Church Publising Company (ECPC is publisher of The Witness and our website's related "a global Witness" project) met with staff of the Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations in Washington, D.C. The young, energetic policy analysts there offered much helpful information on a variety of bills then moving through Congress, among them President George W. Bush's Faith-Based Initiatives/Charitable Choice proposals.

The advocacy work these hardworking staffers in this busy Capitol Hill office are doing was authorized by a visionary piece of Episcopal Church legislation passed at the church's 1982 General Convention — Resolution A-80A, declaring a "priority ministry commitment" to be called "The Jubilee Ministry."

A-80A reminded the church that "the Year of Jubilee decreed by God (Leviticus 25) demands a time of new beginnings, when the relationships of power and servitude come to an end and all members of society are restored to equality and freedom." The resolution also affirmed that "a ministry of joint discipleship in Christ with poor and oppressed people ... to meet basic human needs and to build a just society is at the heart of the mission of the Church."

None of the political rhetoric surrounding "charitable choice" has embraced this fundamental conviction. What we've heard instead is do-gooder talk disembodied from solid social and economic analysis — and subtly oriented toward an elitist agenda. If the religious community wishes to be more involved in meeting the social-welfare needs of our citizens, faithfulness demands an aggressive commitment to bringing radical social change, not to standing in for government.

Julie A. Wortman is Editor/Publisher of The Witness.

NYONE WISHING to become involved in making charity and philanthropy more responsive to the movements that aim to make charity obsolete should read David Wagner's What's Love Got to Do with It? A Critical Look at American Charity (The New Press, 2000), which offers a concise historical account of how charity in the U.S. evolved as a partner in perpetuating poverty. Wagner asks: "What if [Cesar] Chavez, Martin Luther King, Jr., Thomas Paine, Eugene V. Debs, Margaret Sanger or Mother Jones had been content to serve at soup kitchens or join a religious mission somewhere? What if they had become therapists or professional administrators?"

At its very roots, Wagner argues, American charity benefits the haves at the have-nots' expense, complementing our broader social practice of rewarding good fortune with better, while punishing the poor for a supposed deficit of moral fiber. In this ethic, the job of charity is not to shift wealth or power from haves to have-nots, but to meet enough of poor people's needs to keep them alive, but not kicking — at the same time allowing affluent donors and charity leaders to feel socially engaged and virtuous.

"[T]he fight for pensions, unemployment benefits, or the minimum wage," Wagner says, "has often united working-class, poor and even middle-income groups, but social-service approaches often individualize problems or divide classes and communities, removing collective struggle from the table."

Charity, in short, has little to do with love.

In a review of Wagner's book, John Buell adds that the social-change movement "will have to make demystification of charity part of its political practice" (see *The Maine Progressive*, www.maineprogressive.org, 3/30/01). Such a demystification will require, in part, getting a handle on how to shift American giving from charity to change.

For roughly a quarter century, a social-change funding movement has been growing in the U.S., transforming how many of us give and think about giving. Though this movement still only accounts for a small part of American generosity — less than 3 percent of all private giving to nonprofits, according to the National Network of Grantmakers (www.nng.org) — that's a marked increase. The movement is real. And it's a growth industry.

The Funding Exchange (www.fex.org) is a national association of the new breed of progressive foundations attracting donations from people who want positive social change. One thing that sets foundations like these apart is that, in addition to large gifts, smaller donations are often solicited and welcomed. Twenty-five-dollar donations are numerous. The message is, in effect: "You don't have to be rich to be a philanthropist — you just have to find a cause to believe in and support it." The result is that at least some foundations are funding exactly the kind of root-cause programs traditional philanthropy tends to neglect. The donor/grantee relationship is no longer benefactor/supplicant, but a partnership.

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The most dramatic example of this smaller-gifts-and-more-of-them trend is the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (www.nccbuscc.org/cchd/) that raises its money through an annual second collection taken the Sunday after Thanksgiving in every Catholic church in the country. (Think about it!) Though CCHD does not support groups that counter Catholic doctrine — for instance, in such areas as birth control — it has nonetheless been of sweeping benefit to poor people's movements in every state. Since its founding in 1969, CCHD has raised and distributed over \$250 million among nearly 4,000 low-income organizing projects.

It's true that, unlike CCHD, most social-justice funders would have a hard time surviving on small contributions. All have wealthy donors. But that's relative. None was started with corporate mega-mega-endowments. They're driven by much smaller donations. Their methods of giving also counter the norm. New England's Haymarket People's Fund (www.haymarket.org), for instance, relies on volunteer activists, not board or staff, to distribute its donors' money. Its founding donors intentionally distanced themselves from grant-award decisions, believing that local activists know what's best for their own communities.

So "Change, not charity" is emerging as a real 21st-century philanthropic theme. Unlike traditional philanthropic giving, the object is not to relieve government — we, the people — of the "burden" of social welfare, but to hold policy-makers accountable to the people. This democratizing approach turns out to be attractive to many donors.

There are also efforts to expand the progressive giving movement itself. Changemakers (www.changemakersfund.org) was launched last year to assist "the leaders and institutions that build community-based philanthropy." It makes grants to leading funding innovators around the country. Likewise, the National Center for Responsive Philanthropy (www.ncrp.org) has since 1976 conducted research, provided technical assistance, advocated progressive giving policies and guided foundations, corporations, workplace giving programs and individuals into ways of funding social change more effectively. Similarly, Neighborhood

Funders Group (www.nfg.org) both educates larger foundations about the value and methods of grassroots organizing and advocates for social-change funding.

Another rapidly growing aspect of social-change funding is progressive workplace giving. The National Alliance for Choice in Giving (www.choiceingiving.org) is made up of a growing number of so-called federated campaigns in the United Way model. Like a United Way, these groups enable people to give at work through an annual campaign. Unlike most United Way giving, the money goes to groups that emphasize social change.

Still another kind of grassroots fundraising is canvassing. Statewide door-to-door and phone canvasses across the country may number in the hundreds. This represents wildfire growth since their advent in the mid-1970s. These canvasses encourage ordinary people to give in their own self-interest — for clean air and water, affordable health care and utilities, electoral reform, and much more. What's more, they recruit many of those contributors as active players — real people dealing with real policy issues. USAction (www.usaction.org) is a national federation of statewide citizen action groups. The clout of these groups, which are reaching millions each year, defies calculation.

While social service providers, who survive mainly on grants (from government, foundations, and corporations) and fees for service, often complain that changing the system is difficult because they're funder-driven, grassroots social-change leaders, supported mainly by individuals, consider themselves funder-powered, drawing their strength from the communities or movements they benefit. The Midwest Academy (www.mindspring.com/~midwestacademy/) provides a good discussion of the whys and hows of such grassroots organizing.

Networks of individual progressive philanthropists are also coming together. A number of funding groups now host "wealth conferences," at which donors discuss and explore how to effect social change through their giving. These events particularly attract people who believe that the best legacy they can leave their heirs is not an enriched university endowment, a plaque on a museum wing, or a bequest to yet another generation, but the

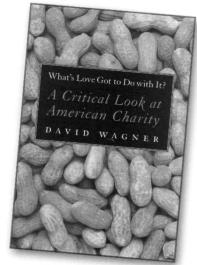
seeds of a just society and a sustainable future.

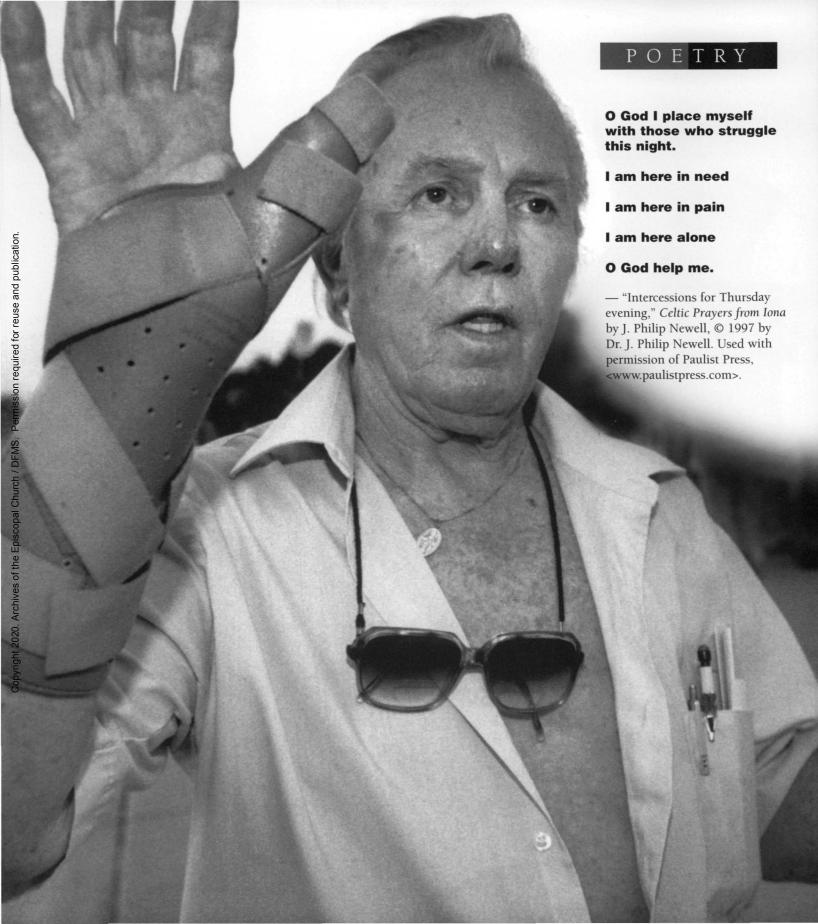
Another networking example comes from the other side of the generation tracks: Cambridge-based Resource Generation (www.resourcegeneration.org), the locus of a nationwide network of young progressives with trust funds (they call themselves "cool rich kids") committed to undoing the inequities inherent in American culture. They're not driven by old-fashioned altruism or by guilt. They believe that the growing concentration of wealth is jeopardizing our future, and that redistribution of wealth (starting with their own, given strategically) can save it. Today they're giving to movements that will redistribute wealth - and recruiting friends and family as well.

The bottom line: Social-change giving is happening, and it's zig-zagging across class boundaries as traditional philanthropy never has. Many nonprofits are also beginning to talk the language of change to prospective donors in all income brackets.

Still, not to paint a too-rosy picture, social change giving remains just a sliver of the American-giving pie. Wagner would, I'm sure, remind us that current practices continue to marginalize the poor quite efficiently. That means that if charitable giving is to evolve into a vehicle for social progress, the message of democratized social-change giving needs the widest possible airing.

Charlie Bernstein works at Maine Initiatives (www.maineinitiatives.org), a social-change fund. An earlier version of this article appeared in The Maine Progressive.

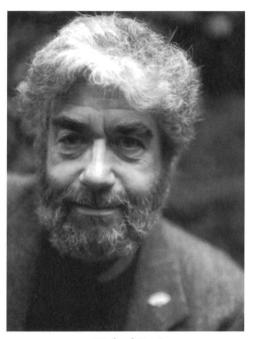




DON'T BE CHARITABLE

Arrange it so that they have power

An interview with Michael Zweig by Jane Slaughter



Michael Zweig

N THE WORKING CLASS MAJORITY: America's Best Kept Secret (Cornell University Press, 2000), Michael Zweig pulls the covers off "America's best kept secret." He's not interested simply in an exposé. Zweig believes that an understanding of class is essential to understanding power in society—and to winning more power for one class by restricting another. That, he says, is "a project of democracy," since the working class, as he defines it, makes up 62 percent of the population. Zweig, who teaches economics at the State University of New York, Stony Brook, and volunteers with the Southold Fire Department in Long Island, is also the

author of *Religion and Economic Justice*. In that book, he argues that a concern for the poor is most effective when understood not as charity but as "an alliance with the working class."

T.W.: It's the conventional wisdom in America that we've overcome classes, that everyone is middle class. In my seventh-grader's U.S. History class, they learned that on the frontier there were no classes. Why did you decide to try to convince people that there is a working class and that most Americans are in it?

M.Z.: Over the last 30 years a lot of good attention has been paid to race and gender, but very little to class. And in fact the media puts forth some very misleading ideas about class. For example, every 20 minutes on the news it's the Dow Jones this and the NAS-DAQ that. You would get the impression that everybody in the country is involved in the stock market, that we're all a little bit capitalist. The fact is that less than half the people have anything at all to do with the stock market, even just belonging to a pension fund that's invested. If you want to have an influence over income and wealth and tax policy and affirmative action and all kinds of very practical day-to-day matters, it's important to know about class.

T.W.: You often hear even union leaders referring to "middle-class workers." Why has the working class disappeared from public view?

M.Z.: When people talk about "middle-class workers," what they mean is workers who have a house and a decent life, who aren't living in abject poverty. They think of anybody who has a decent life as a middle-class person, decent in terms of their consumption. But if we look at class just in terms of income or lifestyle, we miss what class is really about, which is power.

Of course, different classes have different incomes and lifestyles, but it's power that gives you the different incomes and lifestyles. From having different amounts of power you get different amounts of wealth, different status, different access to the media and having your ideas and your needs represented.

Many workers — not all — now live the way middle-class people, managers and small-business owners, lived 50 years ago. That's because unions and social movements won higher wages, Social Security, unemployment compensation, a Fair Labor Standards Act. All these things have improved the lives of workers, but they're still workers. They're still a working class that does not have much power.

T.W.: How do you differentiate classes on the basis of power?

M.Z.: I look at occupation. If someone doesn't have much control over their work, that's a working-class person. A cashier in a supermarket is a working-class job. A stockbroker is also a salesperson, but the stockbroker has enough authority and power at work to shape what they do and have some independence. So that person is middle class.

THE POOR..



The working class is not just blue-collar industrial workers; the working class is also the people who are writing basic computer code, bank tellers, elevator repair people. If you count the numbers of people who are in each occupation, which the U.S. Department of Labor does, I find that about 62 percent of the labor force are working-class people.

The middle class is the professional people, small business owners, managers, supervisors, and that's about 36 percent of the labor force. They have middle amounts of authority and control. And then the capitalists are about 2 percent.

The capitalists are the people who have the power to make decisions about production, not just in industry but in finance, real estate, all aspects of the economy. The people who have the ultimate power to run those industries are the capitalist class. It includes owners of small businesses, but on a national level, there are only about 200,000

people who run businesses that have a national scope.

Understanding class as power helps us look very directly at who has power and how they exercise it in the economy, in culture, in politics. There's a lot of discussion about campaign finance reform, about corporate control of the media and the images that we see, the kinds of things that are represented to us as news or as entertainment: These are all class questions. Because the capitalist class has certain interests and certain ideas about how life should be organized. Ultimately, they use their power not only to run the economy but to maintain their power to keep on doing that.

If you understand class as power, you can understand better who are your friends, who are your enemies, what kind of coalitions can you build, how can you influence events. If you only understand class as income, a lot of that disappears.

For example, the usual way people think about class is that most people are middleclass, it's a middle-class society with some rich people at the top - David Rockefeller and Bill Gates and Madonna. Then there's the poor at the bottom, the "underclass." Then if we notice that everyone we know is experiencing degraded working conditions, and that more people in our families are working to make the same income, and that we don't have time for our children, we're working longer hours, with less medical coverage — if people want to do something about this, where is the target? Who's the enemy, who's responsible? The way politics has played out in this country over the last 20 years is that the problem is poor people. The middle class is suffering because poor people are taking away our tax money and they're living on welfare and they're coming into this country and they're taking away our jobs —

An "Ethnic Anglican" considers classism

by Ian T. Douglas

NCE, EARLY IN OUR MARRIAGE, when my wife and I were vacationing with her parents, my mother-in-law asked me over breakfast: "Ian, why are you an Episcopalian?" Somewhat taken aback by the question, I wondered what was she after? "What do you mean?" I asked. She responded. "You do not seem like other Episcopalians." My interest was piqued. I had a creeping suspicion that my mother-in-law was not making an observation about my religious beliefs but rather about my cultural identity and class background. I asked a second time: "What do you mean?" "Well," she said, "you're not like the Episcopalians I knew in Philadelphia." My suspicions were beginning to be confirmed. Because I am basically a troublemaker, and because I love my mother-in-law dearly and we enjoy a wonderful relationship, I felt free to push her a little further. "What do you mean?" I questioned a third time. She replied in a matter-of-fact manner: "It seems that, unlike the Episcopalians I knew along the Mainline, you are not of the silver-service, tea-sipping upper class." Taking this as a compliment, I found myself answering her inquiry, quite unreflectively, "I'm in the Episcopal Church because I'm an ethnic Anglican."

What does it mean to be an "ethnic Anglican" and what does such an appellation have to do with class and class analysis?

I grew up in a working-class family in Fitchburg, Mass. In my home town, religious affiliation was intimately connected to the immigrant community with which one primarily identified. Finnish folk went to Messiah Lutheran, Greeks to Holy Trinity Orthodox, *Quebecois* to St. Francis', Arcadians to St. Joseph's, Italians to St. Leo's, the Irish to St. Bernard's (these latter four being Roman Catholic churches), and immigrants from England to Christ Episcopal Church.

Just before the Great Depression, my father's parents immigrated to the U.S. from England and found employment in the paper factories of Fitchburg. At about the same time my mother's parents traveled south from Quebec to work in the city's woolen mills. My parents' question was: Do they raise their two boys as *Quebecois* Roman Catholics or English Anglicans? They chose the latter and so our family attended Christ Episcopal Church in Fitchburg.

Growing up in Christ Church, it was clear to me at an early age that two classes existed in the parish. There were the mill owners, an old family with deep roots in New England who built, paid for, and ran the church. Then there was the rest of us, the mill workers who filled the pews. In our eyes, the mill owners were the real Episcopalians and we were the immigrant ethnic Anglicans in their church. It was clear that we were second class, economically and religiously.

The ethnic Anglicans at Christ Church, Fitchburg, were well aware of the classism within the parish and in the wider Episcopal Church. As is so often the case, however, those who were privileged by the class structures, the mill owners, had no idea that classism was rife in the parish. That's how privilege works. Those who enjoy the power do not realize they are carrying an "invisible backpack of privilege." This was as true for the mill owners at Christ Church as it is for others in our communities who continue to be privileged because they are white, or male, or straight.

The Episcopal Church has begun to address the evils of racism, sexism, and heterosexism by unmasking the structures of oppression that privilege some at the

continued in bar on opposite page

T.W.: And they're still poor!

M.Z.: But boy, are they making a mess out of our lives. What you get from that view is a lot of sentiment against immigration, against people on welfare, a lot of racism. The poor become the target. That gets you welfare "reform," it gets you criminalization of drug use, the prison-industrial complex—all that follows from "the poor are the enemy."

What's the alternative? Are "the rich" the enemy? Poor people aren't poor because there are rich people. Poor people are poor because they are workers who aren't getting paid decent wages. Or they're poor because they don't have jobs. They're poor because capitalists have decided not to keep their industries in the cities and have moved them away somewhere so that people are left without work and without an infrastructure and tax base. The capitalists are responsible for those decisions because they're capitalists, not because they're rich.

So if all you have in your mind as a picture of society is a very broad middle class with a few rich and a few poor, you have no appropriate political target. You get a very confused politics that most working people



Photo by Jim Wes

walk away from. Which is exactly what we see. People don't vote, they don't have any confidence in the political process.

Understanding our way through this thicket of politics, culture, and economics, it's very helpful to understand that most people are working-class people: They work for a living, supervised by, and ultimately controlled by, a capitalist class that has different interests and wants to keep these working people powerless. In fact, the capitalists employ whole arrays of managerial personnel to keep them powerless, as well as intellectuals and professionals. But those middle-class people also have a sense of professional responsibility and want their independence, and they can come to resent the restrictions that are placed on them by the capitalists. So the middle class is not only in the middle in terms of income, the middle class is in the middle of labor and capital, caught between them.

Part of maintaining your power is to hide it, and to get people to think that there isn't any power involved at all, it's just the way things are. It's a struggle even to get a discussion of classes out, because it is such a highly charged and dangerous notion. What did we see when Al Gore went to the Democratic Party Convention and talked about "working families"? George Bush and all these pundits went nuts. "This is class warfare, we can't allow this." Peggy Noonan, the columnist and former Reagan speechwriter, was on television beside herself: "I thought we gave up this language years ago ..."

Gore stopped talking about working families and went back to talking about middleclass tax cuts. Any discussion of class is very consciously repressed.

T.W.: Don't a lot of ordinary people seem to have a stake in thinking of themselves as having made it into the middle class?

M.Z.: It all depends on how you ask the question. If you ask most people, "What class are you—upper-class, middle-class, or lower-class?" most people, 85 or 90 percent, will say "middle-class." Because they know they're not upper-class, and they don't want to be lower-class, so what else are they going to say? But if you change the question and say, "What class are you—upper-class, mid-

dle-class, working-class, or lower-class?" 55-60 percent of American people say "working-class." Despite all the consumerism and upward mobility and "this is America, anybody can be anything."

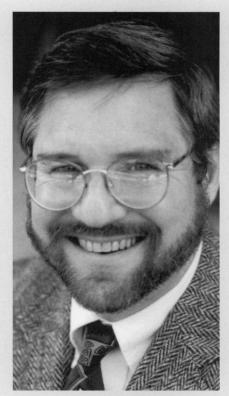
Even if people are just asked, "Are you middle-class or working-class?" still a majority, 55 or 60 percent, will say "working-class." So people do think of themselves that way. They may not spontaneously say it, because it's not part of the culture or the language or the media, it's not what you see on television, it's not the way anything is discussed on the news. It's America's best-kept secret.

People will identify themselves as workers, but they also don't want to have that carry with it a connotation of doom, of being trapped, of yet one more obstacle. People don't like to think that their future has been taken away from them. If the point of saying to somebody "you're a worker," is to put them into a category that says you have no hope, you're stuck here in the factory, you're stuck here at this cash register, people will resent that. But if "you're a worker" means that you have a respected role in society, people don't want to run away from that.

T.W.: Does the fact that people can work hard and move into better occupations than their parents make the whole idea of class less important?

M.Z.: The fact that people can advance does mean that we don't have a caste system where we're born into who we will be forever. People do move across classes (although the biggest indicator of where a person is going to end up in the class structure is where their parents started out). That's a wonderful and important feature of American capitalist life. But that can't be true for society as a whole. Everybody can't leave the working class. There has got to be a working class, and it has to be a majority of the population because that's how the economy is organized and how wealth is created.

T.W.: Some people say you shouldn't raise the issue of class because it's divisive. The idea of class struggle doesn't bring people together.



Ian T. Douglas

expense of others. We have a long way to go, however, in addressing the sin of classism in our midst. We must first recognize and admit that classism is alive and well in our church. We must listen to the experiences of the many "ethnic Anglicans" and other working-class folk among our clergy and in our parishes who have born the brunt of classism in the Episcopal Church. And we must link efforts to overcome classism with the church's other antioppression work. As we continue to struggle together to overcome the sins of racism, sexism, heterosexism and classism in the church and in the world, we will live into the promise of God's freedom for all made real in Jesus Christ.

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M.Z.: If you look over the last 30 years, there's no question that there's been very intense class struggle and class warfare in this country. The only thing is that only one class seems to know it. And they don't want to talk about it.

The capitalist class is waging unrelenting, very deliberate, very well-thought-through warfare on American working people and workers all over the world. It's a warfare that involves attacks on unions, on individual workers who want to organize unions, on poor workers, on low-wage workers, women workers, on African American and immigrant labor-these are the people who have been targeted to have their living standards reduced, and that's been a very conscious program to "make America competitive." The idea that America has to be competitive is sold to us as a question of national pride, but what it actually is is a program for the capitalists who run the economy to make money by degrading the lives of working people.

Calling that out and recognizing it isn't creating class struggle. The class struggle already exists. What it does do is make it a public question. It calls these capitalists to account for what they're doing, politically,

morally, ethically, aesthetically, and in every other way. It's a way to back them off and say, no, we're not going to allow you to treat people this way. That then becomes a fight, because the capitalists don't want to be limited in what they can do. They don't want to be told that it's wrong to lay 40,000 workers off and lay a whole city waste. This has to be called out for what it is. The capitalists have too much power that they want to exercise privately and quietly without supervision and without contest. And without people knowing that that's what's going on.

T.W.: Does being rich automatically put you in the capitalist class, with those values?

M.Z.: No, a lot of professional people and managerial people make very good money. They may own stocks and may identify themselves in some way with the good life and with the powers in society, the power of capital. But that doesn't make them capitalists. And it also doesn't make them necessarily in their thinking and their values aligned with the capitalists. Very often people who are quite well-to-do can have values and ethics that promote a social and cooperative sense of mutual aid as opposed to this barren raw individualism that capitalists promote.

T.W.: Is it possible then to be born in one class but cast your allegiance elsewhere? I'm thinking of Eugene Debs, who said, "While there is a working class, I am of it."

M.Z.: Oh, sure. If you look at the religious community, for example, there are many religious people who are reasonably well-off, they're not capitalists or workers, who cast their lot with the workers. They may not think of it quite that way, because in the religious communities the way this is often talked about is the "preferential option for the poor." Well, we need to understand, who are these poor?

The poor are not some lump of people at the bottom of society who are just there as the underclass, permanently poor and permanently outside the mainstream of American life. The poor are working people. The poor are people who are unemployed but who are going to go back to work. The poor are women whose marriage ends and they are trying to get a job and get their lives together. After a while they get their lives together and then they're not poor anymore. And then something else happens and then they're poor again. Or someone has a job, but then their mother gets sick and they have to stay home and take care of her because they don't have adequate medical care, and they become poor.

If you understand that poverty is something that happens to the working class, it's a different type of preferential option. Instead of an option for some marginal poor, this remote "other" that we have to be nice to, it's an option for the majority of the population, the working class, who are subject to the conditions that create poverty. If you have that option for the working class, that then leads you to an understanding of the need to limit the power of the capitalist class. That has political consequences and ethical and moral consequences.

T.W.: If the poor are in reality part of the working class, cycling in and out of poverty and near-poverty, what does that imply for the traditional Christian concern for the poor?

M.Z.: The idea of doing something charitable for the poor, who will always be with us, is a beautiful thing. But it's misplaced as a practical program, because the way for the poor to have a better life is for them to have more power. "Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day; teach a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime." That means don't be charitable toward the poor; arrange it so that they have power.

If you approach working people who are poor with a sense of charity, it's humiliating to many people. People will take it because they're hungry, and they'll even appreciate it in a certain way, but it can be done in a way that's deeply hurtful and in the long run counterproductive. Or it can be done in a way that says, "Let's work together to stand up and exercise the humanity we have in a way that makes us fully powerful in our interests and with our own needs, but as a community."

The capitalists claim that their wealth is

the result of their individual success and prowess in the market. But their wealth isn't just their own doing; it's also the doing of the people who work for them to create the goods and services they sell. Wealth is actually a social creation.

T.W.: So we should see a fair share for working people, including poor people, not just as charity but as...

M.Z.: As a legitimate claim to the contributions that working people make to the wealth of the country.

T.W.: If someone would follow your prescription for philanthropy, they would not just give money to a food bank, they would help to organize people in some way.

M.Z.: In the last 25 years the social safety net has been dramatically shredded at the same time that the living standards of American working people have been greatly reduced. All the social structures of mutual support are being undermined, unions are being undermined, government programs are being undermined, people are having to work much longer hours and have more stressful lives. That means they have less time to volunteer. Their ability to be active in their churches, in the Boy Scouts, in the Volunteer Fire Department, in all the social structures that allow us to help one another, all that is seriously challenged by what is happening in the economy. So we're being thrown back just on our own resources.

The political forces behind this, which exist in both the Democratic and the Republican parties, are saying to the religious community, "You should do more charity, have another soup kitchen." The churches are being urged to take up the slack of what unions used to be able to win for their members; they didn't have to go to food banks because they had a wage that could support their families.

So the religious community is now being asked to use all their energy on immediate aid for the people on their doorstep, instead of seeing, wait a second, we need to focus on the social structures that are bringing these people to our doorstep. That is what an

understanding of class allows people to do, to see those connections.

We're being told that our ethical and moral responsibility—if it's not just to ourselves is an individual act of charity towards others, volunteering in the soup kitchen. And people are often driven by a sense of moral urgency to do good for the poor. But if we look at the national discussion of morality and ethics in the last 25 years, the way that values enter into the national debate is "family values." All issues of economic justice have been drained away and disappeared from any public review of social policy. All questions of economics are simply technical questions for the market and what we have instead as questions of morality are, "Who are you sleeping with?" Questions of morality become, "Do you smoke marijuana? Are you gay or are you straight? Do you or don't you have an abortion?"

These are all important questions to struggle with, morality at the personal level. But they aren't the sum and substance of ethics and morality. That way of approaching things not only misses the economic targets, it misses the moral targets. It misses the ethical reality that we are mutually interdependent and we are mutually determining and we have a responsibility to each other that isn't just charity. It's the way society needs to be organized, from the top to the bottom.

And that understanding challenges capitalism. It doesn't necessarily destroy it, but it certainly puts a limit on it. It says the market is not the be-all and end-all, as a mechanical process of production and exchange for maximum profits, of the human content of our lives. We're not going to allow our lives to be reduced to that. That's a moral question, and that's not who do you sleep with. If we understand that morality extends to economic justice, we can recast what is the practical and moral and religious task of our institutions.

T.W.: Should we turn a cold shoulder to the starving person on the church steps and say sorry, we're organizing strike support instead?

M.Z.: No, but every strike support should definitely have a soup kitchen. Every union

should be working with every church and every synagogue and every mosque to develop social structures for working people, whether they're on strike or in an organizing campaign or whether they're unemployed or whether they've just been divorced and can't make it for six months.

We feed you, but we do it in the context of a social movement that's feeding you, so that it isn't just the church as an isolated institution taking on the burdens of the poor, it becomes the church working with other institutions to mobilize power, to confront the powerful. That's a very threatening and difficult thing to do.

T.W.: It's more than "speaking truth to power."

M.Z.: Oh, it's doing to power.

T.W.: So you're saying that if people want to exercise a preferential option for the poor, the best way to do that is to organize power for the working class, which is the majority.

M.Z.: That's why it's also a project of democracy. One way class has been obscured in the last 30 years is that workers have been characterized as "special interests." Just like the oil industry or the banking industry. But they're 62 percent of the population.

Jane Slaughter is a freelance writer who lives in Detroit. For The Working Class Majority visit <www.workingclass.sunysb.edu>.



CHARITABLE CHOICE

Unleashing an 'enormous force for good'?

by Camille Colatosti and Julie A. Wortman

AST SUMMER, when the U.S. House of Representatives passed the "Community Solutions Act," (HR7), President George W. Bush issued a statement that called the move "a victory for progress and compassion" that would "increase the help available to poor Americans" and "end discrimination against churches, synagogues and charities that provide social services."

No one, the president added, "can love a neighbor as well as a loving neighbor and we must unleash good people of faith and works in every community in our country. By doing so, we can extend the hope and the promise and the opportunity that is at the heart of the American dream to the heart of every child in America."

The president then urged the Senate "to act quickly to unleash this enormous force for good."

Expanding charitable choice

Passage of the Community Solutions Act was a key step in the Bush Administration's efforts to expand charitable choice (the provision of government-funded social services by religious organizations), an intention first signaled last January 29, when Bush announced the opening of a new administrative office — the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The office opened on February 20, and is directed by John Dilulio, a former Princeton University professor.

DiIulio told *Sojourners Magazine* that his office's mission included increasing charitable giving, promoting public/private partnerships and "making sure that religious and secular organizations in the community that tradi-

tionally haven't been part of the federal funding loop get to be a part of it, if they so choose."

The concept of "charitable choice" originated with John Ashcroft, then a senator from Missouri, during the drafting of the 1996 welfare reform act. Previously, government funds could not be given to predominantly religious organizations like churches and synagogues (what are now being called faith-based organizations, or FBOs) because of the U.S. Constitution's requirement that church and state be separated. In order to accept public funds, religious organizations needed to create secular non-profit 501(c)3 tax-exempt organizations, like Catholic Charities or Lutheran Social Services, that could meet government standards of non-discrimination, safety and licensing.

Ashcroft's "charitable choice" amendment altered existing law to permit government funding of welfare reform programs provided by FBOs which, under Title VII of the U.S. Code, are allowed to discriminate in their employment practices on the basis of religion discrimination that covers not only employees performing religious functions, but also extends to employees engaged in secular functions. According to a background paper prepared by the Episcopal Church's Washington-based Office of Government Relations, courts have interpreted the Title VII exemption for church discrimination to also apply to aspects of an employee's conduct that the religious organization deems inconsistent with its tenets and teachings.

Although welfare reform's charitable choice, which is administered by the states,

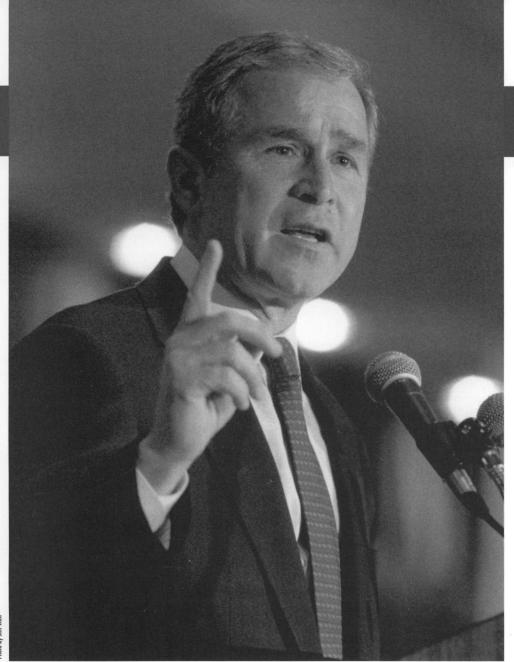
provides that FBOs cannot use government funds for religious missions or to screen the religious backgrounds of potential clients, it provides that they can deliver publicly funded programs that contain religious messages. However, under the 1996 welfare reform bill (and in several bills since then), states must provide beneficiaries with a secular program alternative should they choose not to seek services from the FBO.

Because the Clinton Administration never issued regulations for the charitable choice provision of welfare reform law, it was not widely implemented nor did it face constitutional scrutiny by the courts.

Taxpayer-funded discrimination

While the Bush Administration says FBOs have been unfairly eliminated from eligibility for federal funding, critics of charitable choice say the provision is an unconstitutional effort to eliminate the separation of church and state, pure and simple. Barry W. Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a "religious liberty watchdog group," says the legislative bills that would authorize FBOs to receive federal funds "subject people in need to religious coercion; they subsidize religious discrimination and undercut the integrity of America's houses of worship."

Mark Stern, a lawyer at the American Jewish Congress, says charitable choice has been the cause of at least four lawsuits — including state funding for a Bible class in Texas and a Christian 12-step course for addicted fathers in Wisconsin. A lawsuit in California challenges the state government's policy of setting



aside money for faith-based groups only.

"Bush's faith-based initiatives take an unconstitutional idea and compound it," Stern says. "The government cannot be in the business of engaging in religion. Where religion is pervasive in a program, the government can't subsidize it."

Eyal Press, a reporter and a fellow with the Open Society Institute, a foundation based in New York City, agrees. "Charitable choice removes safeguards" that required religious groups to form separate secular organizations, Eyal says. This "allows groups to evangelize

while providing publicly financed services," he explains. "It also permits groups to discriminate in hiring on religious grounds, despite financial support from the government."

Of particular concern to John Johnson of the Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations is that "the legislation could, in fact, trump state and local laws respecting anti-discrimination measures enacted at those levels." Indeed, says Johnson, "moderate Republican members of Congress delayed a final vote on the House bill to force its sponsors to 'commit' to ensure that the states' rights issue is

addressed when the legislation is conferenced with the Senate version."

Last summer, an article by Washington Post staff writer Dana Milbank (July 10, 2001) spotlighted this concern. The article stated that, according to an internal Salvation Army document, "the White House has made a 'firm commitment' to the Salvation Army to issue a regulation protecting such charities from state and city efforts to prevent discrimination against gays in hiring and domestic-partner benefits," in exchange for promoting Bush's faith-based social-service initiative (an increasing number of states and municipalities have laws prohibiting such discrimination).

The article quoted George Hood, a senior official with The Army, as saying that hiring gay employees "really begins to chew away at the theological fabric of who we are."

Although administration officials said the Salvation Army's claim of a "firm commitment" overstated the case, Milbank noted that The Army document "suggests President Bush is willing to achieve through regulation ends too controversial to survive the legislative process. It also underscores the close allegiance between the administration and conservative groups."

Likewise, funding houses of worship for the charitable services they provide, but insisting that these same religious organizations not use funds to proselytize, is "a distinction without a difference," says Americans United's Lynn.

Transforming lives

Proponents of Bush's Faith-Based Initiative

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Rev. Eddie Edwards, founder of Detroit's Joy of Jesus, meets social-service needs in a private school.

dismiss these concerns. In a July 2000 campaign speech, Bush said, "I'm told by the legal experts that my initiative will pass Constitutional muster. We will send money to fund services. But the money does not go to fund the religious programs within the institution."

Bush has made this initiative the center point of his social policy, stating that religious organizations are more effective in providing the services that poor Americans need. In his foreword to Marvin Olasky's book *Compassionate Conservative* (2000), Bush wrote, "Government can do certain things very well, but it cannot put hope in our hearts or a sense of purpose in our lives. That requires churches and synagogues and mosques and charities."

Religious organizations, proponents also argue, are less bureaucratic than the government and can provide services for less cost.

Don Ebberly, from the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, told *Insight Magazine* on March 26, 2001: "We are going to be spending a lot of taxpayer dollars on social programs in America. Take your pick: either through traditional distant bureaucratic systems or small-scale

loving and caring services. Traditional programs do not have the capacity to transform lives and don't even pretend to promise that result. Faith-based programs do and thereby engage in serious prevention that will have the result of reducing the need for costly government spending."

Likewise, CNN's Tucker Carlson has reported that "study after study shows these faith-based initiatives work better, much better in most cases, than government ones."

But are these claims true? Reporter Eyal Press says, for example, that there is no "strong evidence to indicate that faith-based organizations are more effective than their secular counterparts. This doesn't mean that they are not more effective, but there is no evidence."

Press points to Nancy Ammerman, a sociologist of religion at Hartford Seminary, who states, "We don't have the research to tell us whether faith-based organizations are better or not."

Mark Chaves, a sociologist at the University of Arizona, adds, "It can't be said strongly enough how little we know about whether religion makes a difference in the effectiveness of delivering services. Several

studies have shown that, all other things being equal, individuals who attend church are less likely to be arrested or to abuse drugs — and more likely to find jobs and escape poverty — than those who do not. But none of these studies tells us anything about whether religious organizations are more effective than their secular counterparts in delivering social services."

Do religious organizations even have the capacity to undertake the social service work of Bush's initiative? In a 1999 study of faithbased charitable work, Chaves surveyed 1,200 religious organizations. "More than half of the congregations participated in social service projects of some sort, with African-American and liberal churches playing a particularly strong social-outreach role. The vast majority of these activities, however, were 'short-term, small-scale' efforts, such as sending volunteers to help staff soup kitchens. Congregations devoted an average of 2-4 percent of their budget to social service — figures that underscore the potential limits of a social policy that centers around private religious groups while ignoring the need for public investment in areas like health care and education."

In a July 17 report in *The American Prospect*, Maia Szalavitz, co-author of *Recovery Options: The Complete Guide*, questioned the Bush Administration's confidence in "faith-based treatment" for addiction and juvenile delinquency and its desire to recognize religious training as an alternative form of qualification for treatment providers.

"Over the past 10 years," Szalavitz writes, "more than two dozen teenagers have died in so-called 'tough love' rehabilitation facilities that use violent confrontation and exposure to primitive living conditions as means to a cure."

Competition among religions

But Terri Schroeder, a First Amendment legislative analyst for the national office of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), sees the question about the effectiveness of the faith-based social services as irrelevant. "The real question is: What does the relationship between government and religious organizations need to look like if there are going to be partnerships? Religious diversity has thrived because of tolerance. If we forget

this, we could be opening the door to chaos. This may lead to competition among religions and to government evaluation of religion, the government saying that one religion is better than another."

Indeed, Bush has already said that the Nation of Islam will not qualify for funds because he believes it is a religion that preaches hate. But, according to The Interfaith Alliance, a national organization "dedicated to promoting the positive and healing role of religion in public life," it is not clear "what the criteria would be for determining which religious programs qualify for funding and which don't. Government officials will be put in the position of labeling some value systems better than others and relegating the rest to second-class status."

Meg Riley, director of the Unitarian-Universalist's Washington, D.C., Office of Faith in Action and the co-chair of Equal Partners in Faith ("a multi-faith, multi-racial network of religious leaders and people of faith committed to equality and diversity" founded in 1997), agrees. "Religious freedom is best served when faith communities are left to their own dictates, without governmental strings, on how best to serve their local communities."

Black churches divided

Bill Fletcher, the national co-chair of the Black Radical Congress, believes there is also "a Machiavellian component" to Bush's initiative. The president, he says, is "trying to play upon splits in the African-American movement. This is especially important to Bush given his poor performance among black voters."

Founded in 1998, the Black Radical Congress, explains Fletcher, works "to forge African-American activists and scholars and various organizations into a national movement in order to rebuild a left presence in black America."

"After the election," Fletcher says, "Bush called a meeting of African-American ministers. It was not a diverse group and was aimed at further driving a wedge among divisions. Bush offered a carrot to a sector of the black community."

Eugene Rivers, pastor of the Azusa Christian Community, a Pentecostal church in

Dorchester, Mass., was one of those who attended the meeting in question. A self-described "new leftist," Rivers converted a former crack house in one of Boston's poorest communities into the headquarters of his Ten-Point Coalition, a group of churches that came together in 1992 to combat the gang violence that was claiming the lives of a growing number of the city's black and Latino youths. Working with police and other neighborhood organizations, the Coalition boasts of the impressive 80 percent decline in Boston's homicide rate.

Rivers hosted a March 19, 2001, press conference to proclaim his support for the Bush initiative, although representatives of the Congress of National Black Churches, who also met with the president, issued a statement to say that they are not in favor of the Bush plan. Rivers has accused critics of the Bush plan of being racist, or anti-religious. He told the *Boston Globe*: "The white fundamentalists thought the faith-based office would finance their sectarian programs, which primarily serve upper-middle-class suburbanites, and they are infuriated because John DiIulio wants resources to go to people who are poor, black and brown."

Of the left and liberals, Rivers said, "Those who oppose charitable choice are 'upper-income liberals' who care more about whether a social-service provider has a cross on its door than whether the institution is doing an effective job serving the poor."

For Rivers, "The black community would be foolish to dismiss the opportunity to work with government simply because of ideological discomfort with the Bush administration."

Charitable choice a distraction

Anti-charitable-choice groups like The Interfaith Alliance (TIA) believe the debate over charitable choice "distracts from a deeper examination of our nation's budget priorities that has led to insufficient funding currently available to address America's poverty crisis."

As Richard Wagner observes in What's Love Got to Do with It? (The New Press, 2000), "The United States has the sharpest rates of income inequality in the Western world, the sparsest public social welfare system in the industrialized world, among the highest poverty rates in the Western world,

and a host of festering social problems that produce more violence and prisons than elsewhere."

"In 2000," reports TIA, "Catholic Charities USA noted a 23 percent increase in the amount of food and shelter they delivered, and they remained unable to meet all of their requests. America's Second Harvest, the nation's largest network of food banks, reports that in 1997, 21 million people turned to the agencies they serve, a 17 percent increase over 1996 requests — 40 percent of those clients were from working families. Whether or not religious organizations have the capacity to effectively deliver social services, they clearly have been overextended in meeting the needs of the poor, including the increasing working poor. Increasing the number of competitors for stagnant funds while ignoring the fact that welfare roll reduction has not resulted in poverty reduction will not address this issue."

To many people, calling the government to accountability about social policy, in fact, is the faith community's special, prophetic role — a role which could be seriously co-opted by charitable choice.

"Would there have ever been a Montgomery bus boycott if their hands had been in 'Pharaoh's kitty'?" Timothy McDonald, pastor of Atlanta's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, asked during the Progressive Religious Partnership conference in Washington, D.C., last April. "If Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Atlanta, under Dr. King, had received a \$100,000 grant for poverty work, or if Ralph Abernathy's church in Mississippi had gotten a \$50,000 government gift for computer training, do you think they would have stood up and criticized that same government?"

As Paul Moore, the retired Bishop of New York, pointed out in a *Living Church* editorial last summer, "It is the responsibility of the state, not the church, in an affluent society, to provide for the basic human needs of its citizens: food, shelter, health, education and housing. These are issues of justice, not charity, and it is the duty of the state to provide them."

Camille Colatosti is a professor of English at Davenport University in Detroit and is The Witness' staff writer. Julie A. Wortman is editor/publisher of The Witness.

'COMING OUT' AS WEALTHY

For the common good

by Marianne Arbogast

HE WEBSITE for the White Dog Cafe [www.whitedog.com] features photographs of elegant dining rooms in a row of brownstone houses in the University City section of Philadelphia. It also features a Social Action page with information on topics like global fair trade, criminal justice reform and genetically modified foods. You can arrange for a private party, sign up for a community gardens tour or volunteer for a Habitat project. As you browse menu selections (Roasted Wild Mushrooms and Organic Savoy Baby Spinach Salad sounds good) you can also mark your calendar to attend one of the White Dog's "Table Talks" ("The Quagmire in Colombia," maybe, or "White People Confronting Racism").

White Dog owner Judy Wicks is a member of Responsible Wealth, an organization that promotes fair taxes, a living wage, corporate accountability and broadened asset ownership. But while its goal is increased equity, its membership criteria is exclusive: Only those whose income and/or wealth are in the top 5 percent in the U.S. (over \$145,000 household income and/or over \$650,000 net assets) are eligible to join.

The four-year-old project of the economic justice group United For a Fair Economy now has over 500 members who, their website [www.responsiblewealth.org] explains, "have joined together to speak out publicly to change a growing set of rules tilted in favor of us, large asset owners, at the expense of others in society.

"We believe an economy and democracy that tolerates a widening gap between rich and poor and which concentrates economic and political power in the hands of a few is not sustainable," their statement continues. "The growing disparities of wages and wealth seen in America and throughout the global village are not healthy for society or for business."



Judy Wicks: Investing in people

Wicks likes to say that she "lures customers into social activism with good food." Although her 18-year-old restaurant is a thriving business employing 100 people and grossing close to \$5 million annually, Wicks says that "making a profit is not part of our mission.

"Our mission is to serve fully in four areas: our customers, our employees, our community and nature. Money is a tool by which we serve, whether it's buying top-notch ingredients for our customers, paying our employees a living wage, buying from organic farmers or buying electricity from windpower. The two things that we focus on are economic justice and environmental sustainability."

Wicks, who grew her business from its

inception as a coffee-and-muffin take-out shop in her house, has often served as a spokesperson for Responsible Wealth campaigns.

"I feel that those of us who have businesses have a special responsibility to see that that business is directed toward the needs of the common good," she says. "An organization like Responsible Wealth helps guide that. It was through Responsible Wealth that I heard about the living wage campaign. I'd never thought about it — I thought as long as you paid people minimum wage, that's fine."

In the restaurant business, which traditionally employs large numbers of minimum-wage workers, a concept like the living wage is revolutionary.

"The restaurant business is not known for investment in people, it's known for a revolving door of just using people and going on to the next batch," Wicks says.

At the White Dog, all except the most temporary workers make at least \$8 an hour, the living wage in Philadelphia. Those who stay more than two years also receive health insurance, a dental plan and 401(k) benefits.

Though not a church goer, Wicks says her life is "based on spiritual beliefs. What I do is based on the knowledge that all living beings are interconnected, not only physically through our environment, but also spiritually. And so when I make a decision in my business, I think about how this will affect my customers, my employees, my community and the natural world."

Wicks, who plans to one day pass on her business to her 22-year-old daughter, supported Responsible Wealth's campaign to stop the repeal of the estate tax, part of this year's tax-cut legislation. The \$1.3-million small business exemption would likely cover most of her business, she says.

"My estate is probably worth a little over \$2 million right now, so if I were to die today, my kids would have to pay taxes on anything over \$1.3 million. But even at the 33 percent rate they would be able to afford it because the tax would be paid over 14 years. Knowing how hard it is to start from scratch, I certainly would not advocate a tax that would put a family out of business. If there are, in fact, cases where this happens, I think the exemption simply should be raised."

Her daughter agrees, Wicks says. "She feels fortunate that she's inheriting a business. There are many children who inherit nothing. The tax should be imposed on those who inherit more, for government expenses that provide things like job training and small business loans and better education for those who don't have an inheritance to rely on."

Misinformation was rampant in the campaign to repeal the estate tax, Wicks says.

"The conservatives positioned small business and small farmers as being the ones hurt by this tax, and that's not true. The tax is very progressive in that it taxes the very wealthiest people, the top 2 percent."

Wicks was stunned when she received hate mail after speaking out against repeal of the estate tax on a nationally broadcast rightwing talk show.

"I got hate mail, voice mail and e-mail from people who called me everything from a communist to a lesbian," she says. "It was really mean-spirited and it shocked me, what anger people have for something that I consider to be a generous position. It scared me for a number of reasons — one is that the anger seemed directed toward the federal government. I certainly don't condone everything the government does, by any means, but the government is the most effective way we have to protect the interests of the common good versus the interests of big business. The problem now is that big business is controlling government. We've got to get out of that situation through campaign finance reform, if it's not too late."



Barry Hermanson: What do we owe back?

Barry Hermanson, another Responsible Wealth member, is also a business owner. Like Wicks, Hermanson started out with an alternative vision. After earning degrees in business and theology, he took a VISTA assignment as a small business counselor for a nonprofit serving San Francisco's Asian community, then worked a stint in temporary clerical jobs. He soon realized that temp agencies were charging exorbitant fees, and set out to see if he could do it differently. The result was Hermanson's Employment Services, an agency for temporary office workers that has been able to pay workers up to \$4-an-hour more than the going rate, by keeping overhead costs low and relying on word-of-mouth advertising.

Hermanson, a Presbyterian, is reticent in talking about his faith, but he acknowledges that "it underlies everything I do. I believe that the fundamental message of Jesus was to work for people who are disadvantaged, and to be concerned about others before yourself. In some ways that's impractical, but when I tried to be concerned with the wages my employees were making, they, in turn, brought so much business back to me. Someone could say that was pretty slick marketing, but I believe if you treat other people well, they will treat you well."

Hermanson, who recently served as cochair of San Francisco's Living Wage Coalition, stresses the need for large-scale change in the economic rules of the game.

"I was trying to change the temp agency industry by providing an alternative way, but there's no way the industry is going to be changed as long as there is nobody telling the larger services they need to change," he says. "A perfect example is health care. Most temp employees do not get health care, and I'm not able to build that into what I'm charging my clients because the cost is prohibitive. Health care is not going to happen unless we have a law that says you must do it.

"The Living Wage Coalition helped get legislation passed that raised wages for 20,000 workers, and we're working on a health care plan. Working with a large coalition of people to develop the political will for this legislation has brought a different focus to my life. I have been increasingly involved in community work, particularly with an eye toward economic development and employment."

In addition to contributing both time and money to the living wage campaign, Hermanson helped build and staff a computer training center in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco. "It is very important for individuals to use their money to help create social change, as well as donate to nonprofits who are actively providing some of the needed services," he believes.

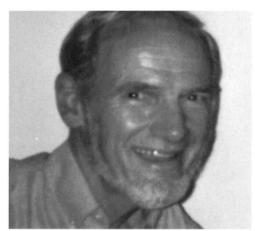
Hermanson is disturbed by what he sees as "a phenomenal change taking hold in this country," expressed in the sentiment that "what I have is mine, I've worked hard, and by God, you shouldn't get any."

He was dismayed at a Democratic club meeting ("These days I almost hate to use the word 'Democrat," he says) where he was challenged on his opposition to repeal of the estate tax. "I said, as a Democrat, I believe in a progressive system of taxation. People who are wealthy should pay a higher percentage. I think people forget that as we live together in community, there needs to be a contribution to that community. It goes to the heart of what we believe is the basis of a democratic society. What do we owe back to each other in order to make it a better place for all of us?"

Charles Demere: Spiritual power in a dollar bill

Charles Demere was born into a family with enough money for two vacation homes, in addition to their year-round home in Georgia.

"Friends of mine who lived on the same



block during the winter didn't have any summer place, and there was something about it that didn't seem quite right," Demere says. "There was a mixture of guilt and enjoyment of the money I had."

Demere, an Episcopal priest, says that early on he identified with the rich young man in the Gospel story who was told to sell everything and give the money to the poor.

"I was bothered by this admonition throughout much of my young adult life," he says. "I was not ready to deny who I was, to pretend to be poor when God had given me wealth."

Eventually, Demere decided that what he needed to do was to work creatively with the money he had. "A Christian says, I belong to God," he says. "And if I belong to God, my house does, too, and my car does." So Demere regularly loans out his car, and recently loaned out a Washington apartment (which he keeps for frequent visits there from his home in Maryland) to a refugee couple from Sierra Leone, who stayed there three months.

Demere, who was in at the founding of Responsible Wealth, initiated its highly successful "Tax Break Pledge" campaign, through which people pledge their savings from the 1997 reduction in the capital gains tax to economic justice efforts. At an early organizing meeting, he recalls, conversation turned to the recent capital gains tax reduction, from 28 to 20 percent.

"I said, that's part of the benefit for rich folk that shouldn't be there," Demere says. "So I pledged to give my capital gains savings to Responsible Wealth. Inside of half an hour, people picked up on the idea, and over a million dollars was committed either directly to the poor or to advocacy for fairer taxation."

Demere, who worked with HUD's Model Cities Program after 12 years of serving parishes, found himself with two government salaries — severance pay and unemployment — when his job ended.

"I contacted Ministry of Money and said I wanted to do something creative with one of the salaries. I ended up hiring someone for Jubilee Jobs, connected with Church of the Savior in Washington, to work with Latinos for entry-level jobs.

"I have fun being creative in different ways," he says. While marching to the World Bank for the Jubilee 2000 campaign, Demere was moved to question himself on debt relief. "I had made loans to various causes, mainly to start up small businesses, and they were having trouble paying me. I said, if you make regular payments, when you get to the halfway point I'll cancel the rest of the debt."

Since his retirement from HUD, Demere has travelled to Nicaragua, worked on an assortment of peace issues and engaged in civil disobedience at the Capitol rotunda for campaign finance reform. He regularly gives away half of his income, and argues that a "preferential option for the poor" implies that "we ought to leave at least 51 percent to the poor in our will."

Money "is meant to be a kind of sacrament," he says. "Bennett Simms at the Institute for Servant Leadership in North Carolina spelled this out. A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. There's a lot of spiritual power in a dollar bill."

Jenny Ladd: 'Coming out' as wealthy

Like Demere, Jenny Ladd struggled with issues raised by her family's wealth. An heir to Standard Oil money, she often kept her financial status a secret.

"I felt like I had to sort of lie about things because I would be embarrassed or I didn't want to be stereotyped or objectified — I didn't want to be the walking wallet," Ladd says.

Her family, though not religious, valued fairness and equity, and she felt "a kind of cognitive dissonance in having those values and also being in a position of having more money than other people."

Growing up in Cambridge, Mass., Ladd recalls students marching down Commonwealth Ave. against the Vietnam war. She was 15 when Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, and wrote the American Friends Service Committee to ask what she could do. At Antioch College, she took part in student strikes supporting workers and, when she was 22, set up an activist-directed fund to support social causes.

"I was in a historical period where social justice and equity issues were in the fore-front, so I was immersed in that and, from a young age, felt like I needed to do something about it," she says. "I had lots of relationships with people who didn't have money, so it was a constant reminder of what some people can do and other people can't do."

Ladd initially pursued a career in education, teaching from elementary through college level and eventually earning a doctorate, but later came to believe that she had more to offer in the field of social change philanthropy.

"I felt like I couldn't do both worlds well," she says. "I couldn't keep up with the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. I needed to make a choice, and at that point the concentration of wealth was beginning to scare me, and I felt that with my particular make-up and history I could be of more service there."

As director of Class Action in Northampton, Mass., Ladd serves as a philanthropic advisor to people with wealth and also works with groups on money and class issues.

"We're going to do a workshop for cross-



class couples, and we just did something called 'The Money Game,' which is a simulation game where you play with real money, and you learn a lot about your own feelings about giving and receiving and taking and asking. I've run classes on how to create a strategic giving plan. I also have a support group called 'Excess Baggage' for people who have more than enough."

Ladd is part of a cross-class dialogue group, now in its fifth year, which was set up "to explore as openly and deeply as we possibly could what significance money and class had in our lives, and how it functioned in daily interactions with others.

"We've talked about why don't the wealthy people give all their money away, what it would be like to be in each other's shoes, and the betrayal that each of us has felt from people from the other class at times. We've shared as openly as we could how much each one of us has or doesn't have, so we've brought our checkbook, we've looked at what our car is worth and our house is worth and our savings account and inheritance. We did one session where we shared what our expenditures were, which is even harder, because it's a real mirror of your values.

"We also have met in what we call caucus groups, where the wealthy people could meet with each other and the working-class and poor people could meet with each other, so that things could be explored in a way that wasn't hurtful to people, but also where people could challenge one another in a useful way."

Ladd says that she has found it liberating to be open about her wealth.

"Speaking out as a person of wealth has been a reclamation of myself, in a way, and I hope of service to the larger whole," she says. Her spiritual perspective, which flows from a daily meditation practice and draws on several faith traditions, gives her "a deep sense of the interconnectedness of all of us" and concern for "the health of the body that we're all part of."

She would like people to understand that their well-being is inextricably tied to the well-being of others. "Right now, if you think of money circulating through some areas of the population and not circulating through others, it's as though we had a leg with gangrene or something."

Though Ladd's inheritance (which she intends to give away) will be significantly increased with repeal of the estate tax, she supported Responsible Wealth's position. While echoing the skepticism of other Responsible Wealth members about government use of tax money, particularly on military spending, she stresses that there will always be government needs. "If the wealthy don't pay, then who does pay? Chances are it will come in different forms of taxation that hit mostly low- and middle-income people."

She likes the idea proposed in Chuck Collins' and Felice Yeskel's *Economic Apartheid in America* of a trust fund, like Social Security, for each child born, which they could draw on when they turned 18 for college or a house or setting up a business.

Under the current system, "only certain kids get born with an asset base," she points out. "It isn't that they go work hard and earn all the money — it's that they have an asset base that grows. That could be shared around a lot more liberally.

"We're in a culture that is so individually oriented and out of balance in that way," she believes. "I'm not suggesting we become a culture that's only looking at the common good in the sense of the state, but I think there really are roles for the government to provide. Also, in our culture, we think of things as that which makes us more secure. In my own life, having a deep spiritual alignment is my source of security — as well as really strong relationships, so if there was money or no money, people would help me and I would help them."

Marianne Arbogast, who lives and works in Detroit, is Associate Editor of The Witness.

Responsible Wealth campaigns

The repeal of the estate tax, signed into law this past spring, was a disappointment to members of Responsible Wealth, which had lobbied hard to retain the tax.

"We will continue to work to see that we do have an estate tax intact," says Mike Lapham, a founder and co-director of the organization. "What Congress did doesn't really repeal the estate tax for another 10 years, so in a sense there's 10 years to fix the mistake that they made."

Though Responsible Wealth supported the gradual increase in exemption levels that was part of the legislation, they believe that complete repeal — which does not take effect until 2010 — "is irresponsible and not really good for our country," Lapham says.

The tax-cut legislation also spurred a new campaign inviting people to "give back" their income tax rebates by donating the money to organizations working for economic justice. "Something like 25 percent are not going to get any tax cut at all," Lapham says.

Responsible Wealth also plans to continue to address issues related to the growing gap between CEO and worker pay by helping members file shareholder resolutions in targeted corporations. This past year they filed 11 such resolutions, asking that CEO pay be linked to issues such as sharing rewards and sacrifices within the organization, employee and customer satisfaction, or social responsibility concerns — especially predatory lending practices.

"We will continue to focus on the predatory lending issue because we think it's an egregious abuse," says Responsible Wealth co-director Scott Klinger. "It clearly makes the rich richer at the expense of the poor, and some companies that practice it have very generous CEO pay policies."

Klinger says that Responsible Wealth also plans to target Walt Disney, which has wide pay disparity but mediocre stock returns. They will ask Disney to limit stock options available to top CEOs to promote broader-based employee ownership.

Although shareholder resolutions are non-binding, Reponsible Wealth has won some victories when companies negotiated for them to withdraw their resolutions, Klinger says. Mattel, for instance, agreed to review an extravagant severance package for a departing chief executive, and Jefferson Pilot, a North Carolina insurance company, said it would work to "raise the floor" for its lowest paid workers.

"Five years ago, CEO pay resolutions were unknown, and now they are quite common," Klinger says. "We think that's due, in part, to our raising of the issues."

For more information, contact Responsible Wealth at 617-423-2148, or visit their website, <www.responsiblewealth.org>.

DOING GOOD

by writing checks

by Gail B. Kuenstler

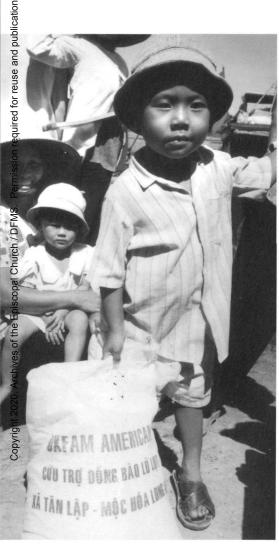


Photo courtesy of Oxfam America

OW TO MAKE SENSE of the contents of your mailbox? This has been my question over the last months as I sort through appeals from Freedom from Hunger versus Food for the Hungry, Oxfam America versus Big Brothers Big Sisters, cancer research versus landmines. I want to help, but who is really doing good? Where are your dollars really needed? Which groups are doing what they say they are doing?

I started to send for annual reports to get information about several groups and immediately discovered one Catholic medical missionary group who was spending a little on overseas projects and a lot to finance the nuns' residence. This showed me that I needed to look closely at annual reports.

I learned that Freedom from Hunger, mentioned above, is a group which gives small (\$75) business loans and weekly education and support to third-world women, transforming their lives and the lives of their children. Food for the Hungry is an evangelical group that builds churches, feeds people and preaches the Gospel. Although I am a church goer, I don't choose to support organizations that use food as part of a campaign to attract converts.

Charity-rating groups

Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance and the American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP), two groups who rate charities, list the evangelical group, Food for the Hungry, on their websites but only one of them, the Better Business Bureau (www.give.org), says that the goals of the

evangelical group are "spiritual." The BBB describes each group in some detail and they include this information in the description. Their site is the first one to check to see if your group is included. If it is included, they will tell you on the site if the group meets their standards. AIP (www.charitywatch.org) will only give you their top groups in a category. You have to get the newsletter from AIP to get the ratings but they rate more groups than the BBB has listed.

The American Institute for Philanthropy (AIP) gives Food for the Hungry a letter grade (C+) in their newsletter because they spend only 62 to 67 percent on the charitable purpose, and spend betwen \$24 and \$31 to raise each \$100. But AIP doesn't mention the spiritual goals. On their website AIP states that Food for the Hungry provided the requested documents but it is not one of their top-rated international relief and development groups. It's important to check out a group on both sites, but you still may have to request the annual report and the IRS Form 990 for charities if the group is not listed because no one has requested information.

Both AIP and the BBB's Wise Giving Alliance have newsletters, which report salaries (CARE's president is making more than \$540,000 a year). They also report the percentage actually spent on the purpose of the charity, what the charity spends to raise \$100, the amount of assets (some groups' ratings are drastically lowered because their assets are too large), and the range of the top three salaries. AIP gives each charity a grade, as in the example above. Freedom

from Hunger, a secular group, gets an Abecause 77 percent of the money is spent on the charitable purpose and only \$14 is spent to raise \$100 (the difference goes to administration). The top salary at Freedom from Hunger is \$99,000. The BBB simply says whether or not the group meets their standard, which is that a "reasonable amount" be spent on fundraising and administrative costs.

The charity sound-alikes (Freedom from Hunger, Food for the Hungry) are a problem for givers; you really have to check them out, and then make a note, so you remember who is who.

Religious and social-welfare groups

If you want to give to a religious group, for example Episcopal Relief and Development, it may not be listed because it is not a charity, for tax purposes, but a religious group. However, the Mennonite Central Committee and Catholic Relief Services, two organizations with very high ratings, are listed with AIP because they are willing to provide the information requested and they are ecumenical in their approach to helping. Many religious groups use their resources to build churches. Some limit their economic aid to members of the church. I prefer to separate my development-giving from my religiousgiving. Third-world indigenous peoples have their own religions.

Social-welfare groups may or may not be listed because they are non-tax-deductible, not-for-profit lobbying groups (RESULTS is one example). They don't have charity status, therefore they don't provide salary information to the government. They may choose not to provide it to the charity rating services, either, even if they are listed by the rating service. Salary and other information might be available by writing to the group.

The hard part for me was to figure out my priorities. Focusing on a few groups and giving larger amounts can make you a major donor. This will entitle you to annual reports, newsletters, videos, and even appointments with the staff to discuss the program. Through prayer, you can let your

heart be guided on the subject of whom to support.

Books like Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger by Ronald Sider or Robin Hood Was Right by Chuck Collins and Pam Rogers will help you develop your own giving program by educating you about some of the consequences of your choices. Living High and Letting Die by Hugh Unger is a moral philosopher's take on the necessity of saving the third-world hungry with all of the resources we have after the expenses of a "modest" lifestyle.

I started by looking up on the Internet a few groups in the international development category, after I received mailings from them. Although Americans gave more than \$143 billion in 2000 to nonprofits, about half of that money went to religious organizations, and almost all the rest went to U.S. causes. Only 1.2 percent went to international affairs, including third-world development. These development organizations, which emphasize self-help and selfdirection, have flowered with the coming of age of the boomers, although they are still quite small compared with more established charities. They have developed a post-Peace Corps kind of giving which is effective and cost-effective.

Every day 35,000 children die of hungerrelated causes, as Oxfam tells us in their "Poverty Report." Because of my own history — I was a volunteer in Mexico with the American Friends Service Committee as a college student and did a volunteer stint just last year in a Mexican orphanage — my interest is in helping children in the third world and especially in Latin and Central America.

The four outstanding organizations I describe below do primarily development, not relief, work. Relief work means helping people after hurricanes or wars. Some of the relief groups are classified by AIP under "development" and some are placed in the "hunger" category. Development, of course, helps children and their families. I no longer give to child sponsorship organizations because they spend too much on communicating with the sponsors and there is no way to know how effective their

work is. In other words the charity-rating groups can only tell you if the program is well-run; they can't tell you if the money you send is used effectively. This is true with development groups, too. There is no way for me to know if Oxfam's village projects are successful; the charity-rating only speaks to issues like accountability, percentage spent on fundraising, salaries and administrative costs. But the communications I was getting from the child-sponsorship groups (at one point I was supporting four children), made me question the quality of the village-level projects. With childsponsorship organizations, some of the money may be used for school fees, but none of it goes to the family directly. The remainder goes to a project like "education about nutrition," for example. Most childsponsorship groups encourage you to visit your children abroad, and this would be a good way to see these projects in action. This, of course, would also be possible with the projects of the groups I recommend. The annual reports of these groups describe the projects in some detail, and their focus is the family and community rather than the child.

Another worry I had in researching organizations was whether it makes any sense to help communities in countries with inept and corrupt governments. Successful democracy is based on some degree of economic security and education. The projects I describe work on both economics and education/ empowerment to promote democracy at the grassroots level. Certainly villagers cannot escape the impact of having a lousy government, but judging from the materials provided by these organizations, these programs work both in the short and long term. Families start to eat better and pay their school fees, so their children can be educated. The water supply gets cleaned up, the birth rate falls and children get medical attention. Parents get loans and job training.

Here is the list of the groups to whom I currently give. All of them get top or near top ratings from the American Institute of Philanthropy:

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#1: Freedom From Hunger

They provide small loans (about \$75) and training in running a business to women. They have a video on the Internet at their site (www.freefromhunger.org) that describes their work in Madagascar. The Grameen Bank, which has provided small loans to the poor around the world for the last 20 years, was the pioneer in microcredit. Freedom From Hunger has good ratings and works in 14 countries. Unlike Oxfam, they accept U.S. government A.I.D. money to finance their programs (25 percent of revenues).

Freedom from Hunger 1644 DaVinci Court Davis California 95617 www.freefromhunger.org 800 708 2555

#2 : American Friends Service Committee

The snapshots of the AFSC's work are fascinating: providing school supplies to children in Haiti, creating health clinics, refurbishing fishing fleets and establishing community stores where people can buy supplies at uninflated prices, peace education, direct food aid to North Korea, health training programs in Sao Paulo, training for women factory workers on the Mexican-U.S. border, nonviolent conflict resolution in the U.S., setting up a National School of Prosthetics and Orthotics in Cambodia, a peace center in the Andes, and on and on. It would seem that the AFSC does anything that they think might work - peace projects, development, relief and health - all with a pacifist accent.

American Friends Service Committee 1501 Cherry Street Philadelphia, PA 19182 www.afsc.org 888 588 2372

#3: Oxfam America

Many organizations that do international development use the simple mechanism of the small loan to encourage small business. For example, working with the village health committee, Oxfam America gives \$20,000 to establish a bank in one Cambodian village. Ninety-seven percent of the

loans are repaid and the interest is used to pay for medicine for AIDS and TB. In the Amazon, Oxfam helps Indian communities to organize to resist encroachment by loggers and farmers and sponsor credit and training programs.

In El Salvador, they support many grassroots women's groups whose members have
recently gotten women elected to the legislature. In Mali, West Africa, one group supported by Oxfam teaches reading and is an
advocate for women's rights including protection against domestic violence. Oxfam's
annual report is staggering; the amount of
work as well as the number of projects which
impact whole regions is inspiring. Africare is
another top-rated group that works in Africa
and does similar kinds of programs.

Oxfam America 26 West Street Boston, MA 02111 www.oxfamamerica.org 800 77 OXFAM

#4: The Heifer Project International

The Heifer Project gives livestock — ducks, water buffalo, llamas, rabbits — to poor villagers all over the world. One animal can change their lives; suddenly there is milk to drink and milk to sell to pay school fees and to buy clothes. This is especially important in areas where all the cattle have been eaten because of famine. You can give a heifer for \$500 or honeybees for \$30. Because ducks and honeybees stimulate a child's imagination, these animals make especially good gifts to be given by relatives in the name of U.S. children. Heifer materials for school children can be helpful in organizing a church or school fundraising event. The charming and well-designed gift cards that your contribution buys are perfect for the child who has everything. The Heifer Project is the most "user-friendly" project for groups new to third-world giving.

Heifer Project International P.O. Box 8106 Little Rock, AR 72203-8106 www.heifer.org 800 422 0755

Top-rated groups according to AIP

The top rated groups in the AIP Interna-

tional Relief and Development category are Africare, American Friends Service Committee, Catholic Relief Services, Direct Relief International, Doctors Without Borders USA, Mennonite Central Committee, Mercy Corps International, Oxfam America, Technoserve and World Neighbors. Heifer is not listed because they spend a larger amount on fund-raising, but still a "reasonable amount," according to the Better Business Bureau. For example, Oxfam has \$10 million in program expenses, 101 employees and only spends 16 percent of contributions on fundraising. This may be possible because they are better known and considerably larger. Freedom from Hunger is not listed above because it appears in the hunger category.

Supporting third-world peace

There are other ways for Americans to improve the lives of third-world peoples besides writing checks. In many places, war is destroying the lives of families and driving many of them from their homes and into refugee camps. Monitoring U.S. foreign policy and influencing congressional decision-making can help to make sure our tax dollars are not increasing the level of violence.

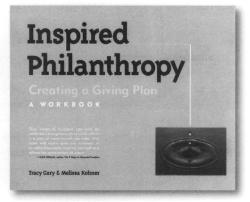
Peace-making organizations such as the Fellowship for Reconciliation, Witness for Peace and Peace Brigades International send delegations to the third world, provide training in countries where violence is a problem and accompany human-rights workers in these countries. These groups need support and can help you contribute to pacifist communities in third-world countries and to refugee communities like those in Colombia or Chiapas.

When the newspaper brings you articles about violence and starvation, you can use your pen to create a better world. It is a gift to be able to afford to give \$75 to a woman in Africa so she can set up a stall in the market and feed her kids! What privilege to be able to support someone who is brave enough to protect human rights workers! Your money can be used effectively to help third-world peoples.

Gail Kuenstler is a member of St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in Woodstock, N.Y. She has a doctorate in Cultural Anthropology.

A workbook for personal giving

By Joseph Wakelee-Lynch



Inspired Philanthropy: Creating a Giving Plan

by Tracy Gary and Melissa Kohner, edited by Nancy Adess, Chardon Press, Oakland, Calif. 1998.

N NOVEMBER 1999, Kim Klein, cofounder of a progressive publishing house in Oakland, Calif., and publisher of Grassroots Fundraising Journal, told an audience: "All social justice requires an understanding of money - how it works, who has it, how it is taxed, how it is given away. Therefore, fundraising is central to program work, not ancillary, not supportive of, central to. Get rid of the barriers between program and fundraising."

Klein knows the money business. She also knows the how-to-find-out-who-has-themoney-business, as well as the how-to-findout-how-those-who-want-to-give-away-theirmoney business, and, maybe most important, the how-to-ask-them-for-their-money business. Best of all, Klein, as co-founder of Chardon Press, is helping to publish a cornucopia of fundraising and organization books designed to help people who work in progressive and religious politics to learn it all, too.

Many of Chardon's offerings are guides to help people make their way through the intricate, intimidating mazes of fundraising. Indeed, Chardon's most popular book, now in its fourth edition, is Fundraising for Social Change, by Klein herself.

Inspired Philanthropy: Creating a Giving Plan, by Tracy Gary and Melissa Kohner, approaches the funding problem from the other direction: It is a workbook designed for people who have money and want to give it away in order to further social change. That's different than traditional philanthropy. "Progressive philanthropy," write Gary and Kohner, "supports what is called social change, that is, actions that seek to right the imbalances of an unjust society or an unequal distribution of resources."

Inspired Philanthropy will help you to understand how and to whom you've been giving time and money in the past, even if it is only a small annual amount. It contains exercises and worksheets designed to help you examine and identify your most important values and issues. By using them, you can focus your giving and strengthen your ability to help causes that you care the most deeply about. Other exercises offer assistance in tracking the recipients that you've given to in the past and identifying their organizational characteristics and goals. These provide a tangible way of making intentional and focused something that until now you may have been doing haphazardly. And there's a useful section on volunteering - giving one's time - that includes a statement of a volunteer's rights and responsibilities that every social service agency should know about.

But the book is also of great use for people who do, indeed, have significant amounts of money to contribute. It's full of tips that can assist you to clarify and maximize your relationship as a donor to an organization that you support. It even includes creative suggestions for challenging others to give with you. And although it is mostly oriented toward individuals, Inspired Philanthropy could be adapted easily for a congregation's use. There are many whose members, perhaps because of age or family responsibilities, cannot often take to the streets with the activists. But those parish stalwarts are often ready to pool their contributions and distribute them to needy organizations. I was part of such a church in southern California that has been giving away more then \$20,000 a year for the past three years.

The book's authors bring their own interesting histories to this work. Tracy Gary, when she was in her 20s, inherited a trust from her parents. At first she gave the money away haphazardly, but she quickly felt the need to be more disciplined. After 25 years, she has given away three-fourths of her inheritance. "My sense of real abundance has come through that giving," she says. Anyone who has met tithers who truly give from the heart will know how Gary can feel so rich by giving money away.

As for Kohner, her first experience in giving was carefully placing a dollar in the collection plate in church. She muses that churches are good at raising money because the plate keeps coming round. I doubt she's sat on any stewardship committees: Church people don't give generously because they can't escape the offering. Usually, they believe that following Jesus means not spending a lifetime accumulating but, instead, giving in a radical way: giving love, forgiveness, peace and hope.

Inspired Philanthropy can help take you down that road of giving, and it's one that gets more satisfying with every step.

Joseph Wakelee-Lynch is a writer/editor in Berkeley, Calif.

SPECIAL REPORT

The global anatomy of a local church conflict

by PamelaW. Darling

Last summer we posted an article by lan T. Douglas in "a global Witness" which described a "showdown" that never materialized at the March 2001 meeting of the Anglican Communion's Primates (see "'Through prayer and action': the seeds of a new Anglicanism?" at www.thewitness.org/agw/).

"For many, especially for conservatives in the U.S. and their colleagues around the world," Douglas wrote, "the 2001 Primates Meeting was to be the final showdown where the American Episcopal Church would be chastised, once and for all, for its 'revisionist' positions on women's ordination and human sexuality."

Against this backdrop — and in light of the efforts of a new traditionalist group, the Anglican Mission in America, to colonize the Episcopal Church with traditionalist parishes under the jurisdiction of its own specially consecrated bishops — the conflict between a parish in Accokeek, Md., and Jane Dixon, the Bishop of Washington, Pro Tempore, has taken on disproportionate, emblematic significance.

This issue went to bed on September 1. Check our website for updates on developments occurring after that date.

hat might have avoided notice as a purely local diocesan matter has instead attracted attention around the Anglican world. Among leaders of the Episcopal Church, USA, and so-called "traditionalist" groups who want freedom to preach "orthodox" doctrine and traditional morality—and to be exempt from the church's canons—"Accokeek" has become a test case.

The facts of this case, well-documented on the Internet [see URLs below], are as follows: On December 13, 2000, Barbara Sturman, senior warden of Christ Episcopal Church in Accokeek, Md., notified the Bishop of Washington, Ronald Haines, that the church planned to call Samuel L. Edwards, of Fort Worth, Tex., as rector. Because Haines was about to retire, he asked Washington's Suffragan Bishop, Jane Dixon, to take over (upon Haines' retirement, Dixon became the Bishop of Washington, Pro Tempore). Canon law allows the bishop 30 days in which to "communicate" with a parish before a call is issued. Even after a call, the bishop is to ascertain whether the candidate is "duly qualified."

A few days after receiving the message from Sturman, Dixon, through her staff, "communicated" that approval was contingent on a satisfactory interview. An appointment was set for January 10, 2001, within the 30-day limit. On January 3, Edwards e-mailed Dixon's office that he could not keep the appointment and the interview was rescheduled for February 26.

Meanwhile, certain members of the congregation shared with Dixon their distress over Edward's views about the "hell-bound" Episcopal "Unchurch." Edwards had for the last eight years been Executive Director of the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA), which had morphed

into Forward in Faith, North America (FIF/NA). In various articles on the FIF/NA website, Edwards expressed the opinions of many traditionalists charging a decline of theological and moral leadership in the Episcopal Church. His writings also reflected the increasing frustration of many dissidents: "Those who are determined to keep working with the system of ECUSA [the Episcopal Church, USA] must do so in the full and certain knowledge that, if they are to bring the hell-bound machinery of that institution to a halt, the substance which gums up its work will be composed of their selves, their souls and bodies."

"I was alarmed by Father Edwards' explicit encouragement of people to 'gum up the works' and leave the Episcopal Church," Dixon says. "I wanted to see where he was on those things. I needed him to guarantee that he would obey



Jane Dixon

his ordination vows, obey the canons of the church. He equivocated."

At the interview, Dixon says Edwards stood by his earlier statements, would not promise what he might do in the future, would not promise to obey the bishop and her successors, would not promise that Christ Church would remain in the Episcopal Church.

After the interview, Dixon notified the senior warden and Edwards that she could not approve him as rector. But Edwards had already signed a contract with the parish and moved his family into the rectory. The canons permit a member of the clergy to function without a license in a diocese other than her/his own for up to 60 days, so Edwards could legally officiate at Christ Church until May 25.

The terms of Canon III.17 were hotly disputed — had Dixon violated the 30-day limit; was she within her rights to deny that Edwards was "duly qualified"?

On March 16, Frank Griswold, the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop, issued a statement. "I are a statement."

Bishop, issued a statement: "I cannot imagine a bishop, as chief pastor of a diocese, approving the election of a priest to serve a congregation when that priest has a marked and publicly stated antipathy — far beyond comment and critiqu Therefore, as Pre Dixon's decision."

More than 60 bi ment and critique — toward the church in which he was ordained. Therefore, as Presiding Bishop, I am in complete support of Bishop

More than 60 bishops signed a letter of support for Dixon, while letters chastising her came from a handful of other bishops. On May 15, the Pre- $\overline{\underline{\mathbb{Q}}}$ siding Bishop met with traditionalist bishops, the president of FIF/NA, and Charles Nalls, the attorney representing Edwards and the Accokeek parish, for a "candid expression of views" about the place of traditionalists in the church.

As the 60 days came to an end, Dixon notified Sturman and Edwards that she was coming to Christ Church to celebrate the Eucharist and

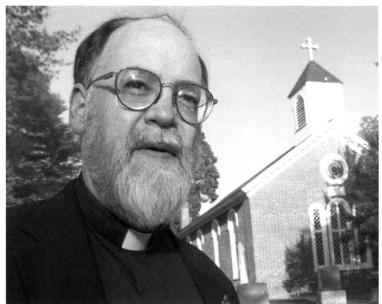
appoint an interim priest to serve them while they looked for a rector.

On Sunday, May 27, the senior warden stood in the church door are told Dixon she could not come in unless she would sit quietly in the pe On Sunday, May 27, the senior warden stood in the church door and told Dixon she could not come in unless she would sit quietly in the pew while Edwards celebrated. Dixon, who had come with some supporters — including the now retired Bishop Haines — announced that she would celebrate the Eucharist on the adjacent church basketball court. Half of those in the church followed Dixon, while the rest remained for the ser-

g vice conducted by Edwards. Members remaining inside were augmented by supporters from several area parishes.

The scene verged on the chaotic as Edwards' supporters attempted to disrupt the bishop's service and police called by the parish to remove "trespassers" milled around uncertainly. Above the heckling, Dixon "trespassers" milled around uncertainly. Above the heckling, Dixon announced that Haines, now retired as diocesan bishop, would serve as interim rector for Christ Church. Another retired bishop, Edward MacBurney, read a statement from Jack Iker, the bishop of Edwards' home Diocese of Fort Worth. Iker condemned Dixon's actions and made the unprecedented — and unlawful — declaration that he was taking Christ Church under his pastoral care and protection and giving permission to Edwards to serve as rector.

During the next several weeks, as dozens of Christ Church parishioners worshipped with Haines at a nearby hall and Edwards officiated in the church, the lawyers got busier. Nalls filed a charge of trespassing against Dixon and a complaint (later withdrawn) in criminal court



Samuel Edwards, outside Christ Church, Accokeek, Md.

against Dixon's husband, for allegedly pushing the junior warden in the midst of the confusion on the basketball court.

On June 25, 2001, Dixon filed suit in federal court to compel Edwards to remove himself from Christ Church and to require the vestry to welcome their bishop. That same day, the Presiding Bishop wrote to all bishops: "I have been unsuccessful in my extensive efforts to assist those involved ... [to] find a way forward that would satisfy their several concerns."

Two weeks later, Dixon sent a complaint about Edwards' officiating without a license to his Fort Worth bishop, Iker. Two sets of ecclesiastical charges against Dixon were filed with the Presiding Bishop, who forwarded them to the Review Committee of the House of Bishops, as the canons provide. As this issue went to press, the matter was in the hands of the secular court, and the disciplinary processes of the Diocese of Fort Worth and the House of Bishops.

ANALYSIS

For those opposing women's ordination, Jane Holmes Dixon — the second woman to be ordained a bishop in the U.S. church — had for many years been a source of particular aggravation because of a series of visitations she made to churches in that diocese that did not accept the ordination of women. By all accounts these were difficult events and contributed to her reputation among some as a feisty, aggressive leader. Many wondered why she appeared to be forcing herself on congregations that did not want her.

There was a precedent. When John Walker was first elected Suffragan Bishop of Washington in 1971, there were churches that would not welcome a black bishop. Diocesan Bishop William Creighton authorized visitations by Walker to every congregation in the diocese to heighten awareness of the evils of racism and its power to divide the Christian community. (Walker eventually became Washington's diocesan bishop.)

Dixon was the next suffragan bishop after Walker. Many remembered how his courage in going where he was not wanted helped the diocese

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Ronald Haines presides at a service for Christ Church parishioners in a nearby hall.

move forward in race relations. They saw Dixon's visitations as another round in the battle for acceptance of all people into the life and ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church.

There was one big difference. Despite the systemic racism in church and society, which continues to this day, most racial discrimination was illegal by 1971. No one could claim any moral imperative for excluding Walker from the church. On the other hand, in 1993 discrimination against women in the church was still protected by a screen of "conscience," rationalized by "theological convictions" about the proper role of women. Persons attempting to exclude Dixon claimed a theological imperative to protect an all-male ordained ministry. They also claimed a canonical exemption, citing the infamous "conscience statement" adopted by the House of Bishops in 1977, following the 1976 vote to ordain women.

Never ratified by the General Convention (in fact, repudiated in several forms), this statement has nonetheless been used repeatedly to legitimize continued discrimination. Even among staunch supporters of ordaining women, many still counsel endless patience, forbearance and tolerance for "conscientious" theological views opposing women, even if they would never dream of making similar remarks in defense of discrimination against black clergy.

A 'church within the church'

Days before the bishops adopted that 1977 "conscience clause," more than 1,700 people dead set against the ordination of women

and/or the new prayer book gathered in St Louis to consider their alternatives. By meeting's end, some had left the Episcopal Church to form the Anglican Church in North America. They elected bishops, who were subsequently consecrated by a retired American Episcopal bishop, a bishop from the Philippines who was later disciplined for participating, and a bishop from Korea, "in absentia," who later denied having given his consent. It was the first sizable breakaway since the Reformed Episcopal Church departed in 1873.

Many of those who did not join the schismatics in St. Louis were members of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission (ECM), formed a few months earlier. They were intent on creating "a supportive ecclesiastical entity within the Episcopal Church," where they could maintain a separate succession whose orders would not be tainted by the presence of women or those who ordained women. Offspring of the anglocatholic American Church Union (ACU), the ECM was first headed by ACU president Stanley Atkins, Bishop of Eau Claire; then by Atkins' Eau Claire successor William Wantland; and later by Robert Terwilliger of Dallas.

Terwilliger ordained Sam Edwards to the priesthood in 1980. The ordination of women was already part of the discipline of the Episcopal Church when Edwards was ordained, but Dallas was among several dioceses still rejecting it as a "novelty." Edwards was soon writing for the ECM newsletter, *The Evangelical Catholic*, and served as its features editor from 1986-1989. By this time, the Diocese of Fort Worth

had separated from the Diocese of Dallas, the ordination of women being one issue that led to the division.

In 1988, pressure on traditionalists escalated with the election of Barbara C. Harris as Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts. It was "the final crisis," a "direct assault upon the unity of the Church," and other traditionalist groups joined ECM in protest. A letter from ECM bishops, drafted by Edwards, summoned sympathizers to a "Synod" in Fort Worth hosted by its bishop, Clarence Pope. Some 1,500 people created the Episcopal Synod of America, electing ECM president Pope as ESA president, and elaborating on the ECM notion of an ecclesiastical entity in the church.

Calling themselves "the Church within the Episcopal Church," they assigned ESA bishops to various areas of the country, elaborated on ways of being "in (or out of) communion," and sought a non-geographical "Tenth Province," a traditionalist overlay on existing Episcopal Church dioceses. Women, sexuality, the interpretation of Scripture, the language used about God — in all these areas these traditionalists saw a capitulation to the godless spirit of modernity, a plunge into heresy and immorality led by false teachers such as prolific author John Shelby Spong, the then Bishop of Newark, various feminists and the "homosexual lobby." In their view, there were now two churches in the Episcopal Church, one orthodox and the other apostate, "hell-bent," having abandoned the traditional faith.

Cultivating global allies

In 1993, Edwards became Executive Director of the ESA, and later facilitated its transformation into Forward in Faith, North America (FIF/NA), affiliated with the original FIF group in England. In the process, Edwards helped create an international traditionalist movement. Some bishops in provinces formerly part of the colonial empire were easily persuaded that the American church had plunged into heresy and rampant licentiousness and readily joined the struggle.

At the 1998 Lambeth conference of Anglican bishops, traditionalists hosted a well-equipped lounge and other amenities for sympathetic bishops. Afterwards, electronic communication made it possible to maintain relationships and develop plans quickly, across continents and

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oceans. Traditionalists in the U.S. were buoyed by the support and encouraged to dream that together they could rescue the Anglican Communion from its slide into false teaching.

In January 2000, with no notice or authorization from anybody, primates of the provinces of Rwanda and South East Asia consecrated two American priests in Singapore, and sent them home again as Anglican bishop-missionaries. They were part of a new group of evangelical American clergy and sympathetic overseas bishops to be called the Anglican Mission to Amer-Sica (AMiA). The new bishops, emphatically not Frecognized as Anglicans by the Archbishop of Canterbury, gathered up dissident clergy and Econgregations from dioceses around the counotry, and from earlier splinter groups. In January ਡੋ2001, the AMiA and FIF/NA signed a joint statement pledging "mutual commitment to Swork together for the establishment of an ਰੈorthodox jurisdiction in North America."

Challenging the structures

The March 2001 Primates Meeting – the "show-down" that didn't happen – left traditionalists frustrated once again. Meeting with Presiding Bishop Griswold in May, they pressed him to shonor the primates' "commitment" to enable traditionalist bishops to assume oversight of parishes at odds with their own bishop. But Griswold had no authority to do such a thing. When Jack Iker took it upon himself to provide alternative oversight to Christ Church, Acco-

keek, he was pursuing that goal, however uncanonically. Disregarding lawful structures and processes, Iker was moving on a parallel track with the AMiA. On June 24, 2001, AMiA bishops and supporters gathered in Denver, Colo., to ordain four more American priests to the episcopate.

Only two days after the Denver consecrations, Dixon filed suit to remove Edwards from Accokeek. Publicity naturally linked the two together. The AMiA, having given up on the Episcopal Church, was creating its own substitute institution. Dixon, perhaps regarding Edwards as an AMiA advance man set on reclaiming the Diocese of Washington from "revisionists" like herself, took forceful action to protect the unity of the existing institution.

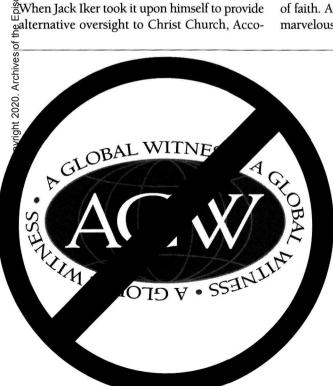
Even though Dixon has had to do her job in an institutional structure that is still profoundly sexist - marked by many patronizing "brother" bishops and traditionalist reports full of feminine put-downs and vitriol so disproportionate it can only be explained by misogyny — the Accokeek conflict is not primarily about sexism or the ordination of women. It is, instead, about the inevitable clash between those who believe God calls the church to theological uniformity - Edwards asserts that unity comes only "from sharing the mind of God" - and those who seek to protect the institution because its stability creates holy space for a diverse community of faith. As Dixon observes, "We can have this marvelous diversity and toleration because we have an institution in which to live. That's what our polity has always been about: We can be the Anglican Communion because we respect the rules "

Even after the last chapter of the Accokeek story is written, the tension it represents will continue to challenge the structures of the church. These challenges will accelerate because of the speed and reach of electronic communication. Anyone can now become part of an international Anglican conversation. Anyone can publish briefs and counter-briefs, prayers and exhortations, stories and screeds about events in the life of the church.

Initially, such anarchic communication gives an advantage to "outsiders" who have had little prior access to channels controlled by those with institutional power. Once that stabilizes, controlling the flow of information may prove more important to those who value theological conformity than to those who value diversity within a common structure. Accokeek is a test case for both hypotheses.

To be continued.

Philadelphia-based Pamela W. Darling is a church historian and author of *New Wine: the Story of Women Transforming Leadership and Power in the Episcopal Church.* Many documents chronicling this story appear on the website of the Diocese of Washington (www.us.net/edow/news/accokeek.htm) and of Forward in Faith/North America (www.fifamerica.faithweb.com/Reading/news.htm).



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SHORT TAKES

Martha's Vineyard?

In a "tongue-in-cheek letter to the White House" (*SojoNet*, 6/4/01), Ken Sehested of the Baptist Peace Fellowship suggested "a novel solution" to the conflict over U.S. naval training on Vieques (now slated to continue until 2003).

"Puerto Ricans have carried the load of our military training needs for more than 60 years," he points out. "Why not approach the citizens of other U.S.-owned islands and request their help in shouldering this burden?

"For instance, there is the Acadia National Park off the coast of Maine. ... Off the coast of Massachusetts is Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Islands. Block Island is off the coast of Rhode Island. Long Island, N.Y., is large enough to allow shared use by the Navy and private citizens. There are hundreds of miles of beachfront (especially useful for practicing marine amphibious landings) on North Carolina's Outer Banks. Georgia offers St. Simons Island and Jekyll Island. In the Florida Keys are literally dozens of islands. Then there's Padre Island off the Texas coast and the Channel Islands and Catalina Island off California. ...

"I am quite confident that after all these negotiations are completed, the U.S. Navy would have several hundred years of assured access to proper training environments. And after all have taken a turn, the people of Vieques could again be approached to begin a second round of shared responsibility for national defense."

Price of prisons

A new searchable database on prisons was launched by motherjones.com this summer. "Debt to Society: The Real Price of Prisons" reports that:

- spending on prisons nationwide has grown six times faster than spending on higher education in the last 20 years;
- many states have seen an actual drop in spending on higher education while prison spending has soared everywhere;
 - the most extreme disparities between



white and nonwhite incarceration rates are not in the south, but in northeastern Democratic strongholds like Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Journalists targeted

Covering the July 6 killing of a Colombian radio news director, *The New York Times* reported that the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists considers Colombia to be the most dangerous country for journalists in Latin America.

Despite his family's fears for his safety, "Jose Dubiel Vasquez continued disseminating news about local corruption and the conflict between rebels and paramilitary groups," The *Times* reported (7/11/01). "On Friday, Mr. Vasquez paid the price, colleagues and relatives said. As he drove home with a fellow reporter after the morning broadcast, a gunman stepped up to Mr. Vasquez's car and shot three bullets into his head. He died immediately, becoming the second news director from Caracol Radio to be gunned down since December.

"Mr. Vasquez was the sixth Colombian journalist slain this year. One was shot to death two days later, the fourth in 12 days, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists in New York. In all of last year, seven journalists were killed, at least three as reprisals for their work, the committee said. ... "Press freedoms are being attacked as

Colombia suffers a wave of political violence. Armed groups — mostly right-wing death squads, rights groups say — focus on labor advocates, professors, student leaders and human rights workers.

"'The parties in the conflict care a great deal about how they are portrayed in the media,' said Marylene Smeets, who oversees the committee's research in Latin America. 'So the parties in the conflict are willing to force journalists to spread their word. They are also punishing those journalists who don't give out the message they would like to give out.'"

Opposing a marriage amendment

The Interfaith Working Group (IWG), a Philadelphia-based progressive interfaith organization representing 22 religious organizations and congregations and 77 clergy from 16 religious traditions in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, issued a statement in July in response to an announcement that a coalition of conservative religious organizations will be proposing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman.

"The U.S. Constitution is not a dictionary, a religious document, or a tool for oppression," their statement says. "The proposed amendment would give the civil institution of marriage a religious definition that is not

shared by all religions. This is oppressive to religious and governmental bodies that may wish to define marriage differently, and to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans who will be denied equal protection under the law."

School bus pollution

The Union of Concerned Scientists is asking citizens to lobby for a federal grant program to put cleaner, safer school buses on the road (*Earthwise*, Summer 2001).

"Most of the 442,000 school buses on the groad today are aging diesel vehicles built to outmoded health and safety standards," they asay. "Throughout the school year, they emit clouds of cancer- and smog-causing pollution that harm our kids and the environment.

"Diesel emissions include soot and smogforming nitrogen oxides. Soot, which evades the body's defenses to lodge deep in the glungs, has been linked to chronic bronchitis, spneumonia and heart disease. Smog impairs the respiratory system, exacerbating asthma and other diseases. And more than 40 of the compounds found in diesel exhaust are classified as toxic air contaminants.

"Diesel emissions pose an especially high grisk to children because their respiratory systems are still developing, they spend more at time outdoors than adults, and they breathe more air per pound of body weight. ... Natural gas school buses, which are already on the road in many communities, offer significant reductions in dangerous emissions. In addition, they provide an interim step toward fuel-cell buses, since the two technologies require similar fueling facilities. Fuel-cell buses, when they become available, will provide virtually pollution-free transportation."

"UCS is working to establish a federal grant program to replace the dirtiest diesel buses with clean, safe school buses. Let your members of Congress know that you want them to fund this important program. Write your senators at U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510 and your representatives at U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515."

Subvertising

"I think America today is essentially no different from McDonald's or Marlboro or General Motors," said Kalle Lasn, a former advertising executive who cofounded the Media Foundation and now edits its magazine, Adbusters, in an interview with The Sun (July 2001). "It's a product image that's sold to us and to consumers worldwide. The American brand is associated with catchwords like 'democracy,' 'opportunity' and 'freedom,' but, like cigarettes that are sold as symbols of vitality and youthful rebellion. America in reality is very different from its brand image. The real America has been subverted by corporate agendas. Its elected officials bow down before corporations as a condition of their survival in office. America isn't really a democracy anymore: It's a corporate state."

The Media Foundation engages in "culture jamming" through "subvertisements" - ads intended to subvert consumer culture, interviewer Derrik Jensen explains. "Nearly everyone is familiar with Joe Camel, the cartoon camel used by RJ Reynolds for 10 years to sell cigarettes — especially to children, critics said," Jensen writes. "In response, Lasn's Media Foundation gave us Joe Chemo, a bald camel lying in a hospital bed with IVs in both arms. Another cigarette-ad parody showed a Marlboro Man look-alike smoking a limp cigarette over the caption 'Smoking Causes Impotence.' Still other counterads have taken on alcohol (a battered child seen through a vodka bottle, with the caption 'Wipe That Smirkoff'), food monopolies, the fashion industry, and consumer culture in general."

Arms transfers code

"Led by Oscar Arias, former president of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace prize winner, an international group of arms control, human rights and development organizations recently began an effort to solicit support for a revision of an arms transfers code of conduct first introduced in 1997," the newsletter of the Council for a Livable World reports (Arms Trade News, May 2001). "The proposed "Framework Convention on International Arms Transfers" outlines a broad set of principles based on international humanitarian law that would require states to adopt mechanisms banning arms transfers that could be used to violate international stan-

dards of human rights and non-aggression.

"The Convention outlines responsibilities states have, deemed by international law, to make a case for limitations on weapons transfers that 'could have an adverse impact on sustainable development or regional peace and security, would facilitate the commission of violent crimes, or could be easily diverted to such ends."

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Volunteers sort donated clothing for shipment to disaster victims overseas. Operated by the church of the Brethren for Church World Service. Photo by Jim West

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